

So You Want to Be a Peacemaker
February 25, 2018

Most of us say that we want to have peace in the world. Most of us agree that we probably will not achieve the stature of a Martin Luther King, Jr., a Desmond Tutu, or a Mother Teresa. But that does not mean that we cannot be peacemakers. We can make a difference with our friends, our families and our communities. Here are just a few traits of a peacemaker for us to consider this morning.

1. A peacemaker truly desires peace. In our hearts, if we desire peace, we can at the very least become peaceful ourselves. If we say we want peace and we really want revenge or victory or a sense of drama (which we can become addicted to), then we have to go to God and pray to be changed. We have to convince God that we really want peace, not revenge, not drama, not even comfort. It all starts inside our own hearts and minds. Peace is an inside job.

2. A peacemaker gives up the perfect for the good. We all have our own ideas about how things should go, how things should be, and how to make things “just right.” But that’s not about peace; that’s about domination and self-righteousness. A peacemaker plants a seed of harmony then quietly watches it grow, acknowledging others as they participate. A peacemaker doesn’t need the limelight. They give that to God.

3. A peacemaker doesn’t take sides. But he does take a stand. He or she takes a stand for peace, for the dignity and worth of everyone. Even if the peacemaker doesn’t like everything that is taking place, a peacemaker understands that goodwill and peace are the goals, not the peacemaker’s preferences and particular likes and dislikes.

4. A peacemaker is familiar with brokenness. Pope Francis asks people to pray for him, that he “doesn’t make too many mistakes.” The peacemaker knows fully he or she is truly imperfect, and that the world is, too. She feels others’ pain and knows that encouragement and love go a long, long way in the healing process.

5. A peacemaker knows that suffering is a part of life. He doesn’t run from it. He accepts it and knows that he will become stronger by doing so. A peacemaker knows that God makes the one strong who continues to express faith in the middle of sorrow and pain.

6. A peacemaker walks in forgiveness. Walking in forgiveness doesn’t mean you never get angry or you do not see injustice. But you know that God walks with you, that Christ even forgave those who crucified him, and that through forgiveness you will be able to shine God’s peace from within.

7. A peacemaker rejoices in small steps, knowing that little signs of progress often grow underground, when no one is looking. Plants seeds of peace like Johnny Appleseed planted apple trees. Then continue on your journey of peace planting.