

Walking Together for World Peace

Request for Cooperation in Building a Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons

August 6, 2024

To: Diocesan bishops, superiors of religious and missionary orders, presidents of Catholic educational institutions, and directors of Catholic institutions

+ Peace in Christ

Next year will mark the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings. We will also be celebrating the Holy Jubilee, and it is hoped that efforts will be made in line with its intentions.

The long-standing cry of the people of the world, especially of hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors), for a world without nuclear weapons came to fruition in July 2017 with the United Nations adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). This treaty entered into force on January 22, 2021 with Holy See among the first countries to sign and ratify it.

On November 24, 2019, Pope Francis visited the atomic-bombed cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima and delivered messages calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons. At the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, Pope Francis said, “The use of atomic energy for purposes of war is today, more than ever, a crime not only against the dignity of human beings but against any possible future for our common home. The use of atomic energy for purposes of war is immoral, just as the possessing of nuclear weapons is immoral.”

Supporting the peace efforts of Pope Francis, the bishops of our four arch/dioceses, which have suffered from the development, testing, transport, possession, use, or threat of use of nuclear weapons:

- the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, New Mexico, whose jurisdiction includes the Los Alamos National Laboratory, where the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were developed and manufactured
- the Archdiocese of Seattle, Washington, whose jurisdiction includes the site of the largest number of deployed nuclear weapons in the United States
- the Diocese of Hiroshima and the Archdiocese of Nagasaki, Japan, which suffered greatly from the devastating effects of the atomic bombs

prayed and dialogued together for the hibakusha of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and other nuclear victims around the world and for world peace through a

Pilgrimage for Peace and various peace events in August 2023. On August 9, we signed a declaration expressing our intention to create a partnership with the aim of realizing a world without nuclear weapons. We then spent a year honing its focus, preparing its bylaws and more to promote and expand the partnership based on this declaration.

To extend our vision and bring more attention to this urgent issue, we are seeking partners willing to journey with us for a world without nuclear weapons. That is why the Lord Jesus Christ said, “If two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matthew 18.19-20). Jesus Himself has promised to help us.

Jesus Christ our Lord is the leader of the Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons. Partners (groups, organizations, and other entities) willing to journey with us are those who desire to live in Christ’s peace. Jesus taught us the importance of our mission to work for peace: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matthew 5.9).

To this end, we call on various entities within the Roman Catholic Church, including (arch)dioceses, religious orders, missionary societies, educational institutions, and other organizations, to join the Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons. Together, this voluntary international network will aim to remember the destruction caused by nuclear weapons, journey together to prevent nuclear harm, and protect against future nuclear harm to realize a world without nuclear weapons.

If you are encouraged by this work for peace, we invite you to review our bylaws on our website and join the Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons (<https://pwnw.org/e/>).

Peace,

Most Reverend John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, New Mexico

Most Reverend Paul D. Etienne, Archbishop of Seattle, Washington

Most Reverend Peter Michiaki Nakamura, Archbishop of Nagasaki, Japan

Most Reverend Joseph Mitsuaki Takami, Archbishop Emeritus, Archdiocese of Nagasaki, Japan

Most Reverend Alexis Mitsuru Shirahama, Bishop of Hiroshima, Japan

Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons

Objectives and Activities

This voluntary partnership, based on the principles of Remembering, Journeying Together, and Protecting that Pope Francis, during his visit to the atomic bombed cities, called “moral imperatives” that “can open a path to peace” (Address of the Holy Father at the Hiroshima Peace Park on November 24, 2019), shall carry out activities to: (1) remember the destruction caused by nuclear weapons, (2) journey together to prevent nuclear harm, and (3) protect against nuclear harm.

(1) Suggested Activities for Remembering

To learn about the tragic history of the destruction caused by nuclear weapons, to examine the present situation around nuclear weapons, and to pray for the victims and for peace,

- Create educational opportunities to learn about the destruction caused by nuclear weapons and the dangers of nuclear proliferation, or opportunities to visit sites of nuclear devastation;
- Schedule Masses and/or Eucharistic Adoration devotions for the victims of the atomic bombings, nuclear testing, uranium mining, as well as all nuclear victims around the world, and for the realization of a world without nuclear weapons;
- Participate in acts of charity, fasting, and almsgiving or other sacrifices, and recite the two prayers specifically selected for the “Partnership for a World without Nuclear Weapons” (see below), or other prayers for peace.

(2) Suggested Activities for Journeying Together

To think, act, and support each other,

- Listen to, and dialogue with, hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors), downwinders, uranium miners, peace activists, nuclear engineers, military personnel, diplomats, and others;
- Think about what can be done, and take action, for the abolition of nuclear weapons;
- Raise funds to support the activities of the three objectives (if possible):
 - (a) Support activities to promote the ratification and expansion of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;
 - (b) Support all nuclear victims around the world and the

restoration of the environment from radiation contamination;
and
(c) Support activities for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

(3) Suggested Activities for Protecting

To protect life and the environment from nuclear harm caused by the development, production, possession and use of nuclear weapons,

- Organize activities to promote the signing and ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;
- Lobby political leaders to redirect funds currently used for the development, production, and possession of nuclear weapons to the relief of hibakusha, downwinders, and all other nuclear victims, the restoration of the environment, and the protection of the earth.

Specific activities are at the discretion of each organization, and expenses for such activities will be borne by each organization.

The partnership bylaws can be found on the website of the Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons (<https://pwnw.org/e/>).

Prayer for World Peace

(Adapted from Saint Pope John Paul II's prayer)

*O great and merciful God, Lord of peace and life,
You have a plan for peace, not suffering.
You condemn war and violence.*

*You are for those who are near and those who are far away.
You will bring peace to those near and far, and to all races and nations. You
sent Jesus to bring peace to those near and far, to make all races and nations
one family.*

*War threatens every creature in the created world. We do not want a cycle of
violence and death that threatens all creatures of creation.
Hear, O God, the heartfelt cry of all people. We ask you to end the wars and
conflicts that are taking place on this earth as soon as possible.*

*We ask that those who hold the keys to humanity's destiny not use the logic of
revenge and retribution. Help ensure that nuclear weapons are never used
again on this earth.*

*Send the Holy Spirit so that we may find new ways to solve problems through
dialogue, patience, and courage.*

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for the intercession of Mary, Queen of Peace

*O Mary, Mother of Christ, Queen of Peace,
We ask for your help in bringing about the peace that Christ, our Redeemer,
has brought to this earth. May Christ remove from the hearts of all people
everything that threatens peace. May Christ transform us into witnesses of
truth, justice, and love. May Christ shine his light into the hearts of the
political leaders of the nations so that they may bring about not only the
welfare of people, but also peace without fear of nuclear annihilation, the
precious gift of peace that protects all life.*

*We pray to Christ, Prince of Peace, through your intercession, Mary, Our
Mother. Amen.*

Membership Application (Declaration of Intent)

We commit to work together to build the Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons and to join its network as

an **Endorsing Organization** or a **Governing Organization** (Please circle one).

Date:

Name of Organization:

Address:

Name of Representative:

Contact Information

Tel:

Fax:

Administrative Contact:

Email address:

Do you agree to have your organization's name on the Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons website?

Yes

No

If you wish to withdraw from the Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons, please notify us in writing of your intention to do so in accordance with Article 7 of the Bylaws.