

# Practical Advice

## Facilitator's Directions

Materials needed:

Letter #4050

The FACILITATOR welcomes participants and says:

In studying the history of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, one sees that there has been a constant presence of war somewhere in the congregation since the foundation. Theresa herself recalled memories of war during the Napoleonic era and was always alert to changes in the political climate of the congregation.

One of her classic letters is #4050, July 1866. As you read it consider her practical mysticism. She offers inspiration and gives very detailed instructions on how to behave during wartime: the pain of war and its devastation were real to her.

If the group is familiar with this history the FACILITATOR asks: Is this a true of the past ten years? Have the School Sisters of Notre Dame been living in war torn parts of the world?

The FACILITATOR says: In this last 5 – 10 years, School Sisters of Notre Dame have had to evacuate from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Pakistan, and Nepal. They have lived in the political uncertainty of Eastern Europe, Central and Latin America.

The following letter is relevant and comes out of a real situation of political upheaval in Europe in 1866. Imagine receiving this letter and discussing it in a local community living under the threat of war.

The FACILITATOR distributes copies of Living in Wartime, #4050 and invites the group to read it together. After listening, consider the questions at the end of the reading.

1. Consider the responsibility to help a community/family learn to live during wartime: what would be important to you that is mentioned in this letter?
2. What would you include if you were advising someone how to live with integrity during wartime?
3. Has anyone had such an experience?
4. Would it make a difference if you were living in an international community during wartime? If so, why?

Conclude by inviting them to pray St. Francis of Assisi's Prayer for Peace.

**St. Francis of Assisi's Prayer for Peace:**

Lord, Make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.  
Where there is injury, pardon.  
Where there is despair, hope,  
Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, Grant that I may not seek  
So much to be consoled, as to console,  
To be understood as to understand,  
To be loved, as to love,  
For it is in giving that we receive,  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.