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“Blessed Are the Peacemakers” : A Jesuit Call for Peace

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Dear brothers and friends,

We are writing with concern about the growing level of violent conflict across the globe. Despite the October 2025 ceasefire, the war in Gaza continues alongside a serious humanitarian crisis. Tensions involving Israel, Iran and the United States have further destabilized an already fragile region. Russia and Ukraine remain in a prolonged conflict, with significant loss of life on both sides. The civil war in Sudan has entered its fourth year and has displaced more than 12 million people. We also remain mindful of the unrest in places such as Haiti, Mexico, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Sahel region and Myanmar.

The Society of Jesus knows the evils of many of these conflicts firsthand. In June 2022, two Mexican Jesuits, Fr. Javier Campos Morales, SJ, and Fr. Joaquín César Mora Salazar, SJ, were victims of narcotrafficker violence in Cerocahui, Chihuahua. In February of this year, a newly ordained Jesuit, Fr. Han Zaw Shing, SJ, was critically injured after his motorbike hit a landmine in Myanmar. Jesuit Refugee Service workers are embedded in refugee camps and communities serving more than a million people displaced by persecution and wars in 58 countries. Jesuits put themselves at risk to minister to displaced persons in the Middle East, including six men from provinces of the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States.

Now as much as ever, Christians must listen attentively to the words of their savior: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matthew 5:9). Christ calls us to be peacemakers. It belongs to Christians to reject the worldly logic of power and follow their crucified Lord, the Prince of Peace, who reigns over that kingdom in which swords are turned into plowshares (Isaiah 2:4).

We know that peace does not come easily. Peaceful solutions are not always immediately evident and effective. Not all involved in these conflicts are actors of goodwill. But as Christians, we know that something being difficult does not render it the wrong option. We are called not to take the easy way out, but rather to enter the narrow gate (Matthew 7:13-14). This call pertains to everyone, not just government leaders. As Bishop James Massa, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Doctrine, recently stated, “The consistent teaching of the Church is insistent that all people of good will must pray and work toward lasting peace while avoiding the evils and injustices that accompany all wars” (Statement of April 15, 2026).

Encouraged by the Holy Father and the bishops of both our countries, we ask all members of our network — Jesuit and lay alike — to work diligently for peace. All of us can and should be peacemakers!

First, we can work for peace in our communities. It is easy to denounce a conflict occurring halfway across the world, but do we ever examine how we might be contributing to conflict and division here at home? To the extent we give way to a pernicious level of polarization and hyper-partisanship, we wound our relationships and impede the flourishing of peace. No matter where we stand on the political spectrum, we need to learn to love our neighbor on the other side and listen to each other.

Second, we can urge our government leaders to oppose the escalation of any conflicts in which our countries are involved and to divert military spending toward nonviolent conflict prevention, diplomacy and peacebuilding. Mindful of Pope Paul VI's words, "If you want peace, work for justice," we can demand that any settlement to conflict meets the basic standards of justice so as to pave the way for lasting peace.

Third, we can pray. As the Permanent Council of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops recently wrote, "By uniting our voices in prayer, we believe that God can transform hearts and open paths where everything seems closed" (Statement of March 5, 2026).

In the face of so much violence and cynicism, it is easy to fall into disillusionment and even despair. But we must reject these attitudes for what they are: temptations that keep us from bearing fruit in the world. As St. Paul writes, "Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest, if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9).

So let us move forward and act. Let us work for peace in our communities by reaching out to those with whom we disagree. Let us call on our government leaders to end all wars. And let us pray fervently for the gift of peace — that "unarmed and disarming" peace to which Pope Leo so often refers and which surely will transform the world.

In the Risen Lord,



Very Rev. Jeffrey Burwell, SJ
Provincial of CAN



Very Rev. Sean Carroll, SJ
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