

Reflections

Stop War and Start Love



● Caitlin Kennedy from North Tawton.

'STOP War and Start Love' is one of many drawings done by nine-year-old young activist Caitlin and gifted to me. She truly is an angel who spreads good news.

Caitlin's ability to capture the universe and its challenges in art is colourfully exquisite and shows astonishing imagination. She delivers her good news in person rather than in a dream like angel Gabriel and I am delighted to dedicate a file in my office to her artwork.

I am sure that like me many of you will have struggled, and are still struggling, to explain

to children like Caitlin what Covid-19 is all about. As the world is emerging from this horrible pandemic, we are struck with the terrible war in Ukraine instigated by the Russian leader Putin. Beyond the challenge we face explaining the rationale behind this atrocious war to children like Caitlin, it is difficult for us adults to try and comprehend the illogical and implausible arguments around this unprovoked aggression.

Across the world everyone, including the principal invader, knows this unnecessary bloodshed could be avoided, but none

of us dare to stop it unfolding in this atrocious way. We feel sad, we keep praying and can send humanitarian aid to the people of Ukraine, and many countries are imposing various sanctions on Russia – but the response is nothing but a snub. We all feel helpless and fear triggering a third world war if we try to stop this present belligerence.

In 2009 I joined the protest in Trafalgar Square, London when the Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa authorised the genocide of 100,000 Tamils, the majority of whom were civilians, not the Tamil Tigers. Most of those who spoke at the

rally said the world was scared of getting involved in a war with China, a supporter of the Sri Lankan army against Tamils. Many nations spoke against the Sri Lankan leader, threatening him with the International Court of Justice for war crimes, just as we now threaten Putin. But so far nothing has happened. Putin probably imagines the claims of the world against him will eventually fall silent, just as happened with Rajapaksa.

The world seems to have developed a mindset that fears future catastrophe more than the ongoing present one, and

so despots feel empowered to continue their aggression. This does not help anyone, especially those who are oppressed. The world needs a better system to ensure safety for those who love peace, and instant eradication of those who engage in ruthless aggression and war.

Let us continue to pray as well as explore ways to stop this war while continuing the sanction slogans.

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