

## Talking/Writing points when contacting your bishop

When writing (by email or mailed letter) or meeting with your bishop, treat him, above all, as a brother in Christ, a fellow traveler on the same journey of faith. He is not an obstacle nor is he an oracle; he is trying his best to serve God and the people of your diocese. You are reaching out to him to offer a wonderful opportunity in service to God, the Church, and his people – especially those who are poor, marginalized, and disenfranchised.



### Here are some things to keep in mind:

- 1. Make sure to introduce yourself.** Tell him which parish you belong to or which parish your family belongs to. If you went to a Catholic school, tell him about that as well. If you are a member of Pax Christi or any other Catholic organization let him know.
- 2. Tell him why you are contacting him.** Tell him about the Pax Christi Bread Not Stones Campaign to redirect military spending to fund human needs. Emphasize how important it is that religious leaders provide a clear moral vision about those things that make for genuine peace and security for our nation and the world. Express your disappointment that many Catholics you know are unaware of what the Catholic Church teaches about peace and military spending and how his voice could begin to change that.
- 3. Remind him of some of the unmet human needs of the people in the diocese.** If you volunteer at a soup kitchen, food pantry, homeless shelter, immigrant/refugee ministry or perform other works of mercy, tell him what changing our national priorities from war and preparations for war to addressing the needs of the poor in your diocese and around the world would mean to the people you serve.
- 3. Invite him to add his name to the Pax Christi USA Bread Not Stones bishops' sign-on statement.** Make sure to include a copy of the statement in your letter, as an attachment to your email, or hand it to him during your meeting. Point out that it is not a partisan political statement, but a moral teaching document.
- 4. Make sure to go over with him the instructions for adding his name to the statement – deadline to sign is November 19, but we hope he will sign at his earliest opportunity.**
  - Your bishop or his assistant/secretary can send an email to us at [jcoode@paxchristiusa.org](mailto:jcoode@paxchristiusa.org) acknowledging that he would like his name added to the letter.
  - Your bishop can physically sign the letter then either a) mail it in to the Pax Christi USA national office at Pax Christi USA, attn: Bishops' Sign-On, 415 Michigan Avenue NE, Ste. 240, Washington DC, 20017; b) photograph the letter with his signature and send it by email to [jcoode@paxchristiusa.org](mailto:jcoode@paxchristiusa.org); or c) entrust it to you/your group to email or mail it to us.
  - If your bishop is willing to sign on during your actual meeting with him, he can give a “thumbs up” for a photograph (with you, with your group, just him, whatever works!) which you can send to [jcoode@paxchristiusa.org](mailto:jcoode@paxchristiusa.org) (you can also use the photo on social media with the hashtag #BreadNotStones).
  - Your bishop can personally give you/your group his verbal affirmation and you can confirm his signing on by checking the box in the [Google report-back form here](#) (or send his name via email to [jcoode@paxchristiusa.org](mailto:jcoode@paxchristiusa.org)).
- 5. IMPORTANT: Remember to document your meeting [by clicking here to complete this Google form](#).**