

UNITED NATIONS DAY October 24

The anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Charter, October 24, 1945, has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948. It has traditionally been marked throughout the world by meetings, discussions and exhibits on the achievements and goals of the Organization. Marking the celebration of the day in 1996, the Secretary-General observed, "The U.N. Provides a unique instrument to translate global consensus into concrete commitment and joint action. Here, statehood is reinforced in an emerging international system. Here, the weak have a voice that is strong and clear. Here lies the heart of our common endeavor for a better world."

Call to Worship

We come together today to call to mind our unity as children of God and our individual responsibility to work together for peace and understanding among all. We must also recognize those groups and organizations whose goal is to foster this unity nationally and internationally.

Today, we celebrate United Nations Day, recognizing the ratification of the U.N. Charter on October 24, 1945. This day is celebrated each year around the world as United Nations Day.

The purpose of the United Nations is to bring all nations of the world together to work for peace and development, based on the principles of justice, human dignity and the well-being of all people. It affords the opportunity for countries to balance global interdependence and national interests when addressing international problems.

The Augustinians have been associated officially with the United Nations since 1996, in an effort to promote shared ideals and to collaborate with this forum for world dialogue by bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to bear on the topics treated there.

Opening Prayer

Lord, God of all peoples, we gather this day to declare not our independence, but our interdependence. We are all created by the same God and share the same eternal destiny. We are called to live together in harmony and peace, as one family in the Lord.

We ask you blessings on us, on all nations, and on the United Nations, dedicated to fostering peace throughout the world. Bless all its members, that they may persevere, faithful to your commandments and, in all decisions, follow your divine will for all of creation. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **All:** Amen.

Reading from the Word of God (1 Corinthians 12: 12-26)

Commentary

St. Augustine took as inspiration for his community the ancient Christian community of Jerusalem described in the Acts of the Apostles. Augustinians today frequently look to that ancient community as a model for their life - and rightly so. Yet, perhaps just as frequently, Augustinians look less closely at the journey of that community in the rest of that New Testament book. For the Acts of the Apostles is the story of the Jerusalem community that did not remain within its original limits. That community could not. It ventured out. It went to Rome, the center of the empire, the center of the world.

Today the United Nations is a center of world and empire. So Augustinians should be at the U. N. precisely because their model is the ancient Christian community in Jerusalem. Such a community could never be closed in upon itself. It had to venture out. So must any group that claims the ancient Jerusalem community as a model. It must venture out today to the center of the world and empire, in witness, in service, in fellowship.

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 47)

Leader: Please respond after each verse of the Psalm, "Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace."

All: Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace.

Leader: Clap your hands, all you peoples; acclaim God with shouts of joy and songs of praise.

All: Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace.

Leader: For the Lord, the Most High, is awe-inspiring; over all the earth he is a great king.

All: Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace.

Leader: He brought peoples under our dominion and gave us authority over the nations.

All: Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace.

Leader: He chose our inheritance for us - the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.

All: Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace.

Leader: God has gone up amid joyful shouts, the Lord amid trumpet blasts.

All: Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace.

Leader: Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

All: Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace.

Leader: God is King of all the earth; sing to him a hymn of praise.

All: Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace.

Leader: God rules over the nations; God reigns on his holy throne.

All: Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace.

Leader: The leaders of the nations rally together with the people of the God of Abraham. For the shields of the earth belong to God, who reigns supreme.

All: Only you, Lord, can bring us true peace.

Litany of Hope (Aims of the United Nations)

Leader: Please respond after each petition, "Lord, hear our plea."

All: Lord, hear our plea.

Leader: That peace be preserved throughout the world, let us pray.

All: Lord, hear our plea.

Leader: That friendly relations among all nations be developed, let us pray.

All: Lord, hear our plea.

Leader: That all peoples work together to build better lives, let us pray.

All: Lord, hear our plea.

Leader: That, through international dialogue, poverty be eliminated, along with disease and illiteracy throughout the world, let us pray.

All: Lord, hear our plea.

Leader: That, recognizing the value of all of God's creation, environmental concern replace environmental destruction, let us pray.

All: Lord, hear our plea.

Leader: That the United Nations be able to deliver these ends, serving as a center where all nations, great and small, may be heard and heeded, let us pray.

All: Lord, hear our plea.

Final Prayer and Blessing

Leader: Please respond to each statement, "We are interdependent."

All: We are interdependent.

Leader: Each of us depends on the well-being of the whole, and so we have respect for the community of living buildings: for people, animals and plants, and for the preservation of the earth, air, water and soil.

All: We are interdependent.

Leader: We take individual responsibility for all we do. All our decisions, actions and failures to act have consequences. We must treat others as we wish others to treat us.

All: We are interdependent.

Leader: We make a commitment to respect life and dignity, individuality and diversity, so that every person is treated humanely, without exception.

All: We are interdependent.

Leader: We consider humankind our family. We must strive to be kind and generous. We must not live for ourselves alone, but should also serve others, never forgetting the children, the aged, the poor, the suffering, the disabled, the refugees and the lonely.

All: We are interdependent.

Leader: No person should ever be considered or treated as a second-class citizen, or be exploited in any way whatsoever.

All: We are interdependent.

Leader: We commit ourselves to a culture of nonviolence, respect, justice and peace. We shall not oppress, injure, torture or kill other human beings, forsaking violence as a means of settling differences.

All: We are interdependent.

Leader: We must strive for social and economic order, in which everyone has an equal chance to reach full potential as a human being. We must speak and act truthfully and with compassion, dealing fairly with all, and avoiding prejudice and hatred.

All: We are interdependent.

Leader: Earth cannot be changed for the better unless the consciousness of individuals is changed first. We pledge to increase our awareness by disciplining our minds, by meditation, by prayer or by positive thinking. Without risk and a readiness to sacrifice, there can be no fundamental change in our situation.

All: We are interdependent.

Leader: Therefore, we commit ourselves to this global ethic, to understanding one another and to socially beneficial, peace-fostering and nature-friendly ways of life.

All: We are interdependent.

Leader: Let us go forth to live out this ethic. **All:** Amen

Blessing

Suggested Hymns		
All My Days (Schutte/Murray SJ)	Canticle of the Sun (Haugen)	Christ, Be Our Light (Farrell)
City of God (Schutte, SJ)	Envía Tu Espíritu (Hurd)	Gifts (Hunter/Wrynn)
Gather Us In (Haugen)	Jerusalem My Destiny (Cooney)	Make Us True Servants (Wentz)
Sing of the Lord's Goodness (Sands)	Song of the Body of Christ (Haas)	We Are Called (Haas)
Let There Be Peace on Earth (Miller/Jackson)		

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