ANNEX 2

Theological Supporting Material

BPFNA- Bautistas por la Paz 2022 Annual Peace Conference

"Stubbornly building healing spaces"

Justification:

Disease, sickness, poverty, and violence are constant in the world. No matter where we look, it seems like there is too much pain and suffering. It is not just COVID 19. There are wounds we carry that no one can see with their eyes getting deeper with time or with present harsh realities. And it seems that everywhere the feeling of frustration, distrust, loneliness, and disconnection are intensified, growing inside and around us.

In this precise time, the Divine Spirit reaches out to nurture, support, and push us towards a health-giving community in spirit, mind and body.

Texts:

Ecclesiastes 3:1 *Everything has its Time...*

(paraphrased) *Time to plant (seeds of peace), time to build (bridges not walls), time to dance (in hope), time to laugh, hug, seek (act), time to speak (raise your voice), time to wait, time to love, time for the path of peace with justice, time to heal. I will heal – says the Lord.*

Is 57:18-19. *I have seen their ways, but I will heal them; I will guide them and restore comfort to Israel's mourners, creating praise on their lips. Peace, peace, to those far and near,' says the Lord, 'And I will heal them.'*

Theological foundation:

The third Isaiah encourages us to look beyond the present pain and shares the experience of salvation. The text is part of the unity of chapters 56 to 59. It emphasizes at the beginning the need to act with justice, to do the right thing (56:1, 58:8), and to be humble (57:15, 58:5). Smith, G. (2009). *Isaiah 40-66* (Vol. 15B, p. 521). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

1 The exhortation at the beginning of chapter 56 is in an imperative way, "keep/maintain justice and do what is right" inviting us (we'll truly commanding us) to behaviors and actions characteristic of the acts of God and the Messiah. Chapter 57 calls us to “prepare the way” because God
draws near to revive the spirit and spirits of the downcast. God opens the space for the promise of healing.

Is 57:18 introduces three important verbs – cure/heal, guide, and restore.

רָפָא (rā·pāʾ) – rafā. (qal) the verb in the qal form means to have the intention of healing - cause or promote the restoration of health or bring to a good state after being sick, injured or in poor condition.

נָחָה (nā·ḥā(h)) – nāḥa. (hiphil) The verb in the qal structure means to lead, guide, direct the movement of others. But in its hifhil as it appears in the text implies creating an opportunity, being in a favorable state.

שָלֵם (šā·lēm) – salem. (piel) In the qal means to complete, but in its piel form as it appears in the text implies to reimburse, to make restitution, that is, to receive compensation of money or goods for a loss, to give compensation.

This is a text for this time. It is a text of consolation, and encouragement. God declares healing, health, guidance, and restitution for a downcast, grieving, and sick people and people with different needs. Hearing the words, “I will heal...” reminds us of God’s earlier promise to “revive” the humble and contrite. Healing can refer literally to the healing of illness or injury, but the broader ethical meaning includes the healing of the heart, of its defects (as in 53:5; Ps 103:3) and disappointments (Ps 34:18; 147:3). But beyond it also encompasses the healing from the injustices and systems of oppression created by our own greed, ignorance and yearning for power, privilege and status.

Healing is only the beginning of God's work that includes “I will guide, I will lead you” so that we are not alone, nor without divine assistance. The third divine act is God “giving back,” “restoring” comforting the righteous and those who mourn because of how they were mistreated in the past (cf. 54:7–8; 57:1–2; 61:2–3). Everything that caused anguish, pain, violence, oppression, and loss in the past will be eliminated so that the healing power of God is able to transform our world into one where Peace and Justice are present.

Peace, peace to the far and near!... “I will heal...”

God’s work does not end. Verse 19 completes the action. There will be new words on our lips precisely because of the healing experience. These are words of praise that are born from an experience of respite, from a breathing, liberated space. Peace for those who are far and those

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2 More than tenses, verbs in biblical Hebrew are described as having aspects or moods. The aspect has to do with the way of articulating the internal time of the situation (aspect) and the external time of the situation (verb tenses). The mode conveys the reality of the situation in terms of attitude, intentions, or expectations.
who are near. Words with a new sense of self worth. My family, my neighbors and my community are included in this promise. But beyond, it extends to what is far away – *those we do not see, or do not want to see or exclude* – they are also promised Peace.

**GUIDING TOPICS**

Building Personal Care, Community Care and Creation Care.

We share a series of ideas on how to use the themes. We hope that you can adjust them to your traditions, activities and creativity.

1. **Personal Care**
   a. **Healing Hearts** – mine and other people’s hearts. Psalm 147:3 (He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds).
   - Pounding hearts – invite us to physical and intellectual movement. Moving let us breathe oxygen, renew blood, activate brain cells and mind, lubricate our bones, etc... We invite you to exercise wisely, to breathe.
   - Healing Spirit/Emotions –depression, frustration, and loneliness abound. We invite you to open your heart to those you can confide in, to express your emotions (write, sing, paint, dance, etc.), and commune with nature. Define sacred spaces to pray and meditate. You are not alone!

2. **Community Care**
   a. **Healing Bodies** – Healing our bodies and the community (post-Covid) requires mindfulness. We invite you to intentionally take care of the body - temple of the Spirit - and physical expression of who we are.
   - Rest and move. We invite you to intentionally care for that body, divine creation. To move your body wisely, listen to music, and read new books. To balance being with doing.
   - Communicate effectively and respectfully. Find those words that build life and nurture possibilities.
   - Eat to heal. Avoid foods that your body craves but don't nourish and seek out those that make you strong. Eat with the people who give you joy and purpose.
   - Support, accompany. Look for the group with which you share a passion for justice. More than ever, this is the time to act for social justice. Participate - march wisely, and carry out actions that will change the world in justice and peace.

3. **Creation - Earth Care**
   a. **Healing Land** – Healing our lands is a gigantic task, but let's start by planting a small seed. Plan how to plant a seed of justice together with indigenous, immigrant, or displaced groups with ties to the land, the soil, and nature. Get involved in Eco-theology and see where God is in this amazing world.