



Holy Year of Mercy

December 8, 2015 - November 20, 2016

“Be bearers of the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, **PEACE**, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” Galatians 5: 22



Every year, Holy Mother Church designates January 1st as the World Day of **PEACE**. Blessed Pope Paul VI proposed the first World Day of **PEACE** in 1968. As Jesus calls all believers to be bearers of God’s **PEACE** in the Beatitudes, Blessed Pope Paul “launched the idea” for the entire world to be united spiritually on the first day of the New Year and pray for **PEACE** which promotes “a more happy, ordered and civilized” home for all. He wrote: “The world must be educated to love **PEACE**, to build it up and defend it.”

What is **PEACE**? It is more than a slogan or the ceasing of earthly battles. **PEACE** is a gift from God. Jesus reveals its nature to the apostles on the night before his crucifixion: “**PEACE** I leave with you; my **PEACE** I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 16:33)

St. Paul instructs us that **PEACE** is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, working within us. By walking and rejoicing daily in God’s ways, our hearts and minds become free from anxiety and guarded with a **PEACE** which “surpasses all understanding.” We become apostles of kindness, secure in the knowledge that true **PEACE** and happiness await us in heaven. (Philippians 4:4-17)

The World Day of **PEACE** also coincides with the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. Who better than Mary, the Queen of **PEACE**, to ask her son to take away the knots of the lives of her spiritual children and replace them with God’s **PEACE**.

Pope Francis has declared the 2016 theme as “Overcome Indifference and Win **PEACE**.” Indifference, especially during this Holy Year of Mercy, cannot be tolerated as it leads to persecution, intolerance and failure to recognize the God-given rights of every human person.

On January 1st and throughout the New Year, let us pray for **PEACE**, which is beyond all understanding, for our world, our families, our school community and ourselves.

✠ **PEACE** in Action:

Take time to pray St. John Paul II’s prayer for peace as a family and in your classrooms.

Mary, Queen of PEACE, we entrust our lives to you. Shelter us from war, hatred, and oppression. Teach us to live in peace, to educate ourselves for peace. Inspire us to act justly, to revere all God has made. Root peace firmly in our hearts and in our world. Amen.

January 3 The Epiphany of Our Lord	Matthew 2:1-12	<i>“Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” What treasures of your spiritual life have you offered the Christ Child?</i>
January 10 The Baptism of the Lord	Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7	<i>“This is my servant...whom I am pleased and upon whom I have placed my spirit.” Why is God pleased with you?</i>
January 17 Second Sunday in Ordinary Time	John 2:1-11	<i>“Do whatever he tells you.” When we follow Christ’s way, how do we come to know his peace?</i>
January 24 Third Sunday in Ordinary Time	1Corinthians 12:12-30	<i>“You are Christ’s Body” How does receiving Holy Communion bring God’s peace into our lives?</i>
January 31 Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time	1 Corinthians 12:31—13:13	<i>“Love is patient; Love is kind.” How has your patience helped you to be kind to someone this week?</i>



Holy Year of Mercy

December 8, 2015- November 20, 2016

“Be bearers of the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, **PEACE**, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” Galatians 5: 22

BACKGROUND FOR THE RESOURCE

The fruits of the Holy Spirit are based on the letter of St. Paul to the Galatians. Though Paul identifies nine fruits, over time the Church added three more fruits of the Holy Spirit to the list (goodness, modesty, chastity.)

What are the fruits of the Holy Spirit?

We often hear the expression, “Actions speak louder than words.” The fruits of the Holy Spirit are behaviors or attitudes which help us to respond to every day situations and witness to God’s grace working within us. They are signs to others that we are believers and depend on the Holy Spirit to live a faithful Christian life.

January’s resource highlights the fruit of PEACE.

The picture on the right hand side of the page is that of Mary, Queen of Peace (Regina Pacis) which is a statue located in the Basilica of St. Mary Major, Rome. St. Mary Major is one of the four major Basilicas of Rome (St. Peter, St. John Lateran and St. Paul Outside the Walls.)

The icon on the left hand side of the page is the official icon for the Holy Year of Mercy. For more information on the Holy Year of Mercy go to: <http://phillyocf.org/>

For bulletin board ideas on PEACE, go to:

<http://www.ihmimmaculata.org/docLinks/ABCNotes.html>