

“Our commitment to reconciliation requires us to promote justice and peace...”

For a childhood and youth free from harassment and violence.

In this sacred space that is our heart and community, let us come to know and be open to each other by praying together, asking for the light and wisdom of God's Spirit. And so we pray:

“Spirit of the Father and Son, come into our hearts and community. We want to hear the voice of the Father who calls us to follow his Son, the Good Shepherd, serving our brothers and sisters. Grant us a heart compassionate and committed heart, sensitive to the pain of others, moving us from feeling to action. We ask you through the intercession of Saint John Eudes, Mary Euphrasia and Mary of the Divine Heart.” Amen.

Reality of bullying: Who in their infancy or at school have not endured some joke or "malicious" nickname in the infancy or at the school? But...

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The Gospel of the Lord:

Luke 18, 15-17

Commitment: Prayer for the children around the world.



Lord, today I ask you for the children whose fingers are full of chocolate and smear it on everything they touch; who jump in puddles and ruin their new pants, who eat sweets before the meal and who can never find their shoes in the morning.

I want to pray for children who are photographed behind the barbed wire, who have never walked down the street with a new pair of shoes, who have never played with balls and who are born in places where we don't go near, but where they will probably die.

I want to pray for children giving us sticky kisses of candy and flower bouquets, who sleep with their dog and who want to bury their fish, who embrace us strongly and who forget their money for snack, who spread toothpaste in the bathroom, who watch with surprise as their father shaves and their mother puts on make-up and who make noise when they take soup.

And I also want to pray for children who have never eaten dessert, have no favorite blanket to take everywhere, who see their parents suffer, who approach our cars on every street corner, begging with their eyes, who have no baths, and whose photos appear in police stations instead of the offices of their parents.



I want to pray for children whose nightmares happen in broad daylight, who eat what they can get, who sleep outside and keep warm with newspapers, who have never gone to the dentist, who do not receive pampering from

anyone, who go to sleep hungry and wake up hungry, and who have no address.

I want to pray for children who like to be held and for those who have to be carried, for those who have given up and for those who continue to struggle, for those who don't have hands to hold theirs.

For all those children, Lord, I want to pray today, because they are all valuable, and bring new form of love in our lives and a reason to live, because they inspire us to commit ourselves to building a more just world.

We pray for our children, those who were born and those who will be born, because they are the best hope for our world, the reward for our work, the realization of our incomplete dreams, the guarantee of our immortality, and the proof that God has not lost hope in people.

Father, I also pray for children who have never received a hug and to whom no one has ever spoken to them about a loving Abba.

Lord, I pray for all children of the world, so that you bless them with love and joy.

Amen.

Prayer prepared by Sister Monica Scavuzzo and Miss Adriana Rita Parise (Justice and peace team of the Province of Argentina-Uruguay)

Reality of bullying:

Who in their infancy or at school have not endured some joke or "malicious" nickname in the infancy or at the school? **Mockery is a frequent element in the relationship between children and adolescents.** But that is not the same as the suffering caused by bullying or harassment from their peers.



Bullying is assaulting or humiliating another person: to insult, spread rumors, physically hurt or intentionally ignore someone. It may occur through a cellphone call, in person, in writing, at school, in the neighborhood, on transportation, at home and even in social networks.

Unfortunately, **many children and adolescents are suffering this type of harassment today** -especially in schools- where these youngsters are discredited, attacked and beaten in their circle of friends. This is not only causing them huge problems socially, low self-esteem and psychological issues, but in some cases leads them to suicide. In part, this is because bullying **occurs at a time during which children and adolescents are beginning to develop their personality**, to know who they are and what they want to do with their lives. Because they need to feel a part of different groups, they have not yet acquired the skills necessary to deal with this type of abuse.

VIDEO:

http://www.coddehumgro.org.mx/sitio/index.php?option=com_hwdvideoshare&task=viewcategory&cat_id=24&Itemid=450 (Only in Spanish)

What families might do to prevent this problem?

- Show concern about their sons and daughters.
- Create a channel of dialogue.
- Learn how to listen.
- Be in contact with the staff of the school and seek information about ways their sons or daughters can relate with their schoolmates.
- Know their children's friends and the people they meet in the daily life.
- Be in control of schedules and television shows that children can see as well as restrict the use of electronic devices (mobile phone).
- Know the friends that children meet by Internet.
- Teach them to decipher, understand and differentiate the real from the virtual world.
- Participate in extra school activities and committees to prevent bullying.