

January 1, 2018

**Today we join our Sisters and Associates in celebrating the
Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God
And the World Day of Peace**

**Message of Pope Francis
For the Celebration of the 51st World Day of Peace**

Migrants and refugees: men and women in search of peace



Peace to all people and to all nations on earth! Peace, which the angels proclaimed to the shepherds on Christmas night, is a profound aspiration for everyone, for each individual and all peoples, and especially for those who most keenly suffer its absence. Among these whom I constantly keep in my thoughts and prayers, I would once again mention the over 250 million migrants worldwide, of whom 22.5 million are refugees. Pope Benedict XVI, my beloved predecessor, spoke of them as “men and women, children, young and elderly people, who are searching for somewhere to live in peace.” In order to find that peace, they are willing to risk their lives on a journey that is often long and perilous, to endure hardships and suffering, and to encounter fences and walls built to keep them far from their goal.

In a spirit of compassion, let us embrace all those fleeing from war and hunger, or forced by discrimination, persecution, poverty and environmental degradation to leave their homelands.

We know that it is not enough to open our hearts to the suffering of others. Much more remains to be done before our brothers and sisters can once again live peacefully in a safe home. Welcoming others requires concrete commitment, a network of assistance and goodwill, vigilant and sympathetic attention, the responsible management of new and complex situations that at times compound numerous existing problems, to say nothing of resources, which are always limited.

Those who see things in this way will be able to recognize the seeds of peace that are already sprouting and nurture their growth. Our cities, often divided and polarized by conflicts regarding the presence of migrants and refugees, will thus turn into workshops of peace.

*May the Lord enable all of us to experience that
“a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”*

Mary, Queen of Peace,

your Son, Jesus Christ, came into the world to leave us His Peace. Through your intercession as Queen of Peace, grant us the wisdom and humility to reflect that peace to the world. Inspire our thoughts, words and deeds to bear witness to your presence in our hearts. May your Holy Spirit fill us with every grace and blessing so that we may pursue what leads to peace on Earth. Amen.



*Mary, Our Lady of Peace,
Brother Mickey McGrath, OSFS*