



Archbishop Justin gives a homily to over 50,000 people at a Prayer for Peace vigil in South Sudan

Below is Archbishop Justin's address in full, given during the ecumenical pilgrimage of peace with the Pope and Scottish Moderator

The only way the world will know Jesus came from the Father is when his followers are one, for God is one.

Our being one is how the world will know that Jesus is Lord, that God reigns over all powers, powers and authorities, that the glory of the Father is believed, and more people come to know His love.

We see this in Acts 2, just read for us by Martha. Those who choose to follow Christ enter into a new community where there are no divisions or hierarchies. They enter into new relationships and a whole new way of living. 'All the believers were together'. More than that, they lived with abundant generosity and care for one another and for the world around. They sold their own possessions to give to those in need. They broke bread together. They lived the gospel and they preached the gospel. Corruption was excluded. Violence was non-existent.

These new followers lived Jesus' words: 'All I have is yours, and all you have is mine'. When we recognise that everything is God's, we are no longer frightened of losing it, because we know that God is a God of abundance, not lack. Of greatness, not scarcity. We no longer cling to things when we know in our souls that everything belongs to God. In a world of famine and thirst, of natural disaster, faith in God's abundance is hard. But when we are one, we value each other like we value the limbs on our own bodies. We value young people.

Young people: you are the majority of South Sudan. You are not just the future, you are the present. If we value you, we will listen to your hopes for peace and opportunity and we allow those hopes to shape the priorities of our nation and church. You will not be deceived into war. You will not be forced to kill. You will disagree with others, but you will still love them. You will set an obedient pattern of love to God.

Young men: you will value and honour women. Never raping, never violent, never cruel, never using them as if they were simply there to satisfy desire. When we are one, we value and honour women.

Women of South Sudan: I know that on top of the grief of conflict and the responsibility to provide for your families, many of you live with the trauma of sexual violence and the daily fear of mistreatment even in your own homes. Yet you are incredible women of strength. My wife.

Caroline, has worked with many of you and has heard the stories of you taking food, clothing and training to those who should be considered your enemies, even risking your lives. May God inspire us with your example and enable us to offer you the care and value Jesus gave to women around him.

This 'being one' is something we must all practise, and yet it is especially the responsibility of leaders. Leaders have the power to act on what others say; they can make the choice to listen or not; they can model valuing those who are different from them, or they can create division.

Being a Christian draws us all into the fellowship of believers. It does not matter that we are from different countries, different tribes, different churches. My dear brothers, Pope Francis and Moderator Iain, we here as your family, your fellowship, to be with you and share in the knowledge of your suffering. We have travelled on this Pilgrimage of Peace in a way that has not been done before. Because we love South Sudan.

It is God's grace and not our merit that we are here. Because nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ. Nothing can separate us from one another. Because we share that love. The blood of Christ unites us, it is sufficient alone for our salvation. We need no other sacrifices. My sister, my brother, will never, never, never be my enemy.

For every person here, there is a place and a calling for you in the family of believers. And your calling is to do what you can to share the love God has given you. Even if it is just a small thing. Listen to Jesus today. Love someone who is different from you today. Embrace them, share food, protect them.

Our dear brothers and sisters, we will pray for you. You are not forgotten. And may God protect you, may he sanctify you and may you know His peace. And may we, together, worship the God who became human and shared in our suffering, so we might become one and share in His glory.

Notes:

1. Photos available to download [here](#).
2. Other photos and video are available from news agencies covering the visit as well as from the Vatican Press Office.

4 min read

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