

Missionary Oblates Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Office

2016 Lenten Reflection on Peace



"On both the individual and communitarian levels, indifference to one's neighbor, born of indifference to God, finds expression in disinterest and a lack of engagement, which only help to prolong situations of injustice and grave social imbalance. These in turn can lead to conflicts or, in any event, generate a climate of dissatisfaction, which risks exploding sooner or later into acts of violence and insecurity." (**Pope Francis, World Day of Peace Message, January 1, 2016**)

"Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. For "Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it".
(**1 Peter 3:9-11**)

Reflection

It is hard to imagine that lots of money can be made by causing others pain and distress but it is true. Speaking to primary school students in Rome in 2015, Pope Francis said that the global "economic system orbits around money and not men and women," and "many people in power live off war." He spoke of greed and the desire to have money and cites the arms trade as one example of an industry that is the enemy of peace.

Other destabilizing yet very profitable global industries listed on the U.S. National Security Council's website are: terrorism, drug and human trafficking, trade in pirated/counterfeit goods, cybercrime, and the list goes on. These criminal industries are transnational: all regions of the world are impacted.

So what can we as individuals do? Is world peace unattainable? Here is the Pope's take: "Peace must be built day by day... it is not an industrial product, it is artisanal: it is built day by day through mutual love, our closeness." For us as people of faith this means being detached from the world's problems is not an option.

May Saint Eugene De Mazenod strengthen and inspire us all to a greater solidarity, especially with those most in need.

Prayer

All too often, Lord, we turn away from the world's many problems, which seem too big, too complex, or too far away. Forgive us our indifference. It is easier, Lord, to see only what is around us: our lives, our homes, our challenges. Forgive us our isolation. Help us to see with your eyes: eyes which notice one another and help us understand. Help us to dream your dream: of communities that reach out and dialogue and where diverse people creatively cooperate. Help us to be people of solidarity and action, so moved by prayer, encounter, and understanding that peace can become a reality. **Amen.**

(Catholics Confront Global Poverty World Day of Peace, 2016)

Action

ACT:

- Visit the *International Justice and Peace* page at the Bishop's Conference for a list of action items:
<http://www.usccb.org/about/international-justice-and-peace/>
- Download an Advocacy Toolkit at *Catholics Confront Global Poverty*:
<http://www.confrontglobalpoverty.org/get-involved/advocacy-toolkit/>

CONNECT:

- Visit Pax Christi USA (PCUSA) to see how you can connect with local groups in your area. <https://paxchristiusa.org/about/>