

Instruments of Reconciliation

SAMPLE LETTER

Date

Title/Name of recipient

Address of recipient

Your Excellency,

I hope you are well.

I am a Catholic parishioner in your diocese at _____ (parish and any other personal connection).

On this Feast of Pentecost when we celebrate the disciples receiving the Spirit to help them live the courageous way of Jesus' nonviolence (or other dates as suggested), I write to share with you about the urgent need for our beloved Church to make a greater commitment to active nonviolence. From the depths of my heart as a committed disciple, I invite you to clearly and frequently affirm active nonviolence as the nucleus of the Christian revolution by 1) sharing and speaking about Pope Francis' World Day of Peace message "*Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace*" broadly within the diocese's parishes, seminaries, and other ministries, and 2) concretely committing to an initiative to scale-up practices of active nonviolence.

As Pope Benedict wrote, "For Christians, nonviolence is not merely tactical behavior but a person's way of being, the attitude of one who is so convinced of God's love and power that he or she is not afraid to tackle evil with the weapons of love and truth alone. Love of one's enemy constitutes the nucleus of the 'Christian revolution.'"

(Share a personal story or issue of concern that illustrates the need for cultivating a culture of active nonviolence.)

The Archdiocese of Chicago offers one model with their initiative toward a culture of nonviolence, which Pope Francis recently affirmed in an April 4 letter.¹ Other key practices to consider are nonviolent communication, restorative circles, trauma-healing, unarmed civilian protection, nonviolent resistance, truth and reconciliation commissions, inter-religious dialogue, educational courses on Gospel nonviolence, etc.

I encourage you to embrace Pope Francis' call to grow in active nonviolence. You can depend on my support of your efforts to follow the Holy Father, who pledged the assistance of the church in "every effort to build peace through active and creative nonviolence." Please let me know if I can be of any assistance.

In peace,

(name)

¹ <https://www.archchicago.org/documents/70111/70579/Pope%27s+Letter/819bc1e7-a926-4717-991a-f545e488500d>