

Peace Seeds

Did you sow any seeds of peace in the last week? There are many 'peace seeds' we need to decide to plant in these days of division, fear, and frustration. Guarding our tongues when disagreements arise; remembering to love others as we love ourselves; treating others, even the most exasperating of people, as we want to be treated; rejecting 'us or them' thinking; putting ourselves in the shoes of the people we struggle to understand; accepting even enemies as people God created – just like us. Hopefully, we have planted more peace seeds than we are aware of because we plant many without think about it. They are seeds we plant in the manner of our living, in the ideals that undergird the decisions we make, the words we chose, the ways we respond to people and situations we face, and every time we put the needs of others before our own. We plant peace seeds because, like other kinds of skills we learn (walking, riding a bike, sewing, carpentry, etc.), peacemaking skills can become so much a part of us that we use them without needing to think about it. When these peace seeds become part of the core of our being and are producing fruit, we are following in the footsteps of Jesus. This does not mean peacemaking becomes easy or conflict and struggle go away. Especially when differences cause us to feel threatened, our brain's fight or flight self-preservation tendencies kick in and we need to be very intentional about calling on our peacemaking skills! As with other skills, peacemaking skills can get rusty when we are out of practice. They become part of us when we daily study Jesus' teaching and practice them regularly. Jesus blessed all peacemakers and called us to be among them. Plant peace seeds in yourself and in others. The fruit will be extraordinary for all of us!



- **Pray for those dealing with COVID.** (Now, in the U.S. 1 out of every 500 people has died of COVID) As the number of people sick, & dying increases, so does the anger, frustration, & fear surrounding the pandemic. Too many people are allowing those feelings to overwhelm them & cloud their judgment. Help us sow the seeds of cooperation, empathy, & Christ-like concern for each other for the good of all.
- **Australia** – people recovering from an earthquake, the strongest there in 24 years. There is damage, & power outages, but no serious injuries. There is fear of aftershocks.
- **Continue prayers for those affected by Storms, flooding, & fires** in the U.S, India, Spain, Haiti, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, China, & Africa. Help sow the seeds of empathy, resolve, encouragement, & creativity as we help people recover & address the human causes that have contributed to these disasters.
- **Pray for refugees** fleeing violence, political upheaval, hunger, economic crisis, or environmental catastrophe. Help us sow the seeds of peace, reason, community, & problem solving as we tackle the issues that put people in such desperate situations.

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