



“ In today’s world, the sense of belonging to a single human family is fading, and the dream of working together for justice and peace seems an outdated utopia. What reigns instead is a cool, comfortable and globalized indifference, born of deep disillusionment concealed behind a deceptive illusion: thinking that we are all-powerful, while failing to realize that we are all in the same boat.”

Pope Francis, On Fraternity and Social Friendship

Solidarity is a word which can be overused and little understood. However, it is fundamental to the way in which we treat one another. If we truly believe that we are all sisters and brothers of one another, made in God’s image and likeness as seen in the guideline of human dignity, then seeking the good of one another cannot be ignored. “We are all in the same boat” – all of us.

Wherever we are. Whatever our age. Whatever our circumstances. We are all responsible for one another, those close by, and those far away. All of our actions have consequences locally and globally. From how we treat people we meet in the street, to the coffee we buy in the supermarket. It is how we live out Caritas, love in action.

“When I speak of solidarity I mean much more than the promotion of philanthropic works or financial assistance to help those who lose out. Because solidarity is not the sharing of crumbs from the table, but to make space at the table for everyone.”

Pope Francis, Let Us Dream

In 2019 Pope Francis visited Abu Dhabi to sign the Declaration on Human Fraternity with Grand Imam of Al-Azhar. This document, and the work that is coming from it with leaders from other religions is solidarity in action. Their work together and joint call for peace is a sign of unity and solidarity.

Flowing from solidarity is the promotion of peace. If we are to live in solidarity with one another we must want the peace of all. Pope Francis warns us that “until exclusion and inequality in society and between peoples are reversed, it will be impossible to eliminate violence” (The Joy of the Gospel, 59). Indeed, it is individualism, the opposite of solidarity, which is the cause of so much violence (see The Joy of the Gospel, 99).

Peace is not just the absence of conflict. It is the way we treat one another. It is the respect we afford to our fellow human beings. It is enabling all people to flourish and live their lives to the full. It is being open to true dialogue with our neighbours, whatever their beliefs, however different they may seem to us. It is using the eyes of love to see our neighbour, and putting love into action.



Pope Francis, On Fraternity and Social Friendship

There is also a need for peacemakers, men and women prepared to work boldly and creatively to initiate processes of healing and renewed encounter.”

Peace requires all of us to strive for peace in our own lives, and in our local relationships.



the processes of change that lead to lasting peace are crafted above all by peoples; each individual can act as an effective leaven by the way he or she lives each day.”

Pope Francis, On Fraternity and Social Friendship



HYMNS

The kingdom of God is justice and peace – Taizé
For the healing of the nations - Fred Kaan

Lord, make me a means of your peace – John Foley
Christ, be our light – Bernadette Farrell
Make me a channel of your peace – Sebastian Temple



Isaiah 2:4

SCRIPTURE

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



John 14:27

SCRIPTURE

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



Matthew 5:9

SCRIPTURE

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



HOMILY NOTES

- The word solidarity is used a lot, but may not always be easy to comprehend.
- In St John Paul II's letter, On the social concern of the Church, he states, "[Solidarity] is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual because we are all really responsible for all."
- Again, the principle of human dignity – our shared family made in God's image and likeness – calls us to not just feel sorry for others when we open our eyes and see the needs of the world, but to commit to action. We all have a responsibility to one another.
- It links to the principle of peace. In the Beatitudes we're told that "Blessed are the peacemakers". But how can we be peacemakers?
- CST tells us that peace isn't just the absence of war. Inequality leads to conflict. The way we treat one another leads to conflict. Yet, if we truly hold to human dignity, if we truly look for Christ in others, how will this affect how we treat one another? How do we live out love, Caritas, in our lives?
- In what ways do we need to seek peace in our own lives, our families, our community? How do we build a community in solidarity with one another? How do we become peacemakers? As Pope Francis acknowledges, even Christians get envious and jealous and cause our own wars (Joy of the Gospel, 98).



Symbols to add to the focal point

- A candle
- An image of a dove
- The "peace" flag



PRAYER



Let us say to the Lord:
"Lord, I am angry with this person,
with that person.
I pray to you for him and for her."

To pray for a person
with whom I am irritated
is a beautiful step forward in love,
and an act of evangelisation.

Let us do it today!
Let us not allow ourselves
to be robbed of the ideal of fraternal
love!

Pope Francis



• For the Church; that it will be a visible example of Christ, the Prince of Peace, in all its actions.

- For world leaders; that they will do all they can to ensure conflicts do not occur.
- For all people experiencing violence in their lives; that they will find just and lasting peace.
- For our local community; that in our own lives we will face all that holds us back from peace, and that we will become peacemakers.