

New Year's Day

World Day of Peace

The Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of Jesus

Scriptures: Numbers 6:22-27; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:16-21

Homily: Fr. Ken

Today, the Church around the world is celebrating World Peace Day. In the past few years, religious leaders of the world and in the Catholic Church, bishops, priests, and lay persons have made the connection between world peace and economic challenges. They have warned that financial dealings based upon very short-term thinking are "dangerous for everyone, even for those who benefit when the markets perform well".

Revisiting a theme chosen from earlier World Peace Day messages, focus here is given to "fighting poverty to build peace", noting that the struggle will succeed only when all people are "personally outraged by the injustices in the world and by the concomitant violations of human rights". This requires careful analysis of the increasingly complex phenomenon of globalization, and recognition that there are also moral and spiritual aspects to poverty, such as marginalization.

The reflections of religious leaders have borrowed heavily from the social writings of Pope Paul VI and our current Pope Francis.

They say that several areas of the struggle against poverty require urgent attention. They call for a new detailed study of the increased poverty caused through pandemic diseases such as the coronavirus, respiratory syncytial virus, the common flu, as well as HIV/Aids.

Religious leaders also emphasize that special attention must be paid to child poverty, noting that “almost half of those living in poverty today are children”. And they again voice concern at the current level of world military expenditure, which they emphasize seriously impedes development.

The leaders caution against the “illusion that the mere redistributing of existing wealth can definitively resolve the problem of poverty”. Wealth creation must be kept in mind if the fight against material poverty is to be effective. The link is critical.

Today we pray for peace. We pray for an end to hunger, disease, and poverty. We pray that true justice comes to all people. And, thus, we pray for true peace.