

Session 7: The Peacemakers

What We Found

Peacemakers, not peace-lovers: *shalom* is wholeness and right order, not quiet (a cemetery is quiet), and St. Augustine's definition anchors the Church's: peace is the tranquility of order (CCC 2304). Peacemakers are called sons of God because peacemaking is the family business: the Son is our peace, making peace by the blood of his cross (Ephesians 2:14; Colossians 1:20), so it costs. We faced Matthew 10:34 squarely: Jesus renounces the false peace of suppressed truth while giving the peace the world cannot (John 14:27); the peacemaker refuses both silence and contempt. And the work starts small: reconciliation outranks worship in the queue (Matthew 5:23-24), within the scope of Romans 12:18.

Voices of the Church

ST. AUGUSTINE · CITY OF GOD XIX.13

"The peace of all things is the tranquility of order." St. Augustine's definition, forged while Rome's order was collapsing around him, is quoted by the Catechism itself (CCC 2304). Order here is not rigidity but rightness: each thing in its proper place and relation, God first. From this definition everything tonight follows: quiet without rightness is not peace, and restoring rightness sometimes breaks a quiet.

Application (ours, not the saint's): before asking "how do I stop this conflict?", the Augustinian question is "what order is broken here, and what would rightness look like?"

ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA · HER LIFE AND LETTERS

St. Catherine of Siena, Doctor of the Church, spent the last years of her short life as a peacemaker in act: writing letter after letter to popes, princes, and feuding Italian cities, traveling to Avignon in 1376 to urge Pope Gregory XI to return to Rome, and laboring for peace between Florence and the papacy. She teaches, in substance, that peace among Christians is won by speaking the truth with boldness and with love together: never by flattery, and never by hatred.

A woman with no office and no army moved the politics of Europe by refusing both the false peace of silence and the false war of contempt. That is this beatitude with a pen in its hand.

ST. JOHN PAUL II · MESSAGE FOR THE WORLD DAY OF PEACE, 2002

St. John Paul II, addressing the world months after September 11, built his message on a double thesis that gives this beatitude its adult form: no peace without justice, no justice without forgiveness. He teaches in substance that justice pursued without forgiveness curdles into cycles of retribution, and that forgiveness, far from opposing or canceling justice, is what keeps the demand for justice human; real peace requires both, and forgiveness is not weakness but the choice of a strong soul refusing to let evil set the terms.

A pope who lived under both Nazism and Communism, and who forgave the man who shot him, had the standing to say it.

Live It This Week

· Memorize Matthew 5:9; recite 5:3-9 each morning.

- Take one concrete step toward one broken order this week: go, own, hear, or bless (see Build 6). If contact is unsafe or impossible, take the fourth: pray for them by name, daily.
- At Mass this Sunday, offer the sign of peace deliberately, holding in mind the person it would cost you most to offer it to.
- Read Matthew 5:10-16 before Session 8: the final session, and the reveal of the thread we have been tracking since night one.

Memory Verse · Matthew 5:9

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

Catechism References

CCC 2302-2306; on Christ our peace, 2305; context on legitimate defense and war, 2307-2317

Before Next Session

Read Matthew 5:10-16 before Session 8: the final session, and the reveal of a thread we have tracked since night one.