

Happy Monday to all,

On this date, September 29 in 1988, the United Nations Peacekeeping Forces were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to recognize their contributions to maintaining international peace and security under difficult conditions. It acknowledged the efforts of these forces in preventing armed conflicts and fostering negotiation conditions.

The United Nations, after World War II, was inspired by the ideal “of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind”. Those who emerged from the horrors of war seemed to be more aware that security transcends national power, that no one is secure when anyone is insecure. Studies show that more UN Peacekeepers in conflict areas means fewer civilian deaths, less violence and a higher chance of lasting peace.

Catholic teaching on the essential nature of world peace emphasizes that true peace, or *shalom*, is rooted in justice, charity, and right relationship, and is achieved through the promotion of human dignity, the common good, and solidarity with those who are suffering. While traditionally allowing for a just war under strict conditions, there's a strong and growing preference for non-violent solutions, with Pope Francis calling for an end to war and a rejection of its justification in the modern era.

Poverty, oppression, political violence, and war are interconnected through complex relationships, creating cycles of instability. Research consistently demonstrates that a high incidence of violent conflict occurs in the world's poorest nations. While poverty itself does not directly cause violence, it functions as a powerful accelerant when combined with oppression, deep-seated grievances, and other forms of systemic injustice.

Catholic Charities service and resources combat poverty and oppression through both our direct services and long-term systemic change. Rooted in the principles of Catholic social teaching, our mission focuses on upholding the dignity of every human person and giving a preferential option to the poor and vulnerable.

At Catholic Charities, we understand that those living in poverty, those who are marginalized, often suffer negative impacts on their overall well-being. Therefore, Catholic Charities provides services that support the physical, mental, and spiritual health of our clients.

This includes comprehensive case management of complex cases and “wraparound” services that combine case management with medical and behavioral health support to help individuals achieve stability.

Catholic Charities operates according to the inspiring words of Pope Paul VI, “If you want peace, work for justice”.

Blessings to all,

Deacon Mike