BREAD NOT STONES
God of Liberation from all our foreboding; Our children ask for bread but are fed the poison of fear.

We put guns in their hands and tell them; this is the way to safety, power, respect, and salvation.
We give lip service to your call to love without cost and to show compassion without distinctions; but we are quick to abandon your teachings when we are told to fear and despise those who are not like us.
We have abandoned your promise of abundant life in exchange for the promise of longevity through overwhelming firepower.
Give us the wisdom to embrace the things that make for peace.

Help us to understand that we live in a world of endless wonder that needs to be cared for and treasured.
Help us to see that we live in a world of bounty that belongs to the whole human family, without excluding or favoring anyone; from each, according to their ability, and to each, according to their needs.
Help us understand that our security lies in the strength of our solidarity with all – even those who are marked as enemies.
Open our eyes, hearts, and minds to the truth that we are only safe and secure when everyone is safe and secure; that we will be at peace only when justice rolls on like a river, protecting the dignity of every person and embracing every creature.
Show us how to give our children the bread they need.

Amen.
Pope Francis, speaking to the Italian Women’s Centre, reflected on the response of Western countries to elevate military spending in response to Ukraine. Congress, calling it “madness.”

"I was ashamed when I read that, I don't know, a group of states have pledged to spend two percent, I think, or two thousand percent of their GDP on arms, as a response to what is happening now, (this is) madness."

March 24, 2022.
US vs. World Military Spending, 2021
Global Total: $2.077 Trillion

- **USA**: $801 billion
- **Next 9 Countries**: $776 billion
  - Korea, South
  - Japan
  - Saudi Arabia
  - Germany
  - France
  - Russia
  - United Kingdom
  - India
  - China
- **Rest of World (144 Countries)**: $535 billion

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditures
In the 20 years since 9/11, the U.S. response of thoroughly militarizing foreign and domestic policy has cost us over \$21 trillion.
'90s to now: How has this shifted?
“We are putting more money into weapons procurement, and that will help the defense industries.”

Defense Secretary William Cohen
• Experts at that time said that military spending was ridiculously high. They estimated the U.S. could save 100 billion dollars/year and still maintain the most powerful military in the world.

• They urged the redirection of excess military spending toward pressing social needs, noting money needed to focus on global warming, health care, education, affordable housing.
The military industrial complex that Eisenhower warned against is powerful and entrenched. A bipartisan conservative Congressional bloc seeks more military spending, not less.

- Robert Borosage
We see with increasing clarity the political folly of a system.... [where] billions [are] spent for destructive instruments while pitched battles are waged daily in our legislatures over much smaller amounts for the homeless, the hungry, and the helpless here and abroad

– US Catholic Bishops, Challenge of Peace
The prospect of diverting material and resources from the development of arms to the development of peoples... is a pressing and compelling [need] which the Catholic Church has for a long time endorsed...

- Pope John Paul II
To reverse the current trend in the arms race involves, therefore, a parallel struggle on two fronts:

on the one side, an immediate and urgent struggle by governments to reduce progressively and equally their armaments;

on the other hand, a more patient but nonetheless necessary struggle at the level of the consciences of peoples to take their responsibility in regard to the ethical cause of the insecurity that breeds violence by coming to grips with the material and spiritual inequalities of our world.

- Pope John Paul II
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Billions of US $</th>
<th>% of GDP</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$778.23B</td>
<td>3.74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$682.49B</td>
<td>3.32%</td>
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<td>$646.75B</td>
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<td>2016</td>
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<td>2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>$679.23B</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$725.21B</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>$752.29B</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
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<td>2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
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<td>2001</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>$320.09B</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>$298.09B</td>
<td>3.09%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
“The pandemic is still spreading, while the social and economic crisis remains severe, especially for the poor. Nonetheless – and this is scandalous – armed conflicts have not ended and military arsenals are being strengthened. That is today’s scandal. … There are still too many wars and too much violence in the world! May the Lord, who is our peace, help us to overcome the mindset of war.”

Pope Francis, Urbi et Orbi Message, Easter, April 4, 2021
Peace is not a utopia, nor an inaccessible ideal, nor an unrealizable dream. War is not an inevitable calamity. Peace is possible. And because it is possible, peace is our duty: our grave duty, our supreme responsibility.

- Pope John Paul II
Who decides the budget?

**The 5 Step Federal Budget Process**

1. The President submits a budget request to Congress.
2. Lawmakers release their own budget plans & set overall spending levels with a budget resolution.
3. House & Senate subcommittees set funding for each program through appropriations bills.
4. House & Senate members come together to resolve differences in their appropriations bills.
5. The budget returns to the President for his signature before it becomes law.
Military Spending in FY22

Proposed $753 billion

Approved $782 billion
**March:** Biden releases FY23 request for an $813b Pentagon budget

**Early 2022:** 86 groups release a letter encouraging Biden not to further increase military spending, addressing the BBB double standard and unfunded human needs

**May:** Proposals for additional increases begin, primarily citing inflation and Ukraine

**June:** Committee markups in both HASC and SASC, House adds $37b and Senate adds $45b to Biden’s request

**July:** Full House vote on NDAA; keeps additional HASC $37b for a total $839b; both amendments to cut failed: on $37b cut; 277-151; on $100b: 350-78
Two types of spending

Mandatory
- Social Security
- Medicare
- Medicaid

About 80% of total

Also...
- Veterans’ programs
- Highways
- Food stamps & welfare
- Some student aid

Discretionary
- Military
- Homeland Security
- Veterans’ programs

About 2/3 of total

Also...
- Federal law enforcement
- K-12 education
- CDC & public health
- EPA & environment
- Housing & homelessness
- Scientific & medical research
Biden FY 2023 Discretionary Budget Proposal, $1.59 trillion

- Military, $823 billion, 52%
- Veterans' Benefits, $135.7 billion, 8%
- Housing & Community, $113 billion, 7%
- Government, $103 billion, 6%
- Education, $92.5 billion, 6%
- Health, $64.8 billion, 4%
- Energy & Environment, $62.3 billion, 4%
- International Affairs, $56 billion, 3%
- Unemployment & Labor, $43.9 billion, 3%
- Science, $43 billion, 3%
- Food & Agriculture, $14.9 billion, 1%
- Transportation, $44.3 billion, 3%
Biden Discretionary Budget Proposal, FY 2023

- Veterans, $118.7 billion, 8%
- "Non-security", $527.3 billion, 33%
- "Security", $935.9 billion, 59%

"Security" = Military, Department of Homeland Security, Veterans’ Affairs (except medical), nuclear weapons, intelligence, and foreign relations

"Non-security" = everything else (shelter, public health, education, community investments)
What Keeps Us Safe?
FY 2023 President’s Budget Priorities

- Three times as much for nuclear weapons ($29.7 billion) as for the CDC ($9.7 billion)
- Nine times as much for nuclear modernization ($34 billion) as for anti-homelessness grants ($3.5 billion)
- Twenty times as much for military research and development ($130 billion) as for renewable energy and energy efficiency ($6.2 billion)
- Twice as much for the Space Force ($24.5 billion) as for substance use and mental health ($10.2 billion)
- More for a single weapons system, the F-35 jet fighter, than for all diplomacy ($9.6 billion)
Congress' priorities:

- $28 million to end U.S. baby formula shortages
- 700 times that much in military aid to Ukraine
If you paid taxes for 2021, you likely paid

$929 for corporate military contractors vs.

$171 for K-12 education.

It’s time to reprioritize.
$7 trillion on contractors

The War on Terror has been a huge profit generator for military contractors.

Stocks in the top five defense companies that were worth $10,000 when the War on Terror began are worth nearly $100,000 today, versus only $61,000 for the overall stock market.
A Strong Majority of Voters Reject Proposals to Dramatically Increase the Military Budget

Recently, some lawmakers have proposed increasing the military budget for the upcoming year to nearly one trillion dollars, a significant increase from last year and more than President Biden and the Department of Defense requested.

Which of these statements comes closer to your view, even if neither is exactly right?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congress should keep the military's budget at the level that President Biden and the Department of Defense requested</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Congress should give the military billions of dollars in additional funding, even though it was not requested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All likely voters</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partisanship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent / Third party</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

May 11–16, 2022 survey of 1,133 likely voters
For Military in 2021, taxpayers in the state of New York are paying $64.8 billion. Here's what those tax dollars could have paid for instead:

- **611,476 Registered Nurses for 1 Year**, or
- **6.12 million Public Housing Units for 1 Year**, or
- **1.48 million Jobs That Pay $15 Per Hour with Benefits for 1 Year**, or
“They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks” Isaiah 2:4
Why cut here?

- There would be no cuts to the European Command
- Air power platforms are very advanced weapons that we haven't used in modern actions
- Major global enemies are not adding new battleships
- Research and development is the candy store for military companies and universities.
The dangers towards research and development

- Companies are given abundant funding so they rarely lose money, even if they fail.
- Universities rely on defense funding for science and computer departments. This sways the research interests of students.
What is needed?

- 20% cuts would free up about $45.48 billion
- Rethinking true "security"
What makes for secure communities?

- Public health research
- Paid medical education
- Climate change prevention and education
- Mental health support
- Community mental health centers
- Affordable housing
- Nurturing childcare
- Affordable, quality care for older adults
- Support for low-income students
- No supplying of military equipment to police
- Clean drinking water
- Access to food
What should be resourced abundantly?

- National Institute of Health
- Climate Change Science
- Affordable housing developments
- Local schools
- Assistance with care for older adults
- Programs that support food access
- Medical education for primary care doctors

- Clean water
- School systems
- Healthcare – especially for low-income communities
- Mental health programs
The budget request for the military for 2023 is $773 billion.
Air power platforms and systems to be funded: $56.5 billion
Sea power (to include nine more battle force ships): $40.8 billion
Research and development: $130.1 billion
Days of Action
Ask your candidates what their plans are!
We continue to see crisis after crisis resulting from the misplaced priorities of the United States. By funding militarism instead of healthcare, and protecting gun rights instead of schoolchildren, the U.S. is continuing to fail our communities.

The **People Over the Pentagon Act, H.R. 8040**, proposed by Representative Barbara Lee, seeks to cut $100 billion dollars from the Military budget.

Do you support the People Over Pentagon Act?
The American Friends Service Committee surveyed adults in the U.S. and found that 56% of people support cutting Pentagon spending and redirecting that money to meet human needs. What steps will you take to reduce military spending?
Preparing for Advent

“Into this world, this demented inn, in which there is no room for him at all, Christ has come uninvited. But because he cannot be at home in it, because he is out of place in it...... His place is with those who do not belong, who are rejected by power because they are regarded as weak, those who are discredited, who are denied the status of persons, tortured, and exterminated. With those for whom there is no room, Christ is present in this world. He is mysteriously present in those for whom there seems to be nothing but the world at its worst.”

-Thomas Merton
get involved & take action!

https://cutt.ly/breadnotstones
Resources:

- National Priorities Project
  - https://www.nationalpriorities.org/
- Costs of War
  - https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs
- #PeopleOverPentagon
  - https://peopleoverpentagon.org/
https://cutt.ly/breadnotstones
lbailey@paxchristiusa.org