

WAKE UP THE WORLD! Reflections with Pope Francis

You are invited to prayerfully spend time with the following quotations and reflection questions and share your insights in local communities and/or theological reflection groups.

From *The Joy of the Gospel*

Our world is being torn apart by wars and violence, and wounded by a widespread individualism which divides human beings, setting them against one another as they pursue their own well-being. (99)

Today in many places we hear a call for greater security. But until exclusion and inequality in society and between peoples are reversed, it will be impossible to eliminate violence.... When a society — whether local, national or global — is willing to leave a part of itself on the fringes, no political programs or resources spent on law enforcement or surveillance systems can indefinitely guarantee tranquility. (59)

From *Laudato si': On care of our common home*

The current global situation engenders a feeling of instability and uncertainty, which in turn becomes “a seedbed for collective selfishness.” When people become self-centered and self-enclosed, their greed increases.... As these attitudes become more widespread, social norms are respected only to the extent that they do not clash with personal needs.... Obsession with a consumerist lifestyle, above all when few

people are capable of maintaining it, can only lead to violence and mutual destruction. (204)

In the end, a world of exacerbated consumption is at the same time a world which mistreats life in all its forms. (230)

From “7 September 2013 Vigil of Prayer for Peace”

Let everyone be moved to look into the depths of his or her conscience and listen to that word which says: Leave behind the self-interest that hardens your heart, overcome the indifference that makes your heart insensitive towards others, conquer your deadly reasoning, and open yourself to dialogue and reconciliation....rebuild the harmony that has been shattered. (3)



For reflection and discussion

- What does the phrase “a culture of peace and nonviolence” mean to you? What attitudes and actions would foster such a culture?
- What connections do you see between social exclusion, inequality and consumerism and the violence we are experiencing in our world today? How do you see such connections reflected in your society?

- How can you be instrumental in overcoming the dominant culture of individualism and indifference and building a culture of nonviolence and peace?
- The recent global response to forced migration has been marked by hospitality and great generosity, but also by indifference and hostility fueled by fear and self-interest. As you look into your own heart, what has characterized your response to the refugees' plight? In what ways might you concretely express solidarity with our refugee sisters and brothers?