

# A Call to be Peacemakers

Congress on Urban Ministry  
Chicago, Illinois  
March 1-4, 2011

“Seek peace and pursue it” (Psalm 34:14)

“Seek the peace of the city ... for in its peace, you will find peace” (Jeremiah 29:7)

“Blessed are the peacemakers” (Matthew 5:9)

“[L]ive in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you” (2 Corinthians 13:11)

Pursuing the Call to be Peacemakers in a Culture of Violence, the Congress on Urban Ministry meeting in Chicago, Illinois, March 1- 4, 2011

*Affirms* that peacemaking is an imperative for Christians; that it is at the core of the Christian faith, that Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace is their model, exemplar and guide in this vocation;

*Understands* that without justice, peace is empty; that in order achieve just-peace peacemakers must also be justice-seekers;

*Grieves* that many people in the United States today live in fear, often an unjustified fear of the other; and that this fear is stoked by some politicians, media and corporations to benefit their vested interests;

*Proclaims* the consistent message of the angels “Fear Not!” which encapsulates the core of the message of the Gospel;

*Declares* that it finds unacceptable that in an average year 100,000 Americans are shot or killed with a gun, that every day on average 300 Americans are victims of gun violence and that they are disproportionately African-American or Latino/a,<sup>1</sup> and that many of them are dying in our city streets and others in mass shootings that are ravaging our nation;

*Opposes* legislation that has already become law in many states that allows ordinary citizens to “conceal and carry” guns in public, and *supports* legislation that would strengthen background checks, close the so-called “gun-show” loopholes, prevent the sale of high-capacity semi-automatic or automatic weapons and high-capacity ammunition clips to the general public and prevent the private sale of fire arms;

*Commits* to “Seek peace and pursue it” by becoming effective peacemakers, joining with Protestant, Orthodox<sup>2</sup> and Roman Catholic churches,<sup>3</sup> engaging with other religious communities and with allies and partners across our cities, states and the nation.

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<sup>1</sup> Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence, with data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/wisqars)

<sup>2</sup> National Council of Churches USA resolution on “Ending Gun Violence” (May 17, 2010) <http://www.ncccusa.org/NCCPolicies/endinggunviolence.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> US Conference of Catholic Bishops Pastoral Message on “Confronting a Culture of Violence,” (1994) <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/criminal/ccv94.shtml>