

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Mt 5:9).

Recently, a study by a monitoring center run by three Italian universities found that more than one million hate messages were posted online in just one year. The most violent ones were directed against foreigners, Jews, and especially against women.

Certainly, we cannot generalize, but each of us has experienced quarrelsome attitudes, offensive words, and antagonisms that divide and undermine social harmony. This especially happens within the context of the family, at work, in sports, and school. Then, on a more global scale, there are currently 56 armed conflicts in the world, the highest number since the Second World War, with an extremely high toll of civilian casualties. It is precisely in this context that the words of Jesus sound more than ever provocative, true, and powerful:

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“Every person carries a deep longing for peace, harmony, and unity. Yet, despite our efforts and goodwill, after thousands of years of history we still find ourselves unable to achieve a stable and lasting peace. Jesus came to bring us peace—a peace, he tells us, unlike the one ‘the world gives,’ because it is not simply the absence of war, arguments, division, or trauma. His peace is all of that, but so much more: it is fullness of life and joy, the complete salvation of the person, freedom, justice, and fraternity rooted in love among all people.

This month’s *Word of Life* is the seventh Beatitude, one of the blessings that open the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7). Jesus, who lives out each of the Beatitudes, speaks to his disciples to teach them. It is worth noting that the eight Beatitudes are all expressed in the plural. This suggests that the focus is not on an individual attitude or personal virtue, but rather on a collective way of living—an ethic that takes shape within a community.”

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So, who are the peacemakers? This Beatitude is one of the most active of them all—it’s about acting. The language is like the very first verse of the Bible about creation, suggesting creativity, initiative, and hard work. Love, by its nature, is creative. [...] And true love will seek reconciliation at any cost.

The people who are called “children of God” are those who have learned and practice the art of peace. They know that there is no reconciliation without giving something of themselves— sometimes, giving their very lives. And they know that peace is something to be sought in every moment, no matter the cost.

But this isn’t something we can do on our own by sheer willpower. It’s the fruit of grace—the gift we’ve received from Christ Himself. He is our peace. And through Him, we have become children of God.

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How, then, can we live out this message? First, by spreading genuine love wherever we are. Then, by stepping in whenever peace around us is threatened. This can be done at times, by simply listening with love to the parties in conflict can help us glimpse a way forward.

We should never give up until broken relationships—often damaged over the smallest things—are restored. Perhaps within our organization, association, or parish, we could launch or join or support special initiatives to raise greater awareness of the need for peace. Around the world, there are countless small and large-scale efforts moving in this direction: marches, concerts, conferences, and voluntary service all help create a current of generosity that builds peace.

There are also educational programs for peace, such as “**Living Peace.**” To date, more than 2,600 schools and groups have joined the project, and over two million children, young people, and adults are involved in its initiatives across five continents.

Among these are the launch of:

The Peace Die—inspired by Chiara Lubich’s *Cube of Love*—whose sides bear phrases that encourage peaceful relationships.

Time Out: A global initiative done every day at 12:00 noon. People around the world pause for a moment of silence, reflection, or prayer for peace.

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Each month the Focolare chooses a Scripture passage as a guide and inspiration for daily living. The commentary on it was originally written by founder, Chiara Lubich (1920–2008). Today this Word of Life, written by an international commission and translated into 96 different languages, reaches several million people worldwide. For audio and videos resources about the WoL, visit focolaremedia.com

