

ANYONE CAN BECOME A PEACE BUILDER

by Bro FRANCESCO DILEO OFMCap

! Queen of Peace" is one of the titles that the Church attributes to the Madonna when reciting the litanies, during particular celebrations or at the end of the Rosary. After this line the faithful invoke: "Pray for us".

Placing all humanity under the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary, Her divine Son, from the throne of the cross, which from an instrument of torture and death was transformed into a banner of love and glory, wanted to offer each of us, pilgrims of the world, from all over and of all ages, a model and a support, especially during periods of tribulations.

In the particular period we are going through, plagued by the multiplication of conflicts in different parts of the earth and, above all, by the risk that hostilities between Israel and Hamas and between Israel and Iran may expand to other areas with unimaginable consequences, the concerns expressed by various representatives of European governments should lead us not to an attitude of fear, but of reflection and prayer, remembering the promise given by the "Lady all dressed in white, brighter than the sun" to the

three little shepherds of Fatima: "In the end, my Immaculate Heart will triumph [...] and a period of peace will be granted to the world."

But the prerequisite for achieving this perspective, which dissolves fears by kindling hope, is conversion, ours and of others.

For this reason, following the teachings of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina and looking at the example he left us, we are called to a continuous revision of our behaviours, to become models for those who are mistaken, to implore from the Lord the gift of grace for those who are blinded by the thirst for power and to spread the Gospel, an indispensable condition to create an era of Love, where peace is only one of its expressions. Let us accept the invitation of the holy Brother, who exhorted and exhorts: "Let us appease the wrath of heaven by returning to Him in the simplicity of faith. Let us renounce the comforts of life and the world in fact, in deed and not only in word. May presumption and pride be far from us, along with rivalry and dissension with our neighbour. Let us pray with humility in the secrecy of our hearts, that peace may soon be granted, that what Jesus deigns to prepare for those who are faithful to Him be ac-

complished" (Letters III, p. 105).

It is not a task beyond our strength, because no believer is left alone to bear on his shoulders the burden of his own pains and those of humanity. Padre Pio allowed himself to be guided and drew support and strength from the maternal help of the Virgin Mary.

Let us learn to follow him also on the path of confident abandonment to the protection of the "Queen of Peace" and we too will become capable of contributing to offering humanity true happiness, which is often rejected because it is not understood, and that peace which can only blossom if the many hearts dried up by selfishness allow themselves to be irrigated by grace, listening to the exhortation that the Madonna addressed in Cana of Galilee, standing beside Jesus: "Do whatever he tells you" (John 2:5).

Exhorting to take and honour this commitment, I wish each of the readers to live the present Marian month with their gaze turned "beyond", towards the horizon where Love shines without sunset, which we cannot reach alone, but by taking care of each other. ❧

© copyright, all rights reserved

