

Pope: May the Hiroshima anniversary serve as a call to pursue peace

In a message on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing, Pope Leo XIV urges the international community to renew its commitment to pursue lasting peace for our whole human family.

“Nuclear arms offend our shared humanity and betray the dignity of creation, whose harmony we are called to safeguard” Pope Leo XIV said in a message addressed to Bishop Alexis Shirama of Hiroshima, and read by the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Francisco Escalante Molina during the celebration of Mass for Peace in Hiroshima.

Marking 80 years since the nuclear bombing by US forces of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II, in which between 150,000 and 246,000 people died, the Pope said the “the two cities remain living reminders of the profound horrors wrought by nuclear weapons.”

He expressed his respect for the survivors – the *hibakusha* – whose stories he said, “are a timely summons to all of us to build a safer world and foster a climate of peace.”

The Pope recalled the reiterated appeal of his predecessor, Pope Francis: “War is always a defeat for humanity” and noted that true peace demands “the courageous laying down of weapons, especially those with the power to cause an indescribable catastrophe.”

“Nuclear arms offend our shared humanity and also betray the dignity of creation, whose harmony we are called to safeguard,” he said.

Illusion of security founded on mutually assured destruction

Quoting Pope Francis, the Pope said that in a time “of mounting global tensions and conflicts”, Hiroshima and Nagasaki stand as symbols of memory that, he said, “urge us to reject the illusion of security founded on mutually, assured destruction.”

Instead, he continued, “we must forge a global ethic rooted in justice, fraternity and the common good.”

The Holy Father concluded expressing his prayer that this anniversary may serve as “a call to the international community to renew its commitment to pursuing lasting peace for our whole human family - “a peace that is unarmed and disarming.”

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