



THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PHILADELPHIA

*“Peace is not merely the absence of war, nor can it be reduced solely to the balance of power between enemies...Peace is the fruit of justice...the fruit of love.”*  
(*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 494*)

*“Violence is a lie, for it goes against the truth of our faith, the truth of our humanity. Violence destroys what it claims to defend: the dignity, the life, the freedom of human beings.”*  
(*Compendium, 496*)

## SISTERS TAKE CORPORATE STAND ON PEACEMAKING (2026)

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We, the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, believe that the United States of America cannot seek peace by waging war. Following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and St. Francis of Assisi, we believe that lasting peace cannot be achieved through acts of war and aggression. We oppose military invasions that violate the sovereignty of nations and the dignity of all people created in God’s image.

We stand against the United States engaging in or supporting military actions that undermine international cooperation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. We firmly oppose the development, possession, and use of nuclear weapons and chemical weapons. These instruments of mass destruction represent a profound rejection of Francis’ vision of universal kinship. They threaten not only humanity, but all of God’s creation—our Sister Mother Earth and all creatures. To possess such weapons is to abandon our sacred trust as caretakers of creation.

We mourn the loss of every life lost to conflict—military personnel, civilians, women, men, and children—for each soul is precious to God. We lament the destruction of communities, the displacement of peoples, and the wounds inflicted upon creation itself.

We encourage our sisters and brothers to join with us in taking the *“necessary risks to be a healing, compassionate presence in our violent world”* (Commitment Statement, 1996). We urge us all to make our voices heard on behalf of peace by choosing appropriate actions that denounce aggression and devastation and support the end of human suffering caused by war and violence.

Our Third Order Rule challenges us: *“As they announce peace with their lips, let them be careful to have it even more within their own hearts.”* (IX: 30). May our hearts seek peace and move us to action for justice in our suffering world.

## RATIONALE

We offer the following principles that guide our opposition to war and violence:

**We embrace Gospel Nonviolence** – Francis lived the Beatitudes radically. “Blessed are the peacemakers” was not merely a prayer for him, but a way of life. Jesus taught us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. We cannot claim to follow Christ while supporting violence against God’s children.

**We follow Francis’ example of Peacemaking** –When Francis met with Sultan Malik al-Kamil during the Fifth Crusade, he showed us that the Gospel calls us to cross boundaries, to see our enemies as brothers and sisters, and to trust in the power of love over the power of the sword.

**We advocate for nonviolent diplomatic solutions** – International cooperation, dialogue, and negotiation offer the only sustainable path to resolving conflicts.

**We oppose violations of national sovereignty** – Military invasions and support for aggressive wars undermine international law and the right of peoples to self-determination.

**We condemn weapons of mass destruction** – Nuclear and chemical weapons pose catastrophic risks to humanity and the environment. Their very existence represents a moral failure and a threat to God’s creation.

**We are committed to being “a healing, compassionate presence in our violent world.”** (Commitment Statement, 1996). This commitment calls us to active peacemaking and opposition to all forms of violence.

## STATEMENT

The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia call upon the United States Government to respect the sovereignty and self-determination of all nations; recognize the dignity of each human person; refuse to support or enable military aggression by other nations; pursue diplomatic solutions with openness to dialogue and through international bodies such as the United Nations; work toward the complete elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons worldwide; and invest in peacebuilding, conflict resolution, humanitarian aid, and the healing of creation.

## ACTION STEPS

- We will pray for all those affected by war—military personnel and families, civilians, refugees, world leaders, and all creation groaning under the weight of violence.
- Following St. Francis’ practice of fasting, we will fast in solidarity with those who suffer from war and as a penitential act calling for conversion from violence to peace.
- We will make our voices heard through letter writing, calls to government officials, and engagement with international bodies. We will speak on behalf of those without voice.
- We will stand in solidarity with victims of war through rallies, vigils, and demonstrations.
- We will examine our own complicity in systems of violence. We will practice simplicity and reject consumerism that fuels war economies. We will ask: *How do our choices contribute to peace or to violence?*
- We will advocate for the protection of Earth from the devastation of war and the poisoning of nuclear and chemical weapons.
- We will welcome the stranger, befriend the outsider, and work to heal divisions. In our own communities, we will practice the peace we proclaim.