

Leader In the book of Wisdom we hear:
“When I enter my house, I shall
find rest with her, for nothing is
bitter in her company; when life is
shared with her there is no pain,
nothing but pleasure and joy.”
(Wisdom 8:16)

Let us listen voices of wisdom in
our world as we seek peace
among nations, in our
neighborhoods and households:



Reader “When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.”
- Malala Yousafzai, Pakistani activist for female education and the
youngest Nobel Prize laureate

Reader “Peace cannot exist without justice, justice cannot exist without fairness,
fairness cannot exist without development, development cannot exist
without democracy, and democracy cannot exist without respect for the
identity and worth of cultures and people.”
- Rigoberta Menchu, Guatemalan 1992 Nobel Peace Prize laureate

Reader “Peace is crafted by hand! There are no industries for peace, no. It is
fashioned each day, by hand, and also with an open heart so that the gift
of God may come.”
- Pope Francis, General Audience, May 28, 2014

Leader Pablo Casals was a Catalonian Spanish composer and cellist. Passionate
about peace and justice, he used his fame and music to support human
rights and work against oppressive governments. In 1971, at the age of
95, after 50 years out of the spotlight, Casals played his arrangement of a
traditional Catalan folk song before the United Nations. In “*The Song of
the Birds*” an eagle, sparrow, finch and lark serenade the Christ Child in
the manger.

Able to move beyond boundaries, birds have long been a symbol of peace. Of his performance and musical selection, Casal said, “This is the greatest honor of my life. Peace has always been my greatest concern. I learnt to love it when I was but a child. When I was a boy, my mother, an exceptional, marvelous woman, would talk to me about peace, because at that time there were also many wars ...

The United Nations, which works solely towards the ideal of peace, is in my heart, because anything to do with peace goes straight to my heart. I have not played the cello in public for many years, but I feel that the time has come to play again. I am going to play a melody from Catalan folklore, *El Cant dels Ocells*, The Song of the Birds. Birds sing when they are in the sky, they sing: "Peace, Peace, Peace," and it is a melody that Bach, Beethoven and all the greats have admired and loved. What is more, it is born in the soul of my people, Catalonia.”

As we listen to The Song of the Birds, let us reflect how each of us may be agents and instruments of peace in the world and in our daily lives.

Share video, Pablo Casal, “Song of the Birds,” from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8DjwLt_c4.

This recording is commonly available online.

All Lord God, we praise and thank you for those without fear who speak, advocate and create for the peace of our world. We rejoice in seeing the community bring together structures of change to build hope and healing. As we seek your face and strive to do your will in the year ahead, fill our hearts with the peace that only you can give so that we can share that peace with the world. Amen.