

Missionary Society of St Columban
聖高隆龐傳教會
General Council

CA A21
Columban Message of Peace and Nonviolence
On the 75th anniversary of the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

HONG KONG, August 3, 2020.

2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings by the United States of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima (August 6) and Nagasaki (August 9). By the end of the year, 1945, more than 210,000 people, mainly civilians, were dead. Those surviving the bombings (Hibakusha) and their children continue to suffer the physical and psychological impacts of the bombing and radiation. Pope Francis, on his visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 2019, issued an urgent plea to the world:

Here, in an incandescent burst of lightning and fire, so many men and women, so many dreams and hopes, disappeared, leaving behind only shadows and silence ... The possession of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is not the answer to one of the deepest longings of the human heart for security, peace and stability ... In a world where millions of children and families live in inhumane conditions, the money that is squandered and the fortunes made through the manufacture, upgrading, maintenance and sale of ever more destructive weapons are an affront crying out to heaven.”

On this 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings, the Missionary Society of St. Columban reaffirms the commitment we made at the height of the Cold War when we declared at our 1982 General Assembly:

Our understanding of Christian Discipleship leads us to condemn in strongest terms defense policies that every day make life more insecure. The most blatant of these are present policies of nuclear armament which threaten all life. These policies are themselves a form of killing since they consume resources desperately needed to meet basic human needs.¹

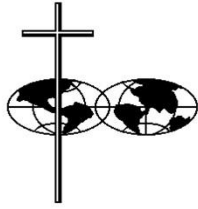
As Columbans, we express our deep desire and hope for healing and reconciliation among and within nations, and we urge political and civic leaders of every nation to:

- Call for abolishing nuclear weapons, their production, possession, testing and use;
- Offer public apologies for past and present war crimes on anniversaries like this; and
- Promote nonviolence as the most effective means to global security and peace.

Today, our missionary presence in many countries in the world continues to bring us in to relationship with people and their anguish who have already suffered from the use of nuclear weapons, and the anxiety of those who see their hopes frustrated by the misappropriation of the world's resources.

As members of Pax Christi International-Catholic Nonviolence Initiative and local Pax Christi chapters throughout the world, we join millions of Catholics calling for an abolition to

¹ Acts of the Columban 1982 General Assembly, statement on Nuclear Weapons



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nuclear weapons. We affirm, too, our commitment to active nonviolence as a Gospel path to conversion, as we continue the work for peace and reconciliation among the nations and peoples of the earth.

In closing, we offer this prayer,

Creator God,

Your world is precious but human folly threatens its very existence.

We pray for those whose lives have been destroyed by nuclear weapons and nuclear testing.

We pray for those denied the essentials of life when money is squandered on nuclear weapons production.

We pray for the politicians, scientists and militaries responsible for the manufacture, build-up and deployment of nuclear weapons, that they may recognize another way for peace is possible.

We pray that our Church will speak to the world with clarity and wisdom and work with world leaders to ban the development, possession and use of nuclear weapons.

With Pope Francis, we commit ourselves to work for a world without nuclear weapons.

We pray in hope for a world built on just relations and cooperation among people who wish to live in peaceful co-existence for generations to come.

Amen.

In Christ's peace,
Rev. Tim Mulroy, SSC
Superior General