

# January Mission Intention

May the dedication of Christians to peace give witness to the name of Christ before all people.



True peace is built on justice and forgiveness.

## Country Focus: Democratic Republic of the Congo: A rich land in need of peace and reconciliation.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a vast country in central Africa with immense natural resources. It is also a country that has known many years of civil war and suffering as competing groups try to control the vast economic resources.

The most recent civil war is said to have claimed nearly 3 million lives, either as a direct result of fighting or because of disease and malnutrition. Despite a peace deal and a new constitution in 2003, many in the country still live in terror.

It is hard to overestimate the role of the Catholic Church in the DRC.



Of a population of 70 million, nearly half of the population is Catholic. The Church has a long history of providing education, health care and many economic enterprises. During the years of civil war, the Church has stood as only national institution that serves the people.

Working toward lasting peace is a central focus of the Church's ministry as it teaches peacemaking to all ages. It lives peace by increasing justice and practicing good governance and addressing the poverty and pain of the people. Peace is possible when justice and forgiveness are present.

## God's Word for Mission

*Promoting Knowledge of Faith*

*"So whoever is in Christ is a new creation....All of this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation ...So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us" (2 Corinthians 5:17-20).*

*"Peace is not merely the absence of war...Peace is about safeguarding the goods of people, free communication, respect for human dignity. Peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity" (Catechism, #2304).*

## Saint for Peace: St. Marie-Clementine Anuarite Nengapeta *Education for Community Life*

Anuarite Nengapeta was born in 1936 in Wamba, D.R. Congo and was the 4th of six daughters. Despite the reservations of her family, Anuarite entered the convent of Holy Family Sisters in 1959 and took the name Sr. Marie-Clementine.

Sr. Marie-Clementine devoted herself to serving others and working to make life more humane and happy for those in her care. In 1964, a rebellion broke out across the country. Simba rebels stormed her convent and attacked many of the sisters.



*Feast Day is December 1st.*

St. Marie-Clementine was killed during the assault. Between the blows she had the strength to say to her attacker: "I forgive you for you know not what you are doing."

Her act of forgiveness and faith during terrible violence has been a deep source of inspiration for her sisters and many of the Congolese people trying to recover from years of suffering. In 1999, she became the first Congolese woman canonized by the Catholic Church.

### Promoting Peace

Catholic teaching promotes peacemaking as an essential aspect of Christian life. Peace is more than the absence of war and conflict. Peace is built on mutual respect and trust between individuals, communities and nations. Promoting peace means working toward better living and working conditions, disarming groups of weapons and structures of fear that oppress others. Christians are called by their faith to be witnesses and agents of peace at home and abroad.



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## My Mission Gift - Offering Prayer, Service and Treasure *Moral Formation*

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### Give an hour of Prayer

- Pray daily for peace in your heart as you face the ups and downs of the day.
- Pray for children that live in areas of conflict and war.
- Pray for DRC and other countries recovering from war.
- Pray for soldiers, veterans and victims of war.



### Give an hour of Service

- Participate in a peace vigil to end war and promote peaceful relations.
- Learn ways to practice peaceful resolution of conflicts.
- Learn how your church and school can become a peace site. Go to: [www.peacesites.org](http://www.peacesites.org).



### Give a Buck for Mission

- Give \$1 to **Holy Childhood Society** which exists to foster faith, peace and development for children who live in areas of poverty, war and other forms of conflict.

Holy Childhood Association is set up for children here to learn about and serve children around the world through their prayers and encouragement. Go to: [www.onefamilyinmission.org/hca](http://www.onefamilyinmission.org/hca).

Place gift commitments and offerings in your Holy Bucket. If you do not have one and would like one, contact Eric Simon at [simone@archspm.org](mailto:simone@archspm.org).

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## Petitions for Mission

*Liturgical Education*

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- ✠ Let us pray for peace in our world and peace in our relationships.
- ✠ Let us pray for the Church to be a witness to peace in places of war and conflict .
- ✠ Let us pray for those who have given their lives for the sake of a more peaceful world.
- ✠ Let us pray for an end to war and for the disarming of weapons of war.
- ✠ Let us pray that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, may reign in our hearts so that we may know his peace that the world cannot give.

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## Prayer for Mission

*Missionary Initiative*

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Dear Jesus, you offer us a peace that the world cannot give. Help us to follow your way of peace, forgiveness and love. May we come to know your peace in our hearts and in our world. Amen.