Pope Leo XIV urges world leaders to lay down weapons

Pope Leo XIV has called on world leaders to lay down their weapons and choose "encounter" over domination.

"Let those who have weapons lay them down!", the Pope urged on Easter Sunday in his traditional *Urbi et Orbi* ('To the City and the World') message.

Speaking to the tens of thousands of pilgrims gathered in St Peter's Square, Pope Leo urged "those who have the power to unleash wars" to chose peace.

This should not be a peace "imposed by force", he stressed, but one achieved through dialogue – "not with the desire to dominate others, but to encounter them".

The 'globalisation of indifference'

Pope Leo warned that the world is "growing accustomed to violence". We are "becoming indifferent", he said, not only to the deaths of thousands of people, but to the "hatred and division" war causes, as well as its "economic and social consequences".

Borrowing a phrase from the late Pope Francis, Pope Leo warned of the "ever-increasing 'globalisation of indifference'".

"We cannot continue to be indifferent!", he urged. "We cannot resign ourselves to evil!". For this reason, he said, he would be leading a prayer vigil for peace next Saturday, April 11th, in St Peter's Basilica.

Nonviolence and 'true strength'

At Easter, the Pope said, Jesus won victory over death, and thereby "defeated once and for all the ancient adversary, the prince of this world".

However, Pope Leo stressed, the power with which Christ won this victory is "entirely nonviolent", based on a love which "creates and generates", "forgives and redeems". This spirit of love and forgiveness, he said, is the "true strength"

that establishes peace, and fosters relationships amongst individuals and societies.

Bringing his *Urbi et Orbi* message to a close, the Pope stressed that Easter peace is not merely “the silence of weapons” but also an inner peace which “touches and transforms the heart of each one of us”.

“Let us allow ourselves to be transformed by the peace of Christ”, Pope Leo urged, entrusting to the Lord “all hearts that suffer and await the true peace that only he can give.”

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