

1	Tue	Mary, Mother of God World Day of Prayer for Peace. Theme: 'Blessed are the peacemakers' 1901: Foundation of Commonwealth of Australia 1994: Native Title Act commenced operation
2	Wed	
3	Thu	1977: First loans by Grameen Bank, founded by Muhammad Yunus in Bangladesh
4	Fri	
5	Sat	
6	Sun	The Epiphany of Jesus
7	Mon	
8	Tue	
9	Wed	
10	Thu	1946: First UN General Assembly opens with 51 nations represented
11	Fri	
12	Sat	
13	Sun	
14	Mon	
15	Tue	1842: Mary MacKillop born in Fitzroy, Victoria 1929: Martin Luther King Jr born in Atlanta USA

16	Wed	
17	Thu	
18	Fri	
19	Sat	
20	Sun	Second Sunday in Ordinary Time <i>World Day of Prayer for Migrants and Refugees</i>
21	Mon	
22	Tue	
23	Wed	
24	Thu	Feast of St Francis de Sales, patron saint of journalism
25	Fri	1959: Pope John XXIII announces his intention to convoke the Second Vatican Council
26	Sat	Australia Day / Survival Day 1972: Aboriginal Tent Embassy established in Canberra
27	Sun	Third Sunday in Ordinary Time <i>UN International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust</i>
28	Mon	
29	Tue	
30	Wed	
31	Thu	

1 January World Day of Prayer for Peace

For the celebration of the 46th World Day of Peace on 1 January 2013, the Holy Father Benedict XVI has chosen the following theme: *'Blessed are the peacemakers.'*

The Pope's Message encourages everyone to take responsibility with regard to peace-building.

The Message embraces the fullness and diversity of the concept of peace. It starts from the human being's experience of inner peace and outer peace. It discusses fundamental rights, principally freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, freedom of religion.

The Message offers, as well, an ethical reflection on some measures the world is going to take to contain the financial and economic crisis, the educational crisis, and the crisis of institutions and politics, which is also – in many cases – a worrying crisis of democracy.

The Message also looks at the 50th Anniversary of the Second Vatican Council and of the encyclical letter by Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, according to which the primacy is always for human dignity and freedom, for the building of an earthly city to the service of every person, without any discrimination, and directed to the common good which is based on justice and true peace.

10 January UN General Assembly opens, 1946

The United Nations is an international organisation founded in 1945 after the Second World War by 51 countries committed to maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations and promoting social progress, better living standards and human rights. The UN has four main purposes:

- to keep peace throughout the world
- to develop friendly relations among nations
- to help nations work together to improve the lives of poor people, to conquer hunger, disease and illiteracy, and to encourage respect for each other's rights and freedoms
- to be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations to achieve these goals.

The work of the United Nations reaches every corner of the globe. Although best known for peacekeeping, peacebuilding, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance, there are many other ways the United Nations and its specialised agencies, funds and programmes affect our lives and make the world a better place. The Organisation works on a broad range of fundamental issues, from sustainable development, environment and refugees protection, disaster relief, counter terrorism, disarmament and non-proliferation, to promoting democracy, human rights, gender equality and the advancement of women, governance, economic and social development and international health, clearing landmines, expanding food production, and more, in order to achieve its goals and coordinate efforts for a safer world for this and future generations.

25 January Second Vatican Council announced by Pope John XXIII

Part of the address of Pope John XXIII in which he first announced his intention of convoking an ecumenical council. The address was delivered to 17 Cardinals in the Basilica of St. Paul-Outside-the-Walls on January 25, 1959.

Oh, what a wonderful spectacle if the Bishop of Rome extends his watchful care to the whole world, to whose spiritual government he is made responsible through the divine mission entrusted to him in the succession of the supreme apostolate! It is a happy spectacle, on the one hand, where the grace of Christ continues to multiply the fruits and portents of spiritual elevation, of health and sanctity in the whole world. On the other hand, it is a sad spectacle when confronted with the abuse and compromise of the liberty of man who, not knowing the open heavens and refusing faith in Christ the Son of God, redeemer of the world and founder of the Holy Church, turns his search entirely to the pursuit of so-called earthly goods ...

Venerable brothers and our beloved sons! We announce to you, indeed trembling a little with emotion, but at the same time with humble resolution of intention, the name and the proposal of a twofold celebration: a diocesan synod for the city, and an ecumenical council for the Universal Church ...

The knowledge which was already fairly familiar to us, and which has been confirmed and amplified by these three months of our introduction to the service 'of the servants of God' encourages us to trust in heavenly grace. Above all, we trust in the intercession of the Immaculate Mother of Jesus and our Mother, in the protection of the Ss. Peter and Paul, 'Princes of the Apostles,' as well as of the Ss. John the Baptist and John the Evangelist, our special patrons, and all the saints of the heavenly court. We implore them all for a good beginning, continuation, and happy outcome of these proposals for a great work, enlightenment, edification and happiness of all Christian people, for a renewed invitation to the faithful of the separated communities that they also may follow us amiably in this search for unity and grace, to which so many souls aspire in all parts of the earth.

Venerable brothers and our beloved sons! How sweetly and encouragingly return to us the words of St. Leo the Great which the Sacred Liturgy invites us now more than ever to recite. The salutation of St. Paul, the convert of Damascus, who has welcomed us here near his most sacred memories, resounds with more life on this day: 'You are my crown and my joy, if your faith, which from the beginning of the Gospels is preached throughout the world, perseveres in sweetness and holiness' (St. Leo Great, Sermon 2).

Oh! What a greeting this is: wholly worthy of our spiritual family! A greeting and a wish. Benedictio Dei omnipotentis Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

Families can be a beacon for a more compassionate and just society. Through the words and actions of their parents, a child will learn and emulate either an attitude of selfish insularity or an outlook of openness, kindness and inclusion.