

Pope calls on leaders to 'disarm the aggressor'

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — When human efforts to end war are insufficient, Christians must come together and make "a pilgrimage on our knees ... a pilgrimage for peace," Pope John Paul II said.

The pope said his Jan. 23 Mass for peace in the Balkans was a spiritual journey to "that martyred land of the Balkans, to our brothers and sisters who suffer, so that they do not feel alone and abandoned."

After the Mass, the pope called on leaders of the warring sides in Bosnia-Herzegovina to allow humanitarian aid into besieged cities, and he repeated a call to the international community to do everything "humanly possible to disarm the aggressor and create the conditions for a just and lasting peace."

During the homily in St. Peter's Basilica and afterward during his recitation of the Angelus, the pope spoke about how dreams for European unity after the fall of communism have been threatened by the rise of nationalism.

"It seemed the dawn of a new world," he said. But the division symbolized by the Berlin Wall has been replaced by "new walls dividing Europe."

"Hostility dividing peoples who were once able to live together peacefully has become a new source of worry and of obvious danger for Europe and for the world," the pope said in his homily.

Pope John Paul said Christians must give thanks to God for answering decades of prayers for the end of the division between Eastern and Western Europe, and for the fact that a nuclear war had been avoided.

He made special reference to Ukraine's agreement to eliminate its nuclear weapons as one of the "signs of reconciliation and promising peace processes" taking place in the world.

"But despite that, we suffer because new walls have been erected not so much to separate systems as to separate individual nations, particularly within the former Yugoslavia," he said.

The pope said he called for the day of prayer for peace in the Balkans during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity because "Christianity is the religion of universal peace."

"Its mission is to unite human beings in Christ, making them aware that they are brothers and sisters because in him they are adopted children of the one Father in heaven," he said.

In addition to praying for peace in the Balkans, the pope said, the Mass was an important occasion for prayers for Christian unity.

"The warfare in the Balkans not only has eroded the stable harmony of nations, but also has damaged the serene coexistence of religions," he said.

"The conflict in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, and especially in Bosnia-Herzegovina, certainly is not a war of religion, just as the events in Northern Ireland are not," he said.

But it must be admitted that the opposing populations belong to different religions or confessions, the pope said. "So, the essentially political struggle between groups and nations can easily be interpreted as a battle between different faiths."

When nationalism is driving division, he said, "religious or confessional membership runs the risk of being another motivation for hostility and hatred."

The use of religious differences, especially among Christians, "is contrary to Christ who, through the cross, reconciled and redeemed all," the pope said.

Saying he was speaking "with and to the leaders of Orthodox and Protestant churches, the pope said: "Brothers and sisters, even if we are not responsible for these divisions, if we lack unity how can the world believe?"

"The pope said Christ's prayer for the unity of his disciples calls for "an examination of conscience by all of us on the threshold of the third millennium, and by the pope first of all."

During the Angelus address he said Christians must contribute to peace in the Balkans through unceasing prayer and "the witness of a stronger commitment to communion among Christians in docile obedience to the heartfelt prayer of the Redeemer: 'Father, may they be one as we are one.'"

"We have prayed and will continue to pray that peace will reign among individuals and nations throughout the world," he said.

"Prayer is a powerful weapon. In the human heart it knocks down the wall which interferes with the love of God and fills the trenches of hatred, distrust and rancor which frequently cause divisions between one person and another, one people and another," the pope said.

In the face of "the cruelty and multiple violations of human rights" in the former Yugoslavia, we cannot let ourselves be resigned. We must not let ourselves be resigned," he said.

Cracking church



AP World Wide News

Aftershocks continue

A crack runs down a brick wall at St. Monica's Church in Santa Monica, Calif. Jan. 21. Residents of Southern California have experienced nearly 2,000 aftershocks from the Jan. 17 earthquake that registered 6.6 on the Richter scale.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	BINGO TIMES & LOCATIONS
		Holy Apostles Our Lady of Mercy St. Stanislaus	The Aquinas Institute 2 Bishop Kearney Guardian Angels Holy Family Home School Assoc. Our Lady of Perpetual Help	St. Anne St. James St. Michael's St. Stanislaus St. Jude the Apostle	Most Precious Blood St. Cecilia's St. Mark's	Good Shepherd St. Thomas the Apostle	Aquinas Institute 1127 Dewey Ave. 254-2020 Wed. 8pm Bishop Kearney 125 Kings Hwy. S. 671-1065 Wed. 8pm Good Shepherd 3288 E. Henrietta Rd. 334-3518 Sat. 7:30pm Guardian Angels Church 2061 E. Henrietta Rd. 334-1412 Wed. 7:30pm Holy Apostles 6 Austin St. 254-7170 Tues. 7:30pm Holy Family Church 899 Jay Street 328-3110 Sun. 7:30pm Holy Family Home School Assoc. 899 Jay St. 328-4800 Wed. 7:30pm Most Precious Blood 179 Stenson St. 458-6079 Fri. 7:30pm Our Lady of Mercy 600 Denise Rd. 665-0775 Tue. 7:30pm Our Lady of Perpetual Help 923 Portland Ave. 467-2725 Wed. 7:30pm St. Anne 1600 Mt. Hope Ave. 271-3260 Thur. 7:30pm St. Boniface 15 Whalin St. 271-1468 Sun. 7:30pm
Holy Family St. Ambrose St. Boniface St. Rita's St. Theodore	St. Charles Borromeo St. Mary St. Michael	Holy Apostles Our Lady of Mercy St. Stanislaus	The Aquinas Institute 9 Bishop Kearney Guardian Angels Holy Family Home School Assoc. Our Lady of Perpetual Help	St. Anne St. James St. Michael's St. Stanislaus St. Jude the Apostle	Most Precious Blood St. Cecilia's St. Mark's	Good Shepherd St. Thomas the Apostle	St. Cecilia's 2732 Culver Rd. 467-4286 Fri. 7:30pm St. Charles Borromeo 64 Malden Lane 663-3230 Mon. 8pm St. James 119 Brockley Rd. 482-9796 Thur. 7:30pm St. Jude the Apostle 4100 Lyell Rd. 247-4322 Thurs. 7:45pm St. Mark's 54 Kuhn Rd. 225-3710 Fri. 8pm St. Mary Lyncum Hall Auburn 315-252-9545 Mon. 7:30pm St. Michael's 869 Clinton Ave. N 325-4040 Thur. 7:30 & 9pm St. Michael's 320 St. Main St. Newark 315-332-2297 Mon. 7:30pm St. Rita's 1008 Maple Dr. 671-1100 Sun. 7:30pm St. Stanislaus 1150 Hudson Ave. 467-1472 Sun. 6:15pm St. Theodore 170 Spencerport Rd. 429-6811 Sun. 7:30pm St. Thomas The Apostle 41 Colebrook Dr. 342-2323 Sat. 8pm
Holy Family St. Ambrose St. Boniface St. Rita's St. Theodore	St. Charles Borromeo St. Mary St. Michael	Holy Apostles Our Lady of Mercy St. Stanislaus	The Aquinas Institute 16 Bishop Kearney Guardian Angels Holy Family Home School Assoc. Our Lady of Perpetual Help	St. Anne St. James St. Michael's St. Stanislaus St. Jude the Apostle	Most Precious Blood St. Cecilia's St. Mark's	Good Shepherd St. Thomas the Apostle	
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