



56TH WORLD
DAY OF
PEACE

*Journeying Together
on Paths of Peace*

January 1, 2023




Introductory Prayer

PEACE

Lord God of peace, We gather here, as a part of the human family, to celebrate the 56th Day of Peace. We recognise that the world is weakened by the viruses, discriminations and war and it causes immense suffering, especially to the marginalised people and the planet. Inspire our hearts to pray, bless and perform for the health and peace in the world. Help us to realise that our life and destiny are bound Together with all forms of life and no one can save oneself alone. Help us to resolve to emanate the fragrance of development and peace. Amen.

World Day of Peace 2023

On December 08, 1967, Pope Paul VI invited the people of the world to celebrate the January 01, as the World day of peace. That was a time of cold war and the arms race was at the peak. January 01, 2023 marks the 56th Day of Peace. 2023 also marks the 60th anniversary of *Pacem in Terris*(PT) of Pope John XXIII (1963) and the 75th anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights by UN. These documents are magnacarta for humanity to ensure Peace, Rights, Dignity for all the people. As the world has started recovering from the consequences of Covid-19, it is struck by the disaster of war in Ukrain. In this context, the theme for this year is announced as No one can



be saved alone. Combatting Covid-19 together, journeying together on paths of peace. On this day we aspire for a world without arms and war, but with development and Peace.

English Song: Michael Jackson:

Heal The World : <https://youtu.be/BWf-eARnf6U>

Sacred Scripture: John 14, 27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

(In silence, inhale along with the breath one of these words or phrases, and exhale peace and healing. Do this exercise at least for two minutes)

Reflections

This passage is from the farewell discourse of Jesus. Peace is the summary message of all the teachings and works of Jesus. That is why the Risen Saviour was greeting “Peace be with you”. The experience of St. Paul is that Jesus is our peace (Eph 2,14). The faithful are dispersed at the end of Mass saying, ‘Let us go in peace.’ So, peace promotion is an important mission of the Church.

Message of Pope Francis for 2023 Peace day

We are invited to remain alert to the reality happening around us. The covid-19 pandemic seems to have upset even the most peaceful parts of our world, and exposed a number of fragilities. After three years of the pandemic, now we are asking: What did we learn from the pandemic? What new paths should we follow? and

What signs of life and hope can we see to move forward? The greater lesson we have learned is that we need one another and none of us can be saved alone. Together we need to build peace, justice and emerge from disasters. When the pandemic is getting over, the war in Ukraine has brought another disaster. The virus of war is more difficult to overcome. Now time has come to lay foundation for a more just and peaceful world. We need to battle the virus of inequality. We also need to develop suitable policies for welcoming

and integrating migrants.
Link for pope's message:

[Click here for the full message](#)



The Social Teachings of the Church on Peace and War

From the 4th century, the Church believed that a State could wage war to protect its citizens from aggression. The works of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine deal on this. *Pacem in Terris*, says that war is no longer is a fit instrument to repair the violation of justice (PT 127).

Pope Francis says that War and the death penalty seem to be solutions but they only introduce new elements of destruction in the society (Fratelli Tutti (FT) 255). War is the negation of all rights and a dramatic assault on the environment. (FT 257). We can no longer think of war as a solution, because its risks will probably always be greater than its supposed benefits. In view of this, it is very difficult to speak of a “just war”. We shall hold Never again war (FT 258).

A cessation to the arms race and banning of Nuclear weapons have to be realised (PT 112). Eliminating all nuclear weapons becomes a moral and humanitarian imperative. With the money spent on weapons, let us establish a global fund to put an end to hunger and to favour development (FT 262). For the Development is the New Name for Peace (PT 76).

Claret and Peace

The world will never be the dwelling place of peace, till peace has found a home in the heart of each and every person (PT 165). Similarly, Claret believed that one has to live in peace with friends and community members. As a young boy he says, “I was always content, happy, and at peace with everyone. I never had a quarrel or fight, great or small, with anyone” (Autobiography (Aut) 50). As a missionary he has expressed similar conviction, “I was convinced, too, that a missionary should be at peace with everyone” (Aut 386).



He was convinced that accepting the will of God could promote peace in oneself. As a boy Claret desired to become a Carthusian monk. While this thinking was in him, he was called by the Bishop. Claret was afraid that the Bishop might ask him to give up the plan of becoming a Carthusian. Yet Claret says, “I held my peace and obeyed” (Aut 82). In one of his resolutions he says that he was ready to remain faithful to the will of God till his death, ‘We should hold the work which God has assigned to us, remaining faithful until death, without fear. The only thing we should fear is acting unjustly” (Aut 652).

While Claret was in the Jesuit novitiate in Rome, one of the prayers that he composed bears his valour to save the people from sin and sinful situations, 'How can I say that I have charity, if I do not warn the people, after having known that there are thieves and murderers on the road? Ah, my Mother, I cannot still my voice on such occasions. No, I shall not be silent, even if I shall be cut to pieces' (Cf. Aut 158,159, 251).



With similar passion he promoted peace and disarmament through non-violent means. When he was Archbishop of Cuba, there were revolutionary upheavals in Puerto Principe. On one such occasions, four revolutionaries along with weapons, were arrested. Claret interacted with them in the prison and brought conversion in them. Then he obtained their freedom from the military general. This eventually led to the dissolution of the band of revolutionaries, and all their guns and ammunition were dispersed, and peace return to the place (Cf. Aut 522-523).

Examination of Conscience

Let us recall in silence our role in promoting healing and peace:

- Do I bear vengeance and hatred?
- Do I live in peace and harmony with community members and the people?
- Do I strive to promote peace and reconciliation among the people?
- Am I disposed to speak out even if it means to be cut into pieces?
- Am I disposed to work together with others for peace mission?
- Am I disposed to work together with others to challenge unjust systems and structures?
- Do I believe that development is another name for peace?
- Do I use as well as promote the sustainable use of the resources?



Intercessory prayers

We shall pray...

- For peace with ourselves and to be healed of our rigidity, anger and impatience.

R/ Let there be Peace and Development.

- For peace among the members of the families, friends, strangers, the poor and the suffering. R/
- For an end to the violence caused by hate speech and deadly weapons. / R
- For the grace to see every human being as a child of God, regardless of race, language and culture. R/
- For the wisdom to teach the young people, on how to resolve

differences in non-violent and respectful ways. R/

- For healing and justice for all those who have experienced violence and rejections. R/
- For the leaders of Russia and Ukraine to engage in dialogue to resolve the differences. R/
- For the leaders of the nations to stop the production, the stocking and the sale of weapons. R/
- For the courage to respond boldly, to the call of the Holy Spirit, to act together, to end violence and discriminations. R/

We may add other intentions

What can we do?



- Practice of love and mercy on a daily basis
- Practice of forgiveness
- Sustainable consumption, which means limiting one's needs
- Engage in real listening than jumping to judgement
- Avoid categorizing people
- Speak positive language
- Appreciate plurality of culture, language, races, nationality etc.
- Be critique of the news in media, especially social media.
- Pray for peace
- Help the needy people
- Join a network that works for development
- Be in solidarity with organisations which promote Justice and peace.

(In silence we shall ask 'What do I choose?')

[Spanish song: Athenas-Una Plegaria de paz:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAQS6s_Ff-0)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAQS6s_Ff-0

Concluding Prayer



O God, on this day
International Day of Peace,
we resolve to end war and violence
which continue to kill and destroy.
Help us to hear your voice that invites for
forgiveness, compassion, patience and di-
alogue. Help us to thirst for justice so that
we might contribute to a peaceful world.
Help us to act on behalf of peace, not
only today, but all the days of our
life. Amen. Preghiamo
insieme:

**We shall pray together:
Our Father Who art in heaven...**