

A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace
Message for the Celebration World Day of Peace
January 1, 2021 – Pope Francis

54th World Day of Peace



January 1, 2021 is the 54th World Day of Peace. Pope Paul VI began the tradition of issuing a message for World Peace for New Year's Day. Pope Francis has chosen as the theme for his 2021 message, *A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace*.

He begins by offering his “best wishes that the coming year will enable humanity to advance on the path of fraternity, justice and peace between individuals, communities, peoples and nations.”

He reflects on 2020, including:

- COVID-19 health crisis
- Racism, Nationalism, and Xenophobia
- Wars and Conflicts

“These and other events that marked humanity’s path this past year have taught us how important it is to care for one another and for creation in our efforts to build a more fraternal society. ... A culture of care as a way to combat the culture of indifference, waste and confrontation so prevalent in our time.”

He reflects on the inbreaking of God’s care throughout history:

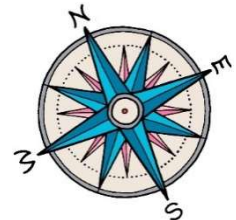
- God the Creator, source of our human vocation to care
- God the Creator, a model of care
- Care in the ministry of Jesus
- A culture of care in the life of Jesus’ followers

Pope Francis then points to the principles of the Church’s social teaching as principles to guide our work for to build a culture of care:

- Care as promotion of the dignity and rights of each person
- Care for the common good
- Care and protection of creation
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A compass pointing to a common path

“At a time dominated by a culture of waste, faced with growing inequalities both within and between nations, I



urge government leaders and those of international organizations, business leaders, scientists, communicators and educators, to take up these principles as a ‘compass’ capable of pointing out a common direction and ensuring ‘a more humane future’ in the process of globalization.”

Seeking Conversion & True Peace

“We need to stop and ask ourselves what has led our world to see conflict as something normal, and how our hearts can be converted and our ways of thinking changed, in order to work for true peace in solidarity and fraternity.”

Pope Francis notes that the pandemic has only made more evident the challenges that result when resources are spent on weapons “that could be used for more significant priorities such as ensuring the safety of individuals, the promotion of peace and integral human development, the fight against poverty, and the provision of health care.”

“What a courageous decision it would be to establish a ‘Global Fund’ with the money spent on weapons and other military expenditures, in order to permanently eliminate hunger and contribute to the development of the poorest countries!”

“Promoting a culture of care calls for a process of education. The ‘compass’ of social principles can prove useful and reliable ...”

There can be no peace without a culture of care

“The culture of care thus calls for a common, supportive and inclusive commitment to protecting and promoting the dignity and good of all, a willingness to show care and compassion, to work for reconciliation and healing, and to

advance mutual respect and acceptance. As such, it represents a privileged path to peace. In many parts of the world, there is a need for paths of peace to heal open wounds. There is also a need for peacemakers, men and women prepared to work boldly and creatively to initiate processes of healing and renewed encounter.”

“At a time like this, when the barque of humanity, tossed by the storm of the current crisis, struggles to advance towards a calmer and more serene horizon, the ‘rudder’ of human dignity and the ‘compass’ of fundamental social principles can enable us together to steer a sure course.”

“As Christians, we should always look to **Our Lady, Star of the Sea and Mother of Hope**. May we work together to advance towards a new horizon of love and peace, of fraternity and solidarity, of mutual support and acceptance. May we never yield to the temptation to disregard others, especially those in greatest need, and to look the other way; instead, may we strive daily, in concrete and practical ways, to form a community composed of brothers and sisters who accept and care for one another.”



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