



Sunday is **A DAY OF PEACE**

From Sacred Scripture

John 20:19, 21-23

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you!" [Jesus] said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

From the Mass, Source and Summit of Life

Christ's atoning sacrifice for our sins on the cross makes reconciliation possible. Peace and harmony are possible. Through the restoration of our relationship with God, we can begin to recognize the other relationships in our lives that are also in need of healing. Reconciliation requires an admission of our own responsibility for sin before God. At every Mass, we start with the Penitential Act, acknowledging our sins and announce our trust in God's mercy. "May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life" (*The Roman Missal*).

At the Rite of Peace, the celebrant prays that the peace of Christ fills our hearts. As a sign of hope, we extend a sign of peace to those around us. "Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you, look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen. The peace of the Lord be with you always. And with your spirit" (*The Roman Missal*).

From the Riches of Our Faith

The Sign of Peace is more than simply a greeting. It is more a prayer for reconciliation as a foretaste of communion in the Body of Christ.

Among many rich cultural expressions of reconciliation, the beloved Polish custom of Oplatek, or the Christmas wafer, is a fascinating one. Before the meal is served, family members break a piece of their Christmas wafers to share with the others in their household, wishing each other well, asking for forgiveness for misunderstandings, and making peace with one another. There's even a wafer to be shared with the animals of the house! We need signs and symbols that move us to true reconciliation and peace.

"With compassion, Christ declares the sabbath for doing good rather than harm, for saving life rather than killing" (CCC, 2173).

Sunday, because of its principal place as the primary day of worship, is also a day for laying aside jealousies, anger, and ill-will. The Lord demands our worship, but that worship may not precede the forgiveness of the sins and faults of our brothers and sisters. We are called to bring God's peace, mercy, and love into our world.



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Live It!

- If you need reconciliation with a family member or a member of the wider community, be the first to hold out an olive branch. Reflect on a person or area of your city, country, the world that needs peace.
- Celebrate the Sacrament of Penance (Confession). Consider going together as a family for each person to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Pray together the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and feel the warmth of God's forgiving love.

Sacred Scripture throughout the Week

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| 1. Matthew 5:9 | Blessed are the peacemakers. |
| 2. Matthew 5:23-24 | Reconcile with others before offering gifts at the altar. |
| 3. John 14:27 | My peace I give to you. |
| 4. John 16:33 | I have conquered the world. |
| 5. 2 Thessalonians 3:16 | May the Lord of peace give you peace. |
| 6. 1 John 4:20 | Love others as you love God. |

Remember, Sunday is a Day of Peace.
