

Prayer for Peace
Journeying with young people toward May 9
FIFTH WEEK – 24.04. – 30.04. 2022 - ROMANIA

1. INTRODUCTION AND OPENING PRAYER

The peaceful living together, being one in a multi-ethnic reality, and unity of spirit are Romania's distinctive traits. Here, along the centuries, we have learned that all kinds of diversities can in fact bring us closer, and living in peace means recognizing the light on the face of our neighbours, whatever their culture.

„Lord, our God, in virtue of your grace and your love for us, look upon our hearts and show us the way that leads toward the union between us manifested by the way we think and feel. Protect us and help us to love one another and to do all that promotes your peace”. (Vali Voin – a young Orthodox)

2. WORD OF GOD AND REFLECTION

A reading from the Letter of the Apostle Paul to the Romans (12, 17-21)

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Carefully consider what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible on your part, live at peace with everyone. Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written: *“Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, says the Lord.”* On the contrary, *“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink. For in so doing, you will heap burning coals on his head.”* Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

An excerpt from the message of Pope St John Paul II for World Peace Day, 1st January 2005:

„For the theme of this 2005 World Day of Peace I have chosen Saint Paul's words in the Letter to the Romans: “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (12:21). Evil is never defeated by evil; once that road is taken, rather than defeating evil, one will instead be defeated by evil. The great Apostle brings out a fundamental truth: peace is the outcome of a long and demanding battle which is only won when evil is defeated by good. If we consider the tragic scenario of violent fratricidal conflicts in different parts of the world, and the untold sufferings and injustices to which they have given rise, the only truly constructive choice is, as Saint Paul proposes, to flee what is evil and hold fast to what is good (cf. Rom 12:9). Peace is a good to be promoted with good: it is a good for individuals, for families, for nations and for all humanity; yet it is one which needs to be maintained and fostered by decisions and actions inspired by good. We can appreciate the profound truth of another saying of Saint Paul: “Repay no one evil for evil” (Rom 12:17). The one way out of the vicious circle of requiting evil for evil is to accept the Apostle's words: “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom 12:21). [...] If we look to the present state of the world, we cannot help but note the disturbing spread of various social and political manifestations of evil: from social disorders to anarchy and war, from injustice to acts of violence and killing. To steer a path between the conflicting claims of good and evil, the human family urgently needs to preserve and esteem that common patrimony of moral values bestowed by God himself. For this reason, Saint Paul encourages all those determined to overcome evil with good to be noble and disinterested in fostering generosity and peace (cf. Rom 12:17-21). [...] Faced with the many tragic situations present in the world, Christians confess with humble trust that God alone can enable individuals and peoples to overcome evil and achieve good. By his death and resurrection, Christ has redeemed us and

ransomed us "with a price" (1 Cor 6:20; 7:23), gaining salvation for all. With his help, *everyone can defeat evil with good.*" (https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_20041216_xxxviii-world-day-for-peace.html)

3. ABOUT PEACE

- ❖ „When we really come to know Jesus and listen to him, then peace will fill our hearts, our families, our Country and the entire world.” - IPS Justinian Chira, Archbishop, Romanian Orthodox Church (1921 – 2016)
- ❖ „First of all, if we do not make peace with ourselves and the others, we cannot aspire to have peace with God.” - Ion Untaru, contemporary poet
- ❖ „Hug those who are suffering, heal the wounds of confusion and call everyone to Peace. Call them to be what they really are. Speak to them in the language of Peace and Peace will be planted in them - Cătălin Manea, contemporary writer
- ❖ The peace makers are those who love peace so much that they are not afraid to intervene in conflicts so as to bring about peace to those who are in conflict with each other. Only those who possess peace in themselves can bring about peace. First of all, we ought to promote peace by the way we act in every moment, living according to the Will of God”. (Chiara Lubich, Word of Life, November 2021)

4. BIDDING PRAYERS „Lord, grant us Your peace!”

Heavenly Father, grant us the light of wisdom so that we are able to choose and seek peace in our hearts, the peace that You have left us, so that we may donate it to our brothers and sisters. (Ruxandra C. – a young Greek Catholic)

Lord God, in these times when it seems that we are ever far away from one another, we ask you to help us remain close to one another for You and in You. Enhance our love for you and between us; sustain us to discard all evil from our hearts, to help those in difficulty and to promote peace among us, day in day out. (Oana B. – a young Orthodox women)

Jesus, we ask you to grant peace among the Churches; help us to do away with human pride so that we may always endeavour to fulfil your desire: “that all may be one”. (Zsolt V. – a young Roman Catholic man)

5. CONCLUDING PRAYER

Lord God, illuminate our hearts and our minds so that we are able to recognize your entire greatness and beauty. Allow your peace, which exceeds all intelligence, to flood our hearts and to enliven our spirits. We ask for the gift of your peace for this city, this country and the entire world! We thank you for everything! Amen! (Timeea Pîs – A Christian Baprist women)

When sadness fills my heart,
When I find myself crushed
On the ground,
My afflicted soul finds peace
and serenity in You.

When dark worries flood into me
And I find it impossible to move
forward,
Your heavenly peace envelops me
and takes over my whole being.

Having a Father is such a
great gift!
In this cruel world, it is
the peace of Jesus that
allows us to hope!
(Adelina Pașolea – a
Christian Pentecostal
woman)

The ecumenical group of young people of Romania