

Vow of Nonviolence

Recognizing the violence in my own heart, yet trusting in the goodness and mercy of God, I vow for one year to practice the nonviolence of Jesus who taught us in the Sermon on the Mount:

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons and daughters of God.... You have learned how it was said, 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy,' but I say to you, 'Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. In this way, you will be daughters and sons of your Creator in heaven."

Before God the Creator and the Sanctifying Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus

- by striving for peace within myself and seeking to be a peacemaker in my daily life;

- by accepting suffering rather than inflicting it;
- by refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence;
- by persevering in nonviolence of tongue and heart;
- by living conscientiously and simply so that I do not deprive others of the means to live;
- by actively resisting evil and working nonviolently to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth. God, I trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it.

Keep this copy

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Send this copy to Pax Christi USA.

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You may want to send this copy to your bishop.

I have taken the Vow of Nonviolence and have bound myself for a one year period.

Signature _____
Name (Print) _____
Street _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Date _____

The wording of this vow expresses a solid theological tradition in the Church. But others of different faith and differing devotion should feel free to express the vow in their own words, giving it the emphasis that fits other theological traditions. Moreover, the person taking the vow should realize that while it commits one to a very demanding ethic, it also implies process toward a goal. One ought not expect to become perfect overnight and therefore care should be taken - lest what was meant for our freedom become a burden of excessive and unhealthy guilt.

After the vow is taken, a signed copy should be sent to the Pax Christi National Office and a copy should be retained by the vowed person. Some may wish to share a copy with their local bishop. For additional copies of the vow, this sheet may be photocopied.

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