

Justpeace

PAX CHRISTI

International Catholic Movement for Peace

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PEACE SUNDAY 15 JANUARY 2023

We give thanks for Pope Francis' continuous and nuanced comments on the world situation. Here is a selection from the past year alone, which might be useful as you prepare for Peace Sunday. Pope Francis' theme for 2023 will be on our website as soon as it is announced. Pax Christi resources can be found here: <https://paxchristi.org.uk/peace-sunday-2023/>

I would like to lament... three world wars in a single century! The one of 1914-1918, the one of 1939-1945, and this one! This one [in Ukraine] is a world war, because it is true that when empires, either on one side or the other weaken, they need to make a war in order to feel strong - and also to sell weapons! I believe that today the greatest calamity in the world is the arms industry. Please! I've been told, I don't know if it's true or not, that if we didn't make weapons for a year, we could end world hunger.

Pope Francis to the Press on the plane from Bahrain, November 2022

The Holy See continues steadfastly to maintain that in the twenty-first century nuclear arms are an inadequate and inappropriate means of responding to security threats, and that possession of them is immoral. Their production diverts resources from integral human development and their employment not only has catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences, but also threatens the very existence of humanity...

To members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See, January 2022

Why, then, wage war on each other over conflicts that we should resolve by talking to each other as fellow people? Why not rather join our forces and resources to fight together the real battles of civilization: the fight against hunger and thirst; the fight against disease and epidemics; the fight against today's poverty and slavery? Why? Certain choices are not neutral: to allocate a large part of spending to weapons means taking it away from something else, which means continuing to take it away yet again, from those who lack the basic necessities. And this is a scandal...

Continuing to spend on weapons sullies the soul, sullies the heart, sullies humanity. What is the use of solemnly committing ourselves all together, on an international level, in campaigns against poverty, against hunger, against the degradation of the planet, if we then fall back into the old vice of war, into the old strategy of the power of armaments, which takes everything and everyone backwards? A war always takes you backwards, always. We walk backwards. We will have to start over again.

To members of the organisation 'Ho avuto sete' March 2022

The photo on our poster (see over) was taken in March 2021, when Pope Francis prayed for peace amid the ruins of Mosul, Iraq.

Foto©Vatican Media



How then does one become a peacemaker? First of all, one must *disarm the heart*. Yes, because we are all equipped with aggressive thoughts against each other, and cutting words...

How does one demilitarize the heart? By opening ourselves to Jesus, who is 'our peace' (Eph 2:14); by standing before his Cross... by receiving from him, in Confession, 'forgiveness and peace'. This is where we begin, because being peacemakers, being saints, is not our ability, they are gifts, it is one of his gifts, it is grace.

Brothers and sisters, let us look within and ask ourselves: are we peacemakers? In the places where we live, study and work, do we bring tension, words that hurt, chatter that poisons, controversy that divides? Or do we open up the way to peace, forgiving those who have offended us; do we care for those who are at the margins, do we redress some injustice by helping those who have less? This is called building peace.

Angelus, Feast of All Saints, November 2022

As we contemplate those glorious wounds, our incredulous eyes open wide; our hardened hearts break open and we welcome the Easter message: 'Peace be with you!'..... Dear brothers and sisters, every war brings in its wake consequences that affect the entire human family: from grief and mourning to the drama of refugees, and to the economic and food crisis, the signs of which we are already seeing. Faced with the continuing signs of war, as well as the many painful setbacks to life, Jesus Christ, the victor over sin, fear and death, exhorts us not to surrender to evil and violence. Brothers and sisters, may we be won over by the peace of Christ! Peace is possible; peace is a duty; peace is everyone's primary responsibility!

Urbi et Orbi, Easter 2022

Peace Sunday 2023

Join Pope Francis in prayer and action for peace



Aisling Griffin