

# Ten steps towards cultivating a culture of peace

## 1. Becoming informed

- 2001- 2010 United Nations International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World
- The UN Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace defines a culture of peace as a particular set of values, attitudes, traditions, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes, to try and solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations.
- World Council of Churches Decade to Overcome Violence
- Catholic and ecumenical gatherings in the Asia Pacific region have confirmed that a culture of peace is an urgent priority for our region. It is from our region that the language of cultivating a culture of peace has been adopted.

## 2. Helpful resources

- The theme of the 2004 Catholic Social Justice Sunday Statement is: [\*Cultivating a Culture of Peace\*](#)
- The National Council of Churches has produced an ecumenical resource kit for Social Justice Sunday. The title is *Security at all costs? A Christian Reflection on where to draw the line*
- The *2004 Social Justice Calendar* provides prayers, reflections and ideas for developing and celebrating a Culture of Peace.

## 3. Surfing the net

- 2001- 2010 United Nations International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World [www3.unesco.org/iycp/](http://www3.unesco.org/iycp/).
- World Council of Churches Decade to Overcome Violence [www.ncca.org.au](http://www.ncca.org.au).
- Amnesty International [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org).
- Pax Christi [www.paxchristi.org.au](http://www.paxchristi.org.au).

## 4. Working for peace

Peace is more than the absence of war. Peace requires our constructive efforts to overcome violence and to build a culture of peace through our courage and commitment to living justly and with compassion, becoming peacemakers rather than peacekeepers. Working for peace challenges us to overcome the spirit and logic of violence by addressing the practice of violence, both direct and structural, in our homes and communities, nationally and internationally.

## 5. Starting the journey towards inner peace

Peace is a challenging journey. It will not happen because we decide to have peace, but requires our conscious action. The journey towards peace begins within our own hearts and lives. Inner peace is not an end in itself. Our actions come from our being.

## 6. Cultivating active non- violence as a way of life

We can promote and practise non-violence as a way of life, being mindful of the

consequences of our actions, fostering cooperation and collaboration rather than competition, allowing conflict and its resolution, following up the expression of anger with forgiveness and reconciliation.

### **7. Participating in family and community peacemaking**

It is in the home where most violence occurs in society – assault, rape, incest. Within the family, one learns to resolve conflict either by violence or by seeking resolution.

### **8. Building relationships of peace**

To develop peaceful communities we need to develop relationships which affirm and respect the dignity of others. We are challenged by the many differences between us. Our individual differences can be seen as gift, as fruit of peace rather than seeds of discrimination and mistrust.

### **9. Being peaceful caretakers of our planet Earth**

How can we protect and care for our planet? Are we at war with the Earth through human excesses and waste or are we fostering a “green peace”? There are consequences of pollution and limits to available resources.

### **10. Prayer**

- Use the accompanying [Prayer Card](#) prepared by the ACSJC for personal prayer, in schools and parishes, and for family and group prayer time.
- People all over the world are working together to bring peace to our hearts and our planet through the prayer May Peace Prevail on Earth. This prayer for world peace carries a message of great hope and healing. It transcends barriers of nationality, race and religion to unite humanity in a call for the common good of all life on Earth.

For more information: The World Peace Prayer Society: [www.worldpeace.org](http://www.worldpeace.org)

