

Congo Week 2024 Sermon

1. Biblical Text: Matthew 5:9
2. Theme: Becoming Agents of Peace

1. The concept of Peace

Peace is defined not as the absence of conflict or the end of a state of war, but « as the multiple reality, spiritual, interpersonal, social and even ecological of an order and harmony which remember creation at the same time as they announce the eschatological recapitulation » (J.- Y., LACOSTE (dir), Dictionnaire critique de théologie, Paris, PUF, 1998, p.839). The concept of peace is wholeness in a person's entire life on this earth. Peace is also the concrete result of good relationships with God, with each other and with creation.

2. The God of peace

Several times in the New Testament, God is called the « God of peace » (Romans 15:33; 16 :20) and Jesus Christ is also called the « Lord of peace » (2 Thessalonians 3 :16). Peace is one of God's characteristics. It's the one of God gives us as Jesus Christ declares: « I leave you peace, I give you my peace. I don't give it to you like the world gives it » (John 14 :27). There is a great heritage here that Jesus left us. This passage clearly tells us that there is the apparent peace that the world gives and the real peace that Jesus Christ gives us as Christians. The peace that the world gives people is ephemeral and while that of Jesus gives us forever the perfect joy and the grace of living in sincerely as brothers and sisters in Christ.

3. Peacemakers

Christians are called to continue the work of peace with all people in the world (Hebrews 12:14). It is in this sense that the Lord calls those blessed who pursue peace (Matthew 5:9). However, to bring peace to others, you must first be reconciled with God. In other words, one must possess the peace that God gives

within oneself. It's in this case that one can become a peacemaker and be called a son of God.

God needs men and women, sons and daughters, who not only have the peace of Jesus Christ within themselves, but who, having found peace, strive to provide it to others. Becoming agents of peace means bringing reconciliation with those close to us, in family, at work, at church, at school, at University, in associations, in social and international relations.

Finally becoming agents of peace means bringing reconciliation in the nations of the world which are divided by armed conflicts and wars which degrade the human being created in the image of God.

2 Corinthians 5:18 says: "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation". This passage of the Bible isn't just a suggestion, but it's for all Christians- a divine calling in a world full of a suffering war, and division, may we step into our role as peacemakers, bringing healing and justice where there's pain and unity where there's division.

We close this sermon with this biblical passage:

"Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes!" (Psalm 133:1-2)

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