Pius XII encyclicals

November 20, 1947 – Mediator Dei

204. Never be discouraged by the difficulties that arise, and never let your pastoral zeal grow cold. "Blow the trumpet in Sion . . . call an assembly, gather together the people, sanctify the Church, assemble the ancients, gather together the little ones, and them that suck at the breasts,"[183] and use every help to get the faithful everywhere to fill the churches and crowd around the altars so that they may be restored by the graces of the sacraments and joined as living members to their divine Head, and with Him and through Him celebrate together the august sacrifice that gives due tribute of praise to the Eternal Father.

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***AUSPICIA QUAEDAM***

ENCYCLICAL OF POPE PIUS XII   
ON PUBLIC PRAYERS FOR WORLD PEACE   
AND SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF PALESTINE  
TO PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES,   
ARCHBISHOPS, BISHIOPS, AND OTHER ORDINARIES   
IN PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH THE HOLY SEE

*Venerable Brethren:  
Peace and Apostolic Benediction.*

Today there are appearing certain tokens which give clear proof that the vast community of nations, after such destruction and ruin brought on by the long and terrible war, is resolutely turned to the saving paths of peace.

2. At the moment, a more willing ear is given to those who are striving to restore lost prosperity, to heal discords and to rebuild from the mighty ruins under which we groan than to those who are inciting to mutual and bitter dispute, to hate and dissension, from which nothing else can arise but fresh and more serious evils to the nations.

3. Nevertheless, although We and the Christian people have no light motives of solace and of hope for better times, there are not lacking circumstances and events which cause anxiety to our paternal heart.

4. Even though the war has ceased in nearly every land, still benign peace has not yet dawned on the minds and hearts of all men; indeed, the sky is still heavy with threatening clouds.

5. We, on our part, do not cease to do all in our power to stave off from the family of nations dangers of threatening disasters; but when human means are unequal to the task, then do We appeal in prayer first of all to God; further, We also exhort all our children in Christ, throughout the world, to implore, together with Us, in ardent prayer the Divine assistance.

6. For this reason, it was comforting for Us in past years to appeal earnestly to all - especially to the young so dear to us - to crowd around the altar of the great Mother of God during the month of May imploring the end of a cruel war; so now, similarly today, by means of this encyclical letter, We invite you not to cease from this pious practice and further to prayers add resolutions for Christian renewal and salutary works of penance.

7. Above all, speak to the Virgin Mother of God and our most tender Mother words of most heartfelt thanks for having obtained, through her powerful intercession, the long desired termination of that great world conflagration, and also for so many other graces obtained from the Most High.

8. At the same time, implore her, with renewed prayers, that at long last there may shine forth, as a gift from Heaven, mutual, fraternal and complete peace among all nations and the longed for harmony among all social classes.

Let there be an end to dissensions that redound to no one's advantage.  
Let there be a reconciliation of disputes that often sow the seeds of further misfortunes.  
Let international relations, public and private, be fittingly strengthened.  
Let religion, the foster mother of all virtues, enjoy the liberty to which she is entitled.  
And let men set about their peaceful work of abundant production for the common welfare - with justice their guide and charity their motive.

9. But you are aware, Venerable Brethren, that our prayers are most readily welcomed by the Most Blessed Virgin when they are not merely fleeting and empty words but the outpouring of hearts adorned with the required virtues.

10. See to it, then, as your apostolic zeal will suggest, that these prayers in common during the month of May are matched by a corresponding reform and revival of Christian conduct.

11. For only from Christian virtues may we hope to see the course of history take its proper, orderly direction, and men empowered not only to achieve prosperity in this world with God's help but also to enjoy, with the infusion of sanctifying grace. unending happiness in Heaven.

12. But there is another special reason today which brings affliction and keen anxiety to our hearts. We mean to refer to the Holy Places of Palestine, which have long been disturbed.

13. Indeed, if there exists any place that ought to be most dear to every cultured person, surely it is Palestine, where, from the dawn of antiquity, such great light of truth shone for all men, where the Word of God made flesh announced, through the angels' choir, peace to all men; where, finally, Christ hanging on the Cross acquired salvation for all mankind, with arms outstretched as if He were inviting all nations to fraternal harmony; and where He consecrated His precept of charity with the shedding of His blood.

14. We desire, therefore, Venerable Brethren, that supplications be poured forth to the Most Holy Virgin for this request: that the situation in Palestine may at long last be settled justly and thereby concord and peace be also happily established.

15. We place great confidence in the most powerful patronage of Our Heavenly Mother- a patronage which, during this month dedicated to her, innocent children especially will implore in a holy crusade of prayer.

16. It will be precisely your task to invite and stimulate them with all diligence - not only children but also fathers and mothers, who in great numbers should give them leadership and example.

17. We know well that We have never appealed in vain to the ardent zeal which inflames your hearts. That is why We seem to enjoy already the sight of dense multitudes of children, of men and women, crowding the churches to beg from the great Mother of God all the graces and favors of which we stand in need.

18. May she, who has given us Jesus, obtain for us that all those who have wandered from the path of rectitude may straightway return to Him, moved by salutary contrition.

19. May she obtain for us - she is our kindest Mother, who has shown herself always, in the face of every danger, our powerful helper and channel of grace - may she obtain for us, We say, that even in the midst of the grievous need surrounding us a just solution will be found for disputes, and that a firm and free peace will finally dawn resplendent for the Church and for all nations.

20. Some years ago, as all will remember, while the late war was still in its fury, when human means showed themselves to be uncertain and inadequate to that terrible conflagration, We addressed our fervent prayers to the all merciful Redeemer, invoking the powerful patronage of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

21. And even as our predecessor of immortal memory, Leo XIII, at the dawn of the twentieth century saw fit to consecrate the whole human race to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, so We have likewise, in the guise of representative of the whole human family which He redeemed, desired to dedicate it in turn to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary.

22. It is our wish, consequently, that wherever the opportunity suggests itself, this consecration be made in the various dioceses as well as in each of the parishes and families. And We are confident that abundant blessings and favors from Heaven will surge forth from this private and public consecration.

23. In token of these blessings, and in pledge of our paternal affection, We impart from a full heart the Apostolic Benediction to each of you, Venerable Brethren, to all those who make generous answer to this our letter of exhortation, and particularly to the numerous throngs of our most dear children.

*Given at Rome at St. Peter's, the first day of May of the year 1948, the tenth of our Pontificate.*

**IN MULTIPLICIBUS CURIS**

ENCYCLICAL OF POPE PIUS XII ON PRAYERS FOR PEACE IN PALESTINE OCTOBER 24, 1948

To the Venerable Brethren, the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See.

Among the multiple preoccupations which beset us in this period of time, so full of decisive consequences for the life of the great human family, and which make Us feel so seriously the burden of the Supreme Pontificate, Palestine occupies a particular place on account of the war which harasses it. In all truth We can tell you, Venerable Brethren, that neither joyous nor sad events diminish the sorrow which is kept alive in Our soul by the thought that, in the land in which our Lord Jesus Christ shed His blood to bring redemption and salvation to all mankind, the blood of man continues to flow; and that beneath the skies which echoed on that fateful night with the Gospel tidings of peace, men continue to fight and to increase the distress of the unfortunate and the fear of the terrorized, while thousands of refugees, homeless and driven, wander from their fatherland in search of shelter and food.

2. To make Our sorrow more grievous, there is not only the news which continually reaches Us of the destruction and damage of sacred buildings and charitable places built around the Holy Places, but there is also the fear that this inspires in Us for the fate of the Holy Places themselves scattered throughout Palestine, and more especially within the Holy City.

3. We must assure you, Venerable Brethren, that confronted with the spectacle of many evils and the forecast of worse to come, We have not withdrawn into Our sorrow, but have done all in Our power to provide a remedy. Even before the armed conflict began, speaking to a delegation of Arab dignitaries who came to pay homage to Us, We manifested our lifelong solicitude for peace in Palestine, and, condemning any recourse to violence, We declared that peace could only be realized in truth and justice; that is to say by respecting the rights of acquired traditions, especially in the religious field, as well as by the strict fulfillment of the duties and obligations of each group of inhabitants.

4. When war was declared, without abandoning the attitude of impartiality which was imposed by Our apostolic duty, which places Us above the conflicts which agitate human society, We did not fail to do Our utmost, in the measure which depended upon Us, and according to the possibilities offered to Us, for the triumph of justice and peace in Palestine and for the respect and protection of the Holy Places.

5. At the same time, although numerous and urgent appeals are received daily by the Holy See, We have sought as much as possible to come to the aid of the unhappy victims of the war, sending the means at Our disposal to Our representatives in Palestine, the Lebanon, and Egypt for this purpose, and encouraging the formation among Catholics in various countries of undertakings organized for the same purpose.

6. Convinced, however, of the insufficiency of human means for the adequate solution of a question the complexity of which no one can fail to see, We have, above all, had constant recourse to prayer, and in Our recent Encyclical Letter, Auspicia Quaedam, We invited you, Venerable Brethren, to pray, and to have the faithful entrusted to your pastoral care pray, in order that, under the auspices of the Blessed Virgin, matters may be settled in justice and peace, and concord may be happily restored in Palestine. As We said on June 2nd to members of the Sacred College of Cardinals, informing them of Our anxieties for Palestine, We do not believe that the Christian world could contemplate indifferently, or in sterile indignation, the spectacle of the sacred land (which everyone approached with the deepest respect to kiss with most ardent love) trampled over again by troops and stricken by aerial bombardments. We do not believe that it could permit the devastation of the Holy Places, the destruction of the great sepulcher of Christ.

7. We are full of faith that the fervent prayers raised to Almighty and Merciful God by the Christians throughout the world who, together with the aspirations of so many noble hearts, are ardently inspired by truth and good, will render less arduous to the men who hold the destinies of peoples the task of making justice and peace in Palestine a beneficial reality and of creating, with the efficient co-operation of all those interested, an order that may guarantee security of existence and, at the same time, the moral and physical conditions of life conducive to spiritual and material well-being, to each of the parties at present in conflict.

8. We are full of faith that these prayers and these hopes, an indication of the value that the Holy Places have for so great a part of the human family, will strengthen the conviction in the high quarters in which the problems of peace are discussed that it would be opportune to give Jerusalem and its outskirts, where are found so many and such precious memories of the life and death of the Savior, an international character which, in the present circumstances, seems to offer a better guarantee for the protection of the sanctuaries. It would also be necessary to assure, with international guarantees, both free access to Holy Places scattered throughout Palestine, and the freedom of worship and the respect of customs and religious traditions.

9. And God grant that the day may soon dawn when Christians may resume their pilgrimages to the Holy Places, there to see more clearly revealed, as they contemplate the evidence of the love of Jesus Christ, Who gave His life for His brethren, how men and nations may live harmoniously together, at peace with their world and themselves.

10. With reliance, then, on this hope, as a pledge of heavenly favors and in token of our affection, gladly in the Lord do we impart to you, Venerable Brethren, and to your flocks, as to all who will take this appeal of Ours to heart, Our Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Castel Gandolfo, near Rome, on the 24th day of October, in the year 1948, the tenth of Our Pontificate.

# AUSPICIA QUAEDAM

ENCYCLICAL OF POPE PIUS XII ON PUBLIC PRAYERS FOR WORLD PEACE AND SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF PALESTINE MAY 1, 1948

12. But there is another special reason today which brings affliction and keen anxiety to our hearts. We mean to refer to the Holy Places of Palestine, which have long been disturbed.

13. Indeed, if there exists any place that ought to be most dear to every cultured person, surely it is Palestine, where, from the dawn of antiquity, such great light of truth shone for all men, where the Word of God made flesh announced, through the angels' choir, peace to all men; where, finally, Christ hanging on the Cross acquired salvation for all mankind, with arms outstretched as if He were inviting all nations to fraternal harmony; and where He consecrated His precept of charity with the shedding of His blood.

14. We desire, therefore, Venerable Brethren, that supplications be poured forth to the Most Holy Virgin for this request: that the situation in Palestine may at long last be settled justly and thereby concord and peace be also happily established.

15. We place great confidence in the most powerful patronage of Our Heavenly Mother -- a patronage which, during this month dedicated to her, innocent children especially will implore in a holy crusade of prayer.

16. It will be precisely your task to invite and stimulate them with all diligence -- not only children but also fathers and mothers, who in great numbers should give them leadership and example.

17. We know well that We have never appealed in vain to the ardent zeal which inflames your hearts. That is why We seem to enjoy already the sight of dense multitudes of children, of men and women, crowding the churches to beg from the great Mother of God all the graces and favors of which we stand in need.

18. May she, who has given us Jesus, obtain for us that all those who have wandered from the path of rectitude may straightway return to Him, moved by salutary contrition.

19. May she obtain for us -- she is our kindest Mother, who has shown herself always, in the face of every danger, our powerful helper and channel of grace -- may she obtain for us, We say, that even in the midst of the grievous need surrounding us a just solution will be found for disputes, and that a firm and free peace will finally dawn resplendent for the Church and for all nations.

20. Some years ago, as all will remember, while the late war was still in its fury, when human means showed themselves to be uncertain and inadequate to that terrible conflagration, We addressed our fervent prayers to the all merciful Redeemer, invoking the powerful patronage of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

21. And even as our predecessor of immortal memory, Leo XIII, at the dawn of the twentieth century saw fit to consecrate the whole human race to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, so We have likewise, in the guise of representative of the whole human family which He redeemed, desired to dedicate it in turn to the Immaculate Heart of the Virgin Mary.

22. It is our wish, consequently, that wherever the opportunity suggests itself, this consecration be made in the various dioceses as well as in each of the parishes and families. And We are confident that abundant blessings and favors from Heaven will surge forth from this private and public consecration.

23. In token of these blessings, and in pledge of our paternal affection, We impart from a full heart the Apostolic Benediction to each of you, Venerable Brethren, to all those who make generous answer to this our letter of exhortation, and particularly to the numerous throngs of our most dear children.

Given at Rome at St. Peter's, the first day of May of the year 1948, the tenth of our Pontificate.

# REDEMPTORIS NOSTRI CRUCIATUS

ENCYCLICAL OF POPE PIUS XII ON THE HOLY PLACES IN PALESTINE APRIL 15, 1949

To the Venerable Brethren the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See.

The Passion of Our Redeemer, rendered present, as it were to us during these days of Holy Week, makes the minds of Christians turn with deepest reverence to that land which Divine Providence willed to be the cherished home-country of the Word Incarnate, and in which Christ Jesus lived His earthly life, shed His blood and died.

2. Yet at the present time, as We recall the memory of those Holy Places with more ardent devotion, Our heart is full to overflowing with keenest anxiety because of the difficulty and uncertainty of the situation which there prevails.

3. During this past year, We have urged you insistently, Venerable Brethren, in successive letters, that all should join in public prayer to implore the cessation of hostilities which have brought destruction and death in that land, and settlement of the dispute on principles of justice, which would fully safeguard the freedom of Catholics and at the same time provide guarantees for the safety of those most Holy Places.

4. And now that hostilities have ended, or at least have been suspended after the recent truce, We offer Our most sincere and heartfelt thanks to God and voice Our emphatic approval of the labor of those whose noble efforts have contributed towards the re-establishment of peace.

5. But although the actual fighting is over, tranquillity or order in Palestine is still very far from having been restored. For We are still receiving complaints from those who have every right to deplore the profanation of sacred buildings, images, charitable institutions, as well as the destruction of peaceful homes of religious communities. Piteous appeals still reach Us from numerous refugees, of every age and condition, who have been forced by the disastrous war to emigrate and even live in exile in concentration camps, the prey to destitution, contagious disease and perils of every sort.

6. We are not unmindful of the considerable aid contributed by public and private agencies for relief of these suffering thousands; and We Ourselves, continuing the work of charity, organized from the beginning of Our Pontificate, have left nothing undone, within Our means, to meet the more urgent needs of this same unhappy multitude.

7. But the condition of these exiles is so critical and unstable that it cannot longer be permitted to continue. While, therefore, We encourage all generous and noble souls to put forth their best effort to aid these homeless people in their sorrow and destitution, We make an earnest appeal to those responsible that justice may be rendered to all who have been driven far from their homes by the turmoil of war and whose most ardent desire now is to lead peaceful lives once more.

8. During these holy days this is Our fondest hope, and likewise that of all Christian peoples: that peace may finally shed its light over the land where He, Who is called by the Sacred Prophets, "the Prince of Peace" (Is. 9: 6) and by the Apostle of the Gentiles Peace Itself (Eph. 2: 14), lived His life and shed His blood.

9. We have never ceased to pray repeatedly for this enduring and genuine peace. And to the end that it might be brought to fruition and permanence at the earliest possible moment, We have already insisted in Our Encyclical letter In Multiplicibus, that the time has come when Jerusalem and its vicinity, where the previous memorials of the Life and Death of the Divine Redeemer are preserved, should be accorded and legally guaranteed an "international" status, which in the present circumstances seems to offer the best and most satisfactory protection for these sacred monuments.

10. We cannot help repeating here the same declaration, encouraged by the thought that it may also serve as an inspiration to Our children. Let them, wherever they are living, use every legitimate means to persuade the rulers of nations, and those whose duty it is to settle this important question, to accord to Jerusalem and its surroundings a juridical status whose stability under the present circumstances can only be adequately assured by a united effort of nations that love peace and respect the right of others.

11. Besides, it is of the utmost importance that due immunity and protection be guaranteed to all the Holy Places of Palestine not only in Jerusalem but also in the other cities and villages as well.

12. Not a few of these places have suffered serious loss and damage owing to the upheaval and devastation of the war. Since they are religious memorials of such moment -- objects of veneration to the whole world and an incentive and support to Christian piety -- these places should also be suitably protected by definite statute guaranteed by an "international" agreement.

13. We are well aware of the intense desire of Our children, following the ancient tradition, to go on pilgrimage once more to these places from which they were barred by the general disturbed conditions. The Year of Atonement which is at hand increases all the more these desires; it is only natural that during this period the faithful should be more eager than ever to visit that land which was the scene of our Divine Redemption. God grant that these longings be satisfied as soon as possible.

14. To bring about this happy result, it will be necessary, or course, to make such arrangements as will allow pilgrims to approach freely those sacred edifices; enabling each to profess his devotion openly and without hindrance, and to remain there free from fear and danger. It must also be considered objectionable that pilgrims should see these places profaned by sinful and worldly entertainments, which are assuredly an offense to the Divine Redeemer and to the Christian conscience.

15. Moreover, We very much desire that the many Catholic institutions which have been erected in Palestine to help the poor, to educate youth and give hospitality to visitors, may be enabled, as is fitting, to carry on unimpeded the work they did so laudably in the past.

16. Nor can We omit to point out that all rights to the Holy Places, which Catholics during many centuries have acquired and time and again defended valiantly, and which Our predecessors have solemnly and effectively vindicated, should be preserved inviolate. These, Venerable Brethren, are the considerations We wished to put before you.

17. Encourage the faithful committed to your charge to be ever more concerned about the conditions in Palestine and have them make their lawful requests known, positively and unequivocally, to the rulers of nations. But let them especially implore unceasingly the help of Him, Who is the Ruler of Men and Nations. May God look down with mercy on the whole world, but particularly on that land which was bedewed with the Blood of the Incarnate Word, so that the charity of Jesus Christ, which alone can bring tranquillity and peace, may conquer all hatred and strife.

18. Meantime, may the Apostolic Blessing, which We lovingly impart to you, Venerable Brethren, and to all your flock, be a pledge of heavenly gifts and a token of our affection.

Given at Rome, St. Peter's the fifteenth day of the month of April, Good Friday, in the year 1949, the eleventh of Our Pontificate.