



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Dear brothers and sisters of many different faiths,

The crisis on the **Ukrainian-Russian** border, along with all the other **armed conflicts** taking place at the end of this year of 2021, is worrisome because it has the potential to lead to violence and destruction. Once again, the clash seems to be driven by geopolitical designs and economic interests completely unrelated to the interest of the people affected.

We want to join the voices of every faith and ask God to convert all inclinations of violence to peace. There are always other ways to settle disputes and they must be explored in order to spare suffering, grief and destruction. In this same vein, we call for a halt to the dangerous growth in expenditure for purchasing new arms that has occurred even during the most difficult months of the pandemic.

We unite ourselves in prayer with the voice of Pope Francis and so many other religious, civil, and scientific leaders, who are calling for a turnaround in the face of this truly unjustifiable economic and political stance. Rather, the money invested to increase arms should be used to lessen the scandal of poverty. The funds that are saved could be used as a special global fund managed by the UN to address pandemics, poverty and climate change.

On December 27th, each of us, in the form that is most suitable, will gather together spiritually to pray for peace according to these intentions.

May the Lord give you peace

Assisi, December 2021

+ Domenico Sorrentino, Bishop