



*Affirming the vision and practice of active nonviolence  
at the heart of the Catholic Church.*

*A project of Pax Christi International*

## *Good news for children* **The gift of nonviolence**

### *A resource to celebrate World Day of Peace 2017*

Children can learn to be peacemakers. They already know that sharing helps everyone feel included. They watch adults demonstrate healthy manners of addressing conflict and caring for those around them. Even though children sometimes feel small in society, in God's sight they are great. They can readily give and receive God's love and share God's peace. They can learn to pray to God at any time of day. To be a peacemaker is to treat others with respect and to practice actions that make peace with those around. When we are peacemakers, we allow God's spirit to fill our hearts, homes, and schools with joy and friendship. Children can be the peacemakers that teach us how to become "children of God."

**Nonviolent Followers of Jesus: The Golden Thread** is a curriculum for children pre-K through 6th grade. Through immersion in this curriculum children learn the language of Gospel nonviolence. While becoming acquainted with current and past nonviolent followers of Jesus, the rich creativity of Gospel nonviolence is opened to children.

*For additional activities like this, also see Little Friends for Peace ([www.LFFP.org](http://www.LFFP.org)).*

### **Supplies**

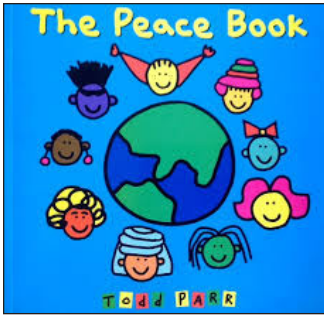
- *Peace Book* by Todd Parr
- *How Full Is Your Bucket? for Kids* by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer
- Colorful cloth
- Bell
- Gift box with a mirror glued to the bottom
- See Sarah Pirtle's video of the song "Two Hands Hold The Earth"

### **Bible text: Mark 5:9**

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God."

## Opening ritual

Set up an environment of peace



- Spread a beautiful cloth on a low table or the floor.
  - Place on it a cross, a bell, the *Peace Book* by Todd Parr, a gift box (with a mirror glued to the inside bottom).
  - Gather the children in a circle or semi-circle around the cloth.
  - Announce that we have a gift to discover, and that we need to be quiet in order to find it.
- Show the bell and announce that listening to it will help us to listen to the gift inside us. Ring the bell and listen.

### Let us pray:

Jesus, thank you for giving us the gift of peace and thank you for calling us to be peacemakers. As we begin this new year of 2017, help us to use the tools of love to solve our problems and not hate. Amen.

### Peacemaker pledge:

Ask the children to stand and to be your echo, line after line:

I am a peacemaker  
I pledge:  
to talk to others with respect  
to treat people with care  
to make peace, not break peace  
to build peace  
at home,  
at school,  
and in my neighborhood  
each day!

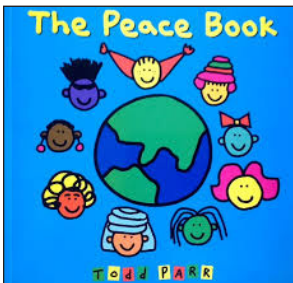
### Sing: “Two Hands Hold The Earth”

Lead the children in this song with movement:

My hands are in the sky, sky, sky.  
My feet are on the ground, ground, ground.

And what about my blood, it's from the sea.  
 And what about my bones, like the mountain's V.  
 And my hands, oh my hands,  
 I believe with my hands I can hold this land.  
 My two hands hold the earth.  
 My two hands hold the earth!  
 (by Sarah Pirtle)

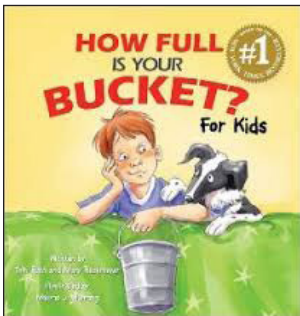
### Option 1



Read the *Peace Book* by Todd Parr

- Ask “What does peace feel like, taste like, smell like, sound like, look like?”
- Ask “What music brings you peace? food? What material do you like to touch? What person brings you peace, how?”

### Option 2



Read *How Full Is Your Bucket? for Kids* by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer

- Ask “How do you bring peace to others?”

### Activity: Peace Box

Lift the Peace Box “that contains the best treasure in the world.”

Invite 3-5 children to form a line facing the rest of the circle to peek inside, but be quiet, so the rest can only guess what's inside. Then show the inside to everyone else gathered.

What is the greatest gift? It's the peacemaker in the mirror!

A peacemaker is one who considers other people's feelings. S/he feels his or her connection with them, and takes care of them.

When another person bothers him or her, a peacemaker goes inside to his heart and tries to imagine what the other person is feeling that may have caused the bothersome action.

Instead of accusing the other person of being bad, s/he shares how the action felt hurtful, and asks for help to fix the problem. Discuss examples.

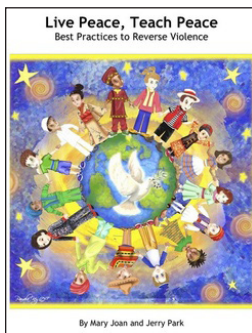
### **Dr. Untangle**

Join hands. Ask one child to be “Dr. Untangle” who goes away while the circle forms into a tangle while not letting go of each other’s hands. Then call the doctor to give them directions on how to untangle.

### **Let us pray:**

Jesus, help us to use the tools of love to solve our problems and not hate. Help us go to our heart and head and not our fists and mean words to solve our problems. Give us the wisdom and energy to stop and think before we act. Amen.

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*This material was prepared for the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative by Mj & Jerry Park, co-directors of Little Friends for Peace ([www.LFFP.org](http://www.LFFP.org)). For more help to cultivate skills of nonviolence, order “Live Peace, Teach Peace: Best Practices and Tools” or “Family Peacemaking” by Mj & Jerry Park*