



Sustainable Development Goal 16:

Peace, justice and strong institutions

To promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies

Peace, stability, human rights and effective governance based on the rule of law are important conduits for effective and sustainable development.

The world we now live in is becoming increasingly divided. Some regions enjoy sustained levels of peace, security and prosperity while others are falling into seemingly endless cycles of conflict and violence. High levels of armed violence and insecurity have a very destructive impact on a country's development. Economic growth is reversed and community well-being is destroyed, leading to long-standing grievances that can last for generations. Sexual violence, crime, exploitation and torture are also prevalent where there is conflict or no rule of law.

Leaders in such countries have an obligation to protect those who are most at risk. Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights is vital. The prevalence of illicit arms must be challenged and resources must be targeted towards increasing and strengthening the participation of affected countries in the institutions of global governance.

The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) focuses strongly on peaceful, just and inclusive societies, with an explicit recognition that there can be no peace without sustainable development and no sustainable development without peace. Wherever safety is routinely and casually under threat, generating lasting improvements in people's lives will not be possible.



But in practical terms what does this mean? What is challenging about SDG 16 is that, unlike other elements of the 2030 Agenda such as access to health, education and sanitation for example, all of which were part of the previous MDGs - commitments to peace, justice and inclusion have not been measured systematically before as part of a global agenda by UN member states.

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sdgoverview/post-2015-development-agenda/goal-16.html>

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2016/05/why-peacebuilding-is-part-of-the-sustainable-development-agenda>

Laudato Si'...70

Disregard for the duty to cultivate and maintain a proper relationship with my neighbour, for whose care and custody I am responsible, ruins my relationship with my own self, with others, with God and with the earth. When all these relationships are neglected, when justice no longer dwells in the land, the Bible tells us that life itself is endangered. We see this in the story of Noah, where God threatens to do away with humanity because of its constant failure to fulfil the requirements of justice and peace: (*Gen 4:9-11, 6:13*).

Our 2012 Congregational Gathering calls us Presentation Sisters to

'use our resources creatively

for the promotion of justice, peace and the integrity of creation'

'Peace is an inside job'

"Reconnecting is the word!"

The deep connection is already there and given" *Richard Rohr*



"As I walked out the door toward the gate that would lead to my freedom, I knew if I didn't leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I'd still be in prison". -
Nelson Mandela

"Blessed are the Peacemakers ... for they shall be recognized as children of God" -- Mt. 5:9.

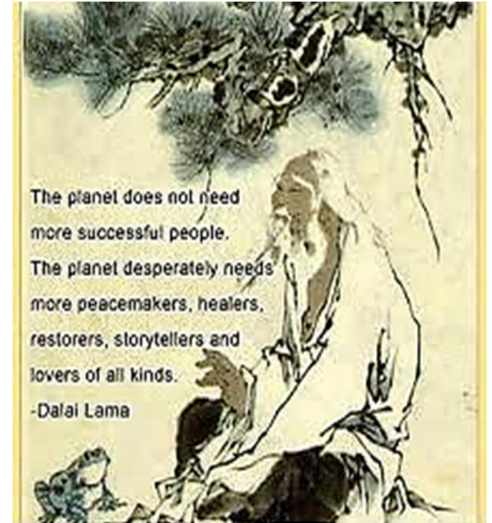
"Every time we turn our heads the other way when we see the law flouted, when we tolerate what we know to be wrong, when we close our eyes and ears to the corrupt because we are too busy or too frightened, when we fail to speak up and speak out, we strike a blow against freedom and decency and justice."
Robert F. Kennedy

Questions for Reflection and Sharing:

- ✚ What walls do I create within and around me that hinder me from embracing the other?
- ✚ Who do I tend to exclude at my table? What can I do to include them?
- ✚ What would it mean to embrace a new form of independence: freedom from seeing myself in isolation from the other?
- ✚ Do I have the courage to speak out against prejudice and discrimination when I see it?
- ✚ Can I make a personal commitment to celebrating Peace Day each year on Sept. 21st?

Closing Prayer

God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love and peace
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good,
advance the weak, and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you! Amen. *(Laudato Si ... 246)*



Song: 'Make me a channel of your peace'

See also:

- Healing With Love: A Guided Heart Meditation for World Peace. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrukVaWn5ak>)
- Hold a Council of All Beings <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/practices/view/27621/hold-a-council-of-all-beings>
- <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg16>
- <http://www.ipsnews.net/topics/peacebuilding/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FmEIP46B-E#t=56>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-IzRMpYpp8U>

Reflection prepared by Srs. Silvia, Shobha & Anna (Palestine)
Published by Union Justice Network