

Commit to the centrality of Gospel nonviolence

Call to prayer:

In recognition of the Jubilee Year of Mercy declared by Pope Francis, people from many countries gathered at the Nonviolence and Just Peace conference from April 11-13, 2016 in Rome to take a clear stand for creative and active nonviolence and against all forms of violence. Let us, with them, recommit ourselves to Gospel nonviolence and peace.



Reader 1:

Come Holy Spirit; fill us with a new heart: a heart that takes in all people from every corner of this earth; a heart that recognizes that we are all sisters and brothers whose home is the earth. Guide our prayer and discussion as we reflect on nonviolence.

Reader 2:

We live in a time of tremendous suffering, widespread trauma and fear linked to militarization, economic injustice, climate change and other forms of violence.

In this context of systemic violence, we are called to recognize the centrality of active nonviolence in the vision and message of Jesus, to the life and practice of the Catholic Church, and to our long-term vocation of healing and reconciling both people and the planet. Let us pray for the areas of our world that need peace today.

Candle ritual

As you pass the lighted candle, the person holding the candle prays aloud for one area of our world today that needs peace.

After each person, respond with the sung response:

Lord, make us a means of your peace.

Reader 3:

We have prayed for our world. Let us now, in a spirit of peace, commit ourselves to furthering Catholic understanding and practice of active nonviolence on the road to just peace. As would-be disciples of Jesus, challenged and inspired by stories of hope and courage in these days, we call on the Church we love to:

- Continue developing and practicing Catholic social teaching on nonviolence

- Integrate Gospel nonviolence explicitly into the life, including the sacramental life, and work of the Church
- Initiate a global conversation on nonviolence within the Church and with people of other faiths,
- No longer use or teach “just war theory”
- Lift up the prophetic voice of the church to challenge unjust world powers
- And with the larger world respond to the monumental crises of our time with the vision and strategies of nonviolence and Just Peace;

Reader 4:

Aware of our responsibility as disciples of Jesus, we commit ourselves to:

- Request Pope Francis to share with the world an encyclical on nonviolence and just peace
- Live the call to Gospel nonviolence in our homes and communities
- Promote nonviolent practices and strategies in our lives, our ministries and our world
- Continue advocating for the abolition of war and nuclear weapons
- Support and defend those nonviolent activists whose work for peace and justice put their lives at risk.
- Protect the earth to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations.

Closing prayer

All: God of love beyond measure, we hear your call to open our arms wide to let the suffering of the world come into our lives. Your call both frightens and invites us. We cannot remain passive in the midst of the challenge. We desire to live your love with total abandon without counting the cost or the reward. We long to be “starthrowers” who care deeply for each of your precious creatures and who choose to make a difference where we can. Give us the strength and wisdom; we pray to enter this unending dance of love every day, every hour, every moment, everywhere. Amen.

Closing song

“Make me a channel of your peace “or “Let there be peace on Earth”

*Prayer service prepared by Sr. Catherine Arata, SSND
Photo from San Damiano, Assisi, Italy, by Judy Coode*

Catholic Nonviolence Initiative

A project of Pax Christi International

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