

Peace Needs Everyone to Build It

Following is excerpted from the NC News translation of the homily preached by Pope John Paul II on Jan. 1.

Today, the first day of the New Year 1983, the Church calls us to meditate on the "designated time."

The motherhood of Mary means the beginning of the God-man in the history of humanity. And this is exactly the "designated time."



This beginning is "the designated time." We desire that our new year, that fragment and reflection of this "fullness," may remain under the sign of the beginning of the God-man in history; that it may remain under the sign of the divine motherhood.

In a special way this year, which signifies for us the new jubilee of the redemption: the year of the Lord, 1983.

The first day of the new year, which remains under the sign of Christmas and of the divine motherhood, is at the same time the day of special prayer for peace on earth in the entire Church. We desire that this prayer may resound with a ringing echo the words of the night of Bethlehem: "Glory to God in high Heaven, peace on earth to those on whom His favor rests."

We have before our eyes "the designated time," in which, with the birth of God, the saving source of good and love has been opened in the history of man.

At the same time we think with deep emotion, with worry, with a sense of responsibility, that in the history of man it can be opened as an opposite source: the sources of evil, of hate and of destruction.

Along this line we constantly receive worrisome signals. And therefore we seek to recommend in prayer this difficult problem to God, from the first day of the new year. At the same time we also seek to do everything possible to sensitize contemporary man to the grand cause of peace.

The entire people of God, all men and women of good will, must be constantly educated to peace. We must be formed and encouraged to the commitment for the cause of peace. An effort without respite is necessary in order to make present in spirits and in hearts the necessity and the possibility of peace, its urgency, but also the responsibility which is incumbent on each one. All must feel called to the cause of this concern and seek, each in his own field, the best means to contribute to this exalting duty. For 16 years, the Roman pontiff has addressed messages to leaders on the occasion of the World Day of Prayer for Peace, tracing incessantly the great lines of a true catechesis on peace and indicating the road to travel.

Thus in the message I published for Jan. 1, 1983, I insisted on "dialogue for peace, a challenge for our times." By its nature, dialogue is exchanged, a communication one to the other, but it is above all a search in common. In war, two parties rise up one against the other. In the question of peace as well there are always and necessarily two parties who must commit themselves. Peace cannot be constructed by one with out the others, but everyone must commit himself to it. And it is thus that one finds the true sense of dialogue for peace: it requires all parties to work in common, to progress in common on the road of peace. It is therefore difficult to imagine how the problem of peace in the world can be resolved in a unilateral manner without the participation and the concrete commitment of all.

In the search for peace, the problem of disarmament occupies an important place, and the desire to see the dialogue in this regard come to concrete results is more than legitimate. But like dialogue, also the request for progressive reduction of armaments, nuclear or conventional, must be addressed at the same time to all the parties involved. The powers which confront one another must be able to go along the various steps of disarmament together and commit themselves to each step in equal measure.

In our common prayer for peace we ask today that dialogue may be undertaken in that spirit and lead to those concrete and practical decisions capable of assuring a real and lasting result.

Women's Retreat

Canandaigua — A retreat for women, "The Beatitudes: Challenge and Promise," will run from 7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 28, through noon Sunday, Jan. 30, at Notre Dame Retreat House. Further information and registration is available by contacting Notre Dame Retreat House, P.O. Box 342, Canandaigua, N.Y. 14424; (716) 394-5700. Suggested donation is \$45.

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More Opinions

Back Bishop On Nukes

Editor:

We of the Rochester diocese should be proud of our bishop and heartened by his courageous and unequivocal stand against nuclear weapons. May his declaration and that of the U.S. Bishops Conference influence the Reagan administration and, above all, convince the citizens of this country, outside as well as inside the Church, that they share in the responsibility for the nuclear peril — their money buys the bombs; their complacency lets them be made.

The nuclear peril is real. Do not be deceived by the White House and Pentagon "Alice in Wonderland" stories about a "limited nuclear war," "winning a nuclear war" or "survivors of a nuclear war." The 47,000 nuclear warheads which the United States and the Soviet Union now possess have an explosive force 6,000 times that of all the explosives detonated in World War II and a million times that of the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima, killed 75,000 people outright and more than 125,000 later from radiation, burns and other injuries. The exchange of a small fraction of these bombs would destroy all of North America and the

Soviet Union, the rest of Europe and Western Asia. Irradiation and the stench and pathogens from millions of rotting bodies would foul the air and the land. What radioactive fallout, ozone depletion and airborne disease would do to the rest of the world can only be conjectured.

All of this can be touched off by a fanatic in the Kremlin or the White House who thinks his country can win a nuclear war, or by miscalculation or mistaken identification or by accident since the fail-safes are not infallible.

Do not be taken in by President Reagan's propaganda fairy tales about "window of vulnerability," or "bargaining chips" or "rebuilding America's strength." Every bomb that is built brings us dangerously closer to the point of no return for arms reduction and the ultimate nuclear disaster.

Before it is too late, every citizen of the country — indeed of the world — must make a choice and take a stand as our bishop has done. There can be no better time than Christmastime to choose between the shalom of Jesus which offers peace, security, well-being and love to all men, and the false security of hate and a nuclear stockpile which offer the extinction of mankind which this Jesus came to save, and the

destruction of the planet which God gave into our care.

Adolphe and Loe d'Audiffret RR 2 Naples, N.Y. 14512

Suggestion For Diocese

Editor:

I read in the Catholic Courier-Journal that Bishop Clark urged the churches to open their doors to the homeless during the cold winter nights for the purpose of offering temporary shelter. Makeshift cots would be set up and volunteers needed. I commend the good bishop for his concern for the homeless but I think many problems will arise, such as meeting the Board of Health regulations.

Inasmuch as the bishop's fund for the poor has exceeded its quota, why not earmark some of this money for the homeless and renovate some of the empty convents and/or schools to create permanent hostels for the homeless? Here the poor would have adequate housing, warm beds, hot meals, showers, etc.

Makeshift cots and overnight shelters are just touching the tip of the iceberg of this long-standing problem. We need low income housing on a permanent basis and we need it now.

Anne B. Christoff 154 Crittenden Way Rochester, N.Y. 14623

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