

April 1, 2022

Love the Lord, Love His Kingdom, Love the Earth

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We know that peace is not simply the absence of war. We know that peace is built, stone by stone, step by step, within our families, our communities, and our world. But what are the building blocks of peace? What structures, policies, and practices need to be examined and restructured to follow our Lord as he seeks to create His Kingdom on earth?

We know the first stone, the keystone, the cornerstone is prayer. We turn to our Rule, "As Jesus was the true worshipper of the Father, so let prayer and contemplation be the soul of all they are and do." (Chapter Two: Article 8). So, sisters and brothers, let us join our prayers as we pray for peace in our world, especially now focusing on the war in the Ukraine. On March 25, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, consecrated Russia and the Ukraine to the Sacred Heart of Mary. As he recited the initial part of the prayer of consecration, he called upon all Catholics to join him in this prayer of consecration. "O Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, in this time of trial we turn to you." He called us to join in prayer for those who are enduring great loss and tragedy. We turn to the Immaculate Heart of Mary who so clearly understands the deep sorrow and pain of those who hurt and suffer.

We pray for the conversion of the aggressors. We pray for those who extend themselves through selfless acts of service to minister to the victims of this war. We pray for the conversion of those in power to turn their hearts to the Lord and reject war, seeking, instead, nonviolent paths of peace and reconciliation.

As we pray for peace, sisters and brothers, may our Loving and Generous God fill our hearts with love and empower us to carry His love into the world.

Peace and All Good,

Patricia Grace, OFS
JPIC Animator, St. Francis Region

If you wish to donate for assistance to the Ukrainian people, may I suggest Catholic Relief Service and/or the Franciscan Relief Fund. Of course, there may be others.



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