



January 1, 2014

Dear Friends,

As this New Year dawns, we want to extend our deep gratitude to each of you for all the ways you support and encourage us in our ministries. We pray that the God of Peace may bless you with the gift of peace in the year ahead.

We are particularly grateful for your collaboration in the ministry of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation and are encouraged by the fervent commitment to pray for peace, especially through the *Shalom* Centers of Prayer for Peace around the congregation. We know too that the monthly International Solidarity Reflections and the observance of the designated United Nations International Days witness to our unity in diversity and strengthen the networking among us.

With the words and example of Pope Francis before us, we are challenged anew “by the many divisions in our world and church today and by the social, economic and ecological crisis of our times.” (*Love Cannot Wait*) “The globalization of indifference” is the oft quoted phrase that Pope Francis uses to describe our present day culture. “Almost without being aware of it, we end up being incapable of feeling compassion at the outcry of the poor, weeping for other people’s pain, and feeling a need to help them, as though all this were someone else’s responsibility and not our own.” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, #54)

His [Message for the World Day of Peace](#), on January 1, 2014, calls us to overcome this indifference and choose the pathway to peace—“an opus solidaritatis,” in order to build a more just and peaceful world. We are urged to weave a fabric of “relationships marked by reciprocity, forgiveness and complete self-giving, according to the breadth and depth of the love of God... This is the good news that demands from each one a step forward, a perennial exercise of empathy, of listening to the suffering and the hopes of others, even those furthest away from me, and walking the demanding path of that love which knows how to give and spend itself freely for the good of all our brothers and sisters.” (#10)

Through our ministry of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation this year, we will continue to foster ways of living the challenges of the 23<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter, which witness to the Gospel with audacity and hope. As we collaborate to build just relationships and to respond to the urgent needs of our times, we commit to deepen our contemplative and prophetic living, strengthen relationships for more effective networking, and promote education and action that address the root causes of injustice.

Inspired by the words of Mother Theresa, “united and content with little, we go out into the whole world,” may each of us too feel that same urgency that “Love Cannot Wait.”

Your sisters,

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