International Day of Peace

This year, 2015, the International Day of Peace, September 21st, is on a Monday, and special activities and celebrations will take place all across the world over the week of the 2015 Peace Day, including festivals, concerts a global Peace Wave with moments of silence at noon in every time zone, and much more.

The International Day of Peace, a.k.a. “Peace Day” provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations and nations to create practical acts of peace on a shared date.

In 1981, the United Nations General Assembly, by unanimous vote, adopted Resolution 36/67 establishing the International Day of Peace (IDP) which stated in part, “...to devote a specific time to concentrate the efforts of the United Nations and its Member “States, as well as the whole of mankind, to promoting the ideals of peace and to giving positive evidence of their commitment to peace in all viable ways.” The first Peace Day was celebrated in September, 1982 on the opening day of the General Assembly.

In 2002, the UN General Assembly officially declared September 21 as the permanent annual date for the International Day of Peace.

By creating the International Day of Peace, the UN devoted a specific day and collaborative focus on worldwide peace and encouraged all of humanity to work in cooperation for this goal. During the discussion of the U.N. Resolution that established the International Day of Peace, it was suggested that:

Peace Day should be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples. This day serves as a reminder to all peoples that the Franciscan Renewal Center is a living instrument in the service of peace and should serve all of us here within the organization as a constantly pealing bell reminding us that our commitment is to peace.

Since its inception, Peace Day has marked our personal and planetary progress toward peace. It has grown to include millions of people in all parts of the world, and each year events are organized to commemorate and celebrate this day. Events range in scale from private gatherings to public concerts and forums where hundreds of thousands of people participate.

Anyone, anywhere can celebrate Peace Day. It can be as simple as lighting a candle at noon, sitting in silent meditation, or doing a good deed for someone you do not know. Or it can involve getting your co-workers, organization, community or government engaged in a large event. The impact if millions of people in all parts of the world, coming together for one day of peace, is immense, and does make a difference. International Day of Peace is also a Day of Ceasefire—personal or political.

Take this opportunity to make peace in your own relationships as well as impact the larger conflicts of our time.

Imagine what a whole Day of Ceasefire would mean to humankind.

-Bonnie Wasniewski, January 30, 2015