

# QUAEDAM ENCYCLICAL OF POPE PIUS XII ON PUBLIC PRAYERS FOR WORLD PEACE

*Pius XII*

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## IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE HOLY SEE

Venerable Brethren:

Peace and Apostolic Benediction.

Today there are appearing certain tokens which give clear proof that the vast community of nations, after such destruction and ruin brought on by the long and terrible war, is resolutely turned to the saving paths of peace.

2. At the moment, a more willing ear is given to those who are striving to restore lost prosperity, to heal discords and to rebuild from the mighty ruins under which we groan than to those who are inciting to mutual and bitter dispute, to hate and dissension, from which nothing else can arise but fresh and more serious evils to the nations.

3. Nevertheless, although We and the Christian people have no light motives of solace and of hope for better times, there are not lacking circumstances and events which cause anxiety to our paternal heart.

4. Even though the war has ceased in nearly every land, still benign peace has not yet dawned on the minds and hearts of all men; indeed, the sky is still heavy with threatening clouds.

5. We, on our part, do not cease to do all in our power to stave off from the family of nations dangers of threatening disasters; but when human means are unequal to the task, then do We appeal in prayer first of all to God; further, We also exhort all our children in Christ, throughout the world, to implore, together with Us, in ardent prayer the Divine assistance.

6. For this reason, it was comforting for Us in past years to appeal earnestly to all - especially to the young so dear to us - to crowd around the altar of the great Mother of God during the month of May imploring the end of a cruel war; so now, similarly today, by means of this encyclical letter, We invite you not to cease from this pious practice and further to prayers add resolutions for Christian renewal and salutary works of penance.

7. Above all, speak to the Virgin Mother of God and our most tender Mother words of most heartfelt thanks for having obtained, through her powerful intercession, the long desired termination of that great world conflagration, and also for so many other graces obtained from the Most High.

8. At the same time, implore her, with renewed prayers, that at long last there may shine forth, as a gift from Heaven, mutual, fraternal and complete peace among all nations and the longed for harmony among all social classes.

Let there be an end to dissensions that redound to no one's advantage.

Let there be a reconciliation of disputes that often sow the seeds of further misfortunes.

Let international relations, public and private, be fittingly strengthened.

Let religion, the foster mother of all virtues, enjoy the liberty to which she is entitled.

And let men set about their peaceful work of abundant production for the common welfare - with justice their guide and charity their motive.

9. But you are aware, Venerable Brethren, that our prayers are most readily welcomed by the Most Blessed Virgin when they are not merely fleeting and empty words but the outpouring of hearts adorned with the required virtues.

10. See to it, then, as your apostolic zeal will suggest, that these prayers in common during the month of May are matched by a corresponding reform and revival of Christian conduct.

11. For only from Christian virtues may we hope to see the course of history take its proper, orderly direction, and men empowered not only to achieve prosperity in this world with God's help but also to enjoy, with the infusion of sanctifying grace, unending happiness in Heaven.

12. But there is another special reason today which brings affliction and keen anxiety to our hearts. We mean to refer to the Holy Places of Palestine, which have long been disturbed.

13. Indeed, if there exists any place that ought to be most dear to every cultured person, surely it is Palestine, where, from the dawn of antiquity, such great light of truth shone for all men, where the Word of God made flesh announced, through the angels' choir, peace to all men; where, finally, Christ hanging on the Cross acquired salvation for all mankind, with arms outstretched as if He were inviting all nations to fraternal harmony; and where He consecrated His precept of charity with the shedding of His blood.

14. We desire, therefore, Venerable Brethren, that supplications be poured forth to the Most Holy Virgin for this request: that the situation in Palestine may at long last be settled justly and thereby concord and peace be also happily established.

15. We place great confidence in the most powerful patronage of Our Heavenly Mother- a patronage which, during this month dedicated to her, innocent children especially will implore in a holy crusade of prayer.

16. It will be precisely your task to invite and stimulate them with all diligence - not only children but also fathers and mothers, who in great numbers should give them leadership and example.

17. We know well that We have never appealed in vain to the ardent zeal which inflames your hearts. That is why We seem to enjoy already the sight of dense multitudes of children, of men and women, crowding the churches to beg from the great Mother of God all the graces and favors of which we stand in need.

18. May she, who has given us Jesus, obtain for us that all those who have wandered from the path of rectitude may straightway return to Him, moved by salutary contrition.

19. May she obtain for us - she is our kindest Mother, who has shown herself always, in the face of every danger, our powerful helper and channel of grace - may she obtain for us, We say, that even in the midst of the grievous need surrounding us a just solution will be found for disputes, and that a firm and free peace will finally dawn resplendent for the Church and for all nations.

20. Some years ago, as all will remember, while the late war was still in its fury, when human means showed themselves to be uncertain and inadequate to that terrible conflagration, We addressed our fervent prayers to the all merciful Redeemer, invoking the powerful patronage of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

21. And even as our predecessor of immortal memory, Leo XIII, at the dawn of the twentieth century saw fit to consecrate the whole human race to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, so We have likewise, in the guise of representative of the whole human family which He redeemed, desired to dedicate it in turn to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary.

22. It is our wish, consequently, that wherever the opportunity suggests itself, this consecration be made in the various dioceses as well as in each of the parishes and families. And We are confident that abundant blessings and favors from Heaven will surge forth from this private and public consecration.

23. In token of these blessings, and in pledge of our paternal affection, We impart from a full heart the Apostolic Benediction to each of you, Venerable Brethren, to all those who make generous answer to this our letter of exhortation, and particularly to the numerous throngs of our most dear children.

Given at Rome at St. Peter's, the first day of May of the year 1948, the tenth of our Pontificate.

**PIUS XII**

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*Source: vatican.va*