

PATHWAYS TO PEACE

In our fasting and prayer on Saturday, October 11, 2014 let us remember the words of Pope Francis.

“On the cross Jesus knocked down the wall of enmity that divides people and nations, and He brought reconciliation and peace.” (WYD, 2013)

“Dialogue is born from a respectful attitude toward the other person, from the conviction that the other person has something good to say. It supposes that we can make room in our heart for their point of view, their opinion, and their proposals. Dialogue entails a warm reception and not a preemptive condemnation. To dialogue, one must know how to lower the defenses, to open the doors of one’s home and to offer warmth.” (Bunson, “Pope Francis”)

FOR REFLECTION: HOW WILL I RESPOND?

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2305: “Earthly peace is the image and fruit of the peace of Christ, the messianic ‘Prince of Peace.’ By the blood of the cross, ‘in his own person he killed the hostility, ‘he reconciled men with God and made his Church the sacrament of unity of the human race and of its union with God. ‘He is our peace.’ He has declared: ‘Blessed are the peacemakers’.”

Consider: *When, if ever, have I experienced “the peace of Christ” in my life? Where do I stand in regard to being reconciled with God? With myself? Am I a peacemaker?*

Pope Francis: “In Him Alone Is Our Hope”, page 115. Pope Francis, while never wavering in his own Catholic identity, nonetheless appreciates encountering people of other faiths. Instead of approaching such situations with a defensive attitude, the Holy Father begins with the assumption that “the other person has something good to say.” This wards off conflict, and paves the way for peaceful, fruitful dialogue.

Consider: *What are my thoughts about people of different faiths than my own? Do I open myself to their point of view, their perspective, and their proposals? How could I establish peace in my interactions with those whose opinion I do not share?*