



THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF PHILADELPHIA

*“Peace is not merely the absence of war, nor can it be reduced solely to the balance of power between enemies...Peace is the fruit of justice...the fruit of love.”*

(Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 494)

*“Violence is a lie, for it goes against the truth of our faith, the truth of our humanity. Violence destroys what it claims to defend: the dignity, the life, the freedom of human beings.”*

(Compendium, 496)

## SISTERS TAKE CORPORATE STAND OPPOSING WAR AGAINST IRAQ (2003)

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We, the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, believe that the United States of America cannot seek peace by waging war. While we acknowledge America’s legitimate differences with Saddam Hussein and his government, we oppose the use of military force against the people of Iraq. We mourn the loss of life for all military personnel and for the women, men, and children of Iraq. We mourn the destruction of societal structures that support the basic necessities for living. We lament the arrogant stance of the United States in ignoring the international voices of reason that advocate for nonviolent diplomatic solutions through the Security Council and world members of the United Nations.

We commit ourselves and call our sisters and brothers of faith to join with us in prayer and fasting that the war may cease and negotiations resume for seeking peaceful solutions.

We also pray for the safety of all who are called to fight in this war. We encourage our sisters and brothers to join with us in taking the *“necessary risks to be a healing, compassionate presence in our violent world”* (Commitment Statement, 1996). We urge us all to make our voices heard on behalf of peace by choosing appropriate actions that denounce aggression and devastation and support the end of human suffering.

Our Third Order Rule challenges us: *“As they announce peace with their lips, let them be careful to have it even more within their own hearts.”* (IX: 30). May our hearts seek peace and move us to action for justice in our suffering world.

## RATIONALE

We would like to share with you a sampling of the rationale which was given in support of a corporate stand opposing the war in Iraq.

- One cannot seek peace by waging war.
- We advocate for nonviolent diplomatic solutions.
- We are committed “to be a healing, compassionate presence in our violent world.” (*Commitment Statement, 1996*).
- 4,304\* U.S. service people have lost their lives
- 92,153-100,591\* citizens and military of Iraq have lost their lives.
- Over 27,000 U.S. service people have been maimed.
- Two million Iraqis have fled their country.
- Two million Iraqis are displaced within Iraq.

\* Numbers updated to June 2009 <http://caualities.org>

## STATEMENT

The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia commit ourselves to stand with our fellow Americans in opposition of the war in Iraq.

## ACTION STEPS

- We will support through prayer our military personnel, their families, the Iraqi people, and members of our government who have decision making authority.
- We will fast in protest of the war.
- We will advocate for an end to the war through letter writing and calls to government officials.
- We will be present at rallies for diplomatic solutions.
- We will publish on a special memorial page on our website a link to the names of all military personnel who have lost their lives in the war.