Guidelines for Peace Promotion in Schools Jesuit Conference of South Asia - Peace & Reconciliation Network

We live in a world of growing violence. The cry for peace is heard all over; from individual hearts, families, communities, war-torn nations, refugees, women, and children and most disastrously from the mother earth. Peace-building and reconciliation have become the need of the hour. Promoting peace and reconciliation is a priority for the Society of Jesus. It is a timely response to Decree 1 of the General Congregation 36 of the Society of Jesus, to the Jesuit Conference of South Asia's recommendation to work towards peace and reconciliation at all levels of the Society, and also to the Universal Apostolic Priorities of the Society of Jesus (showing the way to God through Spiritual Exercises, walking with the excluded, journeying with the youth and caring for our common home).

After family, it is the school that shapes the mind of the child and young citizens of the world. Our schools generally focus on academics and achievement. We also need to focus on how children are able to relate with one another, appreciate diversity and respect others. Considering the present socio-political scenario, the need of the hour is peace. The Schools in India have several platforms to enhance student life. However, there is a lack of specific platform to promote peace. This booklet offers guidelines on setting up creative forums of peace and reconciliation in our educational institutions. The implementation of these guidelines will conscientize and orient the young minds in their commitment to justice and peace.

On October 28, 1931, in a conference of teachers at the Montessori Training College, London, Mahatma Gandhi said: "If we are to reach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with children and if they will grow up in their natural innocence, we won't have the struggle, we won't have to pass fruitless idle resolutions, but we shall go from love to love and peace to peace, until at last all the corners of the world are covered with that peace and love for which, consciously or unconsciously, the whole world is hungering."

How can an education for peace be made meaningful and integral to our present system? This calls for developing concrete methodologies to promote peace and reconciliation which implies that we are aware of the dynamics of violence at the socio-cultural-politico-religious level and diagnose the motives, intentions and dubious attempts at consciously promoting violence and disharmony. In a world rife with injustice and inequality this demands a serious and explicit pedagogic commitment to create critical consciousness, which is concerned with justice and freedom. This will motivate our students to learn alternative ways of conflict resolution rooted in people's lives, cultures, values and attitudes. This would also focus on promoting peace across all areas of our educational ventures, including the teaching-learning process.

These guidelines were formulated at the National Workshop on Peace and Reconciliation held at Indian Social Institute, Bangalore on 15, 16 February 2020. The workshop was specifically meant for teachers of Jesuit schools and organized by Loyola Institute of Peace and International Relations (LIPI), Kochi, the Nodal Agency to build peace in South Asia with support from Indian Social Institute (ISI), New Delhi.

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Definition of Terminologies

1. Peace: Peace is a comprehensive concept. It is neither conquered for oneself nor imposed on others. It must be founded on justice, and built up in harmony. It is not something we should cut out just as an academic discipline. It has its own scope. It should pervade, and build into every discipline we learn/teach. The United Nations defines the word 'peace' in terms of a type of culture that exists when peace prevails. In spelling out what this culture is, it identifies the ideals of peace that have become standard principles of peace that are accepted universally. The UN calls the embodiment of these ideals the 'Culture of Peace.' "A culture of peace is based on respect for human rights, democracy and tolerance, the promotion of development, education for peace, the free flow of information and the wider participation of women as an integral approach to preventing violence and conflicts, and efforts aimed at the creation of conditions for peace and its consolidation." (UN Resolution 52/13). A culture of peace must imply more than a theoretical vision and reach out to persons and groups, communities and societies, nations and states, and indeed our entire world. This culture must also spell itself out as a practical process that impacts all these levels in various spheres of human activity and endeavors.

There are two kinds of peace: positive peace and negative peace. Negative peace refers to how to react and avoid violence. Positive peace is peace by peaceful means. It is filled with positive content such as restoration of relationships, the creation of social systems that serve the needs of the whole population and the constructive resolution of conflict. Peace therefore exists where people are interacting non-violently and are managing their conflicts positively. There is a direct natural correlation between inner peace and outer peace. Inner peace is, in fact, the foundation for outer peace. There are different levels of peace and it has to be seen as a process. Peace- keeping refers to preventing conflicts; peace-making means resolving conflicts and peace building means long term proactive strategy for living peacefully. At every stage there is scope for striving for better quality of peace. It goes on until we reach the Ultimate - the Divine Peace. Peace is the goal and peace is the way.

For the UNICEF, peace is an essential component of quality education. "It is the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level"(Source: UNICEF, *Peace Education in UNICEF*, Susan Fountain, Working Paper, Education Section, Programme Division, New York, June 1999).

2. Violence: Violence is the use of physical force so as to injure, abuse, damage, or destroy. The threat to peace comes from violence. We have to understand the types of violence to promote peace.

- *Direct Violence*: It is the kind of violence that injures or kills people quickly and dramatically. E.g. war, murder, rape, assault, verbal attacks.
- *Personal Violence*: It is injurious force directed by one person against others. E.g. physical attacks, destroying someone's property.
- *Structural Violence*: a form of violence wherein some social structure or social institution may harm people by preventing them from meeting their basic needs. E.g. Classism, nationalism, racism, etc.
- *Cultural Violence*: refers to aspects of a culture that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence, and may be exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science. E.g. Consumerism, materialism, etc.

In addition to these, there are other types of violence such as economic violence, political violence, sexual violence, digital violence, environmental violence, domestic violence, religious violence, ideological violence and violence through science and technology.

3. Conflict: A conflict is a clash of interest or any difference of opinion. The basis of conflict may be personal, racial, political or international. In general, conflicts are natural and unavoidable. What is crucial is to learn to deal with them positively and creatively (Conflict Management). The way we understand and deal with conflicts are critical to the creation of peace. Covering up conflicts will not help in handling them. We need to expose the conflicts and resolve them (Conflict resolution). We need also to transform our conflicts to a healthy one of mutual respect and understanding (Conflict transformation).

4. Reconciliation: Reconciliation is a strategy for conflict resolution. Reconciliation becomes essential when peace is broken. Reconciliation means reconnecting what is being broken. Bringing relationship back to normalcy is reconciliation. It calls for transforming relationships. Forgiveness is essential for reconciliation. Peace is the healing of hurtful memories.

5. Human Rights: Human rights, in general, are fundamental rights to which a person is inherently entitled. These are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination. Unfortunately violation of human rights exists in every part of the world in multiple forms: structural, political, economic, cultural, and environmental.

6. Justice: Justice, in its broadest context, includes both the attainment of that which is just. Plato's definition of justice is that justice is the having and doing of what is one's own. A just person is a person in just the right place, doing his best and giving the precise equivalent of what he has received. In a world rife with injustice and inequality justice calls for a serious and explicit pedagogic commitment to create a critical consciousness, which is concerned with justice, it must itself be just.

7. Freedom: It is the power or right to act, speak and think as one wants without constraints. There are different types of freedom: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom to express oneself, freedom of the press, freedom to choose one's state in life, etc. The freedom we want is not just a freedom from; it must also be a freedom for. It cannot be merely an individualist liberty that so easily regresses into license. For the ultimate subject of freedom is not the isolated individual, it is the person in community, or rather persons in communion with others and with reality. Freedom must be inclusive of both a more universal harmony and a more compelling justice. This is precisely why such freedom must be grounded in reality as the truth, the *satya* that can make us really and truly free.

8. **Harmony**: Shri Aurobindo once said; all problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony. For most religious traditions harmony is the ultimate structure of the universe. But in our pluralist world, harmony must be not just a 'coincidence of opposites', it must make space for all, without repression, without violence. Such harmony can only prevail when it is inclusive of freedom and justice. This is precisely why the harmony we seek must be a "continuous creation."

PEACE QUOTATIONS

- "We must be the change we wish to see in the world." **M. K. Gandhi** (1869-1948), Apostle of Nonviolence and Father of India and leader of Indian Independence.
- "It is essential to know that to be a happy person, a happy family, a happy society, it is very crucial to have a good heart. World peace must develop from inner peace. Peace is not just the absence of violence but the manifestation of human compassion. Without inner peace, it is impossible to have world peace." **Dalai Lama** (Tenzin Gyatso), Nobel Peace Prize 1989, spiritual leader of the Tibetan people.
- "Peace is not a relationship of nations. It is a condition of mind brought about by a serenity of soul. Peace is not merely the absence of war. It is also a state of mind. Lasting peace can come only to peaceful people." Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), First Prime Minister of Independent India.
- "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other." **Mother Teresa** (1910-1997), Nobel Peace Prize 1979, Founder of Missionaries of Charity.
- "The more we come out and do good to others, the more our hearts will be purified, and God will be in them." **Swami Vivekananda** (1863-1902), Hindu Philosopher and Spiritual Leader.
- "These days, absence of war is regarded as peace. But peace really connotes absence of fear. There would be peace only when no part of the world is afraid of or exploited by any other part." Vinoba Bhave(1895-1984), Founder of the Bhoodan-Gramdan Movement, Western India.
- "Where there is no justice there can be no secure peace. ...That just laws which uphold human rights are the necessary foundations of peace and security would be denied only by closed minds which interpret peace as the silence of all opposition and security as the assurance of their own power."Aung San SuuKyi, Nobel Peace Prize winner 1991, Leader of nonviolent movement for human rights and democracy in Burma (Myanmar)."
- "One caste, one religion, one God for all the people of the world; one form and the same blood in all, I cannot find any difference." Sree Narayana Guru (1854-1928), Reformer of South India.
- "No peace without justice, no justice without forgiveness!" **Pope John Paul II** (Karol Józef Wojtyla, 1920-2005) Spiritual Leader and former head of the Catholic Church.
- "Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius and a lot of courage to move in the opposite direction." Albert Einstein (1879-1955), Nobel Prize 1921, discovered relativity, crusader for peace.
- "Whenever I hear anyone arguing for slavery, I feel a strong impulse to see it tried on him personally." **Abraham Lincoln** (1809-1865), sixteenth president of the USA, who began the process that led to the end of slavery in the United States.
- "Peace is not the product of terror or fear. Peace is not the silence of cemeteries. Peace is not the silent result of violent repression. Peace is the generous, tranquil contribution of all to the good of all. Peace is dynamism. Peace is generosity. It is right and it is duty." Oscar Romero (1917-1980), Archbishop of El Salvador, assassinated in 1980, outspoken defender of the poor.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Group Discussion can be held in classes or small groups. Let the students freely express their thoughts. Kindly collate the ideas and views of the students arising therein. Make sure that everybody participates in it. If the discussion is held in groups, a summary of it can be reported by its leader. The teacher in-charge may help them formulate certain convictions based on these presentations.

- Are wars and violence means of promoting peace?
- Ask students to share the objectives and functions of international peace organizations like UN, Red Cross, etc. (library/internet can be made use of to collect information).
- Could you trace a few international treaties leading to peace and reconciliation and examples of peaceful coexistence and cooperation? (For e.g. Versailles treaty, Indo-China treaty, unification of Germany, etc.).
- In the context of increasing incidence of terrorism and violence, (9/11 USA, 26/11 Mumbai, etc.) examine how the fundamentalist forces use youngsters as human bombs?
- Are you aware of the structural and cultural violence prevalent in the society to which you belong? Also discuss the violence existing in the areas of science, technology, religion and environment.
- Could you share the contemporary examples of violation of human rights? Discuss in detail the human rights/child rights envisaged by the UNO and the Indian Constitution.
- What are the reasons for the increasing consumption of alcohol and drugs among teenagers and adults? What are the remedies you suggest?
- How do you cope with failures in life? Could these setbacks be converted into success stories? Share your experiences.
- Are you aware of the conflicts, if any, existing at home, in your school or neighborhood? How can they be transformed?
- Have you ever experienced any incidence of denial of justice? Did you fight for justice on any occasion either for you or for others? Share your experience.
- Could you discuss among yourselves examples of communal harmony in your area and cite some best practices and traditions prevailing there?

Objectives

The ultimate aim underlying the guidelines is to create a peace culture (or peace environment) in schools. The focus is on forming persons of peace-people who will embrace and imbibe the ideals of peace and feel motivated enough to make peace a reality in life. It also aims at creating a peace mentality that will be instrumental in giving birth to a culture of peace. It makes the students aware of the dynamics of self and social transformation, provokes critical thinking, and helps acquire necessary skills to engage in social action for conflict resolution and peace-building.

Methodology

- Methodology of peace promotion is participative, practical and life oriented. Peace is attained in and through action.
- Since the guidelines are quite exhaustive, each school has the freedom to choose what is feasible for them. The schools are also free to implement the programs suggested or introduce innovative programmes.
- Appointment of an animator, setting up an action plan for the academic year, peace clubs, peace notice board, celebration of peace days, sessions/seminars on Constitution, human rights, communal harmony, facing failures, learning empathy and quarterly evaluation are mandatory.

Sl. No.	Programmes	Description
1.	Appointing peace animators	Appoint one teacher as an animator at the school level. Ideally he/she should have some exposure to peace programmes. What is important is that the person should be motivated and enthusiastic to take up this additional responsibility. The primary responsibility of the animator is to prepare an action programme for the next academic year class-wise. The help and support of the Principal and the participation of the class-teachers are crucial to this.
2.	Clarifying the key concepts	Peace, violence, conflict, justice, reconciliation, freedom, human rights, etc. Kindly make use of the link of the article by Johan Galtung for clarifying concepts. Source: <i>Journal of Peace Research</i> , Vol. 6, No. 3 (1969), pp. 167-191 Published by: Sage Publications, Ltd. URL: <u>http://www.jstor.org/stable/422690</u>
3.	Peace and Reconciliation Literacy Programmes (for teachers, parents & students)	Make available a resource person who is working for peace and harmony and make sure students, teachers and parents attend his/her sessions on a regular basis.

• Quarterly reporting to LIPI/JEA is appreciated.

4.	Declaring 'Peace Zones'	A committee of teachers and students will be constituted for conflict management. Their service will be made available in the 'Peace Zone'.
5.	Peace Day & Peace Week Celebrations	The UN has declared 21 st September as International Peace day. Declare the entire week 'Peace Week' in the schools and organize events accordingly.
6.	Workshop on Peace & Reconciliation for teachers & parents	This is mostly to share experiences of promoting peace and practicing reconciliation among teachers, students and parents.
7.	Peace Syllabus	 The following modules could be incorporated in the syllabus: Theories of Peace: Positive peace, negative peace, peace-making, peace-keeping, peace building, etc. Conflict Resolution & Conflict transformation Human Rights and Justice Constitution of India and its Preamble, Fundamental Rights and Duties. Sustainable Development Goals, UN Communal Harmony Art and Peace Science and Technology for Peace Peace and Environment Inner Life and Peace Religions on Peace
8.	Peace Pledge	Each school prepares a pledge according to the contextual concerns and take it during the peace week/peace day/assembly or on suitable occasions like Independence day, Republic Day, Gandhi Jayanthi, Loyola Day etc.
9.	Peace Prayer/Meditation/Songs	Let the animator-in-charge lead the peace meditation programme weekly or monthly. The Peace Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi could be used. Students could compose peace songs.
10.	Examination of Conscience	It is proposed to set apart 5 minutes any time of the day for Examen. A set of questions for reflections may be prepared in advance.
11.	Counseling Sessions for Staff & Students	A qualified and experienced person will be required for counseling students. For class XI and XII, career counseling is also suggested.
12.	Peace through Art	Art consists of different forms like visual arts, music, performing arts like drama and cinema and combinations of one or more of these. Make use of any of these for promoting peace.
13.	Eco-Peace	Enable peaceful co-existence with nature in all its diversity. Imbibe the spirit of the Encyclical <i>Laudato Si.</i> Peace walk may be organized to appreciate the divine in the cosmos.

14.	Environment Friendly Life Style	The basic education needs a long-standing change in life style. It should start from primary education itself. Let there be an organic garden for every class. Prizes be awarded to best garden. Motivate the students to motivate their parents to start vegetable cultivation at the rooftops and backyards.
15.	Peace Documentaries	A short video documentary on peace will be shown once in a while. Students may be encouraged towards producing documentaries on peace and reconciliation based on real-life experiences.
16.	Peace Camps	One-day peace camp be organized for students/teachers /parents during second Saturdays.
17.	Peace exhibitions	Creative ways of exhibitions may be explored. Animator may take lead in this especially on the international peace day/week.
18.	Peace project/ Peace picnic	Ensure local field visits to foster peace awareness
19.	Study of Constitution & Child rights	Invite some qualified personnel like lawyers or those who are working for peace to take classes as and when time permits
20.	Beginning the Class with a Prayer	It is strongly recommended. Silent prayer also appreciated.
21.	Value Orientation in Teaching	It depends on how a teacher integrates the lesson into the lives of the students
22.	Peace Notice Board	Putting up articles on peace, justice and human rights. The matters must be approved by the animator or the teacher in-charge
23.	Introducing Nobel Laureates	Nobel peace prize winners' life may be explained to the children. Ask the students themselves to prepare presentations on these personalities. These may be presented on a regular basis.
24.	Introducing Peace Persons	Buddha, Christ, Gandhi, Martin Luther king, Dalai Lama, Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Swami Vivekananda, Kabir, MeeraBai, etc. and those who are working for peace and harmony will be introduced.
25.	Discussion on Current Affairs	It aims at fostering critical thinking. Discuss with children current affairs (either peace -making events or peace breaking events around). Listen to their perspectives and orient them through a peace channel.
26.	Life Skill Education	Organize personality development programmess e.g. Training in Self-awareness, Confidence- building, Interview, Motivation, Communication (Listening, Public Speaking, Presentation skills), Leadership, Happiness, Relationships, Attitude, etc.
27.	Enabling to Face Failures	In fact, the large number of suicides among the affluent class is basically because of the inability to cope with failures. It is important to conscientize students and parents on what is really achievement. Discussion: what are the fundamental needs of a human person?

28.	Case Studies	Take up a case that happened in the school/locality. Analyze it, reflect on it and learn the lesson.
29.	Peace Bulletin	Quarterly bulletin encouraged. Items in the notice board can be used for it.
30.	Science and Technology for Peace	Critical analysis of the use and abuse of science and technology. Science teachers can take a lead role in it.
31.	Drama and Street Plays on Themes of Peace	Peace club members may take lead for this. Role play and story-telling could be arranged.
32.	Celebrations of Major Festivals & Tribal festivals	Celebrate Christmas, Easter, Deepavali, Onam, Holi etc. with a peace perspective.
33.	Cultural Programmes on Peace	Organize debates, essay writing, printing, and poster making on peace related topics
34.	Inter-faith Prayer	Organize interfaith prayer services on occasions of religious importance. Use of Holy Scriptures and inter faith songs are appreciated.
35.	Social Media	Social media may be used for communicating Peace: the peace activities could be disseminated through Facebook, Whats App, YouTube, etc.
36.	Peace Calendar-Every Month with Different Topics /Action Plan	Each school is supposed to prepare a calendar
37.	Peace Awards	Offering a Memento to a deserved student/teacher/parent every year as part of Peace day celebrations
38.	Posters in the School Surroundings	Posters will be displayed in and around the school premise during the peace week.
39.	Practice of Charity	Charity is peace in action: Any act of charity jointly undertaken will be appreciated.
40.	Practice of Empathy	Way of practicing empathy in your immediate environment. Look at the lowest percentile of achievers in academics. What can you do for them? Adoption of a neighborhood school in a socially and economically less advanced area can be a priority. Visit of old age home and hospitals are recommended.
41.	Peace club for students Peace clubs are significant in the contemporary context of increasing violence, sectarianism, ethnic conflict, religious fundamentalism, violence against women and children.	Suggestions: Category 1: Grade 6,7,8 Category II: Grade 9,10,11 &12 There may be 3-5 representatives from each class. • There must be an animator for peace club • Total no. of members: Max. 50 • Office- bearers must be assigned • Meeting will be held once a month.

	 Objectives: Peace awareness Fostering a peaceful self Peace in daily life and in human interactions Peaceful coexistence with nature 	 Members to have badges Launch 3- member Peace Counsel in each class Quarterly publishing of peace activities Collaboration with NGOs and peace workers
42.	Peace Forum for PTA	The forum members include management representatives, staff representatives, selected parents, and student representatives. The Principals should communicate the importance of the peace agenda to parents through PTA. Monthly discussion: What did you do to bring peace? What could be done further in promoting peace? Animators and PTA-Peace club members must take initiatives in setting up peace clubs in other schools
43.	Issuing Certificate	LIPI/JEA can issue certificates for commendable peace works which will have an additional academic merit.
44.	Evaluation	Quarterly evaluation of peace promotion is recommended.

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