

Diocesan Social Action Office
Cleveland, Ohio



The Table of Peace has 4 legs:

Prayer: Through relationship with the Trinity we find true peace and the foundation of nonviolent love.

Truth: God is truth. In our world, truth involves honesty, faith, and sincerity. Seeking truth is seeing beyond biases.

Justice: Principles of Catholic Social Teaching and gospel mandates to care for the most vulnerable are necessary for peace building. There cannot be peace without human dignity and basic human needs being met.

Love: Peace is sustainable only when we love the other with a true sense of solidarity and compassion.

See page 2 for practical ways you can build peace.

25th Anniversary of The Challenge of Peace from the USCCB
45th Anniversary of Pacem in Terris, encyclical of Pope John XXIII

Summer 2008

25th Anniversary of Peace Pastoral



For more information, contact:

Diocesan Education and Training Center

Cleveland, Ohio

1-888-620-5280

Visit the Diocesan Social Action Web Site:

www.catholic-action.org

Christians must strike a fruitful balance in their lives by including both prayer and action, Pope Benedict XVI said. People of faith can "run the risk of reducing themselves to being one-dimensional" either by retreating from the world to dedicate themselves to God and prayer or by totally immersing themselves in the world to help others, the pope said. Instead, believers must look for "a middle ground" by imitating Christ, whose life was dedicated to contemplation and action.

As we commemorate the 25th anniversary of *The Challenge of Peace*, let us find that balance by developing the four legs of the table of peace.

LEG 1: PRAYER *Pray often for peace. Pray daily for the safety of our military personnel, a just end to the war in Iraq, a peaceful transition for the Iraqi people and a commitment by the international community to assist in the reconstruction of Iraq. Begin gatherings with the following benediction.*

O God, our Creator, we stand here today as people of faith,
we stand as members of one human family, united as brothers and sisters with all people of one world.
We stand before You, asking for your blessing on our efforts for peace.
Wherever we go, whatever we do in the days ahead, we ask you to bless us:

- Bless us with wisdom to seek the truth and to speak it boldly;
- Bless us with courage to work for justice and live it with love;
- Bless us with enlightenment to lift up hope and never lose heart; and,
- Bless us with compassion to grieve the suffering of others as if it were our own.

With your grace, may we be renewed in our desire to walk the road of peace.

May we continue to say NO to war, NO to violence; YES to peace and justice; YES to forgiveness and love.

We ask this of You, O God of Peace. Amen.

LEG 2: TRUTH *Seek the truth. Ask questions. Remember to be grounded in God.*

- Reread *The Challenge of Peace* and *Pacem in Terris*. Both can be found at www.usccb.org.
- Review the components of just war theory. Read about our tradition of nonviolence. You can find information at www.usccb.org/sdwp/harvestextr.shtml for both. Try one nonviolent practice today, even ridding yourself of violent language.
- **Become informed about peace initiatives of national Catholic organizations**, like Network or Catholics for an End to the War in Iraq. Network has formulated a proposal entitled "The Way Forward-Network's Proposals for Peace in Iraq." For more information, visit www.networklobby.org. Catholics for an End to the War in Iraq have launched an online petition drive on the war. Their web site is www.catholicsforanend.org.
- Learn more about the rise in fighting in Afghanistan.

LEG 3: JUSTICE

- During the summer Congressional recess, **organize a parish delegation to meet with your member of Congress in his/her district office** to discuss the current policy stalemate on the war in Iraq. Prepare for the meeting by reviewing the statements of the Pope Benedict XVI, the U.S. Bishops and the Diocesan Social Action Office.

Senator George Voinovich
Federal Building, Room 2955
1240 E. Ninth St.
Cleveland, OH 44199-2001

Senator Sherrod Brown
600 E. Superior, Room 2450
Cleveland, OH 44114

- Generate a letter writing campaign to Senators George Voinovich and Sherrod Brown urging them to advance the Israeli-Palestinian peace.

LEG 4: LOVE

- Visit the Catholic Relief Services web site, www.crs.org, and learn more about the plight of refugees from war torn areas. Donate to relief efforts. Invite others to do the same.
- Practice the skills of forgiveness and healing in your every day life.
- Work to alleviate domestic and global poverty. Visit our web site, www.catholic-action.org, and Catholic Relief Services for some suggestions.