

Peace, very close by and in the world

Beloved person,

This morning it was in the news again: people doing the most terrible things to each other. That evokes feelings of uncertainty and fear in me. Sometimes I cannot bear to hear it anymore and I pretend it is not there.

On the Peace Museum website, I read a quote from Martin Luther King Jr.: *'The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.'* It is a sentence that shakes me awake: I want to be a good person, but am I doing enough against evil when I see what is going on? Where can you find encouragement to keep going when it seems to make no difference? This year's PAX magazine, with the theme "More than the ordinary", says the following about this:

You can make a difference, such as pursuing everyday peace in your daily life. When we talk about bringing about change, it may sound as if we all need to be bigger, louder, more visible. But what we often forget is that real peace is built in small ways. We need peace fighters, absolutely. People who stand on the barricades with courage, dedication and perseverance. But if that is the only image of change, then we close off so many other possibilities.

People who think: what can I do? More than the ordinary means consciously choosing not to look away. Not to become accustomed to injustice. We must not forget: peace is not the absence of war, but the presence of humanity. And humanity is found in small things – the actions that seem so ordinary that they are extraordinary. For everyone whose powerlessness feels overwhelming: do something. Whether it is big. Whether it is small. Whether it is anything at all.¹

We are all familiar with situations where peace and humanity are severely strained and where we cannot see a way out of the impasse or towards greater understanding. You hope for a friendly gesture or gladly want to start with a clean slate. And when you dare to cautiously venture forth, your desire to do the right thing proves to be fragile. In all your vulnerability, you want to give something that could easily be trampled underfoot. Your intentions may be questioned and hurtful things may be said on both sides.

And yet...

If I do not do anything, who will? You probably also sometimes think: "Does it have to come from me again?" Yes, it could well be. Because I truly want to: to be courageous and do what is necessary, wherever I am. To ensure peace by contributing to humanity and wholeness.

What I can do for everyday peace is:

- To choose words that contribute to healing and do not hurt.
- To stay connected in an appropriate way, even when it is uncomfortable.
- To share what is going on inside me instead of defending myself or making accusations.
- To choose compassion and gentleness, even when we do not understand each other.
- To continue to respect the dignity of the other person, even when the relationship is hostile.
- To observe carefully and not judge immediately.

And what would you add to this?

*Where people begin to feel
their deepest intentions
and start afresh, as new
there you will find heaven on earth, thus bringing peace among us*

*Where people begin to give themselves,
let love beckon
and start afresh, as new
there you will find heaven on earth, thus bringing peace among us*

*Where people connect
overcome hatred
and start afresh, as new
there you will find heaven on earth, thus bringing peace among us²*

With a warm-hearted greeting, gladly your sister,
Nanda Ziere



We salute all peace workers

¹Celebrating PAX, More than the ordinary, vredesweek.nl

²Where people begin to feel (freely translated) Waar mensen meer gaan voelen by Ronald de Waal, www.apgen.nl/vredesweek2025