



Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development

World Day of Peace – January 1st

Each year on January 1, the Holy Father marks the World Day of Peace with a special message inviting all people to reflect on the important work of building peace. [This year's message](#) is the latest in a long tradition of messages for this day that began with [St. Paul VI](#) in 1967, and continued with [St. John Paul II](#), [Pope Benedict XVI](#), and [Pope Francis](#).

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. **Pray.** Use one of [these nine ways to pray](#) at [We Are Salt and Light](#) to pray for all those in need of peace in your community and around the world.
2. **Learn.** As faithful citizens, we must seek to understand the political and social issues that lead to poverty and conflict which [threatens the lives of our brothers and sisters throughout the world](#). Learn about these issues and read [stories of hope](#) to learn how faith communities are answering the call to work for peace and justice.
3. **Act.** Read about how [Pope Francis calls us to overcome divisions](#) through social friendship and encounter. Join tens of thousands of Catholics to advocate for policies that seek justice and peace in the U.S. and around the world. Learn more about the annual [Catholic Social Ministry Gathering](#) where Catholics gather to pray for God's justice to be realized, learn about poverty in the U.S. and abroad, and advocate for the poor and vulnerable to our elected leaders.

POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord God of peace, hear our prayer!

We have tried so many times and over so many years to resolve our conflicts by our own powers and by the force of our arms. How many moments of hostility and darkness have we experienced; how much blood has been shed; how many lives have been shattered; how many hopes have been buried . . .

Now, Lord, come to our aid! Grant us peace, teach us peace; guide our steps in the way of peace. Open our eyes and our hearts and give us the courage to say: "Never again war!" . . . Instill in our hearts the courage to take concrete steps to achieve peace.

Keep alive within us the flame of hope, so that with patience and perseverance we may opt for dialogue and reconciliation. In this way may peace triumph at last, and may the words "division", "hatred" and "war" be banished from the heart of every man and woman. . . . Renew our hearts and minds, so that the word which always brings us together will be "brother", and our way of life will always be that of: Shalom, Peace, Salaam!

Amen.