ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful acknowledgement is made to all the volunteers who so generously gave their time to assist in the preparations of this booklet. More than 40 people contributed to create the 101 Days of Prayer for a Peaceful Referendum campaign by writing articles, reviewing the design, editing, creating a logo and materials for the special event. May their effort and time for these preparations for the period between September 21 to January of 2011 be rewarded by your prayers and participation in making this a peaceful referendum.
Introduction

Dear Friends,

We invite you to take a journey of 101 days as we prepare for the referendum in Southern Sudan. Our journey begins on the International Day of Peace, September 21, 2010 and will end on World Day of Peace, January 1, 2011. Between those two dates there are 101 days.

In looking ahead toward that referendum, we can anticipate a time of increasingly heightened anxiety as Southern Sudan prepares to make an enormously important decision. It is likely that campaigns will be activated, organizations will be mobilized, debates will be energized and that increasing scrutiny will be given to this decision.

Diverse opinion and spirited discussions of controversial topics are healthy in a society as long as they are held in a peaceful manner. As a post-conflict country with a long history of war, however, Sudan's familiarity with peace is quite limited.

And so, the confluence of International Day of Peace and the World Day of Peace invites us to initiate a campaign of prayer and activities for peace during the 101 days between September 21, 2010 and January 1, 2011. It will be an important time to teach people how to be peace-builders, to reinforce the importance of peace in our communities, to prepare for the referendum by praying for peace, and to deepen each one's commitment to becoming an advocate for peace.

We offer you this booklet of reflections and quotations on different themes of peace. Reflecting together and praying for a peaceful referendum in Sudan will be a means of grace enabling us to change our hearts and our world.

Solidarity with Southern Sudan (SSS) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) have teamed together to launch this important campaign.
My Dear People,

Greetings in the name of the Lord!

Peace!

The Sudan Catholic Bishops’ Conference, gathered together in an Extraordinary Plenary Assembly regarding the Referendum, recognizes that we, the people of Sudan, are in an historic moment, a moment of change that will shape the new face of Sudan for the future. We are aware that this moment calls for an expression of our faith in a loving God who calls us to freedom and human dignity.

In our statement 'A future Full of Hope', we call upon our leaders and you our faithful and all people of good will for a peaceful process of the Referendum. We urge you to participate in this prayer campaign, 101 Days of Prayer for Peace, beginning on 21 September 2010 until 1 January 2011. We hope this campaign will help us to change our hearts and in doing so we will help change Sudan as well as the world around us.

We encourage you to pray as individuals and together as families and communities during these 14 weeks. Reflecting on the themes of this booklet will prepare us for this important exercise of our right towards self determination that we do on behalf of those who died for our freedom and for future generations to live in human dignity and equality.

Our faith tradition helps us to understand that in prayer we overcome all forms of hatred and oppression. May our prayers to our God of compassion and mercy lead us to life in its abundance.

God Bless You all,

Bishop Rudolf Deng Malong
President

Sudan Catholic Bishops’ Conference
Change your Heart,  
Change the World

Lyec oturo jang yadi latol en’ is a proverb of the African Acholi people. The literal English translation is: ‘An Elephant had broken the branches of the trees (only) to smoke itself’. Elephants in the forests have no regards for trees along their way. However, any of the branches they knock down can one day be used as fuel for cooking their very own skin.

The Acholi people have learned, through the pain of experience, that none of us can do evil and get away with it. The bad things we do to others, in the end, come back to us and affect us negatively too. Various tribes of sub-Saharan Africa share this profound religious belief: evil, in essence, is contagious and retroactive. Once set in motion it comes back to the doer. It is incumbent on each rational human being to break the vicious circle of evil before it really overwhelms all.

But how do we wrestle effectively with the evil within us and all round us? Jesus calls us to conversion of heart as the way to change what is within us and what is around us. The first words of Jesus in the gospel of Mark proclaim change of heart: ‘repent and believe the gospel’. (Mk 1:5). Furthermore, to emphasize the centrality of the message of Christian change of heart, Jesus says: “Do you suppose that those Galileans were worse sinners than any others that this should have happened to them? They were not. Unless you repent you will all perish as they did.” (Lk 13:2-3. 4-5).

Luke’s parable of the Pharisee and the Publican helps us further to grasp how we can live in peace with God and with oneself. (Lk: 18:14). It is when we change our hearts (repentance), and humbly seeks God’s mercy for the evil we have done, (forgiveness) that we come to peace with God, with ourselves and with others.

Fr. Nicolas Kiri
The United Nations' International Day of Peace

Marked every year on September 21 - is a global holiday when individuals, nations and governments highlight efforts to end conflict and promote peace. Established by a U.N. resolution in 1982, “Peace Day” has grown to include millions of people around the world who participate in all kinds of events, large and small.

May Peace Prevail On Earth!

Peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by our Lord Jesus.

The Challenge of Peace #56

Before we can make peace, we must find peace. Before we can find peace with God, we must stop fighting with God and start working with God.

Charles Cameron

The good person brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil one brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

Luke 6:45

A person who never recognizes his mistakes will never know peace.

African Proverb
Healing of Memories

The current international focus on justice is understandable in light of the terrible crimes against humanity which have taken place all over the world, not least in Sudan and Uganda. It aims to stop leaders from acting with impunity, and attempts to put the victims at the centre. To some extent it does, especially when restorative justice is emphasised rather than retributive justice. It is often linked to truth and reconciliation.

However it also has a downside. “Justice” and “vengeance” can look very similar. When watching news broadcasts, how often do we hear victims saying, I will never be at peace until the perpetrator of this crime is brought to justice?” In other words, my future peace and happiness are in the hands of others; I have no control over my life; I am helpless and disempowered, a perpetual victim.

How can victims take control of their lives again, especially when they have no control over states, courts, tribunals and leaders? “Healing of memories” has been developed by, amongst others, Fr Michael Lapsley, an Anglican priest who lost both his hands and one eye in a bomb attack due to his part in the South African anti-apartheid struggle. It’s about remembering, the suffering being recognised, honoring the memory — and letting go. It doesn’t depend on others, because it’s about “me dealing with my stuff, me dealing with what I have in me because of the journey that I have travelled.”

It’s not always easy or comfortable. “God helped me.” said Fr Michael. “The safe space was prayer, love and support that gave me the room to, if you like, spiritually manoeuvre because I realized if I was full of hatred, bitterness, self pity, desire for revenge, that I would be a victim forever. They would have failed to kill the body, but they would have killed the soul and I would be permanently their prisoner.” Some victims spend their entire life in that prison, not realizing that only they have the power to release themselves.

One of the great leaders of South Africa, Chief Albert Lutuli, once said, “Those who think of themselves as victims eventually become the victimizers of others.” The healing of memories breaks that chain of violence and victimization.

John Ashworth
Sunday, Sept. 26
Ams 6:1. 4-7; 1 Tim 6:11-16; Lk.16:19-31

Pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience and gentleness.

1 Tim 6:11

Unless we are truly and constantly free to give and receive love as scripture says, “Love one another as I have loved you”, in thought, feeling, word and action, we can truly say we still need healing.

Betty Igo

As we open in repentance... Jesus’ love transforms our negative repressed energy into positive energy with the corresponding feeling of relief, joy, peace and creativity.

Betty Igo

O living God, send down the Spirit of your son, Jesus Christ; heal our wounded hearts; make peace in the place of conflict; grant love in the face of revenge; build hope where fear prevailed.

Bishop Peter Lee

Issue a blanket pardon. Forgive everyone who has hurt you in any way. Forgiveness is a perfectly selfish act. It sets you free from the past.

Brian Tracy

The Church in Africa, both as family of God and as individual faithful has the duty to be instruments of peace and reconciliation.

Message of the African Synod to the People of God

Pray for peace, forgiveness and reconciliation for our country.
Peace and Education

Peace education encompasses transmission of knowledge and skills, as well as the accepted basic values and norms. One of the focuses for Catholic education is to create a society inspired by the Gospel values of service in love and peace rooted in justice and fellowship. It means human harmony and promises a more human future where a more harmonious society lies.

Positive peace involves the development of a society free from structural violence or social injustice. Peace education takes a more proactive approach unlike a reactive approach of conflict resolution. This is the foundation for building trust, as well as developing awareness of interconnectedness and uniqueness of others. In-group bias based on tribal groups is the foundation of prejudices and discrimination that, in many cases, leads to deep injustice and sometimes to violence. For peaceful co-existence, we need to have the ability to advocate for the rights of others when such rights are threatened. This motivating element is the foundation of shared responsibility for building peace.

Conflict is a part of life, and its nature is neither good nor bad. Conflict describes an imbalance between the needs and interests of two sides. It becomes negative only when the answer to a conflict is aggression. “A good person draws what is good from the store of his heart.” [Luke 6:45]. We all have the potential to be good and to do good things if we focus our minds and hearts on the good things. It is possible to resolve differences positively, by recognizing the problem and one’s own and others’ needs and interests.

Peace is the ideal for the future. Children have the potential to learn about peace and the need for peace in the safe protected environments of the schools. We need to strengthen these individuals’ abilities to resist the majority that discriminates. “Your lives will produce all kinds of good deeds and you will grow in your knowledge of God.” [Colossians 1:10] Life becomes so much more pleasant and smooth, when relationships are warm; when the rights and needs of others are attended to.

Dr. Ben Katoro
Sunday, Oct. 3
Hab 1:2-3; 2:2-4; 2Tim, 1:6-8, 13-14; Lk 17:5-10

If you have faith, the size of a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea’ and it would obey you.  
  
_Lk 17:6_

Feast of St Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace...  
  
St Francis Prayer

That Christians may strive to offer everywhere, but especially in great urban centers, an effective contribution to the promotion of education, justice, solidarity and peace.  
  
Pope Benedict XVI

It is peace education which inculcates and builds love, friendship and international understanding.  
  
Catholic Social Teaching

What’s done to children, they will do to society.  
  
Karl Menninger

Let us dedicate this day to all those working for learning with integrity, education with dignity and peaceful resolution of conflict.

The drops of rain make a hole in the stone, not by violence, but by soft falling.  
  
Lucretius
Blesed are Those Who Work for Peace

The beatitude promised to those who work for peace is a participation in the life itself of Jesus: they will be called children of God. Peace was Jesus’ mission: he came to reconcile humanity with God and humans with each other. At his birth the angel proclaimed: “Peace on earth to people on whom God’s favor rests.” (Lk. 2: 14)

Those who work for peace are called children of God. But the words could be inverted: those who are children of God, work for peace. Pope Benedict says: “Whenever anyone loses sight of God, peace too loses ground and violence easily gets the upper hand.” Living as children of God and considering the others as children of God is the first pillar of peace.

Human dignity is the other pillar. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights reads: “Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.” Any initiative fostering faith and respect for human dignity contributes to peace.

To encourage work for peace Alfred Nobel established in 1901 a Peace Nobel Prize, to be given “to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses”. From 1901 till 2009, 117 individuals or organizations have received it. Among them two outstanding Christians: Mother Teresa and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa in 1995, to heal the scars of Apartheid, and the CPA that ended 50 years of war in Sudan, are good examples of commitment for peace in our time. It is important that we too give our cooperation. “Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.”

Fr. Pacifico Salvatore, MCCJ
Sunday, Oct. 10
2Kgs.5:14-17; Tm.2:8-13; Lk. 17:11-19

Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?  

Lk. 17:13

We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. We know more about war than we do about peace, more about killing than we do about living.

Omar Bradley

The Christian who takes part in the Eucharist learns to become a promotor of communion, peace and solidarity in every situation.

Mane Nobiscum Dominum

...that Christians learn to experience the Eucharist as a great school of peace, forming men and women who, at various levels of responsibility in social, cultural and political life, can become promtors of dialogue and communion."

Mane Nobiscum Dominum

Love is God’s greatest gift to humanity.  
It is God’s promise and our hope.

Caritas in Veritate

To be a peacemaker, one must possess peace interiorly. Peace in the world passes through personal conversion.

Lineamenta #81 African Synod

World Food Day

There are people in the world so hungry, that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread.

Mahatma Gandhi
Peace and Development

Since justice is the condition for peace, then peace is the condition for development and development is the condition for peace. Extreme poverty in most cases is a cause of violence. By development I mean intellectual, social, moral and economic progress. We hardly ever talk of development without basing it on peace. John Paul II said, “no peace no development”.

An African expression says “I want to build a home, I want to have children.” Without peace it is impossible to have a good home and happy children. When people are settled in one place where learning, studying, exchange of ideas is taking place development is possible. Human beings cannot develop in the midst of war. African culture sees development as divine blessing, it is impossible to think of genuine development in the midst of ethical, social and cosmic chaos. Violence in Sudan was the result of ethical, social, political, and economic breakdown.

It is alleged that the human by nature is competitive, aggressive and selfish. Wherever there are human beings, there will always be conflict/violence. However, a closer study of human nature shows that humans naturally seek love, friendship and cooperation of other persons. Human beings are open to others. Cooperation is one of the conditions for development. The breakdown of this openness leads to conflict and hatred. “There is enough in the world for everyone’s need, but not enough for everyone’s greed.”

Pope John Paul II said “To everyone I affirm that peace is possible. It needs to be implored from God as a gift, but it also needs to be built day by day with God’s help through works of justice and love.” Africans acknowledge that God is the source of peace, and peace is fullness of life in this world and in the world to come. It is a life that is long and deep and based on love, respect and brotherhood.
Will not God secure the rights of His chosen ones who call out to Him day and night? I tell you He will see that justice is done to them.  

Lk. 18:7

A commitment to development comes from a change of heart, and a change of heart comes from conversion to the Gospel.

*Message of the Bishops of Africa to the People of God*

Our Father who art in heaven …

*Prayer*

Only this does Yahweh ask of you: to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God.

*Micah 6:8*

We are challenged and encouraged by the African proverb which says that “an army of ants can bring down an elephant.

Jesus, bring us your peace.

*Prayer*

Without peace there is no development and without development there is no peace.

*Pope Paul VI*
Culture and Reconciliation

To reconcile means to come to a common understanding, to let go of the past and to start anew. Reconciliation is normally between two persons or more. Reconciliation is needed when misunderstanding or an argument has taken place.

To solve it, one needs to identify an elder, venue, and time. The chosen elder (or elders) listens carefully in a constructive way, and then asks some questions. The guilty one apologizes while the other accepts the apology.

As a sign of reconciliation, the elder pours water on the heads of the two involved in the argument, while saying, “this problem is thrown into the river,” meaning that the problem has ended.

Alternatively, the elder gets a specific type of vegetable, called giri, he bites it and passes it to the two who had the problem and they each bite the giri. The elder then says, “let coldness come between you.” meaning let peace come between you.

In the case of a bigger problem, a “he goat” is killed and the substance in the stomach is mixed with water and then put on the foreheads of the two in the argument. The elder then throws a bit of the mixture toward the west while saying, “let this problem set with the sun,” meaning let it end at that very moment.

Doing all of this is difficult; it is not easy to get elders; it is expensive and shameful so usually the act will not be repeated.

Similarly Jesus had to endure all our shame on the cross, once and for all by shedding His blood. He emptied Himself totally when water and blood flowed from His side to reconcile us with our Creator. Praise God we have been reconciled and are now the sons and daughters of God.

Sr. Jane Onzia - Sacred Heart Sisters
Sunday, Oct. 24
Eccl.35:12-14, 16-19; 2 Tim:4:6-8.16-18; Lk. 18:9-14

The Lord will rescue me from every evil threat and will bring me safely to the heavenly kingdom.

2Tim:4:18

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.”

John Wesley

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtfully committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

If you give yourself totally to the nonviolent struggle for peace and justice you also find that people give you their hearts and you will never go hungry and never be alone.

Cesar Chavez

Our children are not born to hate, they are raised to hate.

Thomas della Perut

The most important question in the world is. Why is the child crying?

Alice Walker

Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.

Eph 4:30
The Sudan is a country of people who forgive. Sudan is a biblical country. We feel that God’s peace is being reborn among us through the Sudanese people who are forgiving the hurts and wounds of twenty one years of war. Forgiveness is truly a gospel value in Sudan.

Look at the word of Jesus in Luke Chapter 6: “Love your enemies, do good to those who hurt you.” Hate multiplies hate. Violence multiplies violence. Love is the only energy capable of transforming an enemy into a friend. We befriend an enemy by forgiveness and not by hate and revenge. Only love can drive out hate. Martin Luther King said: “Whoever is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power of love.”

An Ancient Tale
There is an ancient tale about a grandfather who explains to his grandson that within every person there are two lions: one is the lion of anger, resentment, jealousy, competition and fear. The other lion, through suffering, has learned to live in peace and harmony with the other animals, to show compassion and respect to those who are different from oneself.

The grandson asks his grandfather which lion will win within him and the grandfather answers: “The one you feed.” We need to help each other to choose again and again to feed the lion of PEACE within us if we are to be among those who are rebuilding our world with love and peace.

Which lion will win in you?

with permission Bishop Taban Paride ; www.kuronvillage.net
Sunday, Oct. 31
Wis. 11:22-12:2; 2 Thess. 1:11-22; Lk. 19:1-10

But you have mercy on all, because you can do all things; and you overlook our sins so that we may repent.

Wis. 11:23

Feast of All Saints

Today, remember all the saints who were peacemakers.

If your enemy is hungry, feed him, if he is thirsty give him to drink.

Romans 12:20

If you want to make peace, you don’t talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies.

Moshe Dayan

Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

Romans 12:16

What you see and the way you love makes a difference. You can either increase the world’s happiness or add to its sorrow.

Joseph Kentenish

What I fear is being in the presence of evil and doing nothing. I fear that more than death.

Otilia de Koster, Panamanian Human Rights Worker
St. Francis of Assisi speaks of all creation as one family. Besides men and women, children and aged who are all his brothers and sisters, he also refers to Mother Earth, Brother Sun and Sister Moon, Brothers Wind and Fire, Sister Water. I ask myself, “What is my relationship with these “family members” who are a part of my everyday life? Am I at peace with them or am I in need of reconciliation?” Promoting a peaceful future for our country could begin with preparing our hearts and minds to cultivate true peace with creation. Sensitivity to the gifts of nature spills over to growing sensitivity to the gift of each person whom God places on our daily path.

Recall the words of Pope Benedict XVI on 1 January 2010 saying, “If you want to cultivate peace, protect creation. Twenty years earlier Pope John Paul II wrote, “In our day there is a growing awareness that world peace is threatened ... also by a lack of due respect for nature.” Any relationship of peace begins with respect which often involves the ability to see beyond the surface.

Someone wrote of St. Francis, “In beautiful things he sees Beauty itself.” When we seek out the beauty of nature and try to protect it, and when we seek out the beauty of each person and try to protect them, we will find God, the Beautiful One. Sometimes a change of heart is asked of us but that is often the price of peace.

Today care for life growing in hidden places! Today beautify your surroundings in some small way! Today reach out to someone and increase peace with creation and with your God!

Jeanette Gaudet, MFIC
But the Lord is faithful; He will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.

2 Thess.3:3

And God saw all that had been created and said, "It is good."

Gen 1

World peace is threatened by a lack of due respect for nature, by the plundering of natural resources and by a progressive decline in the quality of life.

Pope John Paul II in the World Day of Peace Message, 1990

While I know myself as a creation of God, I am also obligated to realize and remember that everyone else and everything else are also God’s creation.

Maya Angelo

If you want to cultivate peace, protect creation.

Pope Benedict in the World Peace Day Message 2010

Protecting the natural environment in order to build a world of peace is thus a duty incumbent upon each and all.

Pope Benedict in the World Day of Peace Message 2010

God destined the earth and all it contains for all people and nations so that all created things would be shared fairly by all humankind under the guidance of justice tempered by charity.

USA Bishop’s Conference
Leadership for Peace

Peace is a fundamental desire of the human heart. All people yearn for the “fullness of life” described by the biblical concept, shalom. “Fullness of life” embraces all aspects of the self - the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual aspects of our being. We know how different types of violence can damage and wound us as human beings. However, we have an important choice to make – whether to be trapped by these experiences or to use them to liberate ourselves and others.

Forgiveness always entails a sacrifice. Desmond Tutu reminds us that forgiveness is not about forgetting or condoning what has happened. In fact, it is important to remember so that something similar may not happen again. In addition, forgiveness means taking what has happened seriously, “drawing out the sting in the memory that threatens to poison our entire existence.” When we do this we are ready to accompany others on the road that leads to peace.

Leadership for peace requires a person to be a peace builder no matter what the cost. It involves using skills like discernment, encouragement, intervention and negotiation. It is demanding and courageous work. When our hearts gradually expand to include “the other” we want “shalom” for our neighbor, for strangers and even for our enemies. We want to join hands with others and forge a new solidarity, a new way of living which is “a great sea-change on the far side of revenge.”

Our Christian faith calls us to be ambassadors of reconciliation and peace, actors in time and space, urged on by the vision of the Kingdom “to open wide our hearts” (2 Cor. 6:13) and work together to renew the face of the earth.

Sr Patricia Murray, IBVM
Sunday, Nov. 14
Mal. 3:19-20; 2 Thess. 3:7-12; Lk. 21:5-19

By your perseverance you will be saved.  
Lk. 21:19

The best teacher is the one who suggests rather than dogmatizes, and inspires the listener with the wish to teach himself/herself.  
Edward Bulwer-Lytton

International Day of Tolerance

Unity implies that no group can feel superior to another.  
Lineamenta 79 African Synod

Don’t tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results.  
George Patton

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.  
John Quincy Adams

If you cannot obey, you cannot be a good leader.  
Aristotle

International Day of the Child

Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of us.  
Rabindranath Tagore
Christ Our Peace

The early Christian communities within the Roman Empire experienced an enforced peace where slavery was normal and the worship of the Empire’s gods was a common practice. Why did this civil authority became antagonistic towards Christ and His followers?

One of the many reasons goes back to the truth stated by Jesus to Pontius Pilot, “my kingdom is not of this world” and later on, “just as you say, I am a king...to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is on the side of truth hears my voice.”(John 18: 33-38) What kind of ‘kingdom’ is Jesus talking about? If His kingdom is not of this world why should it be rejected or opposed? Jesus wanted to establish an eternal kingdom in the world but not of the world.

Jesus was tempted like us but did not sin. “Your faith has saved you, go in peace” is the refrain in Jesus’ deeds. To bring about universal and everlasting peace Jesus died as an innocent and just leader. He lived out his teaching to “love your enemies” and on the cross says; “Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing”.

After his resurrection, Christ says to the Apostles: “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you, receive the Holy Spirit! Those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; those sins you retain, they are retained.” (John 20: 19-23) His message is rule by being servant, conquer by forgiving sins and painful betrayals, denounce falsehoods and injustices, give priority to those who feel rejected. Christ, through his Church, says “your sins are forgiven, go in peace.”

The peace of Christ brings an eternal kingdom through the Holy Spirit and not according to the flesh. Those who live by the Holy Spirit construct peace by TRUTH, JUSTICE, FAITH, WORD OF GOD and PRAYER at all times. (Ephesians 6; 12-18) “Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the children of God.” (Matthew 5; 9)

Fr. Paul Annis, MCCJ
Sunday, Nov. 21 Feast of Christ the King
2Sam 5:1-3; Col 1:12-20; Lk 23:35-43

For in Him were created all things in heaven and on Earth, the visible and the invisible.

Col 1:16

Peace is not something you wish for; it is something you make, something you do, something you are, and something you give away.

Robert Fulghum

Peace is costly but it is worth the price.

African proverb

Let us forgive each other, only then will we live in peace.

Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy

All we are saying is give peace a chance.

John Lennon

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 14:27

You can’t separate peace from freedom because no one can be at peace unless she/he has freedom.

Malcolm X
Forgiveness

When we have been hurt by another, it can be very difficult to come to terms with the woundedness we feel. But by accepting and embracing our own wounds we open a door to forgiveness and new life. Too often people hoard grudges in their hearts which eventually affect their development of healthy human relationships. One of the most important skills we each need is that of knowing how to forgive.

There is an African proverb which states: "He who forgives ends the quarrel." Forgiveness is far better than revenge. Forgiveness builds us up and helps us move on; whereas revenge destroys and creates bitterness. Forgiving helps us to heal our own wounds.

Some people consider those who forgive to be weak or to be cowards or stupid. But there is much wisdom in the English proverb: "The noblest vengeance is to forgive" The gospels (Mt. 18:21-35) tell us that God is always ready and willing to forgive, even the most serious faults of people. Now, if this is the behavior of our God, we do not have any pretext to deny anyone our forgiveness. The parable of the prodigal son reveals explicitly God’s desire to restore a loving relationship with people. By forgiving us our faults God empowers us to become like Him (Mt. 5: 48). Jean Paul Richter wrote the insightful words: "Humanity is never so beautiful as when praying for forgiveness or else forgiving another."

When we forgive we are imitating our loving God. When we ‘change our hearts’ and forgive, we change ourselves and we ‘change our world’ for the better. This is how we translate the life and message of Jesus into our daily lives. Our situation in Sudan invites us to this change of heart if we want a changed world. Hence, we are invited to be courageous enough to break down the walls (cultural, social, political, religious, psychological, and economical) that hinder us to forgive ourselves and others and hence reconcile for the building of a just and peaceful society.

Louis Okot, MCCJ
### First Sunday of Advent

**Is 2:1-5, Rom 13:11-14, Mt.24:37-44**

They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. (Is 2)

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**Is 2**

Allow your wounds of long years to be healed. This is not only for the past but also for the present and the future.

*Robert Schreiter*

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**2 Cor 5:17**

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation; the old order is gone and a new being is there to see.

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**Chief Albert Lutuli of South Africa**

Those who think of themselves as victims eventually become victimizers.

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**John Ashworth**

Do not allow yourself to be an eternal prisoner of the victimization of others.

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**Jn.8:12**

I am the light of the world; anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark but will have the light of life.

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**Mahatma Ghandi**

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.
Healing and Reconciliation:
A Gift from God

Southern Sudan carries many wounds from the long years of war—wounds that are slow to heal. Yet those wounds need to find healing, not only for the sake of the past but also to be able to confront continuing difficulties in the present and face what may be a challenging future.

The Christian message of reconciliation begins with reminding ourselves that it is God who brings about healing and reconciliation in our lives, and that this healing and reconciliation has been entrusted to the Christian community as a special ministry.

Saint Paul puts it this way: "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation." (2 Cor. 5:17-18).

What does this mean? When we look at the terrible things that have happened—the loss of life and loved ones, the cruelty done to people, the hatred and division—we do not know where to begin to heal such deep wounds. Our faith tells us that it is God who brings the healing, because only God can encompass the pain and suffering of so many people. God then works through us, as ministers of reconciliation, to make this healing possible.

So what is the ministry of reconciliation and how are we its ministers? It begins with our deep communion with this loving God, who helps us find the way through the sorrow and the loss. That spiritual bond helps us to see things as God sees them, and to take action that will bring about the healing God intends.

Through the years we have learned much about healing painful memories, walking on the road to forgiveness, and sustaining hope along the way. These make up the ministry of reconciliation. These are things we can learn, if we also learn how to dwell in God’s grace and learn how to see where God is working.

Robert Schreiter, C.PP.S.
Second Sunday of Advent
Is 11:1-10; Rom. 15:4-9; Mt.3:1-12

There shall be no harm or ruin on my holy mountain; for Earth shall be filled with knowledge of the Lord, as water covers the sea.  

Is 11

Reconciliation is to understand both sides; to go to one side and describe the suffering being endured by the other side, and then go to the other side and describe the suffering being endured by the first side.

Pope Paul VI World Peace Day Message 1974

If you bring your gift to the altar and there recall that your brother or sister has anything against you, leave your gift at the altar, go first and be reconciled to your brother or sister and then come and offer your gift.

Matt.5:23-24

Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.

Lk 2:19

To engage in conflict, one does not bring a knife that cuts, but a needle that sews.

Lifelines, the Black Book of Proverbs

International Day of Human Rights

Peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free.

14th Dalai Lama

There is more wickedness in refusing to reconcile than in fighting.

African proverb
Peace with the Anawim, the Poor of God

In the synagogue of his home town of Nazareth, the Lord read from the scroll of the Prophet Isaiah (Lk 4, 16-19) and declared that this was his mission — to bring Good News to the poor, to the little ones, the humble of the earth, those who fear the Lord and who remain true and faithful to his word.

This Good News promises freedom from oppression and a period of peace and well being for the voiceless, the marginalized, the insignificant members of society. The Lord listens to the cry of these 'poor' and comes time and again to save them and to give them his peace.

The poor ones call and the Lord hears them and saves them in time of trouble (Ps 34, 6). The righteous — those who remain true and faithful to the Lord’s way — also cry out and the Lord hears them (Ps 34, 17). As often as we call to him in our poverty and our need, the Lord turns his ear and gives answer. He saves his faithful servants who trust in him (Ps 85, 1-2). What is the Lord’s response to our cries as we turn to him in our need and our troubles? What has the Lord to say? The Lord’s is a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people and his friends — those little ones who are humble — those who turn to him in their hearts (Ps 84, 8). Mary’s song of praise to the Lord (Lk 1, 46-55) speaks of the downfall of the proud, the mighty and the rich. Seen through the eyes of the world, they might appear to triumph, but they have no peace.

Those who enjoy true peace — the year of the Lord’s favor — are those who fear the Lord, those of low degree, the hungry and the poor — the pure and simple of heart. Mary invites us today to be part of that little flock, the small remnant of Israel who remain true and faithful and who will be blessed today and always with the Lord’s blessings of peace.

Fr. Paul Hannon, MAfr.
Third Sunday of Advent
Is 35:1-6.8:10; Jas5:7-10; Mt.11:2-11

Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not. Here is your God coming to save you.

Is 35:4

The most terrible poverty is loneliness and the feeling of being unloved.

Mother Teresa

Love for widows and orphans, prisoners, and the sick and needy of every kind, is as essential as the ministry of the sacraments and preaching of the Gospel.

Pope Benedict XVI Deus Caritas Est, #22

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ.

Gaudium et Spes

Life’s most urgent question is: What are you doing for others?

Martin Luther King, Jr.

You give little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

Kahlil Gibran

The Christian faithful are also obliged to promote social justice, and mindful of the precept of the Lord, to assist the poor from their own resources.

Canon Law #222
A Reflection on Justice and Peace

Peace is not the absence of war but rather peace is completeness and wholeness and fullness of life. War, structural violence, hatred and all such, negate the fullness of being. Many crimes have been done which undermine peace, for example, unequal distribution of resources. If Southern Sudan is to be peaceful, then parties which have been committing these crimes should come out openly, acknowledge and own up to the crimes done. Therefore, justice must be done before peace can be attained.

There are many ways of accessing justice. In this context, I suggest restorative justice as the means to attain peace. Restorative justice is a practice whereby an offender is re-integrated into community without retribution. Restorative justice is part of African heritage. The existence of an individual depends on others in a network of relationships. Even the offender lives in community.

On behalf of the offender, the community asks for forgiveness from the victim. But the victim must open his hand to welcome the offender. Restorative justice is meant to restore broken relationships. The victim does not expect full compensation. But something symbolic is given in public to acknowledge that the offender did wrong and is ready to be forgiven and be accepted. What is important in this case is the mending of the broken relationship. Like Jesus said, “if someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.” (Mt: 5: 39-42).

In order for a win-win situation to take place the victim has to go an extra mile. Jesus reminds us to “bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse.” (Romans 12:14). The victim may even begin the process of healing and forgiveness. The apostle Peter came up and said to Jesus, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.” (Mt: 18:21-22) Restorative justice denounces revenge and promotes peace. This is the spirit we need in Southern Sudan as we prepare for the Referendum.

Francis Biryaho, PhD
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Mi 5:1-4; Heb 11:5-10; Lk. 1:39-45

Blessed are you who have believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.

Lk. 1:44

A smile is the beginning of peace.

Mother Teresa

Those who are at war with others are not at peace with themselves.

William Hazlett

Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel.

Justice in the World, 6

True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Corn can’t expect justice from a court composed of chickens.

African Proverb

Birth of Christ

If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.

Mother Teresa
Peace in Family Life

A family lives in peace through prayer. Without prayer a family will not grow in peace. Prayer is the foundation of Christian family life. Growing together in trust with the Holy Spirit brings the love of Jesus Christ.

A family without the love of Jesus cannot grow in love as a family. Love brings joy and peace to each member of the family and to the whole family. We as a family are given the grace to live with the goodness of the Holy Spirit and the theological virtues of faith, hope and love, the greatest of these is love which comes from Jesus Christ.

In the family we learn to be more concerned about what God thinks about us rather than what people think about us. Love is life and if you miss the Lord you will miss life.

With peace the family develops and grows together in harmony, justice, humility, charity, chastity and fidelity. All of these are gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the family, through prayer we receive the grace to follow the example of Jesus, Mary and Joseph and grow in our love for one another.

The founder of true peace is Jesus Christ who promised his disciples that peace when he said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” (Jn 14:27)

These comforting words that Jesus gives us prepare us to be his witnesses all over the world. We take courage in the words of Jesus, “For whoever does the will of my father in heaven is my sister and brother and mother.” (Mt.12:50)

Samuel Olimpio Kenyi
**Feast of the Holy Family**

Sir.3:2-6, 12-14; Col 3:12-17; Mt.2:13-15,19-23

Put on as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another...  

*Col 3:12*

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<td>26 Dec</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Sir.3:2-6, 12-14; Col 3:12-17; Mt.2:13-15,19-23</td>
<td>Put on as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another...</td>
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<td>27 Dec</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>A family is like a forest, when you are outside it is dense, when you are inside you see that each tree has it’s place.</td>
<td><em>African proverb</em></td>
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<td>28 Dec</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>When you stand with the blessings of your mother and God, it matters not who stands against you.</td>
<td><em>Yoruba</em></td>
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<td>29 Dec</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>It takes a whole village to raise a child.</td>
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<td>30 Dec</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people.</td>
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<td>31 Dec</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>What you help a child to love can be more important than what you help him to learn.</td>
<td><em>African proverb</em></td>
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<td>01 Jan</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Mary, the temple of the Spirit, the Queen of Peace and Protectress of Africa, shows us Christ, our Reconciliation, our Peace.</td>
<td><em>Lineamenta African Synod, 93</em></td>
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Mary, Queen of Peace

There are six feasts each year that honor the Blessed Virgin Mary in a special way: Mary, Mother of God, the Visitation, the Queenship of Mary, the Nativity of Mary, the Holy Name of Mary, and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

May is the month of Mary as well as the month of the Holy Rosary, Sweet Chain linking us to God. During the month of May, special prayers are offered through the rosary and we look to Mary for inspiration in the way of living our Christian life.

We believe that Mary can help us to imitate her and her Divine Son in forming ourselves and others. Mary is not limited to giving us hope about the after-life, but she gives us hope in the struggle of everyday life. The Virgin Mary is an example of humble and generous acceptance of the will of God. Mary was fully dedicated to the mystery and mission of her Son. Mary abandoned her plans and did not regret when she found the mission difficult and demanding. Mary understood the mystery of suffering and put all things in their right place, the hands of God; while for us this is yet to be learned, how to handle pain and suffering.

Mary is the greatest example of obedience, and whom the whole church as community, and as individuals is called to follow. She is the “Lord’s Servant” who not only promises her “yes” at the Annunciation, but who walking in faith, repeats unceasingly her readiness even when she does not understand the meaning of the events. At the foot of the cross, she finds herself to be the mother of the one innocently condemned to death. By her “yes” she exposed herself to the risk of suffering as told to her by Simeon, the road we often avoid. For some Africans Mary could have said that Simeon was a “wizard” for what he said about the child and herself.

Let us ask Mary Queen of Peace to help us learn the secret of suffering and peace which is a great challenge to the world of today. True peace is a gift of the risen Lord.

Sr Mary Daniel Abut
Sacred Heart Sisters
World Day of Peace

The first World Day of Peace was celebrated on January 1, 1968. The idea to celebrate such a day came from Pope Paul VI who said: “this celebration should be repeated every year as a hope and as a promise. We celebrate it at the beginning of the calendar which measures and outlines the path of human life in time. We pray that Peace may dominate the development of events to come.

Peace proclaims the highest and most universal values of life: “truth, justice, freedom and love.

It is for the protection of these values that we place them beneath the banner of Peace, and that we invite all people, to raise at the beginning of a new year, this banner which must guide the ship of civilization through the storms of history to the harbor of its highest destiny.”

Pope Paul VI, World Day of Peace 1968
Catholic Social Teaching
Principles

Human Dignity - Life is sacred and the dignity of the person is at the core of a moral vision for society.

Community and the Common Good – In a global culture driven by excessive individualism, our tradition proclaims that the person is not only sacred but also social.

Rights and Responsibilities – Human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are respected and responsibilities are met.

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable – our basic moral test is how we treat the poor and vulnerable among us.

Participation – All people have the right to participate in the economic, political, and cultural life of society.

Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers – If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected—the right to productive work, to fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property and to economic initiative.

Stewardship of Creation – We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God’s creation.

Solidarity – We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Solidarity means that “loving our neighbor” has global dimensions in an interdependent world.

Role of Government – The role of government has a moral function: promote human dignity, protect human rights, and build the common good.

Promotion of Peace – In the words of John Paul II, “Peace is not just the absence of war. It involves mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations. It involves collaboration and binding agreements.”

Office for Social Justice, a division of Catholic Charities, www.osjspm.org
Prayer for Peace in Sudan

Lord Jesus, you who said to us: “I leave you peace. My peace I give you.” Look upon us your sisters and brothers in Sudan as we face this moment of referendum. Send us your Spirit to guide us. Give us the wisdom we need to choose our future where we will know your true peace. You call us out of slavery, oppression, and persecution so that we may have life in abundance. Grant us peace with one another. Give peace among ethnic groups. Help us to work together for the good of all. We ask this in Your name, Lord Jesus

Amen

Mary, Queen of Peace, pray for us.