



# *The peace entrusted to us*

*Letter to our  
brethren*  
JAN 2026

Dear Piarist brothers and sisters,

**A word as longed for as it is fragile:**  
Peace.

It is one of the most frequently spoken words, yet one of the most wounded of our time. We invoke it at Christmas, we long for it in speeches, and those who suffer cry out for it... yet, all too often, it remains absent from our lives and our coexistence.

Today, peace resounds insistently, but with little reconciling force, in **a world marked by multiple conflicts**, persistent social tensions, polarization that wears down coexistence, and violence – sometimes silent – that infiltrates daily life. Pope Francis spoke lucidly of a *third world war fought piecemeal*<sup>1</sup>, and that expression still starkly describes our time. Not even Christmas is able to secure the respect of armistices. Thus, we live surrounded by conflicts that accustom us to noise, distrust, and a background restlessness that ends up lodging in the heart and can turn into fear – a very bad companion, especially when we are asked to discern and make common decisions, including when we are called to vote.

Faced with this situation, it is no coincidence that **for Pope Leo XIV, peace**

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1.- Address of Pope Francis to the United Nations Security Council, June 14, 2023.

**has been central to his pontificate** from the very evening of his election as Bishop of Rome. He reminds us that the paschal greeting of Jesus, “Peace be with you,” *not only wishes for something but brings about a definitive change in the one who receives it and, in this way, in all reality*<sup>2</sup>. For this reason, he speaks of the *most silent of revolutions*, repeated every day by the Church throughout the world.

True peace is not born from theoretical formulas, but **from the experience of those who live it in real, wounded contexts** and sustain it with humble hope.

At what moments have we experienced that, even while speaking of peace, the heart remains restless and our coexistence is affected?

### At Christmas, Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Christmas introduces us to a paradox: We hear proclaimed the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy, where Jesus is presented as the Prince of Peace (Sar Shalom), and yet the contrast is evident. He is not born into a pacified world, nor does he bring an imposed peace or an apparent triumph. He is born in fragility, on the periphery, in the open and exposed.

Christian peace does not begin by eliminating conflict; it begins **by dwelling within it in a different way**. Gospel peace is about a way of being, not only an external *situation*.

### January 1: Peace as a task entrusted to us.

It is neither accidental nor merely symbolic that the Church has placed the World Day of Peace on the first day of the year. To begin the calendar in this way is a **profoundly pedagogical and spiritual choice**. Since Saint Paul VI instituted this Day, the Church has wished to offer a simple and eloquent gesture; to place peace at the threshold of the time that opens before us, as a horizon toward which we are called to move from the very first day, and as a criterion. Celebrating it together with the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, further reinforces its meaning.

2.- Message of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV for the 59th World Day of Peace. <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/es/bollettino/pubblico/2025/12/18/181225a0.html>

Peace is not only a gift; it is a **task entrusted to us**. Leo XIV reminds us that, *before being a goal, peace is a presence and a path*. He adds: *If peace is not a reality that is experienced, guarded, and cultivated, aggressiveness spreads in domestic and public life*.

Peace is not merely the absence of war: it is **shalom**<sup>3</sup>, integrity, harmony, fullness, a life reconciled with itself, with others, and with God.

If the Church invites us to open the year by placing peace at the center, it is good that we ask ourselves: in what ways can our life, our educational style, and our daily presence become **a true act of community and social reconciliation**, of transformation, capable of opening paths of coexistence where today there is fragmentation?

There is no peace without justice, because every wounded coexistence ends up calling for reparation and fairness. There is no peace without care for the other, because where the neighbor is ignored or discarded, violence always finds fertile ground. There is no peace without truth, because falsehood and denial end up eroding any attempt at reconciliation. Every social, community, or institutional peace becomes fragile and is damaged when it is not anchored in something deeper that sustains it.

### Peace of the heart.

We reach a decisive turning point: **From the peace we yearn for outside, to the peace we are called to tend within**. It is not a matter of pitting them against each other, but of recognizing that every visible peace weakens when the heart remains agitated.

We live in times marked by doing everything efficiently (so efficiently that there is never an end to it): saturated agendas, endless task lists, inboxes that are never emptied, commitments and projects that follow one after another without pause.

And so the question arises, not as a reproach

3.- The original meaning of Shalom (שָׁלוֹם) is integrity, solidity, or restoration.

but as an honest challenge: **How much peace dwells in our heart today?**

A young man once asked me, with a clarity I have never forgotten: **“How is it possible that, as people of prayer, rooted in communities and with carefully prepared formation processes, we sometimes show so little peace in our faces and daily life together?”** That question still stays with me.

If a heart is not at peace within, how can it radiate peace outwardly? What peace can be shared by someone who has traded it for haste and daily tensions?

This is felt not only in communities but also in schools, formation houses, and even in a simple meeting. Who has not experienced how a tense expression can block any possibility of genuine listening? In online meetings, where communication is almost entirely reduced to face and voice, this effect becomes even more evident. A gesture, a glance, or a barely concealed tension can block dialogue or, on the contrary, open a space of trust. I am not speaking of an easy smile or superficial cheerfulness. I am speaking of **inner peace**, something that cannot be faked, but wells up when the heart has found its balance.

### Peace according to *Dilexit nos*: a unified heart.

Pope Francis reminds us in *Dilexit nos* that a heart united to the heart of Christ also transforms our relationships. As he writes: *Our communities, only from the heart, will be able to unite their different intelligences and wills and bring them to peace, so that the Spirit may guide us as a network of brothers, since peacemaking is also a task of the heart... and to build in this world the Kingdom of love and justice. Our heart, united to that of Christ, is capable of this social miracle*<sup>4</sup>.

A heart at peace is not anesthetized, nor is it foreign to inner struggle. Peace does not mean the absence of conflict, but the journey toward deep reconciliation, in a heart that returns to its center and anchors itself in the love of Jesus. When

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4.- Number 28, Holy Father Francis, encyclical letter *Dilexit nos*, on the human and divine love of the heart of Jesus Christ.

this happens, the storm outside does not disappear, but it no longer makes us sink. Only when peace dwells in the heart can it begin to dwell in the world.

### Mystical resonance: guarding the heart.

The tradition of the Desert Fathers, with its teaching on guarding the heart (*nepsis*)<sup>5</sup>, reminds us that inner peace is not automatic, but must be cared for. It is not about denying our inner world, but about learning to watch over the movements of the heart; stopping thoughts that disturb and disorder, and welcoming those that lead to truth, love, and deeper inner unity.

Saint Joseph Calasanz endured prolonged trials, misunderstandings, and genuine persecutions suffered by his own Order, yet his heart remained serene. Not because there was no conflict – there was, and it was very harsh – but because he learned to guard his center and not allow the external storm to rob him of his inner peace.

From that experience come words of surprising pastoral and spiritual relevance: *I exhort you as much as I know and can, that by no event, however serious, may Your Reverence lose inner peace, but strive always to keep your heart calm and united to God, turning to prayer when you feel most troubled, for the Lord is then wont to calm the storm on the sea*<sup>6</sup>.

This is a peace that does not remove the trial, but prevents the trial from dislodging the heart from its true center.

Are we willing to be sentinels of our own hearts? To which thoughts, silences, or fears do we give a voice, and which do we refuse entry?

### A peace that is contagious.

Peace is not proclaimed by words alone. It is transmitted through presence, style, a way of looking, and of accompanying. It becomes contagious when someone knows how to be at peace

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5.- *Nepsis*, from the Greek: νηψις, refers to inner vigilance and sobriety of heart. It comes from the biblical command to be sober and vigilant in 1 Peter 5:8, and expresses the spiritual art of guarding one's thoughts at the door of the heart.  
6.- Joseph Calasanz, *Opera Omnia* 2, p. 324.

with himself and offers that gift with simplicity, not as something of their own, but as a gift from Jesus. This peace is not improvised; it is learned and cared for in the concreteness of shared life. Our communities and working teams are called to be true schools of peace, where listening, conflict management, respect, and reconciliation are practiced. Wherever people are learning to live in this way, peace begins to flow and become visible.

In this sense, our communities and spaces of shared life can become, with humility and realism, authentic workshops of peace, where gestures are cared for, explicit opportunities are created to express tensions respectfully, and the truth of relationships is safeguarded even in disagreement.

For this reason, I would like to offer an invitation: which practices, dynamics, or experiences truly help us grow in this dimension? What workshops, proposals, or simple pathways could help us make our Pious Schools a place where peace is not only desired, but is learned, practiced, and passed on?

I would like to conclude by entrusting you to one of the oldest and most beautiful words of Scripture, proclaimed in the liturgy of January 1: the blessing of Aaron. It is not merely a well-intentioned wish; it is an effective word, spoken to be received and welcomed, capable of placing life under the gaze of God. Its power is immense, for it does not promise the absence of difficulties, but the faithful presence of the Lord in their midst.

*May the Lord bless you and keep you.  
May he let his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.  
May the Lord uncover his face to you and grant you peace<sup>7</sup>.  
Amen.*

With affection and communion,

*Fr. Carles, Sch. P.*

*January 1, 2026, Solemnity of Mary,  
Mother of God, 59th World Day of Peace,  
on the way to Bangalore, India.*

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7.- Numbers 6:24-26.