

## **Reflection on the Holy Father's Call for Peace, Human Dignity, and Moral Responsibility in Public Life**

Ottawa — In light of recent public commentary surrounding the Holy Father's appeals for peace, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops' (CCCCB) Communications Service wishes to reiterate several principles of Catholic teaching that remain especially relevant in times of war and international tension.

Pope Leo XIV's witness in such moments is moral and pastoral, not partisan. His words remind the world that peace is never advanced by contempt, that leadership requires restraint, and that the suffering of innocent people should always be avoided as much as possible.

Catholic teaching holds that war is subject to strict conditions of moral legitimacy. The use of force cannot be presumed to be just a priori; it must satisfy grave and demanding criteria, and may be considered only as a last resort. Even where force is judged permissible, the protection of civilians remains a fundamental obligation. The destruction of essential civilian infrastructure and the resulting suffering of non-combatants are to be avoided.

It is also important to recall that imagery or rhetoric presenting political leaders in terms that belong uniquely to Christ and His saving work is wholly unfitting. In addition to being disrespectful, such representations blur the proper distinction between faith and political power, distorting the meaning of both.

As a Catholic institution with a national mandate, the CCCC does not intervene in the internal political affairs of other countries. At the same time, recent events make it opportune to underscore the moral principles that should inform public life everywhere, including truthfulness, humility, reverence, and concern for the innocent.

The faithful in Canada are encouraged to continue praying for the Holy Father, for peace among nations, and for all who suffer because of war.

Additional resource:

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Safeguarding Peace

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