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August Peace Message

*And he took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them,
"Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever
welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me."
(Mark 9:36-37)*

Wars continue in many parts of the world. Those who are most deeply wounded by war are the people who never wanted it—especially children. And yet, even amid this, there are people working to protect children's lives.

Even in Ukraine, where the war continues, efforts to protect children have not stopped. We are told that this year, once again, children living in areas contaminated by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster 40 years ago were sent to places with lower radiation levels, far from the fighting, for respite care to rest their minds and bodies.

War places the nation, territory, and military power above human life. Yet even in the midst of war, many people have joined forces to send children to safety, feed them, let them rest, let them play, and let them learn. This is a work that moves in the opposite direction from war.

Isn't making peace not about acquiring great power, but about protecting the lives that are most vulnerable to harm?

In Japan, under the banner of "preparing for war," militarization is advancing, and debate continues over a return to nuclear power and over possessing or maintaining nuclear deterrence. But what we wish to protect is not the power of the state or economic profit, but the life and dignity of each individual person. Jesus had a child stand among the people and took that child in his arms. We, too, want to begin our journey toward peace by placing children at the center.

In Ukraine, in Gaza, in Myanmar, in Iran, in Fukushima, and in so many other places throughout the world, efforts continue to protect children's lives from war, violence, and radioactive contamination. Let us join in the work of those who protect life, so that we may build a world where children can eat, sleep, play, learn, and imagine tomorrow—without fear, and in peace.

August 2026

Rev. Yoshitaka Kano
Moderator

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