

Editorial



Dear Members and Readers,

We are all so busy coping with life at a phrenetic phase that raises a kind of tension within ourselves. We also feel the tension around us due to the economy, war, communalism, fundamentalism, terrorism, pandemic and other natural calamities. There is ever growing violence and conflict that also raises our temperature.

In the midst of all these violent conflict situations, people are desperately looking for peace. Peacebuilding is the need of the time. Everyone wants it but not everyone tries to build it. We, who carry the mission of Christ are called upon to act now because it is more important than ever.

For personal peace we do all we can through prayer and meditation but the conflicts and tensions around us demand our wholehearted commitment because they affect our lives and the lives of everyone around us.

We have all seen and experienced the trauma of the pandemic. Many disturbed and traumatised people are still looking for healing. We have people from Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia and other areas beset by conflict, insecurity or political repression, risking their lives in an attempt to reach Europe and other safe places. Then there is the war between Russia and Ukraine where people are struggling for life day and night. These situations challenge us to make a concerted effort and to true messengers of peace.

It is not the absence of violence or conflict, that is achieved through weapons. We are not looking for Negative Peace. We are looking for Positive Peace built on the attitudes,

institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies.

Peace itself is a very beautiful and powerful word. Peace simply means being in a place where no hatred exists and every corner is filled with love, care and respect; where conflicts are handled peacefully. We must remember, *Peace is a Human Right and it's a Right for Everyone!*

In the present issue of our SEDOS Bulletin we have six articles on the theme, "Mission for Peace." They speak of the need to contribute to establishing peace and working for justice for those suffering.

The first article, "COVID-19: Our Collective Trauma: Dialogue with Psychologically Affected People" by Lloyd Cunningham, SVD, speaks about the effort to bring peace and harmony to those whose lives have been traumatised by the deadly "Corona" virus.

In the second article, "Missions in Seasons of Chaos: Lessons from Yoruba Civil Wars for Contemporary Christian Missions", the writers Akinyemi O. Alawode and Samson O. Adebayo address the security challenges concerning food security, health and social security, job security and safety issues of people of Nigeria. Besides these various problems like banditry, ethno-religious crises, kidnapping for ransom, kidnapping for ritual, armed robbery, and other threats. In a country that is unsafe and even hostile to Christians and missionaries, it is a big challenge to bring the tidings of Peace. The precarious security situation instils fear in the mind of anyone who wishes to proclaim the Gospel.

In the third article, "Linking Ethics, Economy and Environment for Global Justice and Planet Peace", Selva Rathinam, SJ, emphasises that this planet is not only a home for humans but for all that exists upon it. Everyone has equal rights. But the modern

economies are becoming increasingly unequal and unfair. The rich become richer and the poor become poorer and they suffer. Therefore, the writer suggests a number of Global Measures for a Healthy Planet, Healthy People, Peace and Prosperity.

In fourth article, “Per Una Cultura Della Compassione Prospettive Di Etica Cristiana”, Prof. Vidas Balčius stresses the need to be like Christ in manifesting the love of God to those suffering. The writer says, “Christian compassion is potentially subversive of any social order, since it expresses God's vision of his creation. The conception of the Kingdom in which sinners are forgiven, in which preference is given to the least, in which all are welcome to the banquet and ‘the Lord God will wipe the tears from every face.’”

The Fifth article, ‘Ahimsa’ in a Violent Society: “Ahimsa, Vegetarian Nutrition and Kindness for Global Peace”, Fr. T.K. John talks about a major contribution India has made to the common heritage of humanity: *ahimsa*. According to him, “*Ahimsa* (non-violence) humanises whereas *himsa* debases humanity.” In a world that is becoming increasingly prone to violence and destruction, the role of *ahimsa* is supremely important and highly relevant. It is a collective responsibility and a noble and worthwhile service.

In the last article, “Virtus and Peace: Synthesis in ‘The Moral Equivalent of War’ by William James”, Prof. Frances Fister-Stoga says, “Epidemics and wars are similar - to paraphrase Georges Bernanos: they have no beginning nor end. But although war has been cyclical throughout history, unlike epidemics and natural disasters, war is based on an intentional human choice.” He differentiates between ‘negative peace’: ‘the absence of direct violence between States engaged in by the military and others in general, and the massive killing of categories of human beings in particular’ and ‘positive peace’, that is non-violent and demands

freedom from structural violence to transform conflict.

I am sure that all these articles will enlighten us and inculcate in us a spirit to promote peace individually and collectively. Christ has given the mission of peace to his disciples, that we need to carry out throughout the world. “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid,” (Jn 4:27).

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Director of SEDOS



(The book is available at SEDOS office.
The cost is € 40,00 for SEDOS Members.)