

Growing in FAITH

Discovering **hope** and **joy** in the Catholic faith.

May 2003

St. Jerome Croatian Church
FRANCISCAN FATHERS: Fr. Joe/Fr. Tomislav

How can we create a non-violent world?

Violence is power used to hurt. Certainly it can be physical - a blow, a gunshot, a bombing. But it can also take other forms, such as gossip, nasty remarks, or withering glances. All forms are hurtful and dangerous.

The U.S. bishops said, "Society cannot tolerate an ethic which uses violence to make a point, settle grievances, or get what we want" (*Confronting a Culture of Violence: A Catholic Framework for Action, U.S. Catholic Bishops, 1994*). They also said, "Commitment and conversion can change us and together we can change our culture and communities."

Turn to prayer. The Catholic's first response to crisis is prayer. Our

tradition of prayer and sacrifice can lead to disarmament of the heart.

Start at home. Look for ways to diminish violence in your own life.

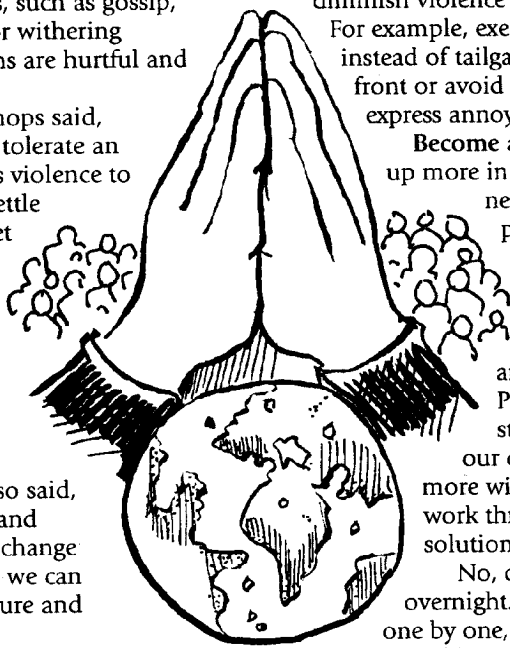
For example, exercise patience instead of tailgating the car in front or avoid profanity to express annoyance.

Become a presence. Show up more in your

neighborhood, parish, or community. It's a great way to model your Catholic values and set an example. Plus, the more of a stake we have in

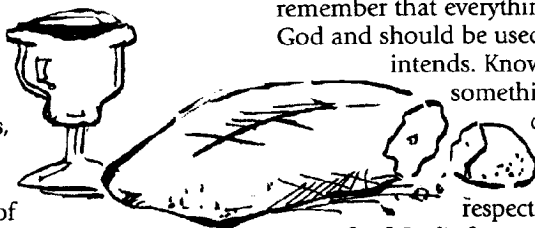
our communities, the more willing we are to work through peaceful solutions to conflict.

No, change won't come overnight. But we can start - one by one, family by family, neighborhood by neighborhood - to rid our communities from the evil and fear that violence brings.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

A blessing or benediction is a prayer invoking God's power and care on something (or someone). Thus, blessing an object places it under the care of God or dedicates to his service.



Why do Catholics bless objects?

Blessing objects helps us to remember that everything comes from God and should be used as he intends. Knowing that something is blessed can help us remember to treat it with respect and revere it as a gift of God's favor.

One Minute Meditations

Honesty is its own reward

History tells us that people who speak the truth aren't always treated nicely. But there are good reasons to be truthful anyway. For example, you never have to remember what you said. Other people will come to trust your word and actions. God will bless us for your obedience and you will feel the joy of knowing you walk in truth.

The best way to avoid a bad habit ...

Bad habits often start innocently enough. Yet when we allow them to continue, they can do great damage. The best solution is to avoid them in the first place. Also, consider listening to the warnings of others who may be able to see the situation more clearly than we can.

The secret to success

We are already a success in the eyes of God if we love him and each other.

