
Week 5 - Violence and the crisis of national security

Opening hymn (Lenten hymn)

Opening prayer

Merciful Father, send forth your Spirit upon us the people of Southern Africa. May we hear anew the voice of Jesus Christ, inviting us to walk with him across the turbulent waters of our time: "Courage, it is I. Do not be afraid."

By the grace of the Holy Spirit empower us to bring comfort to the restless, hope to those who despair, healing to victims of violence and reconciliation where there is division.

May the Holy Spirit heal our families and communities. Grant us ethical and courageous leaders who put the good of the people before their own interest.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to speak the truth with courage, to act justly in all we do, to share with those in need, and always and everywhere to respect your gift of life as we strive to proclaim the values of the Kingdom in solidarity with all people of good will. Amen.

Brief Introduction

One of the problems we face in the three countries is the culture of violence and the need for healing for those traumatized as a result of the violence. The three countries are all facing the challenges of dialogue, healing and reconciliation.

The role of the government and politicians

How satisfied are you with the way the government is handling the culture of violence, national security and the demands for dialogue? What more should the government do to end this problem?

Our role as ordinary citizens and as Christians

Is there a role that we as ordinary citizens can play to address social trauma, the culture of violence and the demands for dialogue?

Sharing our personal experiences

In your community and in your family, what has been your personal experiences of family violence: violence against the unborn, violence between husband and wife?

What has been your experience about violence in the communities: school violence, violence in the farms, violent protests, violence against foreigners, state violence and police brutality?

In your community, workplace and parish, what has been your experience of tensions and fights based on racial, ethnic and political differences?

What has been your experience of being healed from the trauma linked to violence in your family, community and country?

Being challenged by the Gospel and the Catholic Social Teaching

“Blessed are the peace makers” (Matthew 5:9) What have you done to become a peace maker in your family, parish, workplace, community, country?

“Family is the best setting for learning and applying the culture of forgiveness, peace and reconciliation.” (Pope Benedict XVI, Africa Munus, 19 November 2011, Par. 43). What are you doing as a parent to make sure that your family becomes a school to teach your children forgiveness, peace and reconciliation?

What have you done to challenge those involved in violent protests and other forms of violence in your community?

Action

As an act of repentance, what can I (we) do this week in line with the above sharing?

Spontaneous prayer

Allow time for those who wish to make a petition in prayer on behalf of the group. Our Father ... Hail Mary ...

Closing Prayer (use the one on page 5)