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OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
- II. Chapter One: In the Beginning there was Peace
 - A. The Mystery of the Triune God
 - B. The Order of Creation
 - C. Sin: Breach of Peace
 - D. The Promise of the “Prince of Peace”
- III. Chapter Two: Peace of Christ
 - A. The Incarnation of the “Prince of Peace”
 - B. Peace in the Public Ministry of Jesus
 - C. Peace as the Gift of the Holy Spirit
 - D. Mary, Queen of Peace
- IV. Chapter Three: Church: Bearer of Christ’s Peace
 - A. The Church as the Sacrament of Peace
 - B. The Sacrament of Holy Eucharist as Channel of Peace
 - C. Eucharistic Celebration Foretells the Eschatological Promise of Peace
 - D. Blessed are the Peacemakers: They Shall Be Called Children of God
- V. Conclusion

The text of the Introduction and Conclusion follows.

INTRODUCTION

Peace is a part of the original divine plan that God had written in the human heart in the beginning. Indeed, creation in the Bible is the powerful passage from chaos and darkness to “Light and Order of Peace” through the action of God’s Word and Spirit. Creation is one way of identifying the communication of God’s Peace to creatures. The theology of “Peace: Gift of God” helps us to reflect on our mission as persons created in the image and likeness of God (see Gen 1:26–27), and to understand who we are in relation with other creatures in our common home.¹ In the world today, the word “peace” seems to be misunderstood and separated from the original plan of God. It is sad that peace is shattered in the lifestyles of many people — in there manner of thinking and living, which is so rebellious to God’s plan.

In chapter one, “Peace” is presented as a gift of God, the Creator, who from the beginning of creation intended it for all His creatures. The Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in their communion and transcendence gave the gift of peace to all creatures. Genesis 1 shows in the sequence of creation that man is the masterpiece of the Creator, the apex of creation and the master of all creatures. Unfortunately, the fall of our first parents shattered this peace. Sin made man an enemy of God, and there was a great need for reconciliation. It was the promised “Prince of Peace” who would bring reconciliation and restore peace to man.

In chapter two, we will see that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ brought peace to the world. The theology of the Incarnation of the “Prince of Peace” is all about the faith of Christians that Jesus Christ is God in the Flesh (see Jn 1:14) through the Holy Spirit. He becomes like us in order to help us understand the meaning of our lives and how to get through the different pains, sufferings, joys that come our way in our pursuit of the truth. Especially, through His words and deeds, Jesus taught us the true meaning of peace. It is the genuine relationship with God, neighbor, nature, and oneself thanks to the gift of peace in the Holy Spirit. This peace will be fully accomplished through participation in Christ’s Death and Resurrection. By divine grace, Mary fully consented so that God could accomplish His Divine Plan for the Redemption of all mankind. She participates in the work of the Savior in a singular way as “Co-Redemptrix” and worthily carries the title “Queen of Peace.”

In chapter three, I will elaborate the role of the Church as the “Bearer of Christ’s Peace.” The Church is the sign of peace as it continues the saving work initiated by Christ especially through the Sacraments. In particular, the Eucharistic celebration foretells the eschatological promise of peace that we will reach as our ultimate destination in the everlasting peace with the Creator. Indeed, Christians come to participate and encounter the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ in order to become the “peacemakers” in the world.

¹ Francis, Encyclical *Laudato Si'* (Rome 2015).

CONCLUSION

Peace in the Chinese culture suggests wholeness (i.e., the integration of oneself) and harmony. In the Hebrew Bible, the term used is familiar and significant, “*Shalom*.” When someone says “*Shalom*,” it means, “I hope you have all the highest good coming your way.” It is a “goodness of life”; a “wholeness of life” in the inner heart that is not touched by what happens on the outside. It wishes a person’s ultimate good. It is experiencing calmness even in the midst of great trials. Where do we find this peace? This peace which connotes man’s harmonious relationship with God, neighbor, nature, and oneself can only come from God.

In the New Testament, the primary Greek word for “peace” is “*Eirene*,” which has the connotation of “rest and tranquility.” The key agent for tranquility and peace is Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. It is through the justification merited by Jesus that we are all reconciled with God. We have glimpsed at how the Trinity has been mentioned as the ultimate Primal cause of peace in its fullest meaning: The Trinity is a relational God, a unity in the diversity of Three Divine Persons. This is an invitation to all creatures. The ultimate Joy, Harmony, and Wholeness is restored in Jesus, God incarnate. He is our Hope and model for this ultimate Peace. His Passion, Death, and Resurrection is the road to this final triumph of Peace and everlasting Fulfillment.

This peace now continues to be proclaimed in the Church. It is Jesus’ desire that in His Church all people will be unified in the faith. As Paul tells us, we are to consider others’ needs before our own. In all modesty, humility, and lowliness of mind, we are to “be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love” (Eph 4:2). Therefore, the truly humble person sees his own faults in the light of the perfection of Christ; we do not seek to see the faults of others, but when we do, we speak the truth in peace and desire our sanctification, so we will be built up into the image of Christ. And then the Church full of such people enjoying our “common salvation” will be a true, biblical Church unified in peace.

Indeed, peace is the gift of God that the soul begs for! Actually, reflecting on the theme: “Peace: Gift of God,” we would do well to look into the life of the saints. When the saints were born, they were just like any other person created in the image and likeness of God. Day by day, they came to experience sufficiency in God, that is, the gift of peace that they received in their life’s journey. They felt broken, they struggled with difficulties, and doubts assailed them... But, somehow, they were filled with peace as God’s gift to them so they can persevere in their struggles. In the end, God gave them the reward of everlasting peace with Him. Therefore, in the journey of life, especially the journey of one’s vocation, there are always moments of happiness, there are also moments of sorrow, suffering, difficulties, struggles, fatigue, boredom, sense of failure! “Peace” is directly related to the actions and attitudes of individuals; but it is ultimately a gift of God. The presence of peace indicates God’s blessing on man’s obedience and faith seeking understanding. Peace is the desire of the soul for the fullness of life. Peace is the fullness of grace for happiness and holiness of life. In our lifetime, we have seen great champions of peace in Pope St. John Paul II and St. Teresa of Calcutta.

Finally, I would like to end this theological synthesis with a quote from *World Mission Magazine*:

The title of Pope Francis’ message for the World Day of Peace [in 2016] is “Overcome Indifference and Win Peace.” This peace cannot simply be an avoidance of conflict. It has to be deeply rooted in our hearts to become our common vocation, destroying all fear, seeking dialogue and collaboration as a means to build a genuine and sustainable peace where the excluded of society may have their dignified place; where the homeless may not only find a shelter but a

place they can call home. In this perspective, conflicts will not make us rush to build walls but to understand our differences, heal our wounds and seek to build together a new humanity where peace is desired, felt and lived within our hearts.²

² “Inner Peace,” Editorial, *World Mission* (January 2016), <https://www.worldmissionmagazine.com/archives/january-2016/inner-peace>.