

# World Day of Peace

## January 01, 2022



### Introductory prayer:

We begin, invoking the Spirit, asking Him to awaken in us the love for God and for the brothers to dream, to struggle and to work as Claretian family, to build a lasting peace. After a moment of silence, we pray with Fr. Claret:

*O my God and Father,  
Grant that I may know You and make You known,  
that I love You and bring others to love You,  
that I serve You and inspire others to serve You,  
that I praise You and work that all Your creatures praise You.  
Grant, my Father, that all sinners be converted,  
that all the just persevere in grace  
and all of us reach eternal glory.  
Amen.*

The **Day of Peace** was established by Pope Paul VI in December 1967 and was celebrated for the first time in January 1<sup>st</sup> 1968. The peace day was announced in the context of the Vietnam War that had been going on since 1955. As People of God we are called to listen to the cry of so many brothers and sisters, who are victims of different forms of violence, and to work boldly to build peace. In his Message for the World Day of Peace 2022, Pope Francis identifies three topics to reflect and act. The theme for the year 2022 is, **“Dialogue Between Generations, Education and Work: Tools for Building Lasting Peace”**.

# The Word of God:

Isaiah 52:7 :

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion ‘Your God reigns!’”

Prophet Isaiah is looking forward to the freedom of Judah from the Babylonian Captivity when Babylon would be defeted by the Persian king Cyrus. Then the Jews would be able to rebuild their fallen city and restore the temple. Isaiah could even see the bearers of the news of freedom, running on the Judean mountainsides. One hundred years after Isaiah’s time, this same imagery was used by Nahum in a prophecy concerning Judah’s imminent victory over Assyria, “Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news” (Nahum 1:15). Nearly one thousand years later, Saint Paul could exclaim, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’” (Romans 10:15).

Just as Judah celebrated the good news of deliverance from their enemies in the Old Testament, so also today’s society which is torn by war and enmity has to enjoy lasting peace and development.

## The Words of Pope Francis:

The message of the Holy Father indicates that the peace today is disturbed by war, conflicts, diseases of pandemic, climate change, environmental degradations, hunger, thirst and individualistic economic model.

There can be no sustainable development without peace, and no peace without development. So by promoting development, lasting peace can be built. Peace is a gift and a fruit of human labour. Holy Father proposes three paths for building lasting peace.



## **Dialogue Between Generations:**

For peace and development there has to be a Dialogue among the elderly and the younger generations. This requires mutual trust, listening to one another, sharing different views, coming to agreement and walking together. Young people need the wisdom and experience of the elderly, while those who are older, need the support, affection, creativity and dynamism of the young. For without roots, how can trees grow and bear fruit?

## **Teaching and education as drivers of peace:**

The COVID-19 pandemic has produced an unprecedented educational crisis. More than a billion children have faced disruptions in their education. Hundreds of millions of children have been left behind in opportunities for social and cognitive development. On the other hand there is significant reduction in the funding for education. The financial resources are invested more in military than in schools.

Education is mandatory for sustainable development and lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a peaceful and non-violent culture, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity (SDG 4.7). For the development there has to be a dialogue among the popular culture, university culture, youth culture, artistic culture, technological culture, economic culture, family culture and media culture. This dialogue can be made possible by the teaching and education.

## **Creating and ensuring labour builds peace:**

The Covid-19 pandemic has negatively affected the labour market. Millions of economic and productive activities have failed. The conditions of short-term and migrant workers are devastating. The social protection for the labourers are available only for one third of working population. The only answer to this is an expansion of dignified employment opportunities. It is more urgent than ever to promote, throughout our world, decent and dignified working conditions, oriented to the common good and to the safeguarding of creation. Labour, in fact, is the foundation for building just and peaceful society.

( The message of Holy Father can be accessed:  
<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/20211208-messaggio-55giornatamondiale-pace2022.html>)

## The Words of Father Claret:



Weaving was in the DNA of Father Claret. During his last twenty years (1850-1870) he was weaving peace and development. While he was Archbishop of Cuba (1851 -1857), he proposed to imitate the Missionary Bishop Fray Bartolomé de las Casas (1474—July 1566, Spain) who worked hard for the development of indigenous peoples and for the abolition of slavery. Fr. Claret set in motion a series of initiatives aimed at making a different world possible.

### Education

Claret understood that many of the social evils of Cuban society came from ignorance. So, he worked in the educational sector with all the zeal and temperament. He had to fight against not only the lack of education but also, the hindrances of the ruling class and the Governors to prevent the education of the natives. On his insistent request, the Government of Madrid sent the Jesuits and Vincentians to open schools in Cuba. He founded with Mother Paris, the congregation of *Religious of Mary Immaculate*, for teaching mission.

Claret started San Miguel Academy for the artists and writers of Spain to combat errors and to propagate good books. In 1864 he wrote the booklet *Las Bibliotecas Populares y Parroquiales* (Popular and Parish Libraries). He organized the laity to start popular libraries. He said that the laity had to take care of those popular libraries because the priests had to be busy with the things of their ministry.

### Promotion of labour:

One of the pillars of Claret's developmental project was the *Savings Banks*. In order to finance the developmental works and to finance the poor, he began the saving banks. He also made sure that the profits of the bank were again distributed to the widows and the poor.

He started a *School-Farm of Port-au-Prince* to employ the elderly-poor men and women and to educate the poor children.

Claret promoted *Agrarian Reform and land distribution*. With the intention of introducing new technical methods in the cultivation of the fields he wrote in 1854 *Reflections on Agriculture* and in 1856 *The Delights of the Countryside*. In order to make the Agrarian Reform a reality, he advocated land to the small farmers and demand for law for the protection of farmers who had taken land on lease.

## **We Shall ponder in Silence:**

What are our feelings and reactions to the words of Pope Francis and Father Claret?

## **What shall we do to construct peace?**

### **At the Personal level:**

To Practice forgiveness on daily life.

To Pray for peace. For us prayer is powerful tool for peace.

### **As Institute:**

To increase our missionary presence among the people who suffer conflicts.

To work for the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

To adopt Human Rights based approach to development projects

To promote Capacity for Dialogue- Inter Generational, Inter Religious, Inter cultural and Inter linguistic.

To promote capacity building for peace promotion, such as Networking, Advocacy, Monitoring and Evaluations

To Prepare women for peace. Because with their experience of being sister, mother, partner etc., they can understand the sufferings, even those of enemies.

## Concluding Prayer:

“Give us, O Lord, that strange peace  
that sprouts in the midst of struggle  
like a flower of fire;  
that breaks in the middle of the night  
like a hidden song;  
that arrives in the midst of death  
like the expected kiss.

Give us the Peace of those who walk always,  
naked of advantages,  
dressed by the wind  
of a nubile hope.  
Peace of the poor  
who has already conquered fear.

That Peace of the free  
that clings to life.

Peace that is shared  
in fraternal equality  
like water and the Host”

-Bishop Pedro Casaldáliga.

