



International Solidarity Reflection

Peace

Shalom

School Sisters of Notre Dame
September 2010

Introduction

“When you find peace within yourself, you become the kind of person who can live at peace with others.” (Peace Pilgrim Quotes) “Peace is one of humanity’s most precious needs. It is also the United Nations’ highest calling.” (UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon) With all the ideals humanity holds about peace, there is still no permanent peace in this world. Daily we hear about unrests, wars, fighting, hatred, killing of innocent people, destruction, and cruelty. Let us spread our conviction that peace is possible, that peace can prevail on this beautiful Earth that is given to us and that is meant for all people.

Call to Prayer

Let us entrust our thoughts and prayer for peace “to the Queen of Peace, the Mother of Jesus Christ “our peace” (Eph 2:14). May Mary show us, in her Son, the Way of Peace, and enlighten our vision, so that we can recognize Christ’s face in the face of every human person, the heart of peace.” (Message of Pope Benedict XVI for the celebration of the World Day of Peace, 2007) May peace as an irrepressible yearning present in the heart of each person, regardless of his or her particular cultural identity, prevail on Earth. We pray for the grace that everyone would feel committed to the service of this great good entrusted to us.

Experience

“Peace = Future” is the theme of International Day of Peace 2010. This theme focuses on the role of youth in building a peaceful world. United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, in his message for the 100 day countdown to the Day of Peace, beginning June 13, urged young people to plan and take part in projects that will help bring peace to their own neighborhoods, schools, and countries.

“Young people already play a crucial role in working for peace. Yet I know they can do even more. So this International Day comes with a challenge for young people everywhere: Expand on your work to build peace. Share your plans and ideas, with creativity and passion. The world’s concerns will soon be in your hands,” Ban said.

“As we start the countdown to the International Day of Peace, we recognize two truths: Only in a peaceful environment will young people realize their full potential; and young people have the potential to start building that peaceful world today,” Ban said.

From our congregational experience we affirm our work for peace, when we state: “We are convinced anew that education is our response to the cries of Creation, the concrete expression of our solidarity with all. Therefore, we promote education for all, especially those who are marginalized and forgotten. Wherever possible, we link our ministries across the world. We collaborate with others on all levels, sharing our charism and spirituality. Together we carry our mission into the future.” (*Call to Solidarity*)

Reflection

“I will appoint peace your governor, and justice your ruler. No longer shall violence be heard of in your land, or plunder and ruin within your boundaries.” (Isaiah 60:17-18)

"Peace must be the first priority for all countries on all continents No one can ignore the destiny of their brothers and sisters ... the mission of diplomats is of the greatest importance. They are called to create bonds with one another and to build bridges between their respective countries, thus making a significant contribution to friendship among the peoples... ." (Pope John Paul II to [the New Ambassadors, May 17, 2002](#))

"Peace is founded not only on respect for human rights but also on respect for the rights of peoples, in particular the right to independence... . The international order requires a *balance between particularity and universality*, which all nations are called to bring about, for their primary duty is to live in a posture of peace, respect and solidarity with other nations." (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 157)

"As *Shalom*, we will permeate all activities with a persistent search for truth and we will collaborate with others whose search contributes to the building of peace." (SSND, Objectives of *Shalom*)

Action

“Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.” (*The Earth Charter*) What can we do to make this happen?

- Pray for peace and make Peace Days a meaningful event in the community and where you work.
- On Peace Day, put information on the website and let others know about your commitment for peace.
- Allow your heart to be inspired by what others are doing on Peace Day; join other people of good will in their efforts for peace.
- Visit somebody in your neighborhood that is not well accepted, for “it is the people of this world who can create peace.” (Ahmad Fawzi)

Closing Prayer

To the Creator of nature and people, of truth and beauty, we pray:

Hear our voices, for they are the voices of the victims of all wars and violence among individuals and nations.

Hear our voices, for they are the voices of all children who suffer and will suffer when people put their faith in weapons and war.

Hear our voices when we beg You to instill into the hearts of all human beings the wisdom of peace, the strength of justice, and the joy of fellowship.

Hear our voices, for we speak for the multitudes in every country and in every period of history who do not want war and are ready to walk the road of peace.

Hear our voices and grant insight and strength so that we may always respond to hatred with love, to injustice with total dedication to justice, to need with the sharing of self, to war with peace.

O God, hear our voices and grant unto the world Your everlasting peace. Amen. (Pope John Paul II)