



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 5: Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

8. Peace

Mindful that they are bearers of peace which must be built up unceasingly, they should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue, trusting the presence of the divine seed in everyone and in the transforming power of love and pardon. Rule 19

1. What does it mean to say, 'we have peace with God'?
2. How is this the source of our role as peacemakers?

In fact, there can be no peace between men unless there is peace within each one of them, unless, that is, each one builds up within himself the order wished by God. Hence St Augustine asks: *Does your soul desire to overcome your lower inclinations? Let it be subject to him who is on high and it will conquer the lower self: there will be no peace in you; true, secure and well-ordered peace. In what does that order consist? God commands the soul; the soul commands the body; and there is nothing more orderly than this...* This is such a noble and elevated task that human resources, even though inspired by the most praiseworthy good will, cannot bring it to realisation alone. In order that human society may reflect as faithfully as possible the kingdom of God, help from on high is absolutely necessary.

John XXIII *Pacem in Terris* 165, 168



When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea-billows roll;
Whatever my lot you have taught me to say,
'It is well, it is well with my soul.'
*It is well, with my soul;
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live!
If Jordan above me shall roll,
No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life
You will whisper your peace to my soul.
*It is well, with my soul;
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

Horatio Gales Spafford, 1828-88

Earthly peace is the image and fruit of peace with Christ, the messianic 'Prince of Peace'.

By the blood of the cross, 'in his own person he killed hostility' (Col 1.20-22), he reconciled men with God and made his Church the sacrament of unity of the human race and its union with God. 'He is our peace' (Eph 2.14). He has declared: 'Blessed are the peacemakers' (Matt 5.9).

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2305

Before conversion of Francis an unknown man used to proclaim peace in the streets of Assisi. He greeted people saying 'Pax et Bonum!'...In all his sermons Francis began by wishing his hearers peace. He used to say to them, 'God give you peace!' He succeeded in uniting in peace many who had formerly hated one another and were living in sin...In this age of violence, Secular Franciscans ought to carry with them into every place the message of peace.

Peter O'Grady *Rebuild My Church* 58



Scripture—

Isa 9. 2, 6f

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness have seen a great light...For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish it and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

John 14. 27

Peace I leave 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.