



**Munich Peace Conference
11 - 14 February 2016
Greeting address from Pax Christi International**

We are very grateful for the invitation from Pax Christi München to share a greeting from Pax Christi International on the occasion of the Munich Peace Conference 2016. Pax Christi München is one of the very dynamic diocesan groups in Germany working for peace and justice in their own society as well as worldwide.

Peace is a full time job! Indeed, our agenda for a just peace is never ending work, unfortunately. Maybe one of the main challenges of our time is the "globalisation of indifference"ⁱ as mentioned by Pope Francis on the refugee crisis during his visit to the island of Lampedusa in 2013. Indifference to the scourges of our time is one of the fundamental causes of the lack of peace. You can make a difference today by continuing to stand up for peace. The road to peace includes concrete steps towards disarmament, sustainable development and the implementation of all human rights.

Peace workers are people of hope and, consequently, not of indifference. Peace activists express radical solidarity with the daily victims of violence, poverty and terror. They keep human dignity, justice, reconciliation and peace not only as visions to be reached in the future, but also to be realised in our daily lives. Peace is possible where the rights of every human being are recognised and respected, heard and known, according to freedom and justice. Peace workers are promoters of these core values.

Reconciliation means restoring relations

Many people live in fear. Panic builds barriers among individuals and peoples! Fear is both real and orchestrated. We believe that just relationships are essential for just peace. What our time needs are

bridge builders working on the causes of (armed) conflict. Where the connection is lost between individuals and peoples, peace activists will build bridges. We expect first and foremost from our political leaders to be bridge builders and that they care for the common good. But for peace campaigners, particularly members of Pax Christi, the central task is tearing down walls that divide peoples and nations. We build bridges to hope. Connecting people with one another instead of disconnecting! Restore relationships! A long way to go.

Peace is to be worked at! As Eleanor Roosevelt once said: "It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it!"ⁱⁱ

We wish the participants in the Munich peace conference all the best as you analyze and discuss, and as you come together.

Brussels, December 2015

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ⁱ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/italy/10166306/Pope-Francis-condemns-globalisation-of-indifference-as-he-comforts-refugees-on-Italian-island.html>

ⁱⁱ http://womenshistory.about.com/cs/quotes/a/qu_e_roosevelt.htm