Pope Leo XIV calls us to “disarm our hearts to build peace”

In an international context marked by armed conflicts and increased military spending, Pope Leo XIV dedicates his prayer intention for March to **disarmament and peace,** recalling the words with which he greeted the world at the beginning of his pontificate – “Peace be with you” – a motto that has become a constant call to reconciliation. Through the Pope’s Worldwide Prayer Network, the Holy Father exhorts the Church and all people of goodwill to reject the logic of violence and to build securities founded on trust, justice, and fraternity among peoples.

Through the “Pray with the Pope” campaign, the Pope is sending out a profound and hopeful plea for peace, reminding us that God “created us for communion, not for war, for fraternity, not for destruction.” In his prayer, Leo XIV asks for the gift of peace “and the strength to make it a reality” in the concrete history of our peoples.

The Holy Father also prays for the disarmament of “our hearts of hatred, resentment, and indifference,” emphasizing that true security does not come from fear or from control, but from mutual “trust, justice and solidarity among peoples.” He specifically prays that political leaders and heads of state “may have the courage to abandon projects of death, halt the arms race, and place the lives of the most vulnerable at the center.” In addition, he firmly rejects that the nuclear threat should continue to condition the future of humanity.

A world increasingly weaponized

The Pope’s prayer intention is situated within a global context marked by increasingly sustained military spending. According to recent data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), fueled by the war between Russia and Ukraine, other armed conflicts, and geopolitical tensions, global military spending increased for a tenth consecutive year in 2024, reaching 2.7 billion dollars.

This 9.4 % increase over the previous year brought worldwide military spending to the highest level SIPRI has ever recorded. As a result, the global military

burden (the percentage of the global gross domestic product spent on the military) rose to 2.5%. In countries affected by major or high-intensity armed conflicts in 2024, this burden averaged 4.4%, compared to 1.9% for countries not experiencing conflicts.

These figures highlight the stark contrast regarding the resources allocated to the weapons industry and the urgent human developmental needs, social care, and peacebuilding, especially for the most vulnerable populations.

A prayer calling for conversion

It is not necessary to highlight the centrality that praying for peace has had in the Church's recent teaching. Back in January 2000, Pope Francis dedicated *The Pope Video* and his prayer intention to the "Promotion of World Peace." Again in April 2023, he focused on this urgent need, asking prayers "For a Non-Violent Culture."

On his part, Pope Leo XIV has confirmed that peace remains one of the highest priorities of his pontificate. He spoke of a "disarmed and disarming" peace in his first Urbi et Orbi blessing. In his 2026 World Day of Peace Message, he once again insisted on the urgency of deactivating "confrontational logic," substituting it with paths of reconciliation, justice, and fraternity among peoples.

For its part, the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network underscores that this intention is not limited to denouncing structural violence. Rather, it proposes a spiritual and concrete journey of personal conversion and communitarian commitment. Prayer, dialogue, peace education, and solidarity among peoples are presented as forces capable of transforming human relationships and international dynamics.

With his March prayer intention, the Pope renews his appeal that humanity choose life, fraternity, and peace, trusting that communal prayer can open hearts to hope.

Pray with the Pope for disarmament and peace
(23 languages)

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