

# origins

CNS documentary service

## World Day of Peace Message 2017

### Pope Francis

*Calling for a new style of politics built on peace and nonviolence, Pope Francis also called for disarmament, the eradication of nuclear weapons and an end to domestic violence and abuse against women and children. "Violence is not the cure for our broken world," he said in his annual message for the World Day of Peace Jan. 1. The theme for the day of peace is "Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace." The pope said, "It is a challenge to build up society, communities and businesses by acting as peacemakers. It is to show mercy by refusing to discard people, harm the environment or seek to win at any cost." The message, released by the Vatican Dec. 12, said building a world of peace requires a "willingness to face conflict*

*"I ask God to help all of us to cultivate nonviolence in our most personal thoughts and values."*

*head-on, to resolve it" and to make it part of a new process of choosing solidarity and building friendships. "Active nonviolence is a way of showing that unity is truly more powerful and more fruitful than conflict," the pope said. While differences will sometimes lead to difficulties, "let us face them constructively and nonviolently," so that tension and opposition can turn into "diversified and life-giving unity," preserving "what is valid and useful on both sides." His message, which the Vatican sends to heads of state around the world, invited everyone to banish violence from their hearts, words and deeds, and become nonviolent people who build nonviolent communities that care for creation. The message follows, copyright © 2016 by Libreria Editrice Vaticana.*

**1** At the beginning of this new year, I offer heartfelt wishes of peace to the world's peoples and nations, to heads of state and government, and to religious, civic and community leaders. I wish peace to every man, woman and child, and I pray that the image and likeness of God in each person will enable us to acknowledge one another as sacred gifts endowed with immense dignity. Especially in situations of conflict, let us respect this, our "deepest dignity,"<sup>1</sup> and make active non-violence our way of life.

This is the 50th message for the World Day of Peace. In the first, Blessed Pope Paul VI addressed all peoples, not simply Catholics, with utter clarity. "Peace is the

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**Dec. 22, 2016**  
**Volume 46**  
**Number 30**