

FOCUS SECTION

INTRODUCTION

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We are reminded in the papal encyclical, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1975), that the first means of evangelization is witness of life. These words of Paul VI, although written many years ago, have lost none of their power. It is modern day society's pressing need for such a clear witness that provides inspiration for this focus section, dedicated to peace and justice.

The current president of the Pontifical Council of Peace and Justice, Renato Cardinal Martino, shares this vision. An advocate for peace and a practitioner of the pedagogy of peace, Martino witnesses to Gospel values in Latin America, Asia, and the United Nations. He has also been instrumental in the preparation and publication of *The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2004). This tome is a helpful and unique contribution to peace and justice education, offering a one-stop resource for official Church social teachings.

We are grateful to our many contributors who make this focus section possible, especially John Elias, whose wisdom and experience grace the pages that follow. Those who desire peace must work for justice, and so the mission of Catholic education takes on special, more poignant meaning in these days of war and international strife.

Our hope is that the research presented here illuminates the path to peace for all.