

# Homily for the Mass celebrating the Ten Days Appeal for Peace

August 8, 2015 at St. Mary's  
Cathedral, Tokyo

First Reading: The book of Isaiah 48:17-18

Second Reading: letter to the Ephesians 2/16-22

Gospel: Mathew 5□1-10

In the sermon the mount, Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are the peace makers, for they will be called children of God." (Am. Bible Mathew 5□9) Being a peace maker is not only the responsibility of every Christian, but also of all the people on earth.

There are two phrases that always come to my mind whenever I think of peace.

The first is the "defences of peace". This is a famous phrase that appears in the introductory paragraph of the UNESCO constitution: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed; That ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war." (1949)

What are the causes of war? Poverty, discrimination, and disparity can be thought of as the cause of anxiety, fear, hatred, and hostility. These may have tendency to cause deep wounds in people's hearts and trigger war. It is an absolute necessity to work towards eliminating these negative tendencies that cause war.

In this connection, the introductory paragraph of the Japanese constitution left a deep impression on me.

"We, the Japanese people, desire peace for all time and are deeply conscious of the high ideals controlling human relationship, and we have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world."

We have to realize this “determination” at all cost. For this reason, Japan has forever renounced the use of force. This is indeed the important testimony that we have realized the “defence of peace” in our hearts.

The second phrase that I recall is “disarmament of heart”. This phrase appears in the proclamation of the Japanese Catholic Bishops celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II, “The Resolution for Peace”.

“The peace we seek is based on the reconciliation between man and God, which in turn is based on Jesus’ cross and resurrection. As believers, our approach to peace must have Christ in the center. Only by being one with Christ, and with His support and leadership, would we obtain peace. In the occasion of the last supper, Christ established the celebration of the Mass by wishing that “all of us become one”. Through the Mass, Christ shines upon those of us who march towards the realization of peace, and gives us strength to reach the goal. ☩☩☩ To us humans, who are disunited with hatred caused by our sin - Christ brings fire of love and leads us to the ‘disarmament of heart’. He heals our wounded hearts, brings oneness among peoples, and creates inner foundation for the everlasting peace.” (cited from “The Resolution for Peace”)

It is important to cherish the phrase the “disarmament of heart”.

Today’s second reading is from the Letter to the Ephesians. “For he is our peace, he who made both one and broke down the dividing wall of enmity, through his flesh, ☩☩☩through the cross, putting that enmity to death by it. He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.”(Ephesians2☩14-17)

Christians are taught not to combat evil with evil, but to defeat evil with good. The article 9 of the Japanese Constitution is exactly in accord with this teaching. Japanese people are determined to renounce war as a method to settle any international dispute, and also not to retain any fighting power. Because of the article 9 of the Constitution, the Japanese people have not killed anyone nor gotten killed, in any war during the past 70 years.

We are all children of same God - and should learn together and pray together. To accomplish these, we have to: “commune with each other; help each other; and understand each other”.(from“*The Resolution for Peace*”)

To build up the “defence of peace” and cause the “disarmament of heart”, some preparation is necessary. It is important to prepare a right atmosphere. Not just by prayer, but we must act in accordance with our prayers, we have to ferment the right atmosphere.

This year’s “Prayer for Peace 2015” shows us Christian daily goals that point toward the world peace. We must rely on God’s help, and work diligently to attain these daily goals, as children of God.