

Catholic Theme: Peace



Scriptural Story

The Story of the Good Samaritan

But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Luke 10: 29-37

Description & Related Topics

Description:

Peace is the work of justice and the result of love. Much more than the absence of conflict, it speaks of a harmony or shalom which is fundamental to God's original vision for all of creation. Catholic social teaching contends that peace can be established only if the social order set down by God is fully observed. There are four levels in human relationships

1. person to person;
2. person to society and government;
3. country to country; and
4. person and country to the rest of the world.

Peace needs to be based on an order founded on truth, built according to justice, vivified and integrated by charity, put into practice in freedom. Every human is endowed with inviolable rights and duties. The arms race places the planet in jeopardy as well as deprives the less developed countries of social and economic progress. Nuclear war is a more menacing challenge than any the world has ever faced and must be resisted as an instrument to national policy. Catholic social teaching maintains that justice, right reason and consideration for human dignity and life demand that the arms race cease. It aims at informing consciences and contributing to policy debate. Catholics are encouraged to take an active role in public life. Catholic education should promote peace on all levels of human relationship.

Anchor Concepts: Conflict, Empowerment, Justice, Distribution, Transformation/Conversion

Related Concepts:

- SHALOM
- FAITH
- HOPE
- CAUSATION
- VICTIM
- OPPRESSION
- SELF-INTEREST
- BIAS / FRAME OF REFERENCE
- NEGOTIATION / COMPROMISE
- PROTEST / DEMONSTRATION
- DIALOGUE
- RIGHTEOUSNESS
- HUMAN RIGHTS
- QUALITY OF LIFE
- ECONOMIC JUSTICE
- EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH
- DIGNITY OF THE PERSON
- PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR
- RECONCILIATION
- RESOLUTION
- CONVERSION
- COOPERATION / COLLABORATION
- FORGIVENESS
- SOLIDARITY
- COMMON GOOD
- DEVELOPMENT / PROGRESS / GROWTH
- JUSTICE
- SOCIAL SIN
- SOCIAL JUSTICE
- DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE
- DIGNITY OF WORK AND SERVICE
- CHARITY
- MERCY / COMPASSION
- STEWARDSHIP
- VIOLENCE / NON-VIOLENCE
- AUTHORITY
- DEMOCRACY
- POLITICAL VALUE SYSTEM
- POLICY
- EQUALITY / EQUITY
- POWER
- POWERLESSNESS
- MARGINALIZATION
- DISENFRANCHISEMENT
- SUBSIDIARITY
- FREEDOM / LIBERATION
- CONFLICT RESOLUTION
- ARMS CONTROL
- MYSTERY, WONDER, AWE

Scriptural References

Moses Returns to Egypt

Go in peace!

Exodus 4: 18

Praise for Deliverance from Trouble

Come, O children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.
Which of you desires life, and covets many days to enjoy good?
Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.
Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

Psalms 34: 11-14

For everything there is a season

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8

The Future House of God

He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Isaiah 2: 4

Peace and Security through Obedience

He shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more, but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken,

Micah 4: 3-4

God's Wrath

Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you have uttered falsehood and prophesied lies, I am against you, says the Lord God. My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations; they shall not be in the council of my people, nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter the land of Israel; and you shall know that I am the Lord God. Because, in truth, because they have misled my people, saying, 'Peace', when there is no peace; and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets smear whitewash on it. Say to those who smear whitewash on it that it shall fall. There will be a deluge of rain, great hailstones will fall, and a stormy wind will break out. When the wall falls, will it not be said to you, 'Where is the whitewash you smeared on it?' Therefore thus says the Lord God: In my wrath I will make a stormy wind break out, and in my anger there shall be a

deluge of rain, and hailstones in wrath to destroy it. I will break down the wall that you have smeared with whitewash, and bring it to the ground, so that its foundation will be laid bare; when it falls, you shall perish within it; and you shall know that I am the Lord. Thus I will spend my wrath upon the wall, and upon those who have smeared it with whitewash; and I will say to you, The wall is no more, nor those who smeared it—the prophets of Israel who prophesied concerning Jerusalem and saw visions of peace for it, when there was no peace, says the Lord God.

Ezekiel 13: 8-16

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares

In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Isaiah 2: 2-4

The Righteous Reign of the Coming King

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests on his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9: 6

The Peaceful Kingdom

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them

Isaiah 11: 6

A New Covenant

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt – a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Jeremiah 31: 31-34

The Beatitudes

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.

Matthew 5: 9

The Shepherds and the Angels

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

Luke 2: 14

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

'I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

Peace

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

John 14: 25-27

Results of Justification

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have our peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ

Romans 5: 1

Grace and Peace to You

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1: 1-2

Fruits of the Holy Spirit

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

Galatians 5: 22-26

Church Teachings

Documents of Vatican II

29 Since all men possess a rational soul and are created in God's likeness, since they have the same nature and origin, have been redeemed by Christ and enjoy the same divine calling and destiny, the basic equality of all must receive increasingly greater recognition.

True, all men are not alike from the point of view of varying physical power and the diversity of intellectual and moral resources. Nevertheless, with respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, color, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent. For in truth it must still be regretted that fundamental personal rights are still not being universally honored. Such is the case of a woman who is denied the right to choose a husband freely, to embrace a state of life or to acquire an education or cultural benefits equal to those recognized for men.

Therefore, although rightful differences exist between men, the equal dignity of persons demands that a more humane and just condition of life be brought about. For excessive economic and social differences between the members of the one human family or population groups cause scandal, and militate against social justice, equity, the dignity of the human person, as well as social and international peace.

Human institutions, both private and public, must labor to minister to the dignity and purpose of man. At the same time let them put up a stubborn fight against any kind of slavery, whether social or political, and safeguard the basic rights of man under every political system. Indeed human institutions themselves must be accommodated by degrees to the highest of all realities, spiritual ones, even though meanwhile, a long enough time will be required before they arrive at the desired goal.

Gaudium et Spes, (The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

63 A similar lack of economic and social balance is to be noticed between agriculture, industry, and the services, and also between different parts of one and the same country. The contrast between the economically more advanced countries and other countries is becoming more serious day by day, and the very peace of the world can be jeopardized thereby.

Gaudium et Spes, (The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

THE FOSTERING OF PEACE AND THE PROMOTION OF A COMMUNITY OF NATIONS

77 In our generation when men continue to be afflicted by acute hardships and anxieties arising from the ravages of war or the threat of it, the whole human family faces an hour of supreme crisis in its advance toward maturity. Moving gradually together and everywhere more conscious already of its unity, this family cannot accomplish its task of constructing for all men everywhere a world more genuinely human unless each person devotes himself to the cause of peace with renewed vigor. Thus it happens that the Gospel message, which is in harmony with the loftier strivings and aspirations of the human race, takes on a new luster in our day as it declares that the artisans of peace are blessed "because they will be called the sons of God" (Matt. 5:9).

Consequently, as it points out the authentic and noble meaning of peace and condemns the frightfulness of war, the Council wishes passionately to summon Christians to cooperate, under the help of Christ the author of peace, with all men in securing among themselves a peace based on justice and love and in setting up the instruments of peace.

78 Peace is not merely the absence of war; nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies; nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice. Peace results from that order structured into human society by its divine Founder, and actualized by men as they thirst after ever greater justice. The common good of humanity finds its ultimate meaning in the eternal law. But since the concrete demands of this common good are constantly changing as time goes on, peace is never attained once and for all, but must be built up

ceaselessly. Moreover, since the human will is unsteady and wounded by sin, the achievement of peace requires a constant mastering of passions and the vigilance of lawful authority.

But this is not enough. This peace on earth cannot be obtained unless personal well-being is safeguarded and men freely and trustingly share with one another the riches of their inner spirits and their talents. A firm determination to respect other men and peoples and their dignity, as well as the studied practice of brotherhood are absolutely necessary for the establishment of peace. Hence peace is likewise the fruit of love, which goes beyond what justice can provide.

That earthly peace which arises from love of neighbor symbolizes and results from the peace of Christ which radiates from God the Father. For by the cross the incarnate Son, the prince of peace reconciled all men with God. By thus restoring all men to the unity of one people and one body, He slew hatred in His own flesh; and, after being lifted on high by His resurrection, He poured forth the spirit of love into the hearts of men.

For this reason, all Christians are urgently summoned to do in love what the truth requires, and to join with all true peacemakers in pleading for peace and bringing it about. Motivated by this same spirit, we cannot fail to praise those who renounce the use of violence in the vindication of their rights and who resort to methods of defense which are otherwise available to weaker parties too, provided this can be done without injury to the rights and duties of others or of the community itself.

Insofar as men are sinful, the threat of war hangs over them, and hang over them it will until the return of Christ. But insofar as men vanquish sin by a union of love, they will vanquish violence as well and make these words come true: "They shall turn their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into sickles. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaias 2:4).

SECTION 1

The Avoidance of War

79 Even though recent wars have wrought physical and moral havoc on our world, the devastation of battle still goes on day by day in some part of the world. Indeed, now that every kind of weapon produced by modern science is used in war, the fierce character of warfare threatens to lead the combatants to a savagery far surpassing that of the past. Furthermore, the complexity of the modern world and the intricacy of international relations allow guerrilla warfare to be drawn out by new methods of deceit and subversion. In many causes the use of terrorism is regarded as a new way to wage war.

Contemplating this melancholy state of humanity, the council wishes, above all things else, to recall the permanent binding force of universal natural law and its all-embracing principles. Man's conscience itself gives ever more emphatic voice to these principles. Therefore, actions which deliberately conflict with these same principles, as well as orders commanding such actions are criminal, and blind obedience cannot excuse those who yield to them. The most infamous among these are actions designed for the methodical extermination of an entire people, nation or ethnic minority. Such actions must be vehemently condemned as horrendous crimes. The courage of those who fearlessly and openly resist those who issue such commands merits supreme commendation.

On the subject of war, quite a large number of nations have subscribed to international agreements aimed at making military activity and its consequences less inhuman. Their stipulations deal with such matters as the treatment of wounded soldiers and prisoners. Agreements of this sort must be honored. Indeed they should be improved upon so that the frightfulness of war can be better and more workably held in check. All men, especially government officials and experts in these matters, are bound to do everything they can to effect these improvements. Moreover, it seems right that laws make humane provisions for the case of those who for reasons of conscience refuse to bear arms, provided however, that they agree to serve the human community in some other way.

Certainly, war has not been rooted out of human affairs. As long as the danger of war remains and there is no competent and sufficiently powerful authority at the international level, governments cannot be

denied the right to legitimate defense once every means of peaceful settlement has been exhausted. State authorities and others who share public responsibility have the duty to conduct such grave matters soberly and to protect the welfare of the people entrusted to their care. But it is one thing to undertake military action for the just defense of the people, and something else again to seek the subjugation of other nations. Nor, by the same token, does the mere fact that war has unhappily begun mean that all is fair between the warring parties.

Those too who devote themselves to the military service of their country should regard themselves as the agents of security and freedom of peoples. As long as they fulfill this role properly, they are making a genuine contribution to the establishment of peace.

80 The horror and perversity of war is immensely magnified by the addition of scientific weapons. For acts of war involving these weapons can inflict massive and indiscriminate destruction, thus going far beyond the bounds of legitimate defense. Indeed, if the kind of instruments which can now be found in the armories of the great nations were to be employed to their fullest, an almost total and altogether reciprocal slaughter of each side by the other would follow, not to mention the widespread devastation that would take place in the world and the deadly after effects that would be spawned by the use of weapons of this kind.

All these considerations compel us to undertake an evaluation of war with an entirely new attitude. The men of our time must realize that they will have to give a somber reckoning of their deeds of war for the course of the future will depend greatly on the decisions they make today. With these truths in mind, this most holy synod makes its own the condemnations of total war already pronounced by recent popes, and issues the following declaration.

Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation.

The unique hazard of modern warfare consists in this: it provides those who possess modern scientific weapons with a kind of occasion for perpetrating just such abominations; moreover, through a certain inexorable chain of events, it can catapult men into the most atrocious decisions. That such may never truly happen in the future, the bishops of the whole world gathered together, beg all men, especially government officials and military leaders, to give unremitting thought to their gigantic responsibility before God and the entire human race.

81 To be sure, scientific weapons are not amassed solely for use in war. Since the defensive strength of any nation is considered to be dependent upon its capacity for immediate retaliation, this accumulation of arms, which increases each year, likewise serves, in a way heretofore unknown, as deterrent to possible enemy attack. Many regard this procedure as the most effective way by which peace of a sort can be maintained between nations at the present time.

Whatever be the facts about this method of deterrence, men should be convinced that the arms race in which an already considerable number of countries are engaged is not a safe way to preserve a steady peace, nor is the so-called balance resulting from this race a sure and authentic peace. Rather than being eliminated thereby, the causes of war are in danger of being gradually aggravated. While extravagant sums are being spent for the furnishing of ever new weapons, an adequate remedy cannot be provided for the multiple miseries afflicting the whole modern world. Disagreements between nations are not really and radically healed; on the contrary, they spread the infection to other parts of the earth. New approaches based on reformed attitudes must be taken to remove this trap and to emancipate the world from its crushing anxiety through the restoration of genuine peace.

Therefore, we say it again: the arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity, and one which ensnares the poor to an intolerable degree. It is much to be feared that if this race persists, it will eventually spawn all the lethal ruin whose path it is now making ready. Warned by the calamities which the human race has made possible, let us make use of the interlude granted us from above and for which we are thankful to become more conscious of our own responsibility and to find means for resolving our

disputes in a manner more worthy of man. Divine Providence urgently demands of us that we free ourselves from the age-old slavery of war. If we refuse to make this effort, we do not know where we will be led by the evil road we have set upon.

It is our clear duty, therefore, to strain every muscle in working for the time when all war can be completely outlawed by international consent. This goal undoubtedly requires the establishment of some universal public authority acknowledged as such by all and endowed with the power to safeguard on the behalf of all, security, regard for justice, and respect for rights. But before this hoped for authority can be set up, the highest existing international centers must devote themselves vigorously to the pursuit of better means for obtaining common security. Since peace must be born of mutual trust between nations and not be imposed on them through a fear of the available weapons, everyone must labor to put an end at last to the arms race, and to make a true beginning of disarmament, not unilaterally indeed, but proceeding at an equal pace according to agreement, and backed up by true and workable safeguards.

82 In the meantime, efforts which have already been made and are still underway to eliminate the danger of war are not to be underrated. On the contrary, support should be given to the good will of the very many leaders who work hard to do away with war, which they abominate. These men, although burdened by the extremely weighty preoccupations of their high office, are nonetheless moved by the very grave peacemaking task to which they are bound, even if they cannot ignore the complexity of matters as they stand. We should fervently ask God to give these men the strength to go forward perseveringly and to follow through courageously on this work of building peace with vigor. It is a work of supreme love for mankind. Today it certainly demands that they extend their thoughts and their spirit beyond the confines of their own nation, that they put aside national selfishness and ambition to dominate other nations, and that they nourish a profound reverence for the whole of humanity, which is already making its way so laboriously toward greater unity.

The problems of peace and of disarmament have already been the subject of extensive, strenuous and constant examination. Together with international meetings dealing with these problems, such studies should be regarded as the first steps toward solving these serious questions, and should be promoted with even greater urgency by way of yielding concrete results in the future.

Nevertheless, men should take heed not to entrust themselves only to the efforts of some, while not caring about their own attitudes. For government officials who must at one and the same time guarantee the good of their own people and promote the universal good are very greatly dependent on public opinion and feeling. It does them no good to work for peace as long as feelings of hostility, contempt and distrust, as well as racial hatred and unbending ideologies, continue to divide men and place them in opposing camps. Consequently there is above all a pressing need for a renewed education of attitudes and for new inspiration in public opinion. Those who are dedicated to the work of education, particularly of the young, or who mold public opinion, should consider it their most weighty task to instruct all in fresh sentiments of peace. Indeed, we all need a change of heart as we regard the entire world and those tasks which we can perform in unison for the betterment of our race.

But we should not let false hope deceive us. For unless enmities and hatred are put away and firm, honest agreements concerning world peace are reached in the future, humanity, which already is in the middle of a grave crisis, even though it is endowed with remarkable knowledge, will perhaps be brought to that dismal hour in which it will experience no peace other than the dreadful peace of death. But, while we say this, the Church of Christ, present in the midst of the anxiety of this age, does not cease to hope most firmly. She intends to propose to our age over and over again, in season and out of season, this apostolic message: "Behold, now is the acceptable time for a change of heart; behold! now is the day of salvation."

Gaudium et Spes, (The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)

For complete citation go to

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html

9 ... God gathered together as one all those who in faith look upon Jesus as the author of salvation and the source of unity and peace, and established them as the Church that for each and all it may be the visible sacrament of this saving unity.

Lumen Gentium, (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)

13 ... All men are called to be part of this catholic unity of the people of God which in promoting universal peace presages it. And there belong to or are related to it in various ways, the Catholic faithful, all who believe in Christ, and indeed the whole of mankind, for all men are called by the grace of God to salvation.

Lumen Gentium, (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)

36 The faithful, therefore, must learn the deepest meaning and the value of all creation, as well as its role in the harmonious praise of God. They must assist each other to live holier lives even in their daily occupations. In this way the world may be permeated by the spirit of Christ and it may more effectively fulfill its purpose in justice, charity and peace. The laity have the principal role in the overall fulfillment of this duty. Therefore, by their competence in secular training and by their activity, elevated from within by the grace of Christ, let them vigorously contribute their effort, so that created goods may be perfected by human labor, technical skill and civic culture for the benefit of all men according to the design of the Creator and the light of His Word. May the goods of this world be more equitably distributed among all men, and may they in their own way be conducive to universal progress in human and Christian freedom. In this manner, through the members of the Church, will Christ progressively illumine the whole of human society with His saving light.

Moreover, let the laity also by their combined efforts remedy the customs and conditions of the world, if they are an inducement to sin, so that they all may be conformed to the norms of justice and may favor the practice of virtue rather than hinder it. By so doing they will imbue culture and human activity with genuine moral values; they will better prepare the field of the world for the seed of the Word of God; and at the same time they will open wider the doors of the Church by which the message of peace may enter the world.

Lumen Gentium, (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church)

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2304 Respect for and development of human life require peace. Peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of powers between adversaries. Peace cannot be attained on earth without safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and assiduous practice of fraternity. Peace is “the tranquility of order.” Peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity.

2315 The arms race does not insure peace. Far from eliminating the cause of war, it risks aggravating them.

Other Church Documents

Peace on earth – which man throughout the ages has so longed for and sought after – can never be established, never guaranteed, except by the diligent observance of the divinely established order.

Pacem in Terris, (Peace on Earth), Encyclical Letter of Pope John XXIII, 1963

164 (Peace) is founded on truth, built upon justice, nurtured and animated by charity, and brought into effect under the auspices of freedom.

Pacem in Terris, (Peace on Earth), Encyclical Letter of Pope John XXIII, 1963

64 To wage war on misery and to struggle against injustice is to promote, along with improved conditions, the human and spiritual progress of all men, and therefore the common good of humanity. Peace cannot be limited to a mere absence of war, the result of an ever precarious balance of forces. No, peace is something that is built up day after day, in the pursuit of an order intended by God, which implies a more perfect form of justice among men.

Populorum Progressio, (On the Development of Peoples), Encyclical Letter of Pope Paul VI, 1963

76 Excessive economic, social and cultural inequalities among peoples arouse tensions and conflicts, and are a danger to peace.

Populorum Progressio, (On the Development of Peoples), Encyclical Letter of Pope Paul VI, 1963

76 Development is the new name for peace.

Populorum Progressio, (On the Development of Peoples), Encyclical Letter of Pope Paul VI, 1963

277 We readily recognize that we live in a world that is becoming increasingly estranged from Christian values. In order to remain a Christian, one must take a resolute stand against many commonly accepted axioms of the world.

The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1983

284 All of the values we are promoting in this letter rest ultimately in the disarmament of the human heart and the conversion of the human spirit to God who alone can give authentic peace.

The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1983

333 In the words of our Holy Father, we need a "moral about face." The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say "no" to nuclear conflict; "no" to weapons of mass destruction; "no" to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and "no" to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender. Peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by our Lord Jesus. The content and context of our peacemaking is set, not by some political agenda or ideological program, but by the teaching of his Church.

The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1983

14 Condemning class struggle does not mean condemning every possible form of social conflict. Such conflicts inevitably arise and Christians must often take a position in the "struggle for social justice." What is condemned is "total war," which has no respect for the dignity of others (and consequently of oneself). It excludes reasonable compromise, does not pursue the common good but the good of a group, and sets out to destroy whatever stands in its way.

Centesimus Annus, (On the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum), Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, 1991

43 The obligation to earn one's bread presumes the right to do so. A society that denies this right cannot be justified, nor can it attain social peace.

Centesimus Annus, (On the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum), Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II, 1991

As messengers of the peace proclaimed by the child of Bethlehem, the church in our diocese cannot justify recourse to violence as an ordinary means of solving the serious and longstanding problems of our region. We made this clear both before the conflict started and when it began. However, as interpreters of the views of our peoples, close to their aspirations, we pastors understand the anguish and the prolonged suffering of our brothers and sisters which led them to the subjective judgment that all peaceful paths had been exhausted. ... Chiapas is one of the poorest states of the Mexican Federation, not because it lacks natural resources for its development – quite the contrary, it has them in abundance – or because the majority of its population is indigenous, but because the mechanism of the dominant model of production and accumulation have systematically favoured a minority to the detriment of the majority. This structural situation is an 'institutionalised violence' that daily threatens social harmony and is the breeding ground of all popular uprisings, whether political or armed. Faced with this violence of the 'established order', the church cannot remain silent on pain of conniving by its silence with the sin of the world. With the energy given to us by the spirit of the prophets and with the power of the Gospel, we have insisted, in season and out of season, on the need for a conversion of persons and social structures

Lessons of the Zapatista Uprising, Bishop Samuel Ruiz Pastoral Letter, Lent, 1994

Canadian/Ontario Documents

3 The teachings of the Church have steadfastly resisted the arms race. “Any act of war”, declared the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council “aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of whole cities. and their inhabitants is a crime against God, and humanity itself.” The Church has repeatedly declared that “the arms race is to be condemned unreservedly”, “it is an injustice”, is a form of theft”, it is completely incompatible with the spirit of humanity and still more with the spirit of Christianity.

The Neutron Bomb: Enough is Enough, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1981

10 Today we urge members of the Catholic community and all citizens to join in the struggle against nuclear arms. We call on you to make your opposition known to all government decision makers. We pledge ourselves to support creative initiatives seeking the conversion of warlike mentalities and social change for justice and peace.

The Neutron Bomb: Enough is Enough, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1981

Your participation in this good news which brings justice and peace is a powerful affirmation that our Catholic secondary schools are more necessary now than ever before. For us and for our vision of Catholic education, this striving to do justice and bring peace into our world is at the very heart of the matter. You are demonstrating that Catholic schools contribute to the improvement of both Ontario and world society. With good will and efforts like yours, we can develop a society which does provide employment, security and dignity for all its citizens and which reaches out to help those in need.

Celebrating an Education for Peace and Justice, A Letter to the Catholic Secondary School Students of Ontario From the Catholic Bishops of Ontario, 19

For complete text go to <http://www.occb.on.ca/english/celebrating.html>

22 Justice is not enough to bring about and to guarantee the kind of peace of which we are speaking: such peace is also the effect of an esteem which goes far beyond all that justice can do. Brotherhood is the second foundation of peace.

On the Occasion of the Hundredth Year of Confederation, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1967

Prepare for Peace in Iraq

We believe that war is not the answer. Twelve years ago a UN-mandated and US-led coalition went to war against Iraq. Tens of thousands of children, women, and men were killed. The destroyed infrastructure and subsequent economic sanctions together with continued bombing contributed to the deaths of hundreds of thousands more. Now, just when UN inspectors have begun to work effectively, we are on the brink of another war. We believe that renewed war on Iraq will not deliver lasting disarmament. War is most likely to deliver more of what it always does – lost lives, environmental destruction, physical and psychological damage for both victims and aggressors, wasted resources, threats of widened political instability and increased terrorism, more hatred, and re-energized extremism. We believe that peace is more than the avoidance of war. We also know that simply avoiding war will not solve the fundamental problems of Iraq – an unrepresentative regime that violates human rights and may not be in compliance with its obligations related to weapons of mass destruction. Peace and justice require more than the absence of war. Outlaw regimes that still retain or aspire to the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction cannot be allowed to stand, in Iraq or anywhere else. Indeed, we believe that durable disarmament and accountable governance are closely linked.

Statement on Iraq, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, January 20, 2003

For complete text go to <http://www.cccb.ca/PublicStatements.htm?CD=&ID=1249>

Quotations

So instead of loving what you think is peace, love other [people] and love God above all. And instead of hating the people you think are warmakers, hate the appetites and the disorder in your own soul, which are the causes of war. If you love peace, then hate injustice, hate tyranny, hate greed - but hate these things in yourself, not in another.

Thomas Merton

Peace, in the sense of absence of war, is of little value to someone who is dying of hunger or cold. Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free.

The 14th Dalai Lama

Peace is not the product of terror or fear. Peace is not the silence of cemeteries. Peace is not the silent result of violent repression. Peace is the generous, tranquil contribution of all to the good of all. Peace is dynamism. Peace is generosity. It is right and it is duty.

Oscar Romero

Why is it so easy for us to be willing to pick up arms and risk our lives, and so difficult to put down those same weapons and still risk our lives - in the cause of life?

Ramzi Kysia

Sometime in your life, hope that you might see one starved man, the look on his face when the bread finally arrives. Hope that you might have baked it or bought or even kneaded it yourself. For that look on his face, for your meeting his eyes across a piece of bread, you might be willing to lose a lot, or suffer a lot, or die a little, even.

Daniel Berrigan

Peace begins when the hungry are fed.

Anonymous

The sad truth is that most evil is done by people who never make up their minds to be good or evil.

Hannah Arendt

That's all nonviolence is - organized love.

Joan Baez

There have been periods of history in which episodes of terrible violence occurred but for which the word violence was never used...Violence is shrouded in justifying myths that lend it moral legitimacy, and these myths for the most part kept people from recognizing the violence for what it was. The people who burned witches at the stake never for one moment thought of their act as violence; rather they thought of it as an act of divinely mandated righteousness. The same can be said of most of the violence we humans have ever committed.

Gil Bailie

The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.

Steve Biko

It is the job of thinking people, not to be on the side of the executioners.

Albert Camus

Through violence you may murder a murderer, but you can't murder murder.
Through violence you may murder a liar, but you can't establish truth.
Through violence you may murder a hater, but you can't murder hate.
Darkness cannot put out darkness. Only light can do that....
Difficult and painful as it is, we must walk on in the days ahead with an audacious faith in the future.
When our days become dreary with low-hovering clouds of despair, and when our nights become darker than a thousand midnights, let us remember that there is a creative force in this universe, working to pull down the gigantic mountains of evil, a power that is able to make a way out of no way and transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows. Let us realize the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.

Martin Luther King

When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers and for a time they seem invincible but in the end, they always fall -- think of it, ALWAYS!

Mahatma Ghandi

An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind.

Mahatma Gandhi

I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.

Albert Einstein

Web Resources

The Vatican

<http://www.vatican.va/>

The official web site of the Vatican contains an impressive collection of materials with a useful internal search engine.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

<http://www.cccb.ca/Home.htm?NL=1>

The official web site of the CCCB contains extensive documentation, including recent media releases and publications, with a wide variety of useful links to other Church and Catholic organizations' web sites.

Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops

<http://www.occb.on.ca/>

The official web site of the OCCB contains extensive resources from the Catholic Bishops of Ontario as well as useful links to other Church and Catholic organizations' web sites. The Conference's jurisdiction over Ontario Catholic schools makes this site particularly relevant.

Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace

<http://www.devp.org>

Development and Peace is one of Canada's leading international developmental agencies. Since 1967 it has helped improve the living and working conditions in 70 countries around the world. Launched in 1967 by the Canadian Catholic Bishops, laity and clergy, Development and Peace has a twofold purpose:

- educate Catholic about north-south issues, and
- support initiatives by third world people to take control of their own lives.

Canadian Catholic School Trustees' Association

<http://www.ccsta.ca/>

Pax Christi International

<http://www.paxchristi.net>

Pax Christi USA

<http://www.paxchristiusa.net>

Pax Christi is the international peace movement. Its members worldwide work for the transformation of society through non-violence and advocate peacemaking as a priority. The USA site provides excellent links to other peace sites.

Project Ploughshares

<http://ploughshares.ca/>

This is the web site of an ecumenical group of the Canadian Council of Churches. Located in the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, this group dedicates itself to the cause of peace through disarmament.

Peace Kids

<http://www.peacekidz.com/>

This rich site offers many resources and activities ready for use in the elementary classroom as well as extensive links to similar sites for children.

People For Peace

<http://www.people4peace.net/links.htm>

Another rich collections of resources and links on peace and peace-making from the level of individual relationships to addressing more complex global conflicts.

Peace quotes

<http://www.salsa.net/peace/quotes.html>

This site contains an extensive list of short quotations related to peace. A school could easily have a new saying for every school day.

Quotes For Peace

<http://members.aol.com/pforpeace/quote8.htm>

As well as providing another list of peace related quotes, this site features an extensive set of links to a wide variety of sites, many of them designed with the classroom in mind.

Quote Garden

<http://www.quotegarden.com/peace.html>

Just as you would expect, another interesting site featuring quotes on peace.

Wisdom Quotes

http://www.wisdomquotes.com/cat_peace.html

Yet another rich source of quotations on peace.

Catholic Social Teaching on Peace

http://www.osjspm.org/cst/q_peace.htm

Source of quotations from Church teaching on peace with links to original documents available online.

Peace in many languages

<http://www.salsa.net/peace/translate.html>

See the word "peace" in dozens of languages.

Faith Central: Justice and Peace

<http://www.faithcentral.net.nz/inclass/justice.htm>

A New Zealand Marist online project - provides annotated links to a number of useful resources on both war and peace as well as on Catholic Social Justice teachings related to peace.

Physicians for Global Survival (PGS)

<http://www.pgs.ca/>

Physicians for Global Survival (PGS) is a physician-led organization which, out of concern for global health, is committed to the abolition of nuclear weapons, the prevention of war, the promotion of non-violent means of conflict resolution and social justice in a sustainable world.

Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility

<http://www.ccnr.org/index.html#topics>

CCNR is a not-for-profit organization, federally incorporated since 1978, having a charitable tax number. It is dedicated to education and research on all issues related to nuclear energy, whether civilian or military -- including non-nuclear alternatives -- especially those pertaining to Canada. Documents here are best suited for high schools.

Oneworld

<http://www.oneworld.net/>

A site that provides information about justice and peace issues from around the world. Very extensive resources for high schools can be found here.

Theology of Peace

<http://www.shc.edu/theolibrary/peace.htm>

Extensive Church documents on peace can be found here.

Vatican Peace Resources

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/special_features/tragedies/20010911_index_en.html

Letters and prayers related to recent peace and justice situations are found here, most by Pope John Paul II.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

<http://www.vatican.va/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a5.htm#l>

This will link you to the teaching of the Catechism on safeguarding peace.

World Peace for Peace

http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/peace/index.htm

This site will link you to every speech by Pope John Paul II on World Day for Peace from 2002 back to 1979.

United Nations: Peace Education

<http://www0.un.org/cyberschoolbus/peace/index.asp>

Great gateway site for extensive resources and documents on peace and human rights.

United Nations Peacekeeping

<http://www0.un.org/peace/>

Entry points for all peace related initiatives for the United Nations.

Waging Peace

<http://www.wagingpeace.org/index.htm>

This is the web site of The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation which initiates and supports worldwide efforts to abolish nuclear weapons, to strengthen international law and institutions, to use technology responsibly and sustainably, and to empower youth to create a more peaceful world. Founded in 1982, the Foundation is comprised of individuals and organizations worldwide who realize the imperative for peace in the Nuclear Age. The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation is a non-profit, non-partisan international education and advocacy organization. It has consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council and is recognized by the UN as a Peace Messenger Organization.

Peace and Bullying

<http://www.bullying.org/public/frameset.cfm?w=b>

This website is dedicated to increase awareness of, and the problems associated with, bullying and to prevention, resolving and eliminating bullying in society

Let's Talk about Bullying

<http://www.talk-helps.com/>

This educational site contains links to other important bullying prevention sites

Canada Safety Council

<http://www.safety-council.org>

This site is from the Canada Safety Council. There is a parents' helpline too!! Bullying affects the whole community, not just the bully and the victim. Peers are more important than they realize. They can be part of the audience, support the destructive behavior, or intervene in a positive way, perhaps by reporting the situation.

Cyberbullying

<http://www.cyberbullying.ca>

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal Web sites, and defamatory online personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others." -Bill Belsey

This is information on the latest form of bullying know as "cyber-bullying", which can occur through chat rooms, email etc. This site provides possible signs and solutions for potential victims of "cyber-bullying".

Bullying

<http://www.bullying.com/>

This site provides brief passages from today's experts of bullying.

Stop Bullying Now

<http://stopbullyingnow.com/>

The Stop Bullying Now intervention is based on Dan Olweus's research and on social worker Stan Davis's thirty years of experience with children, families, and schools.

Buly B'ware

<http://bullybeware.com/>

Teachers, students, support staff, parents and administrators need to work as a team to take action against bullying. This site provides ways of achieving such goals.

Child Abuse Prevention Services – Stop the Bullies

<http://kidsafe-caps.org/>

This site is from Child Abuse Prevention Services. Some people think that bullying is just a part of growing up. But that is not true. No one should have to put up with a bully. No one has the right to make someone else feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

Stopbullyingme

<http://www.stopbullyingme.ab.ca/>

The Citizens Against Bullying Association of Northern Alberta is dedicated to raising awareness about the problem of bullying behaviour among children.

The Canadiana Safe School Network

<http://www.canadiansafeschools.com/>

The Canadian Safe School Network offers a number of programs and resources to help you reduce youth violence in your school and community, from brochures and interactive CD-ROM's, to workshops and assembly programs.

SafeCanada

<http://www.canada.net/>

The Federal Government Departments are working together to provide Canadians with a peaceful and safe society. Safety touches all aspects of our lives...at home, at work, and in our communities.

Through this website your Government provides you with useful safety information about policing, **school safety**, food recalls, transportation safety, surfing on the internet, health advisories, weather advisories and more.

This website is about safety for young and old, Canadians and visitors to Canada. Learn more about what the federal government is doing to keep Canada safe...

Links to Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations

A Discerning Believer Formed in the Catholic Faith Community:

- CGE1d** Develops attitudes and values founded on Catholic social teaching and acts to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good
- CGE1h** Respects the faith traditions, world religions and the life-journeys of all people of good will
- CGE1j** Recognizes that “sin, human weakness, conflict and forgiveness are part of the human journey” and that the cross, the ultimate sign of forgiveness is at the heart of redemption (Witnesses to Faith)

A Reflective and Creative Thinker:

- CGE3a** Recognizes there is more grace in our world than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges
- CGE3b** Creates, adapts, evaluates new ideas in light of the common good
- CGE3d** Makes decisions in light of gospel values with an informed moral conscience
- CGE3f** Examines, evaluates and applies knowledge of interdependent systems (physical, political, ethical, socio-economic and ecological) for the development of a just and compassionate society

A Self-Directed, Responsible, Life-Long Learner:

- CGE4a** Demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others

A Caring Family Member:

- CGE6a** This Christian vision of the human journey is best understood within the context of relationship. It is accomplished in community, in solidarity with brothers and sisters in the Church and beyond

A Responsible Citizen:

- CGE7e** Witnesses Catholic social teaching by promoting equality, democracy, and solidarity for a just, peaceful and compassionate society
- CGE7g** Respects and understands the history, cultural heritage and pluralism of today’s contemporary society

Reflection Questions

Personal and Group Reflections

Personal Reflection:

1. *How does your faith in Jesus help you to work for peace?*

2. *How do you promote authentic peace in your life?*

Small Group Reflection:

1. *What are the attitudes and values that allow us to engage in horrific local and global conflicts?*

2. *How do you reconcile the following sayings of Jesus?
Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you (John 14:27)*

Do you think that I have come to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. (Luke 12:51)

Strategies:

1. *Identify areas of the curriculum where it is possible to integrate Catholic social teaching on peace.*

2. *What is being done in your school to foster a 'community of peace'?*