



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 5: Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

9. Being a Peacemaker

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

The ministers and councillors should live and foster the spirit and reality of communion among the brothers and sisters, among the various fraternities, and between them and the Franciscan family. They should, above, all cherish peace and reconciliation in and around the fraternity. *Constitutions* 32.1



...during these sacred days our supplication is raised towards him who by his painful Passion and death overcame sin—the root of discord and the source of sorrows and inequalities—and by his blood reconciled mankind to the eternal Father; for he himself is our peace,...This is the peace which we implore of him with the ardent yearning of prayer. May he banish from the hearts of men whatever might endanger peace, may he transform them into witnesses of truth, justice and brotherly love. May he enlighten the rulers of peoples so that in addition to their solicitude for the proper welfare of their citizens, they may guarantee and defend the great gift of peace; may he enkindle the wills of all, so that they may overcome the barriers that divide,...and may

all peoples on earth become as brothers, and may the most longed-for peace blossom forth and reign always among them. [John XXIII *Pacem in Terris* 169-171]

1. Why should a Franciscan make a special effort at peacemaking?
2. What is the secret of peacemaking?
3. How should we understand Jesus 'I have not come to bring peace but a sword' (Matt 10.34b)?

All this is to say that Secular Franciscans must be Christlike in their peacemaking. 'My peace I give you yet not as the world give.' The kind of peace that Christ gives may sometimes be bought only at the price of pain...the result of Christ's teaching will at times bring us face to face with malicious opposition...But the peace of goodwill, which only God can give, will always be the mark of his children. Francis did not have peace with his own father but he had the peace of Christ. The story of Francis and his followers is richly interwoven with instances of peacemaking. The Anthonys, Bernadines, Capistrans and Elizabeths of the Order are shining examples of the overflow of internal peace into the lives of others.



In his preaching, he announced peace by saying: '*May the Lord give you peace.*' Thus he greeted the people at the beginning of his talk. As he later testified, he had learned this greeting by the Lord revealing it to him...he proclaimed peace, preached salvation,...brought to true peace many who had previously lived at odds with Christ and far from salvation.

Armstrong, Hellmann, Short *Francis of Assisi: early documents* Vol I Bonaventure: Major Legend cap 3.2 (p 543)

Foley, Weigel, Normile *To Live as Francis Lived* Reflection 40 (p 149)

**Apply
Here**

Scripture—

Lk 6. 27-33

‘ But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.

‘ If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. ’

Jas 3. 13-18

Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will always be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And the harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.