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## Editorial. Peace: Interdisciplinary Perspectives

Kurien Kunnumpuram, SJ

**Abstract:** At the beginning of a new century people wonder what this century has in store for them? Will it be a time of peace? The question is quite legitimate, since the last century was probably the most violent century in human history. It is undeniable that we humans have a deep yearning for peace. And yet, we live in a world which is marked by discord, dissension, hatred, violence and war. Faced with this painful situation, can we really hope for peace? Is humanity capable of ushering in an era of peace on earth? And even if it is capable of doing so what resources are available to it for establishing peace? What contribution can different traditions and different disciplines make towards peace in the world? These are some of the questions which this issue of *Jnanadeepa* seeks to answer.

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Peace  
Interdisciplinary Perspectives



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## Editorial

At the beginning of a new century people wonder what this century has in store for them? Will it be a time of peace? The question is quite legitimate, since the last century was probably the most violent century in human history.

It is undeniable that we humans have a deep yearning for peace. And yet, we live in a world which is marked by discord, dissension, hatred, violence and war. Faced with this painful situation, can we really hope for peace? Is humanity capable of ushering in an era of peace on earth? And even if it is capable of doing so what resources are available to it for establishing peace? What contribution can different traditions and different disciplines make towards peace in the world? These are some of the questions which this issue of *Jnanadeepa* seeks to answer.

There are four articles dealing with the understanding of peace in the major religions of India – Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity. They also inquire into the contributions these religious traditions can make towards peace in India/the world. There is no doubt that they have rich resources to aid individuals, groups and nations in their efforts to establish peace on earth.

There are three articles which examine the issue of peace from the point of view of the social sciences. The first one deals with peace from the perspective of psychology. It contends that peace is a life-long process that one is engaged in. The second one is by a political scientist. He studies the contribution the UNO has made towards the maintenance of peace in the world and suggests ways in which it can more effectively serve the cause of peace in the world. The third is something of a case-study of the Northeast. From a sociological point of view it examines the causes of the conflictual situation that exists in the Northeast and spells out some concrete steps that need to be taken in order to usher in an era of peace and prosperity in this trouble region of our country.

There are two articles which discuss the question of violence and non-violence. The first one deals with Mahatma Gandhi's understanding of non-violence, its theoretical foundations as well as its practical implications for us today. The other one examines the nature and forms of violence and comes to the conclusion that violence is ambivalent. One cannot absolutise all violence as bad or all non-violence as good.

There is another article on peace which is more practical. It explains the way the Dharma Bharati National Institute of Peace and Value Education spreads a culture of peace in India and abroad. It also clarifies the vision

behind Dharma Bharathi. Those who are looking for a concrete plan of action foster peace in our land will find this article useful.

As usual, there are two special features in this issue. One deals with science and priestly formation. Its contention is that familiarity with and genuine appreciation of the developments in science and technology are necessary for priests and religious destined to be leaders of their communities. The other is a report of an empirical study of rural poverty in India. It also describes how the poor people look at their sad plight.

It is our fond hope that the discussion of peace in this issue will stimulate further discussion among our leaders and lead to some concrete action.

Kurien Kunnumpuram SJ  
Editor