

The Catholic Sun

BISHOP THOMAS J. OLMSTED

HOME | ADVERTISING | CONTACT US |
ABOUT US | SUBMIT A STORY IDEA

LOCAL NEWS

NATION/WORLD

NEWS BRIEFS

EDITORIAL

LETTERS

BISHOP OLMSTED

PERSPECTIVES

MEDIA/ARTS

FLICKR PHOTOS

CLASSIFIEDS

LA COMUNIDAD

SUNBEAMS

PUBLISHING
SCHEDULE

PHX DIOCESE

VATICAN



Jesus Caritas
Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted

APRIL 19, 2007

Beatitudes: Blessed are the peacemakers

"Peace be with you." With this salutation, the bishop greets the people each day at Mass. These words link him to Christ who greets His disciples in the same way in the days after His Resurrection. They also extend our Savior's gift of peace to those gathered in His name now in A.D. 2007.

Peace is both gift and mission for followers of Christ. As Jesus teaches in the seventh Beatitude (Mt 5:9), "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

'Not peace but the sword'

Notice, however, that Jesus does not say, "Blessed are the peaceful." Neither does He say, "Avoid upsetting people." Note, too, how the next Beatitude adds further definition to this one when Jesus proclaims (Mt 5:10), "Blessed are they

BIOGRAPHY

- [Click here for more information.](#)

RECENT COLUMNS

- **April 5, 2007:**
Beatitudes:
Blessed are the clean of heart
- **March 15, 2007:**
Beatitudes:
Blessed are the merciful
- **March 1, 2007:**
Beatitudes:
Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness
- **Feb. 15, 2007:**
'Beatitudes:
Blessed are the meek'
- **Feb. 1, 2007:**
'Beatitudes:
Blessed are they who mourn'
- **Jan. 18, 2007:**
'Beatitudes:
Blessed are the Poor in Spirit'
- **Jan. 4, 2007:**
'Beatitudes:

Search



Web



The Catholic Sun



USCCB

EXTRAS

You Welcomed Me, a pasotral letter on migration [PDF]

Why is Marriage Important to the Catholic Church? [PDF]

NEW: Welcome to the Diocese [PDF]

Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Minors [PDF]
En Español [PDF]

who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Moreover, Jesus adds (Mt 10:34, 38), "Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon the earth. I have come to bring not peace but the sword. ... whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me."

Evidently the peace that we are to make and the peace that Jesus gives (Cf. Jn 14:27) is not the same type of peace that the world gives. St. Paul describes it this way (Phil 4:7), "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding."

To be peacemakers according to the heart of Christ, we must be ready to love our enemies and also ready to take up a sword. But, the sword that we are to take up is not the sword of violence that is used in this world. Rather, it is the sword of God's life-giving word which cuts away our own pride and selfishness and sets us free to love. As Hebrews 4:12 instructs us, "Indeed, the word of God is living and effective, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and thoughts of the heart."

Loving our enemies

G. K. Chesterton wrote, "Never trust a man who has no enemies." With these words, this great Catholic apologist of the 20th century was not encouraging cantankerous behavior, nor was he urging us to ignore Jesus' command (Jn 15:12), "Love one another as I love you." But he was alerting us to the inevitability of encountering opposition, and even hatred, when we serve Christ in truth and in love.

Popularity has never been a true test of faithful discipleship. At the Last Supper, Jesus warns us (Jn 15:19-20), "If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own; but because you do not belong to the world, and I have chosen

Moving Beyond the Law'

- **Dec. 21, 2006:** 'Honor your father and your mother'
- **Dec. 7, 2006:** 'Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day,' Part Two
- **Nov. 16, 2006:** 'Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day'
- **Nov. 2, 2006:** 'Thou shalt not take God's name in vain'
- **Oct. 19, 2006:** 'Catholics in the Public Square'
- **Oct. 5, 2006:** 'Thou shalt not have other gods besides me,' Part Three
- **Sept. 21, 2006:** 'Thou shalt not have other gods besides me,' Part Two
- **Sept. 7, 2006:** 'Thou shalt not have other gods besides me,' Part One
- **Aug. 17, 2006:** 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor,' Part Three
- **Aug. 3:** 'Thou shalt not bear false witness

Ads by Google

[A Roman Catholic Site](#)

Answers your Catholic questions. Stop by. From the Franciscans.
www.OnceCatholic.org

[Got Catholic Guilt?](#)

Read BustedHalo.com 60% less guilt
www.bustedhalo.com

[Phoenix Catholic Churches](#)

Catholic Churches in Phoenix AZ. Website, address, maps & more.
DexOnline.com

[Catholic Singles Photos](#)

Free membership, photo gallery, and more. Meet Catholic singles now.
www.CatholicMingle.com



you out of the world, the world hates you. Remember the word I spoke to you, 'No slave is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

With the seventh Beatitude, Jesus does not promise worldly peace and easy comfort, but He does promise that those who "make peace" will be blessed. Making peace that will last is a costly endeavor, one that entails a share in Christ's Cross by which He reconciled the world to Himself and won for us the gift of genuine peace.

Peacemaking in an age of terror

Over the past 70 years, since the rise of Nazism in Germany, the atrocities of totalitarian regimes in other countries, and the terrible events of World War II, the Church has become increasingly aware of her role in promoting peace and justice. This is evident especially in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), found above all in the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World", *Gaudium et Spes* (Cf. #77-90). Here, we are reminded (#78), "Peace is more than the absence of war: it cannot be reduced to the maintenance of a balance of power between opposing forces nor does it arise out of despotic dominion, but it is appropriately called 'the effect of righteousness' (Is 32:17). It is the fruit of that right ordering of things with which the divine founder has invested human society and which must be actualized by man thirsting after an ever more perfect reign of justice."

It is worth noting that, already 42 years ago, *Gaudium et Spes* warned that (#79), "the savagery of war threatens to lead the combatants to barbarities, far surpassing those of former ages... In many cases terrorist methods are regarded as new strategies of war." While speaking of the need to make provision for conscientious objection under certain conditions, the Constitution affirmed (#79), "All those who

against thy neighbor,' Part Two

- **July 20: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor,' Part One**
- **July 6: 'Thou Shalt Not Steal,' Part Two**
- **June 15: 'Thou Shalt Not Steal'**
- **June 1: 'Thou Shalt Not commit Adultery,' Part Two**
- **May 18: 'Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery'**
- **May 4: 'Thou Shalt Not Covet': Avoiding Greed and Envy**
- **April 20: 'Thou Shalt Not Covet': Purity of Heart**
- **April 6: 'Thou Shalt Not Covet': Excessive Obsessions**
- **March 16: 'Thou Shalt Not Kill': Just War 2**
- **March 2: 'Thou Shalt Not Kill': Just War**
- **Feb. 16: 'Thou shalt not kill': Is the death penalty needed today?**
- **Feb. 2: 'Thou shalt not kill':**



enter the military service in loyalty to their country should look upon themselves as the custodians of the security and freedom of their fellow-countrymen; and when they carry out their duty properly, they are contributing to the maintenance of peace.”

Being a peacemaker in an age of terror is a daunting task but a necessary one, and one that will be blessed by the Lord. While we have differing roles to play in peace-making, depending on our place in society, we are all called to do our part:

“Since, moreover, human nature is weak and wounded by sin, the achievement of peace requires a constant effort to control the passions and unceasing vigilance by lawful authority. But this is not enough. Peace cannot be obtained on earth unless the welfare of man is safeguarded and people freely and trustingly share with one another the riches of their minds and their talents. A firm determination to respect the dignity of other men and women and other peoples along with the deliberate practice of fraternal love are absolutely necessary for the achievement of peace.” (#78)

It is worth remembering that the Nobel Peace Prize was bestowed in 1979 upon Mother Teresa of Calcutta. When she received the prize on Dec. 10 of that year, her acceptance speech began with the Prayer of St. Francis, “Lord, make me an instrument of your peace...” Then, she went on to say, “I feel the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a direct war, a direct killing.”

To be a peacemaker is to recognize the inestimable worth of every person and to stand up for their dignity and rights, most especially the least and most vulnerable among us. Those who do this will be called children of God.

Copyright 2007 The Catholic Sun.

Why abortion is evil yet still legal

- **Jan. 19: ‘Thou shalt not’: Why abortion is evil**
- **Jan. 5: ‘Thou shalt not’: Language of Love**

Copyright 2006-2007 The Catholic Sun Newspaper. All Rights Reserved. [Contact The Catholic Sun.](#)