



A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace New Year's Eve 2021

“The year 2020 was marked by the massive Covid-19 health crisis, which became a global phenomenon cutting across boundaries, aggravating deeply interrelated crises like those of the climate, food, the economy and migration, and causing great suffering and hardship. I think especially of all those who lost family members or loved ones, and all who lost their jobs. I think too of physicians and nurses, pharmacists, researchers, volunteers, chaplains and the personnel

of hospitals and healthcare centers. They have made, and are continuing to make, great sacrifices to be present to the sick, to alleviate their sufferings and to save their lives; indeed, many of them have died in the process.”

...Alongside testimonies of love and solidarity, we have also seen a surge in various forms of nationalism, racism and xenophobia, and wars and conflicts that bring only death and destruction in their wake. 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.”

Pause and Reflect: How it is that you have been changed by the events of 2020.

Share: What learning and transforming within self can you briefly share?

You may wish to use as a background the instrumental, *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace* from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JYV5Q0E2caE> during the prayers below.

Leader: Sacred Scripture presents God not only as Creator, but also as one who models cares for all creation.

Response: I commit to actions of peace and care because peace and violence cannot dwell together.

Leader: Jesus life and ministry represent the supreme revelation of God's love for humanity and at the culmination of Jesus' mission, we are given the ultimate proof of his care for us by offering himself on the cross, thus opening for us the path of love.

Response: I commit to following Jesus, going and doing likewise.

Leader: Christians in the early Church, as well as today, are invited to active charity through the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. These origins, enriched by the reflection of others over the centuries have become the beating heart of the Church's social doctrine.

Response: I commit to promoting the dignity of each human person, solidarity with those living in poverty and those who are vulnerable, and the pursuit of the common good and concern for protection of all creation.

Leader: "Every aspect of social, political and economic life achieves its fullest end when placed at the service of the common good, in other words, "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily".

Response: I commit to plans and projects that take into account their effects on the entire human family, and consider their consequences for the present and for coming generations.

Leader: "Solidarity helps us to regard others – whether as individuals or, more broadly, as peoples or nations – as more than mere statistics, or as a means to be used and then discarded once no longer useful, but as our neighbors, companions on our journey, called like ourselves to partake of the banquet of life to which all are equally invited by God."

Response: I commit to solidarity that concretely expresses my love for others and to the common good.

Blessing: I invite you to raise your hand in a gesture of blessing of care.

All: God's culture of care 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, individuals prepared to work boldly and creatively to initiate processes of healing and renewed encounter". May we embrace this blessing from our sisters and brothers and be mindful of the care we share with all of life. We pray all this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

~ c. 2020, Sisters of Charity of Nazareth