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An overview of contemporary scriptural exegesis and ethics on Jesus' nonviolence

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What evidence do we have that Jesus was radically nonviolent? The following paper provides an overview of Jesus' nonviolence from contemporary scriptural exegesis of the roots, significance, principles, ethical approaches, and core practices of Jesus' nonviolent way in the context of first century Palestine. The emphasis is on scriptural witness and draws on the revolution of exegetical and theological research over the past half century on the centrality of nonviolence to the life and message of Jesus.

New Testament scholarship on the nonviolence of Jesus

For the past 50 years the stream of scholarship on the nonviolence of Jesus, and its relationship to the Church's teaching on war and peace, has widened and deepened—and the current continues to pick up speed.

Numerous seminal works by theologians and scripture scholars illuminating the nonviolence of Jesus have been published since the mid-20th century, from Lisa Sowle Cahill to James Douglass, from Leonardo Boff to John Dominic Crossan, from Albert Nolan to Eileen Egan, from John Dear to Ched Myers, and from Rev. Emmanuel McCarthy to Eli Sasaran McCarthy. Here are a few highlights of this contemporary research.

Robert Daly, SJ, in his article on nonviolence in the New Testament and the early church[1] concludes that there is little scholarly doubt that the message of nonviolence is central to Jesus' life and teaching as well as part and parcel of the faith in early Christianity. He cites the survey work of Rene Coste: "Rene Coste, for example, is summarizing a broad consensus of gospel criticism when he affirms: 'It is an incontestable fact that Christ did preach nonviolence, both as a condition and a consequence of the universal love that he taught us. To pretend, as is sometimes done, that his directives are only meant to be applied to individual…relationships is a supposition nowhere to be found in the New Testament.'"

Many influential moral and systematic theologians have incorporated this New Testament scholarship into their work. Edward Schillebeeckx, for example, wrote a two volume study, the first of which entitled Jesus[2] was a summary of contemporary scripture scholarship and the second, Christ[3], translated that scholarship into a systematic Christology. Schillebeeckx concluded that based on scripture scholarship Jesus died because of the way he lived –with nonviolent resistance.

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1 Robert Daly, SJ, "The New Testament and the Early Church," in *Nonviolence: Central to Christian Spirituality*, ed. Joseph Culliton (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1982), 41.

2 Edward Schillebeeckx, *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1981)

3 Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ: The Experience of Jesus as Lord*. (New York: Crossroad, 1980)

Bernard Haring's 1986 volume, *The Healing Power of Peace and Nonviolence*[4], is a clarion call to Christians to embrace nonviolent action. Fr. Haring, recognized as the finest moral theologian of the twentieth century, rooted his research in the work of a set of scripture scholars who helped him to see vividly the nonviolent Jesus, including Rudolph Schnackenburg, Rudolph Pesch, Norbert Lohfink and Heinrich Spaemann. They found that nonviolence is at the heart of the gospel.

Another important contribution to this area of study was the publication in 1972 of John Howard Yoder's book *The Politics of Jesus*,[5] called by the eminent theologian Stanley Hauerwas " the most important work of theology of the twentieth century." Using the latest tools of historical/critical biblical scholarship, bridging the gap between scripture studies and moral and systematic theology, and drawing on the work of C.H. Dodd, Hans Conzelmann, Rudolph Schnackenburg, John L. McKenzie, SJ, Robert Margenthaler, Robert North, SJ, Krister Stendhal and Hans Dieter Betz, Yoder concluded that Jesus taught an ethic informed by the sociopolitical realities of first century Palestine whose content consisted most importantly of nonviolence and love of enemy and that this is normative for Christians.

The moral theologian Richard Hays, exploring the moral vision of the New Testament[6], recognizes that the call to nonviolent peacemaking, while not easy, stretches people beyond what is typically considered "realistic" or "natural." He wrote: "God broke through the borders of our standard definition of what is human and gave a new formative definition in Jesus."

The scripture scholar and theologian Walter Wink also made definitive contributions to a revitalized understanding of the nonviolence of Jesus. Through careful exegesis of New Testament texts—including the "hard sayings" of Jesus like "Turn the other cheek" (MT 5:38-41)—he illuminated Jesus' "third way" of nonviolence as an active and transformative alternative to either violence or passivity.[7] Wink's pioneering exegesis and theological analysis has dramatically underscored the centrality of Jesus' programmatic nonviolence.

The growing consensus of contemporary scriptural and theological research is that Jesus proclaimed and lived nonviolence.

Jesus's nonviolence

To illuminate, recover and live Jesus' nonviolence today, it is critical that we understand the context in which he lived and ministered.

Jesus was born into a land seething with violence. The people of Galilee at the time of Jesus' birth were murderously angry. They were angry at the Roman occupiers who squeezed them

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4 Bernard Haring, *The Healing Power of Peace and Nonviolence* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1986)
5 John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*. 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1994)
6 Richard Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1996), 105
7 Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of* Domination (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 175ff.

for tribute to fight their wars, angry at Herod and his sons for bleeding them dry with taxes to build their glorious buildings and towns, angry at their priests for sending thugs into the countryside to steal their grain, their only source of meager wealth. It was not surprising that after Herod died in 4 BC (just after Jesus' birth) Judas the Galilean was able to tap that anger and spark a violent revolt. He and his followers attacked the capital of Galilee, Sepphoris, the home of wealthy landowners allied with the Temple priesthood, and raided the armory there. The Roman general in the region, Varus, sent part of his army into the countryside. Josephus wrote: "They caught great numbers of them…those who were the most guilty he crucified; these were in number about two thousand."[8]

Sepphoris was four miles from Jesus' hometown of Nazareth. Jesus no doubt grew up hearing the story of the "Day the Romans Came" when Rome used its favorite tool to strike terror into the hearts of a people, crucifixion. Two thousand rebels nailed or tied, naked, to crosses for all to see, slumping, pulling themselves up again and again, slowly, painfully, asphyxiating, gasping for breath, and at last giving up their spirits. The constant threat of blood and violence was in the air that Jesus breathed. The city of Sepphoris was rebuilt by Herod Antipas during the years of Jesus' youth.

Before Jesus' lifetime, during his life, and for decades after, uprisings and rebellions continued, escalating each time in violence until the final, fateful destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in the year 70 CE and the end of the Jewish people in their own country.

His people were an oppressed people—kept in line by the threat of violence. Jesus could see what was going to come down on their heads if they stayed on the path of escalating violence. He wept over the city of Jerusalem. "Oh, Jerusalem I wanted to take you under my wings as does a hen her chicks" (Luke 13:34) and "Oh Jerusalem, if only today you had known the ways of peace" (Luke 19:42). He imagined what was likely to happen and described what did happen quite accurately--"not a stone will be left on a stone…" (Matt. 24).

So what did Jesus do about it?

He did two things. One, he gave them a powerful alternative to violence and, two, he worked to change the underlying causes of their suffering -- the structural violence built into their political system.

One: Jesus' powerful alternative to violence

It was thought at the time that there were only three ways forward: flight, fight or accommodate. The Essenes, the faction of the Jews that we learned about from the Dead Sea Scrolls, chose flight. They fled into the desert to build their own version of the Jewish religion and refused contact with any outside their fold. The priests and the Herodians had chosen accommodation; collaborating with the Romans meant they could continue to practice their

[8] Josephus, *War of the Jews* (sacred-texts.com, translated by William Whiston, 1737), Book 2, Chapter 5.

religion and as long as they did what the Romans wanted they could wield a degree of power and even build some wealth for themselves. The Pharisees and later, the party of violent resistance, chose to resist, maintain their identity against the pagans, keep it clear that they were enemies, and eventually to fight.

Jesus pointed out a fourth way for Israel. Build an inclusive community, even including so-called enemies, by using the power of nonviolent, loving, willing-to-risk-suffering action. Later it will be called the Way of the Cross. Instead of a way of narrow exclusion, Israel could practice the way of arms-wide-open inclusion and be the city on the hill that the rest of the world was looking for: "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matt. 5:44). It is at the same time a warning that the way they are choosing will be a dead end. As Albert Nolan wrote: "Jesus' message was to persuade the Jews that their present attitude of resentment and bitterness is suicidal…The only way to be liberated from your enemies is to love your enemies."[9]

Jesus expands on his recommendation in the Sermon on the Mount when he says:

> "You have heard it said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but I say to you, 'Do not violently resist one who does evil to you. If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the left; if someone goes to court to take your coat, give him your cloak as well; and if anyone presses you into service for a mile, go a second mile." (Matt. 5:39-41)

Many people have read this passage and concluded that Jesus is counseling passivity in response to violence. Contemporary exegesis shows that Jesus is recommending just the opposite—creative, nonviolent resistance. Gerhard Lohfink wrote: "There is a widespread consensus in New Testament exegesis that in this text we hear Jesus himself."[10] Jesus lays out three very tightly drawn examples of violence that his disciples very well might recognize, namely an abusive superior insulting an inferior with a backhand slap on the face (right cheek is the clue), a person taking another to court to sue for his last stich of security, the cloak that a poor person, reduced to homelessness, wrapped himself in at night to keep out the cold; and a Roman soldier pressing a Jew to carry his 60 pound service pack for a mile.

The function of this kind of language, a series of examples, one after another, is to invite the listener to think of still more examples of everyday violence. The language is evocative, inviting thought and imagination. Jesus is not laying down a law. As Robert Tannehill wrote: The language arouses moral imagination, enabling hearers to see their situation in a new way and to contemplate new possibilities of action."[11]

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9 Albert Nolan, *Jesus Before Christianity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 13.
10 Gerhard Lohfink, *Jesus and Community* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984) 50-51.
11 Robert Tannehill, "The 'Focal Instance' as a Form of New Testament Speech: A Study of Matthew 5:39b-42," *Journal of Religion* 50, no. 4 (1970): 382.

Jesus invites his hearers to think what they would do if someone slapped them backhanded on the right cheek. Instead of striking back, might there be a nonviolent, more productive response? Imagine the inferior in the situation looking the one who has committed the insult in the eye and then turning to that person the other cheek—saying in effect "I am not cowed. And you are acting in a way that is beneath yourself. So go ahead, if you really want to lower yourself, now punch me in the face. You still will not intimidate me. But I will not strike you back. I will maintain my dignity." Such a response is not a surefire way to avoid further trouble. But it is a response that just might work. The one insulted does not respond to the violence with violence but with a gesture that says, "I am willing to endure additional pain to reach you with a message about our common humanity." Jesus is certainly not counseling rolling over passively in a situation of violence. He is saying instead, "Stand up for yourself, but don't respond in kind." He is suggesting that his followers act as he acted—with creative nonviolence.

The second example is set in a court of law. As scripture scholar Walter Wink explains:

> Someone is being sued for his outer garment. Who would do that and under what circumstances? Only the poorest of the poor would have nothing but an outer garment to give as collateral for a loan. Jewish law strictly required its return every evening at sunset, for that was all the poor had in which to sleep. The situation to which Jesus alludes is one with which his hearers would have been too familiar: the poor debtor has sunk ever deeper into poverty, the debt cannot be repaid, and his creditor has hauled him into court to wring out repayment. Indebtedness was the most serious social problem in first-century Palestine. Jesus' parables are full of debtors struggling to salvage their lives. It is in this context that Jesus speaks. His hearers are the poor ("if anyone would sue you"). They share a rankling hatred for a system that subjects them to humiliation by stripping them of their lands, their goods, finally even their outer garments. Why then does Jesus counsel them to give over their inner garment as well? This would mean stripping off all their clothing and marching out of court stark naked! … You had no hope of winning the trial; the law was entirely in his favor. But you have refused to be humiliated. At the same time you have registered a stunning protest against a system that spawns such debt. You have said, in effect, "You want my robe? Here, take everything! Now you've got all I have except my body. Is that what you'll take next?" Nakedness was taboo in Judaism. Shame fell not on the naked party but the person viewing or causing one's nakedness (Genesis 9:20-27).[12]

The legal system that countenances such a lawsuit leaving someone in such dire straits is called into question. As Wink comments: "such an action unmasks the cruelty embedded in the structures of the society and its pretenses of justice."[13]

The background for the third example is Rome's occupation of the country. The Roman soldier had the right, according to Rome's code, to press into service at any time a member of the

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12 Walter Wink, "Christian Nonviolence," ZNet magazine, December 17, 2004.

13 Walter Wink, *The Powers That Be* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 104.

occupied country to carry his pack of 60 to 85 pounds. To limit resentment from the local population, the code stipulated that impressment of an individual could be only for one mile. Forcing someone to carry the pack more than a mile could warrant punishment from the centurion. Jesus says imagine when you come to the end of the first mile, you take the initiative and make the choice to carry the pack a second mile. In that action you would be saying to the soldier—you see me as a person without power, a veritable beast of burden. I am letting you know I am a person who can make choices.

With these examples Jesus is putting forth an alternative way to the presumed limited choices of an oppressed people, a direction that is neither fight nor flight nor accommodation. It is instead a way to resist without being infected by the very violence that one is resisting. People have an unlimited array of possibilities once they are able to see their way past the violent response. Jesus calls on his disciples to act against domination using their imaginations, courage and strength.

The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' summons us to act like he acts, which in turn is to act as his Father acts-- who "sends the rain on the just and the unjust alike." His disciples have observed him. They have heard him speak of his Father as one who approaches humans with a free offer of love and grace—unearned. And they have seen him deal with people in the same way—none are outcast, none are beyond the pale. All are embraced—even when they choose to turn away from him, he does not give up on them. So living the Sermon on the Mount is to live in a different way—beyond the way people "naturally" act. Act not because of laws but out of love that gives strength and knows no bounds. It is to live in the free air of those who know they are loved without limit and who as a result can pass that spirit on to others. It is no wonder that Mahatma Gandhi, after first reading the Sermon on the Mount as a young man, said that it went straight to his heart. It confirmed for him the best of his tradition and made him admire Jesus as the "Prince of the Satyagrahis" ("practitioners of nonviolence"), a person of creative, nonviolent action. It is also no wonder that Pope Benedict XVI said:

> Love your enemies…This page of the Gospel is rightly considered the 'magna carta' of Christian nonviolence: it does not consist in surrendering to evil—as claims a false interpretation of "turn the other cheek" (Luke 6:29)—but in responding to evil with good (Romans 12:17-21), and thus breaking the chain of injustice. It is thus understood that nonviolence, for Christians, is not mere tactical behavior but a person's way of being, the attitude of one who is convinced of God's love and power, who is not afraid to confront evil with the weapons of love and truth alone. Loving the enemy is the nucleus of the "Christian revolution."[14]

Pope Benedict moreover said this of the nonviolent Jesus:

> He was always a man of peace. It could be expected that, when God came to earth, he

[14] "Pope Benedict XVI Calls for a 'Christian Revolution,' Invites Faithful to Respond to Evil With Good," Public Address in Vatican City, February 18, 2007.

would be a man of great power, destroying the opposing forces. That he would be a man of powerful violence as an instrument of peace. Not at all. He came in weakness. He came with only the strength of love, totally without violence, even to the point of going to the Cross. This is what shows us the true face of God, that violence never comes from God, never helps bring anything good, but is a destructive means and not the path to escape difficulties. He is thus a strong voice against every type of violence. He strongly invites all sides to renounce violence, even if they feel they are right. The only path is to renounce violence, to begin anew with dialogue, with the attempt to find peace together, with a new concern for one another, a new willingness to be open to one another. This is Jesus' true message: seek peace with the means of peace and leave violence aside."[15]

Jesus' nonviolent alternative: Dramatized in his life

It is thrilling to read the Gospels and see how Jesus' dramatized the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount in his own life, including reaching out in love to those whom society treated as outcasts. For him there are no enemies—not even Roman officials. He healed a Roman officer's servant. Not the Samaritans. Jesus celebrated that traditional enemy of the Jews as an embodiment of charity in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Not even the Pharisees and Herodians who went out of their way to trap and humiliate him. He tried very hard to turn those who thought they were his enemies into friends. He continued to reach out to them again and again-- using forceful disputation, witty responses to trapping questions, appeals to their hearts, shaming examples of their contradictory teachings—hoping against hope that he would melt their hearts and change them.

In the Gospels we find examples of his personal courage and creativity in the face of violence.

When people in his home town were so resentful and angry at him that they were about to throw him off a cliff-- somehow, without violence, he walked right through their midst. (Luke 4:28-30)

Consider how he dealt with a mob of men who were ready to stone to death a woman they had taken in adultery. They felt completely righteous—they felt their own law commanded them to act. First note the courage of Jesus. He did not shrink away from the scene, he walked right into the middle of it. Note his creativity. He did not use superior force to overcome their violence. He bent down in front of them and began writing in the dust—a classic diversion of attention move. They evidently cooled a bit. John's gospel says that he then stood up. He must have looked at them but probably not in a condemnatory or angry way—that would have further inflamed the situation. Probably a composed, benign face. He then put them back on their heels with a simple statement of truth: "the one among you without sin, cast the first stone." They melted away—the older ones first. (John 8:4-11).

[15] Pope Benedict XVI, Good Friday Sermon, 2011.

In Caesarea Phillipi, the northernmost part of the country, he decided that he needed to go to Jerusalem to confront the leaders in their own bailiwick. As Jesus set his face to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51), the disciples were afraid. He knew he was walking into the maw of state-sponsored violence. He had a vivid sense of the evil that would most likely come down on him. But he kept walking.

If we follow him through his passion we see the same centered, nonviolent way of responding to events as they unfold. The gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke and John, all describe one of his disciples meeting violence with violence, taking a sword and cutting off the ear of a servant of the high priest. Luke has Jesus say vehemently: "Enough of this!" (Luke 22:51) and then healing the servant's ear. Matthew has Jesus say: "Put your sword back, for all who draw the sword will die by the sword" (Matt. 26:52). Jesus certainly knew the siren song of violence. Matthew has Jesus go on to say: "or do you think I cannot appeal to my Father, who would promptly send twelve legions of angels to my defense?" (Matt. 26:53) That would be thirty-six thousand angels.

Can the sword be used in self-defense? The guards have arrived in the garden with their swords. As Dominic Crossan wrote: "If opponents use violence to attack Jesus, should his disciples use violence to defend him? The answer is quite clear. Even when opponents use the sword to attack Jesus, the disciples must not use it to defend him. But if not then, when? If not then, never!"[16]

As the trial scenes unfold, Jesus continues to respond forthrightly and with dignity. When a soldier feels free to slap him for the way Jesus answered the high priest, Jesus responded calmly but assertively, "If there is some offense in what I said, point it out; but if not, why do you strike me?" (John 18:23).

In Jesus' dialogue with Pilate, he renounces the right of self-defense—because he has brought into the world in his person a kingdom that is unlike Pilate's; it does not depend on violence to exert power. His kingdom is not of this world, meaning Pilate's world. His kingdom relies on the power of truth and nonviolent resistance. Jesus says to Pilate: "Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my men would have fought to prevent my being surrendered to the Jews. As it is, my kingdom does not belong here" (John 18:36). He goes on to explicitly say what gives him his power: "I was born for this; I came into the world for this, to bear witness to the truth and all who are on the side of truth hear my voice" (John 18:37).

After he had been condemned to death and led to the place called, The Skull, Golgotha, where they crucified him, Jesus—consistent with his entire message concerning the way one should respond to one's so-called enemies, and consistent with his message about the centrality of forgiveness in the kingdom—said: "Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:24). He died as he had lived. His last words expressed love and forgiveness for those who were killing him.

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[16] Dominic Crossan, *God and Empire*, (San Francisco: Harper, 2007), 178.

Two: Jesus worked to relieve the underlying causes of the Jews' suffering—the structural and cultural violence built into their political system

Understanding the vision and mission of Jesus involves understanding his context, including what was going on politically and economically in his time. As Donald Senior wrote, "The more we want to know about Jesus, the more we should know about his world."[17]

Rome was an occupying force demanding an ongoing stream of tribute through the king they had put in place. Their client king, Herod the Great, had spent profligately on building such magnificent structures as the Temple with blocks of stone up forty feet long, the wonder of the world that brought people from all over the civilized world to gaze at its grandeur. He built the fortress Masada out in the Judean desert. He built a magnificent town on the shores of the Mediterranean, Caesarea, which he dedicated to the emperor, Caesar. The tax burden on the common people to support all this was beyond their strength. The high priestly family of Ananias that reigned for over sixty years had no respect from the people. The Temple revenue was directed into their family coffers.

Most important to understand was the work of the Pharisees, the lay renewal party that had come back into power under Pilate. Under Herod they had been on the outs due to their resistance to his attempts to introduce Hellenism into the country. Before Herod, under the Hasmoneans they had enjoyed considerable influence and even had the power of the sword behind them. As John Meier wrote: "They were willing to use the power of the state to impose their legal practices on the people--even to bloody vengeance on their foes."[18] Respected by the people they were intent on seeing the practices of ritual purity and dietary laws prescribed for the priestly class apply to the people as a whole. They had a great zeal for purity. They believed that the people needed to remain pure and undefiled to be faithful to Yahweh and to renew Israel. Many things could make people impure—certain occupations such as shepherding, contact with dead bodies, contact with gentiles, bodily fluids, lack of physical wholeness from illness and perhaps what was most important, not keeping the rituals surrounding food and tithing according to the law.

The number of rules that grew up around eating was astounding. Of the 341 rabbinic texts attributed to the Pharisaic schools of Shammai and Hillel of the first century, 229 pertained to table fellowship—everything from meal preparation to serving to hand washing. Not to observe these rules meant a person was considered not practicing, outside the circle of faith. Just as important to them were the tithing obligations. At every stage of the food growing and production process a small fee had to be paid to the Temple. Not to pay these tithes meant that one was outside the circle of purity.[19] With this emphasis the Pharisees were intensifying the burdens on the people. To what were already insupportable burdens on the backs of the

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[17] Donald Senior, *Jesus: A Gospel Portrait* (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), 26.
[18] John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 3 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 331.
[19] Marcus Borg, *Conflict, Holiness and Politics in the Teaching of Jesus* (Harrisburg, Pa. Trinity Press International, 1998) 96.

people were added these additional tithes. Religion was, in effect, further supporting what was already a very unjust social structure.

Purity reinforced separation. Separation exacerbated the view that the gentiles were the enemy. The Pharisees believed that defending against the inroads of paganism would eventually lead to the dream of national liberation. They stoked those fires of resistance and when the time came to revolt, they joined the fight against Rome—except for the faithful remnant that left for Jamnia and founded the version of Judaism that depends not on the Temple but on the study of Torah. N.T. Wright wrote: "Strong evidence exists that the position of the house of Shammai, was held by the majority prior to 66…the Pharisees in the period between the death of Herod and the outbreak of war in 66 were concerned with politics, not merely piety; with resistance and revolution, not merely with private holiness."[20]

What was Jesus' take on this political and economic situation?

In the third chapter of Mark, Jesus has healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath. It is stunning to read what happens next: "Then the Pharisees went out and immediately began plotting against Jesus, together with the Herodians how to destroy him." (Mark 3:4) By this early in the Gospel – the third chapter! – they are ready to kill Jesus? Why? What had he done?

Jesus could not countenance an order built on exclusion. He took action to challenge structures that dehumanized and diminished and destroyed, including a system where the disabled were regarded as unholy and that healing and wholeness must be delayed.

He could not abide exclusion, separation, and hatred of the enemy—in the name of religion, in the name of their God. If there is no violence in God, only unfathomable love, that undercuts the age old tendency of humans to label those who are outside a privileged circle as threats, as enemies, as evil—to dehumanize them and then make them objects of righteous, sacralized violence. As he read their shared history, he understood that Israel was indeed God's chosen people—but chosen as the hope of humankind. Yahweh is God of all the earth. Jesus therefore resisted with all his might the temptation to sink into tribal religion and its violence.

He was not just opposing their interpretation of their religion, a way of exclusivity that featured a hidden threat of eventual violence, he was trying to have them change the way their society was structured. The pivotal structures of their society were the Torah, the Sabbath and the Temple. Jesus was taking issue with the ways all three were being interpreted and used. He felt that injustice was being baked into the structures of the society. He was working to change the reasons why there was so much suffering for the people. He was trying to change not just attitudes but dominating, harmful structures.

He preached and acted in ways to bring outcasts back into the fold. In his first sermon he called for a return to the Deuteronomic year of jubilee that gave a special place in society to

[20] N.T. Wright, Foreword to Marcus Borg, *Conflict, Holiness and Politics in the Teaching of Jesus*, xii.

protecting the most vulnerable: the widows, the orphans and the sojourners. Holiness for Jesus was not purity but compassion, not exclusion but inclusion. He associated with and even ate with those who supposedly were outside the circle of faith--tax collectors, sick people, prostitutes. He healed lepers and told them to go see the priest so they could be reincorporated into the community. He declared that it is not what goes into a person that makes them unclean but what comes out of their hearts—in effect denying and undercutting the entire edifice of branding people unclean through food laws.

Jesus opposed the structures that embodied unjust cultural norms and attitudes. Jesus attacked the way that the Torah had become a tool for ostracizing people, fomented a spirit of hatred for outsiders and, through the hundreds of rules governing food, had become another way to squeeze money from the poor. Jesus went to Jerusalem to oppose the way the Temple institution had become the pinnacle of a system that robbed the poor. "You have made my Father's house a den of thieves. (Luke 19:46) Even the sacred Sabbath had been made into an oppressive institution—people were afraid to do even the most obvious good for others for fear of violating the Sabbath. The fundamental problem Jesus had with the institutions of his time was that they had become buttresses of a terribly unjust social and economic system that systematically transferred wealth from the peasant class to the priestly and royal class. There can be no positive peace if the institutions have injustice baked into them.

This second contribution makes Jesus a bonafide peacemaker. Not only did he live a style of life that was nonviolent. He went further and used nonviolent action to fight for justice and peace. Why did they want to kill him so early on? Because he had upset the system. Why did he die? Because of the way that he lived.

Discipleship: Following Jesus, the nonviolent peacemaker

Scripture scholars make a careful point about the audience for Jesus' message of "love your enemies" and indeed of the entire Sermon on the Mount. He is addressing first and foremost the circle of his disciples. "Jesus saw the crowds and went up a hill, where he sat down. His disciples gathered around him and he began to teach them" (Matt 5:1-2). To follow the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount presupposes that practitioners have heard, responded to and are leaning in to Jesus and his message. The circle of disciples however represented the whole of Israel. The message is directed not to individuals but to a community of disciples. This is why the church is so important for living this message. Only seeing others live the way of nonviolence and resistance can the individual continue to live it. It calls for continual unlearning of the usual ways of the world and continually modeling nonviolent action for one another. As Stanley Hauerwas wrote: "Discipleship is not a heroic endeavor of individuals, but rather a way of life of a community…The practice of peace among Christians requires constant care in our lives together, through which we discover the violence that grips our lives and compromises our witness to the world."[21]

[21] Stanley Hauerwas, *Performing the Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2004), 73.

At the same time, it is amazing how freeing and bracing is the practice of nonviolent action. Participating in the work of Christian peacemaking is to experience grace which transforms every "natural" pattern. It is to experience something of our higher selves. Peacemaking is not a summons to follow a set of rules or a utilitarian ethic, but rather a virtue to be practiced. As Eli McCarthy wrote: "Virtues are habits responsive to the good rather than acting from duty or fear of punishment."[22] He argues that Jesus calls us to cultivate a virtue of nonviolent peacemaking, which realizes the "goods of a conciliatory love that draws enemies toward friendship, and truth, particularly the truths of our ultimate unity and equal dignity." McCarthy draws on the witness of Jesus to identify core practices to help us cultivate this virtue.[23]

Jesus' life is normative for Christians. The new commandment calls us to "love as he has loved us" (John 15:11-13). The official creed statements, the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed, jump from "he was born of the Virgin Mary and became man" to "suffered under Pontius Pilate, died and was buried." They leave out the most important part—his life. We cannot understand the meaning of his incarnation or his death on the cross unless we understand how he lived. He became a human being to show us the way. He died on the cross because of the kind of life he lived, a life of nonviolent, hopeful, insistent resistance to the structures of domination of his society and arms wide-open, inclusive compassion. He was willing to risk suffering. When he asks us to take up our cross and follow him, he asks us to live life as he did. Over the centuries the words "taking up one's cross" have been emptied of their political content. The cross is not about enduring a personal tragedy or an illness or a difficult family situation—except by extension. As John Howard Yoder wrote: "The cross of Calvary was… the political, legally to-be-expected result of a mortal clash with the powers ruling society."[24]

The Sermon on the Mount and the drama of Jesus' life give to us more than adequate ethical guidance and inspiration for peacemaking. When the Church used the "just war" approach to embody its teaching on issues of war and peace, it lost, or allowed to be muted, the strong, prophetic teaching of the gospels. Rarely was the bold call to peacemaking greatness in the Sermon on the Mount heard in the church. No longer was the example of Jesus' nonviolent life held up for study and emulation. Strangled was the call to restless, creative peacemaking. As Walter Wink wrote: "The removal of nonviolence from the gospel blasted the keystone from the arch and Christianity collapsed into a religion of personal salvation."[25]

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[22] Eli Sasaran McCarthy, *Becoming Nonviolent Peacemakers* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012), 32.

[23] These include celebrating the nonviolent Eucharist, with secondary components of prayer, meditation, and fasting; training and education in nonviolent peacemaking and resistance, with the secondary component of forming nonviolent peacemaking communities; attention to religious or spiritual factors, especially in public discourse, and learning about religion, particularly in the form of intra-religious or inter-religious dialogue; a constructive program with its particular focus on the poor and marginalized; conflict transformation and restorative justice; unarmed civilian protection, and nonviolent civilian-based defense. See Rev. Emmanuel Charles McCarthy, "A Nonviolent Eucharistic Jesus: A Pastoral Approach." http://www.centerforchristiannonviolence.org/data/Media/NV_Eucharist_PastoralApproach_01d.pdf

[24] John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*. 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI.: William B. Eerdmans, 1994) 129.

[25] Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 217.

Thank goodness we are again reading the New Testament, listening to the Sermon on the Mount and attempting to follow the arc of Jesus' courageous life of peacemaking.

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Official Catholic social thought on Gospel nonviolence
By Dr. Lisa Sowle Cahill, Boston College

Historical overview

Gospel nonviolence has been an essential characteristic of Christianity since the first century. To be a disciple of Jesus is live out of the reign of God, as embodied in his command to "love your enemies and do good to those who persecute you….so that you may be children of your father in heaven" (Mt 5: 44, 45). The example and teaching of Jesus embody love, inclusion, forgiveness, willingness, and sacrifice. The early church excluded the shedding of blood for all his followers. Until the fourth century, nonviolence, including refusal of military service, was the Christian norm, although from the second century on, there is evidence that some Christians in fact served in the Roman army.

Just war tradition or theory began to develop in the age of Constantine, and became dominant as Christians gained access to and responsibility for government and political power, eventually even generating a crusade ideology, in which violence was claimed to serve the gospel itself. The two main shapers of Christian just war theory were Augustine (and his teacher Ambrose) and Thomas Aquinas (fourth and thirteenth centuries, respectively). Though both recognized gospel nonviolence, Augustine limited it to an inward intention of love, when establishing peace necessitates war. Aquinas thought war to defend the common good could be justified within carefully defined limits. For Aquinas, strict gospel nonviolence was to be embodied by the clergy, who imitate Christ on the altar. Nevertheless, pacifist ideals and peace movements, such as the Peace of God and Truce of God, continued throughout the middle ages and into the modern era. In the thirteenth century, Francis of Assisi crossed crusader lines to preach the gospel to the caliph of Egypt. In the sixteenth century, Desiderius Erasmus depicted war as inhumane and unholy, especially deplored violence by those claiming to act in God's name, and saw peace as so necessary to the blessings of life that war should be avoided at virtually any cost.

Although just war theory has historically been the most influential framework for Catholic teaching on the political use of force, it has always been secondary to the Catholic Christian commitment to peace. In fact, just war theory was and is intended primarily to restrain not validate war. Just war theory was not endorsed officially by the Roman Catholic Church until the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1992, no. 2309). Justification of force has been overshadowed in the tradition overall, in Catholic social thought, and in papal teachings, by exhortations to nonviolence and peace. Modern popes have lent personal support to efforts to mediate international conflicts nonviolently, including Pius IX, Leo XIII, and Pius X. Most notable in this regard is Benedict XV, an Italian elected in 1914, just as World War I was beginning. Although the Italian episcopacy supported the war, and Catholics around the world were divided on it, Benedict used his first encyclical to deplore the horror of modern weapons. Benedict saw just war theory as merely excusing war and as unable to deal with the present-day reality of war. He called for a 1914 Christmas truce, opened a Vatican office to reunite

prisoners and families, and dedicated scarce Vatican funds to relief efforts. Like his predecessors, Pius XII, pope during World War II, constantly held up the ideal of peace as growing from spirituality, justice and charity.

In his 1944, 1948, and 1956 Christmas messages, however, Pius XII alluded to just war criteria when he asserted the right of nations to defend themselves against unjust attack. *Gaudium et spes* likewise asserts the right of governments to "legitimate defense once every means of peaceful settlement has been exhausted" (no. 79). Perhaps paradoxically, the twentieth century also saw the diminution of the just war emphasis in Catholic social teaching, especially after the Second Vatican Council (1965). Since the 1960s, official Catholic teaching has uniformly deplored the destruction and disaster of war, pressing the point that it always represents a moral failure. Although the idea and theory of a just war has not officially been repudiated, no pope since the Council has approved a war, or even mounted a defense of the justice of war in principle. In fact, the criteria of just war, if applied stringently, may themselves eliminate the possibility of a just modern war. The use of force for humanitarian purposes--in cases of horrific threats to human life, human security, and social order—is still acknowledged by Catholic teaching. Yet the focus of recent official statements certainly has been on nonviolence, and on the incompatibility of violence with transformational justice. Popes John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis have repeatedly denounced the savagery of war. John Paul, Benedict and Francis have all echoed Paul VI's cry, "No more war, war never again!"

Popes, other Catholic leaders, and official Catholic organizations have made the nonviolent resolution of conflict a moral and practical priority through their teachings, symbolic actions, and work to end conflicts and build peace. The Catholic Church urges the resolution of conflicts by peaceful, nonviolent and democratic means, insisting that the way to genuine peace lies in the creation of just and participatory social, economic, and political relations and institutions. In fact, it might be said that the distinctively Catholic contribution to the Christian tradition of gospel nonviolence is to put the emphasis on constructive and practical efforts to build the conditions of peace nonviolently, in cooperation with other social entities--rather than simply to repudiate violence and refuse political participation as a countercultural act of witness. In the words of Paul VI, "If you want peace, work for justice" (1972 World Day of Peace Message).

Focus: The priority of Gospel nonviolence from Vatican II onward

Both the Council document *Gaudium et spes* (1965) and John XXIII's *Pacem in terris* (1963) were written at the height of the Cold War, and in light of the advent of nuclear weapons, so terrifyingly balanced by the superpowers' policy of "mutual assured destruction" at the edge of planetary disaster. Both documents pose the question whether just war criteria need to be thoroughly reconsidered, and contemplate a possibility that John XXIII explicitly puts forth: "it is contrary to reason to hold that war is now a suitable way to restore rights which have been violated" (*Pacem in terris*, no. 127; cf. *Gaudium et spes*, nos. 79-80). *Gaudium et spes* still legitimates defensive wars, and John XXIII does not definitively exclude them. Yet they agree

that modern war threatens unimaginable destruction, and see the arms race as a clear and present cause of global injustice. War and preparation for war are placed under ever more stringent moral scrutiny and targeted by mounting moral disapprobation (*Pacem in terris*, nos. 112-13; *Gaudium et spes*, nos. 80-81.).

The foundation and heart of these two documents, however, is not the consideration of war. It is the proclamation of a gospel-inspired and nonviolent peace, capable of engendering lasting trust among nations. Pope John appeals both to the Christian faithful and to "all men of good will," praying that Christ will banish "whatever might endanger peace" and "transform all men into witnesses of truth, justice and brotherly love." "Besides caring for the proper material welfare of their peoples," rulers should "also guarantee them the fairest gift of peace" (no. 171). *Gaudium et spes* captures the practical and social meaning of gospel nonviolence in very similar terms. Praising all who "renounce the use of violence in the vindication of their right," it calls Christians "to 'practice the truth in love' (Eph. 4:15) and to join with all true peacemakers in pleading for peace and bringing it about" (no. 78). In accord with nonviolence as an authentically Christian and human mandate and practice, the Council for the first time recognizes a right of individual conscientious objection to bearing arms (no. 79).

Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict, and Francis all solidify and advance this trajectory, accentuating the tensions latent in a tradition that has historically justified war, while holding up peace as it guiding social ideal. New developments include: language that more strongly contrasts war and nonviolent peace, even to the point of excluding violence entirely; the marginalization and even abandonment of explicit validation of defensive war as just; the introduction by John Paul of a duty of humanitarian intervention (not excluding armed force); a strengthening and elaboration of the connection between practical work for justice ("development"), nonviolence, and peace; incorporation of environmental reasons to avoid war; the need for broad social conversion; and, with Francis, an explicit turn to interreligious as well as intercultural and international partners.

Paul VI emphasizes that "reconciliation is the way to Peace" (1975 World Day of Peace Message), declaring "No more war, war never again! Peace, it is peace which must guide the destinies of people and of all mankind" (1965 Address to the United Nations General Assembly). Not only does he hope (with *Gaudium et spes*) that war will eventually be prohibited by international law (1975 World Day of Peace Message). He states in no uncertain terms that "the Church cannot accept violence, especially the force of arms" (*Evangelii nuntiani*, no. 37, 1975), and holds up Gandhi's example to urge that nonviolence can become a national and international principle of action (1976 World Day of Peace Message). Nevertheless, he does seem to accept the legitimacy of armed revolution to resist grave offenses to human dignity and the common good (*Populorum progressio*, no. 31). This pope's greatest contribution is his insistence that the only true way to peace is to engage social partners constructively to end injustice, and actualize human rights, economic justice, and stable, participatory social and political institutions. The more privileged nations and peoples have a special responsibility. "If you want peace work for justice" (1972 World Day of Peace Message; citing the 1971 Synod of

Bishops' *Justitio in mundi*, no. 6). And most famously, "the new name for peace is development"-- though not on a neoliberal or unrestrained market model (*Populorum progressio*, no. 87).

John Paul II announces just as clearly that "Violence is evil," "a lie," and "the enemy of justice" (Homily at Drogheda, Ireland, 18-20, 1979; quoted in the 2006 Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 496). Like previous popes, John Paul sees violence as leading to more injustice, and deplores the scale of modern warfare. Combining Paul VI's distinctive contribution with his own call for solidarity as an active commitment to the common good of all, he titles his 1987 World Day of Peace Message "Development and Solidarity: Two Keys to Peace." Yet the 1990's saw humanitarian disasters in the face of international apathy or ineffectiveness in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Somalia. Hence this pope validates the new concept of "humanitarian intervention" (2002 World Day of Peace Message, no. 11). As he asserted regarding Bosnia, when "populations are succumbing to the attacks of an unjust aggressor, States no longer have a "right to indifference". It seems clear that their duty is to disarm this aggressor, if all other means have proved ineffective" (Address to the Diplomatic Corps, January 16, 1993).

Along the same lines, and responding again to recent events, John Paul allows for a nation's right of defense against terrorism (2002 World Day of Peace Message, no. 5), even while holding up forgiveness and interreligious cooperation as by far the better path. Yet when confronted in advance with specific military interventions such as the Gulf War and a U.S. invasion of Iraq, John Paul rejects the possibility of war as "a decline for humanity," (Address to the Diplomatic Corps, no. 7, 1991), and "a defeat for humanity" (Address to the Diplomatic Corps, no. 4, 2003). Rejecting the inevitability of war in both cases, he urges dialogue and diplomacy in accord with international law.

Benedict XVI returns to the basic question whether a just war can even exist today, agrees that the war against Iraq was unjust, and notes that modern weapons inevitably violate noncombatants ("Cardinal Ratzinger on the Abridged Version of Catechism," Zenit, 2003). "Violence never comes from God" (Angelus Address, 2007). Specifically refusing violence and embracing gospel nonviolence, Benedict calls "love your enemies" its "magna carta." Nonviolence is for Christians not merely a behavioral strategy, much less a form of obedience to a heteronomous norm. It is "a person's way of being, the attitude of one who is convinced of God's love and power, who is not afraid to confront evil with the weapons of love and truth alone" (Angelus Address, 2007; see also Good Friday message, 2011). "Violence is contrary to the Kingdom of God" (Angelus Address, 2012). On a visit to Cameroon, Benedict asserted that all genuine religion rejects violence in any form ("The Saving Message of the Gospel Needs to be Proclaimed," 2009).

Nevertheless, like his predecessor, Benedict endorses humanitarian intervention under the rubric "responsibility to protect." "Recognition of the unity of the human family, and attention to the innate dignity of every man and woman, today find renewed emphasis in the principle of

the responsibility to protect" (Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, 2008). Like John Paul II, Benedict mentions humanitarian intervention or the responsibility to protect in international contexts such as UN intervention, or intervention by an international coalition, in which the presumable and implied means is armed force. Neither explicitly rejects this possibility. Yet, perhaps reflecting skepticism about whether violence can actually end violence, Benedict adds in *Caritas in veritate* that the responsibility to protect must be implemented "in innovative ways" (no. 7, 2009).

Benedict follows both Paul VI and John Paul II in urging economic and political "development" as a necessary part of the solution to social problems, and the best way to prevent and remedy injustices. He repeatedly confirms this aspect of Catholic social teaching in his World Day of Peace Messages (2009, 2010, 2010), and makes it the centerpiece of *Caritas in veritate*, an encyclical written to commemorate *Populorum progressio*.

It will come as no surprise that Pope Francis reaffirms these same themes, often in the very same phrases. He summons international parties in conflict to seek peace by dialogue, reconciliation, negotiation and compromise. He appeals repeatedly for nonproliferation and disarmament, especially of nuclear arms. Praying for peace in Egypt, Francis reiterates that "the true force of the Christian is the force of truth and love, which means rejecting all violence. Faith and violence are incompatible!" The way of Jesus is the way of peace, reconciliation, "living for God and for others." The strength of the Christian is "the force of meekness, the force of love" (Angelus Address, August 19, 2013). When, like John Paul and Benedict, Francis is confronted by the prospect of a military intervention in Syria by U.S. and French "superpower," he is insistent that "War brings on war! Violence brings on violence" (Angelus Address, August 31, 2013).

Expanding on these themes, he adds,

> *My Christian faith urges me to look to the Cross…. violence is not answered with violence, death is not answered with the language of death. In the silence of the Cross, the uproar of weapons ceases and the language of reconciliation, forgiveness, dialogue, and peace is spoken. This evening, I ask the Lord that we Christians, and our brothers and sisters of other religions, and every man and woman of good will, cry out forcefully: violence and war are never the way to peace! …. War always marks the failure of peace, it is always a defeat for humanity. Let the words of Pope Paul VI resound again: 'No more one against the other, no more, never! ... war never again, never again war!'. 'Peace expresses itself only in peace, a peace which is not separate from the demands of justice but which is fostered by personal sacrifice, clemency, mercy and love'. Forgiveness, dialogue, reconciliation – these are the words of peace, in beloved Syria, in the Middle East, in all the world! ("Vigil of Prayer for Peace" [in Syria], 2013).*

After the publication of *Laudato S*i', in which he connected war and ecological destruction (no. 56), Pope Francis urged the United Nations in New York to support sustainable development

while protecting the environment. He decried the hypocrisy of talking about peace while manufacturing arms; and rebuked international leaders for failing to find peaceful solutions to global conflicts, especially in the Middle East (Address to the General Assembly of the UN, 2015).

Some ambiguity in Pope Francis's position on violent force has been introduced regarding the dilemma of how to defeat the international terrorist organization, the so-called Islamic State (IS or ISIS). In August 2014, the pope remarked informally to reporters that dialogue even with Isis should not be considered a "lost cause." Yet, "I can only say that it is licit to stop the unjust aggressor. I underscore the verb 'stop'; I don't say bomb, make war -- stop him. The means by which he may be stopped should be evaluated."

Ordinarily, one would assume that stopping unjust armed aggression calls for humanitarian intervention and/or self-defense, in the form of taking up arms against a very violent and very dangerous opponent. Yet, perhaps going beyond John Paul and Benedict, Francis explicitly adds that he is not endorsing bombs and war. Left unclear is whether he envisions more limited and carefully targeted uses of violence as a last resort; or whether he has in mind such measures as nonviolent peacekeeping, civil society acts of nonviolent resistance and protest, or initiatives by Islamic religious leaders and faith communities to deter membership in ISIS. In March 2015, Silvano Tomasi, then the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations in Geneva, did endorse military action against ISIS (but not in Syria), applying just war criteria. He urged that a political solution be sought first, yet reminded heads of state and their representatives that inaction would lead to moral culpability similar to that following, for example, the genocide in Rwanda. Tomasi cautioned that any intervention should be guided by UN authority, and include the Muslim states of the Middle East. (http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-vatican-idUSKBN0MA0WX20150314). The tension continues.

A new or at least more visible dimension of the endorsement of gospel nonviolence by recent popes is their awareness that ethical analyses, Church teachings and publicly accepted ideals and norms are one thing; commitment, solidarity, and the political will to live up to ideals and abide by norms are another. Therefore condemning violence is not enough; a huge task remains to convert hearts and minds, and to show that another way is truly possible. A similar awareness is manifest in *Laudato Si's* use of prayer and poetry, its invocation of saints and heroes, its multiple references to local bishops' conferences, its appeal to interreligious spirituality and commitment, and its accompaniment by a Vatican video illustrating the beauty and endangerment of "our common home." It is crucial to mobilize nations, peoples, communities, and members of faith traditions, by awakening imaginations, inspiring new identities, and creating wider worldviews.

In this vein, it is important to note that public symbolic actions by recent popes go beyond "teaching" in the sense of pronouncements and documents. Symbolic actions and events creatively reach out to those of many faiths, and span divisions that spawn violence. One example is the well-publicized prayer vigil for peace in Syria that Francis held in St. Peter's Square in September 2013. He was joined by 100,000 peace advocates, even as international

leaders debated the possibility of military action. Another example is the prayer of three successive popes—John Paul, Benedict and Francis—at the Western Wall or "Wailing Wall" in Jerusalem, the remnants of a platform on which the Second Temple was built. Their widely circulated and iconic images represent Christian repentance of suffering caused to the Jews, as well as hope for peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The latter message was brought home powerfully (and controversially) by Francis's additional visit to the "wall of separation" in Bethlehem.

Though the focus of this discussion has been on post-Vatican II popes, it is important to realize that the most effective "official" teachers of gospel nonviolence in local contexts are the local episcopacy, accompanied by clergy, religious, pastoral ministers, catechists, and community workers, and members of base communities. Their existential perspective is frequently very different from that of high-level Vatican teachers, heads of state, and international leaders who have the power and the prerogative to deliberate about unleashing their considerable military arsenals (or even a UN peacekeeping force) against less powerful aggressors. A few illustrative examples will have to suffice.

In Medellín, Colombia (1968), the Conference of Latin American Bishops named the support by political authorities of an oppressive elite as a major source of violence, and recognized structural injustice as a form of "institutionalized violence." They called for a Church that is not only nonviolent, but in solidarity with the poor. In 1983, the bishops of the United States reflected their own cultural situation within a superpower nation, when they embraced gospel nonviolence in the first half of their pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace;" yet went on in the second half to endorse a policy of "strictly conditioned" nuclear deterrence which placed the lives of millions and the health of the entire planet in jeopardy. Yet the 1993 anniversary letter, "The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace" was more critical of just war theory, called for "peaceable virtues," and underlined the potential of nonviolence to be a principle of political debate and government decisions.

In 2009, the Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa (AMECEA) delegates to the Synod for Africa linked violent conflicts to religious divisions, the global economic recession, poor leadership and corruption, environmental crises, HIV/AIDS, and the lack of evangelization and spirituality with strong cultural as well as Christian roots. Simple promulgation of Catholic social teaching is hardly an adequate remedy. True evangelization must include small Christian communities, families, education, ecumenical and interfaith dialogue, and the participation of women and youth. In 2014, the bishops of Eastern Africa spoke to the crisis in South Sudan. Like recent popes they cited the bible in support of God's mandate of peace, and Christ's call to reconciliation. They called for a cessation of hostilities. But they also appealed for international humanitarian support, "intervention" on behalf of the Sudanese people whose human rights are violated, security for refugees, and participation of all stakeholders in negotiations.

In 2014, the Conference of Latin Bishops of the Arab Regions (CELRA) reported on the "horrible" conditions and levels of suffering in Syria and Iraq. Reflecting some of the tension in the papal voice on this situation, they asserted that "without true reconciliation based on

justice and mutual forgiveness there will be no peace;" yet uphold "the right of the oppressed to self-defense." Moreover, they urged "the international community" to use "proportionate force to stop aggression and injustice against ethnic and religious minorities." Finally, the international Synod of Bishops gathered in Rome in 2015 to discuss the family issued an appeal for resolution of the situations of conflict in the Middle East, Africa and Ukraine. They referenced "unspeakable atrocities" and "bloody conflicts" that have continued for years. But they also expressed their conviction that peace without force is possible. "Reconciliation is the fruit of fraternity, justice, respect and forgiveness."

Much could be written about international Catholic peacebuilding organizations such as Caritas Internationalis, Catholic Relief Services, the Catholic Peacebuilding Network, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, the Community of Sant' Egidio, Maryknoll, Franciscans International, Jesuit Relief Services, Pax Christi International, RENEW International and Peacebuilders Initiative, all united around gospel nonviolence (http://cpn.nd.edu/resources-for-scholars-clergy-and-practitioners/international-catholic-peacebuilding-organizations/). These too work to create the conditions of peace through justice; are committed to resourceful and practical ways of nonviolence; often work in the midst of ongoing violence; are willing to take great risks in the name of the gospel; and bridge ethnic, racial, and religious divisions. These too are embodiments of Catholic social tradition and action, and are helping to define the current trajectory and future of gospel nonviolence, as well as its potential for success.

Conclusion

While recent official Catholic social teaching has certainly amplified and made central the voice of gospel nonviolence, it is clear that official teaching to date has not spoken with one voice only. This reality is open to a variety of interpretations. For example: 1. A simple lack of coherence in the Catholic position, deriving perhaps from different historical contexts and interests; 2. An interpretation of papal statements as rhetorically creative, pastoral interventions regarding ad hoc problems, not efforts to formulate a full theoretical analysis of ethical-political obligations and norms; 3. A deep and real "Augustinian" ambiguity within Christian social responsibility in a fallen world, reflected in the Church's teaching and in its practical responses; 4. A qualified but sure endorsement of just war theory in Catholic teaching, with pleas for nonviolence a necessary reminder that the just war criteria must be stringently applied; 5. A gradual yet sure shift from the precedence of just war theory to gospel nonviolence, though recalcitrant vestiges of the former still appear.

Without settling whether any or none of these interpretations are adequate, let me offer five hypotheses about the trajectory and future direction of Catholic teaching on nonviolence. These hypotheses are inferred from the present actual state of Catholic social teaching on nonviolence, not from an evaluation of desirable changes:

1. The heart of Christian identity, and hence of the Catholic message on nonviolence, is to commit wholeheartedly to living the gospel and the reign of God. This means to prioritize love,

compassion, reconciliation and “mercy” at the existential level; and to engage in nonviolent practices of justice and reconciliation.

2. Situations of conflict or injustice must be approached with the mentality of “there has to be a better way.” As Francis said to Sant’ Egidio in 2014, “War is never a necessity, nor is it inevitable. Another way can always be found.”

3. Leave the possible use of violence in extremis on the table, but don't expend Christian or Catholic moral capital to debate or justify particular uses of violence (others are more than ready to do so).

4. More broadly, eliminate the elaboration or refinement of “Christian just war theory” as a Catholic social teaching project. Replace it with a theology and ethics of peace and peacebuilding (such as “just peace”).

5. Recognize that the political success of gospel nonviolence depends on broad social conversion and mobilization. Seek ways in which grassroots activism, networking, and public symbolic actions can bring that about.

Advancing Just Peace through strategic nonviolent action
By Dr. Maria J. Stephan, U.S. Institute of Peace

Inequality eventually engenders a violence which recourse to arms cannot and never will be able to resolve. It serves only to offer false hopes to those clamoring for heightened security, even though nowadays we know that weapons and violence, rather than providing solutions, create new and more serious conflicts. Evangelii Gaudium ("The Joy of the Gospel"), Pope Francis, 2013 #60.

All across the globe, from Guatemala to Poland to Venezuela to Palestine, ordinary people are organizing and challenging systems of injustice, inequality, and oppression using weapons of will and active nonviolent means. Their struggles are part of a rich history of nonviolent movements and "people power" that include the Mahatma Gandhi-led fight for self-determination in India, the Polish Solidarity movement against communist dictatorship, the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, the peaceful ouster of dictator Augusto Pinochet in Chile, and recent nonviolent movements for human rights and dignity in Tunisia, Guatemala, Brazil, and elsewhere.

The technique of nonviolent action

In each of these cases, unarmed civilians used nonviolent direction action, or what nonviolent action scholar Gene Sharp described as techniques outside of institutionalized behavior for social change that challenges an unjust power dynamic using methods of protest, noncooperation, and intervention without the use or threat of injurious force.[26] The theoretical underpinnings of nonviolent resistance, articulated by Sharp and by earlier scholars including German philosopher Hannah Arendt, holds that power is fluid and ultimately grounded in the consent and cooperation of ordinary people, who can decide to restrict or withhold that support. Sharp identified six key sources of political power, which are present to varying degrees in any society: authority, human resources, material resources, skills and knowledge, intangible factors, and sanctions.[27] Ultimately, these sources of power are grounded in organizations and institutions, made up of people, known as "pillars of support". When large

[26] Gene Sharp, *Social Power and Political Freedom*, Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 1978.
[27] G. Sharp, *How Nonviolent Struggle Works,* Albert Einstein Institute, 2013. 1. **Authority:** Defined by Jacques Maritain ". . . the right to command and direct, to be heard or obeyed by others." Authority is voluntarily accepted by the people and therefore is present without the imposition of sanctions. **Human resources:** the number of persons who obey them, cooperate with them, or provide them with special assistance, as well as by the proportion of such persons in the general population, and the extent and forms of their organizations; **Skills and knowledge:** the skills, knowledge and abilities of such persons, and the relation of their skills, knowledge, and abilities to the rulers' needs; **Intangible factors:** Psychological and ideological factors, such as habits and attitudes toward obedience and submission, and the presence or absence of a common faith, ideology, or sense of mission; **Material resources:** The degree to which the rulers control property, natural resources, financial resources, the economic system, communication and transportation, etc., helps to determine the limits of their power; **Sanctions:** the type and extent of sanctions or punishments at the rulers' disposal, both for use against their own subjects and in conflicts with other rulers. Accessed at: http://www.aeinstein.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/How-Nonviolent-Struggle-Works.pdf.

numbers of people from various pillars of support (bureaucracies, trade and labor unions, state media, educational institutions, religious institutions, security forces, etc.) use various nonviolent tactics to withhold consent and cooperation from regimes or other power-holders in an organized fashion, this can shift power from the oppressor to the oppressed without bombs or bullets.

Sharp identified 198 methods of nonviolent action that included peaceful marches, vigils, social and consumer boycotts, stay-aways, sit-ins, street theatre, humor, and the creation of parallel structures and institution (included in what Gandhi referred to as the "constructive program," which focused on social uplift for the poor and marginalized).[28] The rise of social media technologies, including Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram has expanded the universe of tactics even further, while offering new avenues for communication, mobilization, and peer learning across borders. Successful movements have integrated both on and offline forms of mobilization, organization, and direct action – online activism is never a substitute for nuts and bolts offline organizing.

Nonviolent struggle draws on courage, strategic planning, and, for many people involved in nonviolent resistance - spiritual discipline and motivation. In many of the most iconic historical nonviolent movements, from the Catholic Worker movement, to the U.S. civil rights movement, to the "people power" struggle for democracy the Philippines, to the struggles against dictatorship in Poland, Argentina and Chile, Catholic and Christian faith communities and institutions played pivotal roles in exposing injustices, encouraging global solidarity, providing organizational strength, and offering spiritual nourishment for activists and nonviolent change agents.[29]

Despite these successes, deep economic disparities, institutionalized racism and discrimination, protracted intra-state wars, and the rise of extremist groups continue to wreak havoc on lives and livelihoods around the world. The civil war in Syria, which began as a nonviolent uprising against the Bashar al Assad dictatorship in 2011, has now claimed over 250,000 lives. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has used brutal tactics to take over territory in an attempt to create an Islamist totalitarian state. In Uganda, which boasts the largest per capita youth population in Africa, the thirty-year autocracy of Yoweri Museveni was recently extended another five years after elections in February marred by fraud, violence, and intimidation. In the United States, structural injustices and police violence continue to adversely target African Americans, while politicians mobilize fear, xenophobia, and hatred as part of a strategy to take power.

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[28] G. Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action: Part 2 - The Methods of Nonviolent Action*, Boston: Extending Horizons Books, 1973.

[29] See, for example, Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict,* St. Martin's Press: 2000; Stephen Zunes, Sarah Beth Asher, and Lester Kurtz (eds), *Nonviolent Social Movements: A Geographical Perspective,* Blackwell: 1999; Maciej Bartkowski (ed), *Rediscovering Nonviolent History: Civil Resistance in Liberation Struggles,* Lynne Rienner: 2013.

Nonviolent resistance is more effective than violence

Despite the prevalence of these and other injustices around the world, there is reason for great hope. Catholic teachings focus on the need to avoid war and prevent violent conflict by peaceful means.[30] Fortunately, empirical data reveal that there is a force more powerful than violence to achieve social justice, which Pope Paul VI called the basis of peace.[31] According to research that I conducted with Erica Chenoweth from the University of Denver, which culminated in our 2011 book, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*, nonviolent resistance against formidable opponents, including those with predominant military power, has been twice as successful as armed struggle. We examined 323 violent and nonviolent campaigns against incumbent regimes and foreign military occupations from 1900-2006 and found that the nonviolent campaigns succeeded, in terms of stated political objectives, about 54 percent of the time, compared to 27 percent for violent campaigns.[32]

In addition, our study concluded that nonviolent campaigns are associated with both democratic and peaceful societies. Armed rebel victories almost never produce democratic societies (less than four percent resulted in democracy); worse, they are often followed by relapses into civil war. The data clearly show that the means by which peoples challenge injustices and oppression strongly influence the character of the societies that follow. For a Catholic faith community that places a premium on the avoidance of war and the protection of human life as the moral foundation of society, these are significant findings.

Why has nonviolent civil resistance proven to be so much more successful than violence? In a nutshell: it's all about participation. We found that the average nonviolent campaign attracts eleven times the level of participants compared to armed campaigns. The physical, moral, informational, and commitment barriers to participation in nonviolent campaigns are much lower compared to violent campaigns, which means that young and old people, men and women, rich and poor, disabled and able-bodied, peasants and professionals can all participate in nonviolent activism. The range of nonviolent tactics is vast, facilitating participation: Sharp's list of nonviolent methods has greatly expanded with the rise of social media and new tactics invented by creative nonviolent resistors around the world. When large numbers of people from diverse societal groups engage in acts of protest, noncooperation, and nonviolent defiance, their actions create social, political, economic, and moral pressure for change. When violence is used against disciplined nonviolent protestors, the chances that the violence will backfire against the perpetrator, causing them to lose legitimacy and power, is much greater than when violence is used against armed resistors.[33]

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[30] "Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching," U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005. Accessed at: http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm.

[31] Populorum Progressio, "On the Development of Peoples", Pope Paul VI, 1967 #76.

[32] Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict,* Columbia University Press, 2011.

[33] Brian Martin. *Justice Ignited: The Dynamics of Backfire*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield: 2007.

Strategy, religion, and resistance

Although nonviolent movements contain elements of spontaneity and artistry, the chance of success increases significantly if participants adhere to basic principles of strategy. Those include achieving unity around achievable goals and nonviolent methods, building capacity to maintain nonviolent discipline, focusing on expanding the diversity of participation, and innovating tactically. The strategic dimensions of nonviolent resistance were first articulated by Peter Ackerman and Christopher Kruegler in *Strategic Principles of Nonviolent Action* and by Robert Helvey in *On Strategic Nonviolent Conflict*.[34] In *Why Civil Resistance Works*, Erica Chenoweth and I, building on writings by sociologist Brian Martin and others, discussed why state violence targeting nonviolent movements (versus armed resistors) is more likely to backfire against the perpetrator, leading to greater support for the movement. We highlighted the strategic importance of innovating tactically and alternating between methods of concentration (e.g. street demonstrations, sit-ins) and methods of dispersion (e.g. consumer boycotts, go-slow actions) to reinforce movement resilience and effectiveness.[35]

The techniques-based approach to nonviolent action described by Sharp, Ackerman and others focuses on the pragmatic, utilitarian use of nonviolent action, which is detached from religious or ideological underpinnings. This approach is distinguished from "principled nonviolence," whose adherents reject violence on any grounds and are typically pacifists. An advantage of the technique-based approach is that it does not create a barrier to participation for those who are not pacifists (i.e. most people around the world). It is possible to convince those living under profound oppression, who might otherwise take up arms or who have taken up arms, that there is a more effective way to challenge injustice – without having to first convince them that violence is always wrong. Well-known Quaker pacifist and nonviolence trainer and practitioner George Lakey famously said that "most people who participate in nonviolent campaigns aren't pacifists, and most pacifists don't participate in nonviolent campaigns."[36] On the other hand, there is tremendous value in the principled nonviolence approach which provides moral, religious, and philosophical anchors to remaining nonviolent when the going gets tough (as it often does) and the temptation to use violence is high. And "nonviolence" offers a long-term vision for societies, and the world writ large that is built on nonviolent communications, peaceful co-existence and reconciliation.

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[34] Peter Ackerman and Christopher Kruegler, *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict,* Praeger: 1994; Robert L. Helvey, *On Strategic Nonviolent Conflict. Boston:* Albert Einstein Institution, 2004 (Accessed at: http://www.aeinstein.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/OSNC.pdf.) A condensed version of strategic principles of nonviolent action is Peter Ackerman and Hardy Merriman, a "The Checklist to End Tyranny" in Maria J. Stephan and Mathew Burrows (eds), *Is Authoritarianism Staging a Comeback?* Atlantic Council, 2014. (Accessed at: http://hardymerriman.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/A_Checklist_for_Ending_Tyranny.pdf)

[35] Chenoweth and Stephan, ibid.

[36] George Lakey, *Powerful Peacemaking: A Strategy for a Living Revolution,* New Society Publishers: 1987.

In practice, the line is not so stark between the principled and pragmatic nonviolence traditions.[37] Spiritual belief and religious organizations and institutions have often played critical roles in nonviolent movements. Mahatma Gandhi himself, a brilliant strategist, devised a nonviolent resistance strategy against British colonialism that was clearly inspired by faith. He referred to Jesus as nonviolence "par excellence".[38] On the most practical level, it is extremely difficult for a nonviolent movement challenging entrenched and long-standing injustices to maintain morale and to sustain active participation over an extended period of time. Activists burn out. Sustained resistance becomes burdensome. In such circumstances, activists and movement leaders need to be able to draw on resources that will inspire, encourage, and nourish. Their strength and resilience depend on it.

Faith communities and institutions can provide that sense of community solidarity, spiritual nourishment, and the cultivation of virtuous habits. It is difficult to imagine the U.S. civil rights movement sustaining its vibrancy and effectiveness without the spiritual and organizational power provided by the black churches. The iconic images of the Filipino nuns, rosaries in hand and kneeling in prayer in front of dictator Ferdinand Marcos' soldiers, together with declarations by Cardinal Jamie Sin imploring justice over Radio Veritas, helped galvanize the popular nonviolent struggle for a democratic Philippines in 1986. Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa drew on faith-based beliefs grounded in justice and reconciliation in his insistence that the struggle for a free South Africa be nonviolent, and that forgiveness be the guiding principle of the post-apartheid state. In East Timor, which gained independence in 2002 following a brutal Indonesian military occupation, Catholic priests and religious sisters from around the country spoke out against the atrocities committed by Indonesian forces and provided protection and material support to those youth and others who were fighting nonviolently for self-determination.

In Liberia, a country that endured years of brutal civil war between armed rebel groups and the Charles Taylor government, a group of church-going women came together and organized a remarkable nonviolent direct action campaign that pressured the warring parties to sign a peace agreement in 2003. Peace vigils, sex strikes, and social pressure were a few of their tactics.[39] In Guatemala, a broad-based coalition involving peasants, students, lawyers, and religious leaders used boycotts, strikes, and protests to challenge entrenched government corruption, forcing a kleptocratic president to step down without violence in 2015. This was a remarkable achievement for a country that had endured over three decades of civil war. [40] The NETWORK "nuns on the bus" (NOTB) movement in the United States, founded by Sr. Simone

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[37] Eli S. McCarthy, *Becoming Nonviolent Peacemakers: A Virtue Ethic for Catholic Social Teaching and U.S. Policy,* Wipf and Stock Pickwick Publishers: 2012.

[38] M. Gandhi, Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, vol. 62, May 20, 1936.

[39] See "Liberian Women Act to End Civil War," *Global Nonviolent Action Database,* 2010. Accessed at: https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/liberian-women-act-end-civil-war-2003; *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, Dir. Gini Reticker. Fork Films LLC, 2008.

[40] Azam Ahmed and Elisabeth Malkin, "Otto Pérez Molina of Guatemala Is Jailed Hours After Resigning Presidency," *New York Times,* September 3, 2015. Accessed at: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/04/world/americas/otto-perez-molina-guatemalan-president-resigns-amid-scandal.html.

Campbell, has used cross-country bus rides since 2012 to stand with ordinary people and provide a creative and hopeful outlet for Catholics (and all Americans) committed to economic justice, immigration reform, equality, and civic engagement.[41]

Catholic teachings and solidarity with nonviolent activists

Contemporary Catholic teachings on nonviolence have been animated in documents including "Pacem in Terris" from the Second Vatican Council, World Day of Peace messages by popes, and the U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letters, "The Challenge of Peace" and "The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace."[42] The Church's social justice teachings focus on the inherent dignity of the human person, the importance of participation in society, of rights and responsibilities, on the primacy of the poor and the vulnerable, the dignity of work and the right of workers, on the importance of global solidarity and care for God's creation. Faithful citizenship, understood in the context of Catholic teachings, includes engaging in nonviolent action to advance the rights and dignity of the most vulnerable and oppressed, including those whose basic rights to life and work are violated by unjust systems of power.

The Church's social justice mission would be further strengthened through an explicit commitment to supporting those who struggle for basic human rights and dignity using active nonviolent means. Although there are sometimes tensions between perspectives that advocate "peace" and those that advocate "justice", in reality these camps ought to be bridged, as the Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace signifies.[43] There is nothing inherently contradictory in using tactics that nonviolently disrupt the status quo and those that embrace dialogue, mutual understanding, and reconciliation. In his famous 1963 "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," Martin Luther King Jr. responded to criticisms that the sometimes disruptive tactics of the U.S. civil rights movement were "unwise and untimely" and that he should be seeking dialogue instead:

> *'Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches, and so forth? Isn't negotiation a better path?' You are quite right in calling for negotiation. Indeed, this is the very purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue*.[44]

In conflicts where power is uneven and discrimination is institutionalized, those power dynamics need to shift in order for negotiation and lasting peace to have a chance. Violent extremist groups like ISIS recruit disaffected youth and others by claiming that only violence will

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[41] Sister Simone Campbell, *A Nun on the Bus: How All of Us Can Create Hope, Change, and Community.* HarperOne, 2014.

[42] *Pacem in Terris*, Encyclical of Pope John XXIII on Establishing University Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty, April 11, 1963. Accessed at: http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html.

[43] Maria J. Stephan, "The Peacebuilder's Field Guide to Protest Movements," *Foreign Policy,* January 22, 2016. (Accessed at: http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/01/22/the-peacebuilders-field-guide-to-protest-movements/.)

[44] Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", April 16, 1963. Accessed at: https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/letter-birmingham-jail.

allow them to resist injustice and exclusion. That narrative needs to be fiercely challenged. There are remarkable examples of nonviolent resistance being used against ISIS in Iraq and Syria.[45] In Kenya, militants from the extremist group Al Shabab boarded a passenger bus in 2014 and demanded that the Christians and Muslims be separated into separate groups - a tactic that had been used prior to mass killings of Christians. The Muslim passengers, mostly women, refused to be separated. They insisted that the militants should shoot everyone or leave, and they put hijabs on the heads of the Christian women. Amazingly, the militants left and nobody was killed.[46] Fortunately, powerful alternatives to violence exist and the Church can play a powerful role in spreading the message of how effective and faithful nonviolent struggle really is.

Conclusion

Through its teachings, advocacy, and support for peacebuilding and social justice endeavors globally, the Catholic Church shepherds manifold moral and material resources to promote a world without violence. Committing to supporting those around the world engaged in nonviolent resistance to advance rights, peace, and dignity - doctrinally, through Catholic teaching, education and formation, through the policy-influencing arms of the Church, and through field-based programs, is a concrete and powerful way to counter violence globally. Increasing solidarity and material support to those nonviolent change agents around the world is a specific way to reduce the huge loss of life that inevitably follows when people take up arms or governments drop bombs.

Fortunately, there is an ever-expanding library of resources – books, films, nonviolent action training manuals, online courses – and a growing number of capacity-building organizations around the world that specialize in helping conflict-affected communities organize nonviolently for change. The U.S. Institute of Peace, Rhize, the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, Nonviolent Peaceforce, the American Friends Services Committee, Operation Dove, and Christian Peacemakers Teams are only a few such organizations. Together with remarkably active and effective organizations like Pax Christi, Mercy Corps, Caritas International, and Catholic Relief Services, expanding and deepening partnerships and synergies focused on improving knowledge and skills related to strategic nonviolent action could help prevent and mitigate violent conflict around the world. At a policy level, combining a principled denunciation of war with firm support for those nonviolently resisting injustices – and embracing the peaceful warriors on the front lines of nonviolent change – would be a profound step in realizing Pope Francis' vision of a world in which conflicts are transformed without violence.

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[45] Maria J. Stephan, "Resisting ISIS," *Sojourners,* April 2015. (Accessed at: https://sojo.net/magazine/april-2015/resisting-isis.) See also, M. Stephan, "Civil Resistance vs. ISIS," *Journal of Resistance Studies,* Vol 1, Number 2, 2015.

[46] "Kenyan Muslims Shield Christians in Mandera Bus Attack," *BBC,* December 21, 2015. (Accessed at: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35151967.)

An overview of Gospel nonviolence in the Christian tradition
By Fr. John Dear and Ken Butigan

This paper profiles the lineage of Gospel nonviolence from the early Church to today as a resource as we gather to pray and reflect on how we might recover, proclaim, and embody the centrality of Jesus' nonviolence for the healing of the church and the world. In these pages we are reminded that Jesus' nonviolence was once normative for the Church and for all Christians, and that, in our turbulent time of global violence, searing injustice, and catastrophic climate change, we are being invited and challenged to again restore it definitively to the heart of the Church and its mission.

But first, let us say a word about "nonviolence." This term is not found in the Bible. The word "nonviolence," while it has a long history in other traditions, is a relatively new term in Christianity. Increasingly, however, theologians, church leadership, and Christians in many parts of the world have come to see that this word most effectively characterizes Jesus' way—a way that combines both an unmistakable rejection of violence and the power of love and truth in action for justice, peace and integrity of creation. "Nonviolence" is a clearer way to understand Jesus' vision than even "love" and "peace" by themselves, because we can use these terms but at the same time support violence and war. This is more difficult with nonviolence. The word "nonviolence" illuminates the heart of the Gospel—the proclamation of the Reign of God, a new nonviolent order rooted in God's unconditional love.

The early church of nonviolence

The early church resolutely placed the nonviolence of Jesus at the center of the church and of individual discipleship. It fully understood that to be a disciple of Jesus meant to be comprehensively nonviolent. The Christian community in Jerusalem refused to participate in the violent insurrection against the Romans (66-70 C.E.) and for 300 years the church resisted service in the Roman military. Christians refused to worship Caesar, who claimed to be God, or to kill for Caesar. The Church prepared its members to face the consequences for following the nonviolent Jesus: persecution and martyrdom. It nourished a culture of spiritually-grounded nonviolence through the corporal works of mercy, through the practice of forgiveness and reconciliation, and through resistance to the culture of violence.

Not a single Christian writing exists before the early fourth century supporting Christian participation in warfare. Only eight epitaphs of Christian soldiers have been found from the first three centuries. We know there were a few because Tertullian, in 197, rebuked Christians who were in the army. Many, he said, in turn converted to the path of the nonviolent Jesus and quit the military. Tertullian said that Jesus' command to love one's enemies was the "principal precept" of Christianity. The pagan author Celsus in 170 condemned Christianity on the grounds that if everyone became Christian, there would be no army. Nonviolence was the hallmark of the early Church.

The witnesses of well-known Christian martyrs were often recorded and recited at community

Eucharists as a way to encourage one another in their Gospel nonviolence. Justin Martyr wrote, "We who were filled with war and mutual slaughter and all wickedness have each and all throughout the earth changed our instruments of war, our swords into plowshares and our spears into farm tools, and cultivate piety, justice, love of humankind, faith and the hope, which we have from the Father through the Crucified One." He was killed in 165. Many other saints and writers condemned Christian participation in killing, such as Tatian, Athenagoras, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Cyprian, Minucius, Felix, and Lactantius.

Perhaps the most celebrated Christian in the first 1,000 years of the Church was St. Maximilian. In 295, this 21-year-old son of a Roman veteran refused conscription into the Roman army and was beheaded. At his trial he said, "I cannot serve. I cannot do evil. I will not be a soldier of this world. I am a soldier of Christ." His testimony was read as part of the mass for centuries after his death.

This steadfast conviction and faithfulness, in many cases embodied to the point of death, was founded in a clear grasp of Jesus's nonviolence. Not only did it understand his nonviolence, it sought to emulate it in its many dimensions, as the following brief summary illuminates.

With courage and fidelity the early church sought to follow the nonviolent Jesus who was the beloved son of God and who proclaimed, in the Sermon on the Mount, that all peacemakers are sons and daughters of God; who in the desert rejected the temptation of violence and violent power, including the temptation to become a violent messiah; who proclaimed and actualized the nonviolent Reign of God by healing the sick and disabled, by expelling the demons of violence, by feeding the hungry and by liberating the oppressed; who defied Sabbath laws when they oppressed human beings (Mark 3: 1-6) and nonviolently challenging lethal patriarchy (John 8: 1-11); and who called his followers to love their enemies, to forgive, to be compassionate, and to offer no violent resistance to one who does evil.

The early church emulated the nonviolent Jesus, who sent the 12 apostles and the 72 disciples on a mission of peace and nonviolence into a culture of violence, "as lambs sent among wolves": who himself went on a mission of peace and nonviolence by going to Jerusalem, not as a military general but as a new king of nonviolence, "a just savior is he, meek, and riding on an ass…He shall banish the war chariot from Ephraim, and the war horse from Jerusalem…and he shall proclaim peace to the nations" (Zechariah 9:9-10); and who nonviolently challenged the Temple system that threatened the economic and political privilege of the religious authorities, who then took steps to put him to death.

The early church strove to follow in the footsteps of the nonviolent Jesus who, the night before his death, initiated a new covenant of nonviolence by taking the bread and the cup and saying, "My body broken for you, my blood shed for you" and thus swept away the old covenant of justified and sacred violence that demands that we "break the bodies of others; shed the blood of others"; who told Peter to put down his sword in the Garden of Gethsemani; who underwent arrest, trial, condemnation, torture and execution with perfect nonviolence; who, standing before Pilate, contrasted the violent kingdom of this world with the nonviolent Kingdom of God

that practices nonviolence; who broke the chains of death and violence when he rose from the dead; who displayed, not revenge or retaliation, but nonviolence when he appeared to his disciples; and who sent his disciples to fulfill his mission of building peace and nonviolence.

The early church, in its spiritual formation, evangelization, ecclesial self-understanding, sacramental life, and prophetic witness sought to faithfully live these facets of the life and ministry of the bonviolent Jesus. (For a more comprehensive treatment of Jesus' nonviolence, see Terrence Rynne's resource paper, "An overview of contemporary scriptural exegesis and ethics on Jesus' nonviolence.")

Constantine's rejection of Jesus' nonviolence—and the turn toward Christian killing and justified warfare

The Christian community's programmatic, disciplined and theological nonviolence began to be compromised after Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity in 313 C.E. He baptized his troops and established Christianity as the official religion of the Empire. Masses of people flocked into the church, which until then had been a small, grassroots network of underground communities of nonviolence. Constantine announced that Christians could now serve in the Roman military and kill Rome's enemies. In doing so, he dispensed with the Sermon on the Mount and the commandment to love one's enemies, and turned to the pagan Cicero to justify Christian violence, sowing the seeds for the so-called "just war theory." By the early fifth century, only Christians could serve in the Roman army. St. Augustine then wrote that sometimes the best way to love one's enemies is to kill them. Christians began killing others in direct violation of Jesus' teachings and life, and this killing by Christians continues today.

Accommodation with the empire and its violence and wars had a dramatic impact on the church, its theology and the world. Christians began to justify their participation in warfare, and eventually many forms of violence. In a few centuries, Christians were waging holy wars, and eventually massive Crusades led by cardinals and priests which killed hundreds of thousands of people. Christian men burned women at the stake; systematically persecuted Jews; kept millions of people as slaves; blessed conquest; fought in war; ran concentration camps; and built and used nuclear weapons. Today, Christians around the world threaten and wage war against one another.

The lineage of Gospel nonviolence since Constantine

In spite of this history, thousands of faithful Christians over the centuries have strived to follow the path of Gospel nonviolence. They have been a remnant Church, a small movement within the imperial, war-making church. Historians have begun to study and trace this lineage of nonviolence. [The single best study of this tradition is *The Catholic Peace Tradition* by Ronald Musto (Orbis Books, USA, 1986).]

In the centuries after Constantine, pockets of Christian men and women retreated to the deserts to keep the nonviolence of Jesus alive. Later, monasticism developed with monastic communities created for worship and study, service to the local community and the practice of peace and hospitality. (They were by and large nonviolent, though, as they grew, many of them

also became involved in warfare and killing.)

Other persons and movements have pursued the path of Gospel nonviolence. Some examples – drawn from Hildegard and Jean Goss-Mayr, "The Gospel and the Struggle for Justice and Peace: Training Seminar," International Fellowship of Reconciliation, 1990 – include:

- Saint Martin of Tours (316-397) was an officer in the Roman army before his conversion to Christianity. After his conversion he left the military, at great risk to himself, to place himself at the service of the poorest and to spread the gospel.
- Pope Leo the Great saved the city of Rome in the fifth century by nonviolent dialogue when Attila the Hun invaded Europe.
- Saint Severin, also in the fifth century, mediated between the Germanic tribes who were threatening populations of fortified cities. He successfully asked the inhabitants to enter into dialogue with the enemy, and thus war and destruction were avoided.
- The "Truce of God," which was an attempt by the Church during the Middle Ages to limit wars.

In the 13th century Francis of Assisi was an icon of Gospel nonviolence. He reclaimed the nonviolence of Jesus, pointed Christians back to the Gospel, and almost single-handedly reimagined the Church. As a youth fighting in his local military, he was imprisoned, converted to the nonviolence of Jesus, and quit the military. He formed a community of practitioners of Gospel nonviolence who refused to take up arms. They lived in poverty, served the poor, and greeted everyone with the phrase "Pace e Bene" ("Peace and Goodness!"), often being attacked as a result. But within a few years, their movement began to spread. Thousands joined. At the news of the latest crusade, Francis took bold new action. He crossed contested territory and met with the Sultan Malik al-Kamil, the leader of the enemy, to make peace. Along with Clare of Assisi and her community, Francis and his early community offered a new Christian witness of nonviolence that historians now believe helped end feudal violence. He forbade any follower to own a weapon, support war, or kill others. St. Francis is widely regarded as the greatest, most beloved saint in history but he was first of all a practitioner of the nonviolence of Jesus.

In the centuries after Francis, religious orders and communities focusing on the works of mercy and charity proliferated. Moreover, after the Protestant Reformation and Counter-Reformation, small "Peace Churches" blossomed which explicitly espoused the nonviolence of Jesus, including the Anabaptists, Brethren, Mennonites and the Society of Friends. These peace churches advocated nonviolent change and led to the Abolitionists and the eventual global movement to abolish slavery. Their leaders were predominantly Christian who sought to practice the nonviolence of Jesus. Their movements and writings helped inspired new movements, such as the Suffragists, anti-war movements, and the labor movements.

A new awakening to Gospel nonviolence in the 20th century

At the beginning of World War I the International Fellowship of Reconciliation was established. As Hildegard Goss-Mayr writes, "It was the first organized and ecumenical expression of Christians who, in following Jesus Christ, are not only saying 'no' to the use of violence as a

means of conquering injustices and resolving conflicts, but at the same time are rediscovering the creative force of the nonviolence of God. It is found in every continent today, promoting active nonviolence in the heart of the churches when faced with injustices in the world."

During World War II, Franz Jägerstätter of St. Radegund, Austria was a faithful witness for nonviolence. A Catholic, Jägerstätter was ordered to join the Nazi military in 1943 but refused on the grounds that this would disobey Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount. He was arrested, brought to Berlin, tried and beheaded. After the war his action and writings became known and have influenced thousands of people around the world; many who became involved in grassroots movements for peace have cited his witness as a motivation. Jägerstätter was recently beatified by the Catholic Church.

In the United States, Dorothy Day founded the Catholic Worker movement, a network of houses of hospitality where Catholics welcomed the poor and the homeless to live with them, and where they also publicly denounce and resist war in obedience to the nonviolent Jesus. Day engaged many times in nonviolent civil disobedience for peace and justice.

Thomas Merton, the celebrated Trappist monk and author, influenced millions of people through his writings that included teachings on nonviolence and called for the abolition of war and nuclear weapons.

The example of Blessed Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador inspired a new generation of Catholic peacemakers. He was assassinated on March 24, 1980, the day after he preached that Christians were forbidden to kill and that members of the military and death squads should disobey orders to kill, quit their positions and stop the repression in his country.

With the atomic destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States during World War II, the threat of global nuclear annihilation became a possibility. With the development of grassroots movements and the widespread legacy of Gandhi, millions of people began to awaken to the teachings and methodologies of nonviolence, helping to build a global movement that succeeded in making possible arms control agreements, the 1962 Partial Test Ban Treaty, and the 1993 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty signed by 183 nations that ended most nuclear testing worldwide.

Just as the global anti-nuclear movement has applied nonviolence to the struggle for a world without weapons of mass destruction, thousands of other movements have been proliferating for more democratic societies, human rights, economic justice, and environmental sustainability over the past half-century using the power and methods of nonviolence for effective change.

The Church, Catholic leadership and Catholic laity have been involved in many of these and other movements for nonviolent change, including in the U.S. civil rights movement, the Solidarity movement in Poland, in the peace communities in Colombia, and in the struggles for justice and social change in South Africa, Liberia, East Timor, and many other contexts.

In addition, Catholics and Christians have played pivotal roles in developing innovative approaches to addressing violence, injustice, human rights violations, and war, including restorative justice (Victim Offender Reconciliation Program; Peace Circles); forgiveness and reconciliation training; third-party intervention and unarmed civilian protection and accompaniment (Witness for Peace, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Nonviolent Peaceforce, Operation Dove); nonviolent communication; conflict transformation programming; trauma healing; antiracism training; innumerable initiatives for interfaith dialogue; and a dramatic increase in academic degree programs in peace studies and research on the core values of nonviolent change, including forgiveness, creativity, love, compassion and empathy as well as nonviolent civil resistance, movement-building, and the dynamics and infrastructure for a culture of peace and nonviolence.

The Church and the move to nonviolence

The modern foundations of the Roman Catholic Church's turn toward peacemaking and nonviolence began with Saint John XXIII's 1963 encyclical *Pacem in Terris* that questioned all warfare and opened the door to a church of nonviolence. During the Second Vatican Council, the Church issued an absolute condemnation of weapons of mass destruction and an affirmation that every government should recognize the right of conscientious objection. In its documents and succeeding meetings, the Catholic Church articulated a central commitment to peacemaking rooted in justice that addresses the causes of war.

In 1983, the U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter, *The Challenge of Peace*, "proposed a theology of peace, explored the scriptural basis of peacemaking, imagined Jesus as a peacemaker and elevated nonviolence as a real Christian option."

Ten years later, the U.S. Catholic bishops issued a letter entitled *The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace* in which they wrote: "Although nonviolence has often been regarded as simply a personal option or vocation, recent history suggests that in some circumstances it can be an effective public undertaking as well. Dramatic political transitions in places as diverse as the Philippines and Eastern Europe demonstrate the power of nonviolent action, even against dictatorial and totalitarian regimes... These nonviolent revolutions challenge us to find ways to take into full account the power of organized, active nonviolence." (U.S. Bishops' Conference. *The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace* [Washington, DC, 1993], 10-11.)

Building on the growing recovery of Jesus' nonviolence, recent popes have made statements that point toward a comprehensive embrace of Gospel nonviolence. Pope John Paul II, addressing young people in Lesotho on September 19, 1988, said, "To choose the means of nonviolence is to make a courageous choice in love, a choice which embraces active defense of human rights and a strong commitment to justice and harmonious development." Pope Benedict XVI, on February 18, 2007, stated, "Nonviolence, for Christians, is not mere tactical behavior but a person's way of being, the attitude of one who is convinced of God's love and power, who is not afraid to confront evil with the weapons of love and truth alone. Loving the enemy is the nucleus of the "Christian revolution." And Pope Francis I said on August 18, 2013,

"The true strength of the Christian is the power of truth and love, which leads to the renunciation of all violence. Faith and violence are incompatible."

The historic opportunity to reclaim the nonviolence of Jesus and return the Church to Gospel nonviolence

Jesus calls us to nonviolence. Though the Church has often betrayed this central Gospel mandate, it can definitively recover its calling and become a nonviolent church. By doing so it would harvest and accelerate the 2,000-year tradition of nonviolence for the transformation of the Church and the world.

What might come of such a clear stance?

We can perhaps glimpse this by reflecting on an example where the Church boldly spread the vision and teaching of Gospel nonviolence. There are many cases, but we can do no better than the example of the Church in the Philippines in the 1980s that played a critical role in unleashing nonviolent people power to end a dictatorship.

Under the U.S.-backed regime of Ferdinand Marcos there was much corruption, poverty, widespread human rights violations, and a lack of democracy. Systematic violence by the government was aimed at destroying the opposition, including community-based organizations and movements working for change. There was little hope for social transformation. There was a growing armed struggle led by a group called The New People's Army. At the same time, however, the Catholic Church in this predominantly Catholic country was casting about for an alternative. Was there an option to passivity on the one hand and violence on the other?

Many people were not too sure. A bishop was quoted at the time as saying, "I used to believe in nonviolence, but Marcos is too cruel; only a bloody revolution will work against him." When he was asked how long such a revolution would take, he said, "Ten years." The 1983 assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino seemed only to confirm the bishop's gloomy assessment.

It was then that the church's leader in the Philippines, Cardinal Jaime Sin, decided to see if an alternative was possible. He put the full weight of the church behind an exploration of Gospel nonviolence and how it could be applied to change the situation in his country. As part of this effort, he took part in a three-day nonviolence training in Manila led by Hildegard and Jean Goss-Mayr of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation and sponsored by the Little Sisters of Jesus. It was a life changing event that led to organizing "active nonviolence" trainings for scores of Catholic and Protestant bishops and hundreds of other clergy, women religious and laity. A Philippine chapter of the Fellowship of Reconciliation was established, which organized 40 nonviolence trainings in 30 provinces.

These workshops eventually played a key role in the nationwide mobilization to stop the dictator from stealing the 1986 national election. Cardinal Sin joined with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines in formally calling on the country to engage in "active resistance" and "a nonviolent struggle for justice." They appealed to Filipinos of all religions to follow the

teachings of Jesus in the gospel and use peaceful means to address the crisis. Nonviolence trainings — and nonviolent inventiveness on the spot — contributed to the emergence of a widespread nonviolent force, both within the civilian population and key sectors of the military that refused orders rather than attack unarmed civilians organized in disciplined human barricades. Nonviolent activists found themselves in the surprising position of protecting soldiers who defected. Within four days, Ferdinand Marcos boarded a plane bound for Hawaii.

In Manila, over one million unarmed human beings had joined the self-described People Power movement and demonstrated how nonviolent people power can trump tanks and circling bombers. There were many factors to its success, but two of those included a call from the Church to take nonviolent action, and the role of the Church in organizing nonviolence training, especially for those who helped organize and coordinate the resistance.

This is a highly visible example of the power of Gospel nonviolence and the role that the Church can play in spreading it. The ministry of sharing the Good News of Gospel nonviolence is not limited to such dramatic situations. Jesus' nonviolence is needed in every dimension and context in our lives and our world. Nonetheless, this particular case illustrates the difference such action can make.

Conclusion

Mahatma Gandhi, who read the Sermon on the Mount every day for 40 years, concluded that Jesus was the greatest person of nonviolence in history, and that everyone who follows him is called to be a person of nonviolence. Though the Church has supported and engaged in violence for the past 1,700 years, many saints and martyrs have affirmed, like Gandhi, that Gospel nonviolence is the way of Jesus and have kept it alive through the centuries. Rooted in this tradition, the Church in this kairos moment—this time of momentous decision—is called to reject violence and justifications for war; to adhere faithfully to the nonviolence of Jesus; and to collaborate with people everywhere to create a thriving culture of nonviolence, justice, and peace.

In this spirit, a bold, new recovery of Jesus' nonviolence by the global Church will have an incalculably powerful impact. An encyclical or major Church document on Nonviolence and Just Peace—confessing our violence as a Church but also harvesting, building on and deepening the lineage of Gospel nonviolence theologically, spiritually, and pastorally—would invite people everywhere to tap the power each of us has to collaborate in rejecting violence and in fostering a more just, peaceful and sustainable world.

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No longer legitimating war: Christians and Just Peace
By Rose Marie Berger

Pero es bello amar al mundo con los ojos de los que no han nacido todavía.
[But it's beautiful to love the world with the eyes of those still to be born.]
—Otto Rene Castillo[i]

In this Year of Mercy, Roman Catholics have an opportunity to love the world in new ways and to see it through the eyes of future generations. Pope Francis models in *Laudato Si'* how a fresh approach to ancient tenets can catalyze astonishing change in our human family. As he has led on climate change and care for "our Sister, Mother Earth,"[ii] we too can find fresh approaches to the biblical call to be peacemakers. Many are desperate in these days for a peace that is swollen with hope; a peace that is not merely a cessation of violence, but is the "peace of God that passes all understanding."[iii] What can Catholic just peace offer to the world today? How can just peace help the Body of Christ in loving "the world with the eyes of those still to be born"?

I. WHAT IS JUST PEACE?

Just peace is a Christian school of thought and set of practices for building peace at all stages of acute conflict—before, during, and after. It draws on three key approaches—principles and moral criteria, practical norms, and virtue ethics—for building a positive peace and constructing a more "widely known paradigm with agreed practices that make peace and prevent war."[iv] Just peace principles and moral criteria guide actions that can assist institutional change and provide a framework for judging ethical responsibility. Just peace practical norms provide guidance on constructive actions for peace, can be tested for effectiveness, and point toward a comprehensive just peace pedagogy and skills-based training. Just peace virtue ethics teaches how to change our hearts. It asks what type of people we are becoming through the virtues we cultivate and shows us how to become people of peace. These three aspects form a "head, body, heart" approach. Just peace is not merely the absence of violence but the presence of social, economic, and political conditions that sustain peace and human flourishing and prevent conflicts from turning violent or returning to violence.[v] Just peace can help Christians move beyond war.

II. JUST PEACE IN BIBLICAL AND CHRISTIAN TRADITION

Just peace is rooted in the biblical concept of shalom. Its meaning encompasses definitions such as wholeness, soundness, to be held in a peaceful covenant, to be restored, healed, and repaid. It describes both domestic tranquility as well as neighborliness among nation-states; both a physical state and a spiritual state. It is a quality of right relationship.[vi] The rabbinic scholars have taught "All that is written in the Torah was written for the sake of peace."[vii]

The phrase "Christian peacemakers" ought to be redundant. For Christians, Jesus is the incarnation of God's shalom and the manifestation of just peace. Many Christians, by the very nature of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, prioritize peace with justice and reject violence as a means toward peace, recognizing it as a failure. We are called to be courageous innovators who defend the "least of these"—without benefit of the world's weapons. The World Council of Churches spent the

millennial decade studying how to overcome violence. The WCC produced two seminal documents: "An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace"[viii] and the "Just Peace Companion."[ix] The first declared the concept and the mentality of "just war" to be obsolete.[x] The second offered extensive direction on implementation of just peace theology and practice. Both documents delivered a comprehensive review of scripture, ethics, values, practices, curricula, human stories, and prayer for embodying just peace within the Christian tradition and within the condition of the world in which this faith is practiced.

Every Christian is charged with resisting evil, but none are given the right to kill. In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI preached on Luke 6:27 ("Love your enemies"), saying it "is rightly considered the magna carta of Christian nonviolence. It does not consist in succumbing to evil, as a false interpretation of 'turning the other cheek' claims, but in responding to evil with good and thereby breaking the chain of injustice."[xi]

Pope Francis stressed that "faith and violence are incompatible."[xii] In his 2014 address with Presidents Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas, Pope Francis said, "Peacemaking calls for courage, much more so than warfare. It calls for the courage to say yes to encounter and no to conflict; yes to dialogue and no to violence; yes to negotiations and no to hostilities."[xiii] In 2015, Francis continued, "It is not enough to talk about peace, peace must be made. To speak about peace without making it is contradictory, and those who speak about peace while promoting war, for example through the sale of weapons, are hypocrites. It is very simple."[xiv]

Just peace is an integral expression of Catholic faith and catechism[xv] that can be further developed into a robust and resilient theology,[xvi] theory, and praxis. If, as the U.S. Catholic bishops wrote, "The content and context of our peacemaking is set not by some political agenda or ideological program, but by the teaching of his Church,"[xvii] then that teaching must be full-bodied, theologically grounded, effective, and adaptable from the local parish to the United Nations. However, the legitimation of war in Catholic social teaching remains,[xviii] and according to theological ethicist Glen Stassen, "without a widely known paradigm with agreed practices that make peace and prevent (and defuse) war, public debate will remain vague and unclear about the effective alternatives to the drive to war."[xix]

III. THREE STREAMS OF THE JUST PEACE RIVER

There are three broad scholarly streams that feed into the great river of just peace.

Just peace principles

The first stream identifies "principles and moral criteria" to guide action and provide a framework for judging ethical responsibility. Maryann Cusimano Love, a scholar at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., has spent much of her career shaping these criteria after drawing them from the practices of Catholic organizations such as Caritas Internationalis (CI). She has also been honing their effectiveness in the highest circles of government and the military. In a formulation that is familiar from just war principles,[xx] Love has identified seven just peace principles that serve as a guide for directing action.

Just Peace Principles[xxi]

1. Just cause: protecting, defending, and restoring the fundamental dignity of all human life and the common good
2. Right intention: aiming to create a positive peace
3. Participatory process: respecting human dignity by including societal stakeholders—state and non-state actors as well as previous parties to the conflict
4. Right relationship: creating or restoring just social relationships both vertically and horizontally; strategic systemic change requires that horizontal and vertical relationships move in tandem on an equal basis
5. Reconciliation: a concept of justice that envisions a holistic healing of the wounds of war
6. Restoration: repair of the material, psychological, and spiritual human infrastructure
7. Sustainability: developing structures that can help peace endure over time

Just peace principles are applied at all stages of conflict. They are not only for responding to violence or war. From Love's point of view, peacebuilding tools and other methods of conflict transformation and nonviolence[xxii] are all tools to implement just peace, and her just peace criteria guide those practices.

For example, Love has examined the work of Caritas Internationalis, a confederation of 165 Catholic relief, development, and social service organizations operating in 200 countries. CI's mission is to work for a better world, especially for the poor and oppressed. "Emergency response" to natural disaster, conflict, and climate change is one part of CI's work. The bulk of it, however, is the systemic building up of just societies. CI and its U.S. partner, Catholic Relief Services, have embedded Love's just peace principles into their trainings, and they practice ways of operationalizing just peace on the ground. [xxiii]

Love's approach is relationship-centered and participatory. [xxiv] Right relationship requires high levels of participation, bringing in multiple stakeholders. "That is very different from the type of peace being built by the United Nations or the [U.S.] Department of Defense," said Love.[xxv] "They very rarely, if ever, ask for any input from the local population. If you look at the United Nations-sponsored peace negotiations held since 1992, 98 percent have been without any—zero—participation of women. That's a pretty significant omission. And there are many other omissions, such as of civil society groups, religious groups, and youth groups. … Participation is not an important value for Catholic peacebuilders just because it works, but because we truly believe in the fundamental dignity of all human life. If all people have this sacred human dignity, then all people should be part of that process."

Love's just peace criteria are particularly well suited for use with institutional change. Institutions, wrote Love, "are key for new norms to take hold."[xxvi] Institutions do change, she wrote, but they "learn by doing."[xxvii] She has used these principles in her work with the United Nations, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of State, as well as other large institutions. "The Catholic Church helped create, publicize, and institutionalize just-war norms internationally," wrote Love. She argues that it is an opportune time to do the same with just-peace norms.

Just peace practices

The second stream identifies just peace "practical norms." These are just peacemaking practices, available for use before, during, and after conflict, that can be tested for effectiveness, provide guidance on constructive actions for peace, and point toward a comprehensive just peace pedagogy and skills-based training. Over the past 30 years, numerous scholars have contributed to honing a set of 10 just peacemaking practices. Ethicist Glen Stassen at Fuller Theological Seminary in California and theologian Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite at Chicago Theological Seminary have brought significant leadership to this robust set of just peace practical norms. Stassen has described just peacemaking as "the new paradigm for an ethics of peace and war,"[xxviii] shifting the debate away from limiting war, as just war principles do, to practicing peace.

These just peace norms have been used in a variety of settings, such as negotiations on nuclear disarmament, diplomatic intervention seeking to stop the U.S. invasion of Iraq,[xxix] denominational general conventions choosing to identify as "just peace churches,"[xxx] interreligious and interfaith collaborative efforts to develop just peace in other traditions,[xxxi] and intervention to combat global gender-based violence.[xxxii]

Stassen has argued, "It is necessary to have both (1) an explicitly Christian ethic with a strong scriptural base and (2) a public ethic that appeals to reason, experience, and need, and that cannot place the same emphasis on scripture and prayer that an explicitly Christian ethic can."[xxxiii] The version of the 10 just peacemaking practices[xxxiv] below reflects both.

Part One: Peacemaking Initiatives
1. Support nonviolent direct action (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:38-42)
2. Take independent initiatives to reduce threat (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:38-42)
3. Use cooperative conflict resolution (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:21-26)
4. Acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice and seek repentance and forgiveness (Biblical basis: Matt. 7:1-5)

Part Two: Working for Justice
5. Advance democracy, human rights, and religious liberty (Biblical basis: Matt. 6:19-34)
6. Foster just and sustainable economic development (Biblical basis: Matt. 6:19-34)

Part Three: Fostering Love and Community
7. Work with emerging cooperative forces in the international system (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:43ff)
8. Strengthen the United Nations and international efforts for cooperation and human rights (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:43ff)
9. Reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:38ff)
10. Encourage grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:1-2, 7:28-29)

In his work, Stassen has said, his team was "aware that our social context includes a private/public dualism in which Jesus' way and also peacemaking get interpreted as idealistic and individualistic.

To counter this distortion, we intentionally focused on 10 practices—not 10 ideals—and on historical and political-science evidence showing each practice is in fact working to prevent some wars. Furthermore, with the human nature variable in mind, a realistic understanding of human sin argues that these practices need to be institutionalized in policies, international networks, and laws in order to check and balance concentrations of political, economic, and military power."[xxxv]

Just peace virtues and ethics

The third stream is just peace virtue ethics. A virtue is a disposition to "do good." It is not just doing something good because it is required or because one can see the benefits. It is being good deep down, with an innate wisdom and intuition of what will be generative for life and flourishing. Some virtues come naturally. Others, called "moral virtues," are acquired through practice, devotion, and community. Virtue ethics teaches how to create morally good cultures that foster morally good people.

Eli S. McCarthy is a Catholic theological virtue ethicist at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. He has elaborated a just peace virtue ethic by integrating the just peace approaches of Stassen, Thistlethwaite, and Love. Virtue ethics, wrote McCarthy, "is focused on the character of persons, but includes concern for both acts and ends or consequences. In virtue ethics, the primary ethical question asked is 'Who are we (am I) becoming?' before, 'What is the rule?' or 'What are the consequences?'"[xxxvi]

McCarthy stated that "nonviolent peacemaking ought to be assessed as a distinct and central virtue" in and of its own right. If nonviolent peacemaking is a key virtue, then other virtues, such as justice and courage, are qualified in a new way and often-overlooked virtues such as "humility, solidarity, hospitality, and mercy" might be better recovered. McCarthy has developed seven practices[xxxvii] that flow from and cultivate nonviolent peacemaking as a virtue. They are:

1. Celebrating the Eucharist as Christ's nonviolent act of self-sacrifice,[xxxviii] with secondary components of prayer, meditation, and fasting
2. Training and education in nonviolent peacemaking and resistance, with secondary component of forming nonviolent peacemaking communities
3. Attention to religious or spiritual factors, especially in public discourse, and learning about religion, particularly in the form of intra-religious or inter-religious dialogue
4. A constructive program with its particular focus on the poor and marginalized
5. Conflict transformation and restorative justice, particularly in the form of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions
6. Unarmed civilian protection, a third-party intervention both in the form of international implementation and local peace teams
7. Civilian-based defense, a nonviolent form of civil defense that engages the broader society against an external threat or in the overthrow of a government

McCarthy has argued that Love's just peace criteria and Stassen and Thistlethwaite's just peacemaking practical norms have embedded in them a desire for Christians to become better and more just peacemakers. He has added to their work an "orienting virtue ethic" along with the focused question, "What kinds of people are we becoming?"

A virtue ethics approach to nonviolent peacemaking would amplify the development of character and the kind of imagination that engages and creatively applies, extends, and even corrects the practical norms of Stassen's just peacemaking. (For example, some limits to Stassen's original just peacemaking principles have been that they focus only on reducing offensive weapons and so have nothing to say about nuclear abolitions. Some scholars have interpreted the principles to legitimate limited violent intervention in conflict.[xxxix]) It would create the environment for the kinds of people who are willing to risk "unarmed civilian protection" and create the space for the practices of reconciliation, conflict transformation, and care for creation[xl] through the related virtue of solidarity and nonviolent civilian-based defense.[xli]

McCarthy has described his just peace approach as both a vision and an ethic. As a vision, it expresses the reality of shalom and the integration of peace and justice as modeled by Jesus. As an ethic, it offers a way of justice via peace-making and peace via justice-making. Here, just peace must include a "moral commitment to illuminating human dignity, but also ensuring human rights and cultivating thriving relationships," argued McCarthy. "This ethic offers a set of core virtues to form our character and shape core practices, as well as to both orient and better apply a set of just peace criteria for specific actions to engage conflict."[xlii]

IV. WHAT DOES JUST PEACE LOOK LIKE IN ACTION?

Catholic communities already embody and practice just peace. Cardinal Peter Turkson said in 2013, "From South Sudan, the Middle East, and Central America to Congo, Colombia, and the Philippines, the Catholic Church is a powerful force for peace, freedom, justice, and reconciliation. But this impressive and courageous peacebuilding often remains unknown, under-analyzed, and unappreciated."[xliii] There is an opportunity for developing these significant bodies of experience, wisdom, and research into an effective and integrated just peace approach across the breadth of the Church.

Having looked at three streams, let us look now at the river in action. What can be learned when just peace principles, practical norms, and virtue ethics are applied to nuclear weapons, armed drones, and civil war?

Just peace and nuclear weapons

If the Cold War is over, why do we still have nuclear weapons? Maryann Cusimano Love has argued that analyzing the Cold War through the lens of just peace teaches us that the Cold War did not end well. Not only did it leave us with nuclear weapons, but also with "alert force postures and cultures of suspicion," wrote Love.[xliv] Therefore, in just peace terms, relationships are not "right." Without right relationships, reconciliation, restoration, and long-term sustainable peace are not possible. Love proves her case by applying a standard peacebuilders tool called "disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration/reconciliation" to the relationship between the U.S. and Russia. She has argued that this peacebuilding process was never completed, because the Cold War didn't "end," it just changed. There was some disarmament, but without demobilization and without building deeper relationships. Love wrote, "To achieve deeper disarmament we need to build deeper relationships. To build deeper relationships, we need more people-building relationships. That means not just state government activities but exchanges between church and civil society,

dialogue and engagement to broaden the work of reintegration and reconciliation." Just peace in this case, she wrote, means "moving away from a peace based on desolation and mutually assured destruction, and instead moving to a peace based on right relationships and mutually assured reductions of nuclear weapons."[xlv]

Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite has seen just peacemaking practical norms at work in the Obama administration's nuclear negotiations with Iran. "One can see how much 'multiple stakeholders' were brought in to the significant Iran nuclear deal," she wrote, "and that is central to just peace practice #9" (to reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade). Obama's 2009 Nobel Peace Prize speech[xlvi] exemplified some understanding of just peace practices. However, Thistlethwaite is concerned that the Obama administration has tried to "cobble together elements of both just peace and just war theory without, in fact, analyzing deeply how many contradictions are thus imported into foreign policy."[xlvii]

Eli S. McCarthy has argued that if one examines the issue of nuclear weapons in the context of the nonviolent peacemaking virtue ethic—including that the "how" of the process must be consistent in character with the "what" of the goal—then a just peace virtue ethic would challenge just peacemaking practice #9 of reducing only "offensive weapons" as both an unclear distinction and an inadequate one.

Just peace and armed drones

Using just war theory, the Obama administration defined U.S. drone strikes in Afghanistan as "legal, ethical, and wise."[xlviii] Are they? Love has argued against the Obama administration's position. Proponents of drone warfare argue that use of armed drones is "more moral" than sending in ground forces or massive aerial bombing. Love said that "drones are used where the U.S. would never send ground troops … where wars have not been declared and where the U.S. would otherwise not intervene conventionally. Thus drones are extending, not limiting, killing." They do not build a positive peace. They do not protect the common good.[xlix]

Thistlethwaite also has critiqued the Obama administration authorizing drone strikes. Killing without risk, without humanization, she argued, greatly increases "moral hazard" and risky behavior. She has seen nations too easily tempted to use armed drones. Just peace, Thistlethwaite wrote, "can offer a roadmap to create real conditions for addressing the causes of terrorism that will obviate the perceived need for drones. Just peace, in this sense, is a proposal for a counterterrorism strategy that does not involve the use of drones, or presume the necessity of force."[l]

McCarthy has argued that "Just war theory doesn't prioritize or illuminate a more important moral question about human habits"[li] when it comes to drones. He suggested shifting the primary moral analysis of armed drones away from law, just war, and rights to the question of virtue and character: "What kind of people are we becoming by using armed drones?" Rather than building right relationships, drones instill fear and decrease trust. Using drones to kill people makes us the kind of people who "cultivate fear in communities as they wonder if they may be attacked just because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time."[lii] Rather than respecting human dignity,

drones dehumanize. Using armed drones often dictates against promoting development, practicing restorative justice, and training for nonviolent civilian resistance. Drones mask the root causes of conflict, which leads to cycles of violence. Using armed drones significantly damages our capacity for empathy, a core virtue of human flourishing. Drones drain hope—they create deep levels of anxiety in the targeted communities and erode any sense of being able to change one's situation. Drones diminish the virtues of solidarity—both with the targeted communities and within our own society where the vulnerable become a "faceless" other.[liii]

Just peace and civil war in Mozambique

Peacebuilding principles, practices, and virtues can also arise from the ground in a manner that is reflective of just peace. More than one million Mozambicans died as a result of war in the years between the 1964 fight for independence and the civil war that followed it. Using a version of just peace principles, the Mozambican Christian Council (CCM) and the Mozambican Catholic Church helped end the armed conflict.

Working across traditional divisions, the multidenominational Christian council and Catholic Church adopted six just peace principles of engagement:[liv] 1) look for what unites rather than what divides (right relationship); 2) discuss problems step-by-step (participatory process); 3) keep in mind the suffering that so many people endure as war continues (cultivate empathy and human dignity); 4) work with the friends and supporters of both sides; this is fundamental (reconciliation, right relationship, virtue of solidarity); 5) remember the deeper dimensions of peace such as forgiveness, justice, human rights, reconciliation, and trust (right intention); 6) work with other groups—the power of the churches being much increased by inter-denominational cooperation (reconciliation, right relationship, virtue of solidarity). The Mozambican churches determined that "in working for solutions to armed conflicts, it is necessary to have patience and a method."[lv] Through the virtue of patience and the method of their six just peace principles, the churches were able to adapt to the complexity of the war. Because church members had contacts on all sides of the conflict, they built up sufficient trust at the local level to travel in zones inaccessible to anyone else. In this way, the Mozambican Christian Council and Catholic Church opened up diplomatic space, provided shuttle diplomacy, and eventually brokered the 1994 Rome General Peace Accords.

V. JUST PEACE, JUST WAR, JUST CATHOLIC: A CONVERSATION

In a globalized world, it no longer takes centuries for Catholic witness to reach the ends of the earth. We've moved from papyrus to @Pontifex, from frigates to Facebook. Catholic teaching on war and peace has developed slowly, over time and circumstance. In the current era, the weapons of war and the communication of hate have exploded with the advance of the Internet and related technologies. There arises an opportunity to clearly communicate the Catholic faith in new ways. Does it become more important now to clearly separate "justice" from "war" and violence in the language and witness of the Church? Does just peace as language and a framework offer a positive, generative Catholic witness that, if articulated well, can take root around the world? If Catholics are called to be "first responders" in the "field hospital" of the Church, what kind of training in principles, practices, and virtues does a just peace approach provide?

Just peace as the primary framework for the Church?
The centuries-old "just-war theory" sought to provide a means of determining when it was morally justifiable to break the commandment "Thou shall not kill," with guidelines regarding whether to go to war (*jus ad bellum*) and how to fight war in an ethical manner (*jus in bello*). Some Catholic scholars have worked to extend just war criteria to include jus post bellum to guide restorative practices in a post-war context.[lvi]

Love asserted that just war tradition, if anything, "tells you only how to limit war. It has nothing to say about how to build peace."[lvii] She compared the applicability of just war criteria to the decline in the death penalty. "It was once thought necessary to protect people, but now capacity has grown to protect people in other ways than the death penalty," wrote Love.[lviii]

Thistlethwaite wrote that just peace is not just a change in terminology; instead it is "a paradigm shift away from the basic assumption behind just war criteria that war is inevitable."[lix]

McCarthy argued that even a small shift in language might help delegitimize any link between "justice" and "killing," possibly opening space in Catholic imagination for re-linking justice and life, justice and dignity, justice and peace. Although a shift to the language of "limited war" instead of "just war" might better illuminate some "good intentions" in the just war tradition, "without the turn to a just peace approach—criteria, core practices, core virtues—then we as the Catholic Church continue to legitimate war as a practice as long as it is 'limited.' Such religious legitimation and more so the practice of war itself already has and will likely continue to obstruct the development of our imagination, will, and practice of just peace approaches, and thus, leave us too easily influenced and determined by those in political, economic, and military positions of power."[lx]

McCarthy wrote that a virtue-based approach would better prepare the Catholic Church to orient, apply, and develop Love's just peace criteria. He has advocated changing the culture of the Church on war and peace by keeping its attention on this central question: "What kind of people we are becoming?" and what virtues or vices are being cultivated?

Just peace and the Catholic Church's diplomatic work
Just war principles are deeply institutionalized in international law. If the Catholic Church adopted a just peace approach, how would it impact its diplomatic ability to persuade governments away from military action or war? Love wrote that just peace principles are becoming more widely recognized and institutionalized, at the United Nations, within governments, and even in the U.S. Department of Defense. The DOD, in some cases, is turning away from use of lethal force and toward civilian-military relations, recognizing the need for peacebuilding over war. "I think that much of the just war vs. just peace take down is not helpful and productive," Love wrote. "Just war principles are deeply institutionalized in the Geneva Conventions, the U.S. military code of justice, etc. Every arms control agreement that has ever been written has owed a debt to just war tradition's attempts to limit conflict, and limit civilian casualties. I would never want to 'do away' with those normative constraints, with those limitations. But limiting conflict and trying to make war more humane is not the same as building peace."[lxi]

Love stressed that just peace criteria can and should be operative in every phase of conflict and conflict resolution, as well as at all levels of participation. It should entail multiple stakeholders, especially women, as well as active conflict prevention, education, economic development, and the building of participatory and transparent governance.[lxii] Exclusion from the process, Love argued, often fires war and lengthens it.[lxiii] Just peace allows for a more robust intentional inclusion of women who are disproportionately affected by war. Thistlethwaite wrote that sexual violence is a weapon of war and women's bodies are a strategic battlefield in any combat zone.[lxiv] Therefore just peace principles can address the disproportionate damage that war and violence do to women in a way that just war principles have not.

Love and others currently implement just peace criteria at the highest levels of the U.S. government and in international and military circles. Love posited that the number of major armed conflicts in the world has declined by more than half since the beginning of the current century and that casualties in war have declined. She attributed this to overlapping trends (e.g. rising number of democracies, rising economic interdependence), but also to the growing acceptance of just peace principles and a greater commitment across sectors to use peacebuilding tools to implement these principles. "Our overemphasis on just war since Constantine's time," observed Love, "has caused us to miss just peace principles, which are not new, and have been hiding in plain sight."

McCarthy has argued that the Catholic Church's diplomatic work would actually be enhanced by focusing on just peace principles, practices, and virtues. However, "such impact will be truncated if the Catholic Church continues to draw on 'just war' argumentation," he wrote, "in part because it will obstruct the development of imagination, will, and practice of just peace approaches. Further, the 'just war' concept and particularly the language tends to perpetuate habits of violence in a society, thus undermining its often stated purpose of limiting war. It does this in part as an expression of Johan Galtung's 'cultural violence' concept, because as a concept that war can be justifiable or just, it often functions as one cultural idea among many to legitimate direct and structural violence, such as large military spending and the arms race."[lxv] According to McCarthy this is one reason why it is insufficient to say that the historical use of just war mostly to justify war is "simply a 'mis-use' of the approach due to human sin. The language itself functions to enable, make more likely, or perpetuate such use." McCarthy has recognized that the present legal code, both domestically and internationally, has legal limits on war which will still function. Yet, both Vatican II and Pope Paul VI have called us to go further saying boldly it is "our clear duty, then, to strain every muscle as we work for the time when all war can be completely outlawed by international consent."[lxvi]

Just peace and the "Responsibility to Protect"

At the UN 2005 World Summit, leaders adopted a responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. Just war has been used to measure the moral legitimacy of this intervention in cases of "imminent threat" of lethal atrocities. How would just peace engage the "responsibility to protect"?

International law is relatively clear. The question here is one of ecclesial responsibility. How should the Catholic Church act? Love wrote that any limited use of violence that the Church might allow in

cases of grave atrocity should be "more akin to policing, like Gerald Schlabach's work on just policing."[lxvii] Schlabach has said that "just policing" fits well within a just peace model. "Policing seeks to secure the common good of the very society within which it operates; because it is embedded, indebted, and accountable within that community, it has an inherent tendency to minimize recourse to violence," he wrote. "Warfare may also seek to secure the common good of a society, of course; but because it extends beyond that society through threats to other communities it has an inherent tendency to cut whatever slender bonds of accountability would truly limit its use to 'last resort.'"[lxviii]

Thistlethwaite has reminded us that "imminent threat" is just war language and that we must always ask who is doing the defining. Some have argued, she said, that the UN's "responsibility to protect" (R2P) doctrine fills a gap between just war and just peace. Thistlethwaite offers caution. "I think one can see that R2P gives license to a 'soft interventionism.' ... R2P is an unstable mix of peacemaking and forceful interventionism. R2P incorporates 'military intervention within the same norm as conflict prevention and peace support operations [and that] skews the whole R2P doctrine toward the extreme option of coercive intervention, which tends to become the center of the entire principle.'"[lxix]

McCarthy argued that, especially when a lethal threat is immediate and grave, the Church—as the Body of Christ—should urgently participate in just peace analysis, advocacy, intervention, and healing before, during, and after such events. "If governments or the UN decide based on present international law for military action in such atrocity cases," wrote McCarthy, "the Catholic Church's role is less about condemning those persons who took such action. Instead, the Catholic's role is to clearly name such violent action as a tragedy, a failure on the way of just peace, as well as inconsistent with human dignity and a culture of human rights for all." Even more important, the Church's role is to keep a just peace approach front and center in all such cases and advocate, even in the midst of violence, for actions that will transform the violence with just peace.

"During and after the violence," wrote McCarthy, "Catholics should be clearly taking a restorative justice approach to all actors, which includes the human need for accountability. During and after the violence, the Catholic Church should promote public mourning rituals for the violence, advocate for addressing the root causes, and urgently call for the government actors particularly, but also the Catholic Church, to significantly increase nonviolent intervention strategies as well as investments in such training and institutions."[lxx] The Catholic Church does not need, and McCarthy suggested "should not" provide, "explicit justification or legitimation for military violence. When the level of dehumanization is so high, then what is 'necessary' is not so much lethal force, but the willingness to risk one's life for the sake of the dignity of all people."

A wellspring of peace

Catholic social teaching provides a rich context in which to build a systemic body of thought and practice of Christian nonviolence. An overarching strategic objective of just peace is to develop a systematic analysis of nonviolence in order to cultivate effective approaches to addressing contemporary challenges in society through nonviolent means. Just peace can be applied at all stages of conflict, including climate change-related conflict and "resource wars." Just peace can be

thoroughly integrated with *Laudato Si'* in a manner that recognizes that violence done to human communities is often accompanied by devastating environmental destruction. An integral ecology contributes to an integral just peace.

"For the Church," wrote Love, "a tradition of just peace has been ... given to us by Jesus. Jesus dialogued with enemies and with poor and marginalized persons, raising them up and healing impoverished, war-traumatized peoples, driving out their demons. Jesus not only had a declaratory policy urging peace-building, he lived peace-building and commissioned us to follow him."[lxxi]

Pope Francis reminds us that out of the mystery of mercy comes the wellspring of peace. The commandment to be merciful is "a program of life as demanding as it is rich with joy and peace."[lxxii] Reconciliation is not a theory or an approach for Catholics. It is a sacrament at the center of our lives, and it is the way of peace. Out of this wellspring comes the spiritual imagination to create just peace. Out of this wellspring we can, as Guatemalan poet Otto Rene Castillo wrote, learn to "love the world with the eyes of those still to be born." [lxxiii]

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END NOTES

[i] Excerpt from Otto Rene Castillo's poem "Frente al Balance, Mañana" ("Before the Scales, Tomorrow") with translation by Barbara Paschke and David Volpendesta. Reprinted with permission of the translators.

[ii] Pope Francis, Laudato Si', paragraph 1. http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

[iii] Philippians 4:7.

[iv] Glen H. Stassen, "Just-Peacemaking Theory," Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics, eds. Joel B. Green, Jacqueline Lapsley, Rebekah Miles, Allen Verhey (Baker Publishing Group, 2011), 443.

[v] Part of this language came from a personal email exchange with David Cortright at Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace (personal email, 3 March 2016).

[vi] See Malachi 2:6

[vii] See Midrash Tanchuma (Shoftim 18).

[viii] World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Call to Just Peace (Geneva, 2011). http://www.overcomingviolence.org/fileadmin/dov/files/iepc/resources/ECJustPeace_English.pdf Founded in 1948, the WCC promotes Christian unity in faith, witness and service for a just and peaceful world. A global fellowship, the WCC brings together more than 349 Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican, and other churches representing more than 560 million Christians in 110 countries and works cooperatively with the Roman Catholic Church.

[ix] World Council of Churches, Just Peace Companion (Geneva, 2012). http://www.overcomingviolence.org/fileadmin/dov/files/iepc/resources/JustPeaceCompanion_2ndEd.pdf

[x] World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Call to Just Peace (Geneva, 2011), paragraph 23.

[xi] Pope Benedict XVI, Angelus sermon at St Peter's Square, 18 Feb 2007. https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/angelus/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_ang_20070218.pdf

[xii] Junno Arocho Esteves, "Pope Francis: 'Faith and Violence are Incompatible'" in Zenit, 19 Aug. 2013. https://zenit.org/articles/pope-francis-faith-and-violence-are-incompatible/

[xiii] Pope Francis, address with Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas, Vatican, 8 June 2014. https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/june/documents/papa-francesco_20140608_invocazione-pace.html#Distinguished_Presidents

[xiv] Pope Francis, interview by journalists during return from Sarajevo, reported by Vatican Information Service, 6 June 2015. http://www.news.va/en/news/the-pope-interviewed-by-journalists-during-return

[xv] Catechism of the Catholic Church (Part 3, Section 2, Chapter 2, Article 5, Peace, paragraphs 2302-2306). http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a5.htm

[xvi] See "Toward an Ecumenical Theology of Just Peace" by Fernando Enns in Just Peace: Just Peace: Ecumenical, Intercultural, and Interdisciplinary Perspectives (Wipf & Stock, 2013).

[xvii] U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, The Challenge of Peace: A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace (USCCB, 1983). http://www.usccb.org/upload/challenge-peace-gods-promise-our-response-1983.pdf

[xviii] Catechism of the Catholic Church (Part 3, Section 2, Chapter 2, Article 5, Avoiding War, paragraphs 2307-2317). http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a5.htm

[xix] Glen H. Stassen, "Just-Peacemaking Theory," Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics, eds. Joel B. Green, Jacqueline Lapsley, Rebekah Miles, Allen Verhey (Baker Publishing Group, 2011), 443.

[xx] For Maryann Cusimano Love's comparison of just war principles and just peace principles, see "Drones: Ethics and Use" (4 Feb. 2014), 44. http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/upload/drones-ethics-and-use-2014-02-04.pdf

[xxi] Maryann Cusimano Love, "What Kind of Peace Do We Seek? Emerging Norms of Peacebuilding in Key Political Institutions" in Peacebuilding: Catholic theology, ethics, and praxis, eds. Robert J. Schreiter, R. Scott Appleby, and Gerard F. Powers (Orbis Books, 2010), 82. For Love's comparison of just war and just peace principles, see presentation by Maryann Cusimano Love, "Drones: Ethics and Use" (4 Feb 2014). http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/upload/drones-ethics-and-use-2014-02-04.pdf

[xxii] Maryann Cusimano Love specifically refers to the conflict transformation work of John Paul Lederach and Lisa Schirch and to Gene Sharp's 198 methods of nonviolence (personal email correspondence on 2 March 2016).

[xxiii] Pursuing Just Peace: An Overview and Case Studies for Faith-Based Peacebuilders, eds. Mark M. Rogers, Tom Bamat, Julie Ideh (Catholic Relief Services, 2008), frontmatter. http://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/tools-research/pursuing-just-peace.pdf

[xxiv] Pursuing Just Peace, 5.

[xxv] "Peace by piece: On peacebuilding with Maryann Cusimano Love" an interview by the editors (U.S. Catholic, Vol. 76, No. 9), 12-16. http://www.uscatholic.org/culture/war-and-peace/2011/07/peace-piece-peacebuilding-maryann-cusimano-love

[xxvi] Maryann Cusimano Love, "What Kind of Peace Do We Seek? Emerging Norms of Peacebuilding in Key Political Institutions" in Peacebuilding: Catholic theology, ethics, and praxis, eds. Robert J. Schreiter, R. Scott Appleby, and Gerard F. Powers (Orbis Books, 2010), 56.

[xxvii] Love, Peacebuilding, 58.

[xxviii] Glen H. Stassen, "Winning the Peace," (Sojourners, Vol. 34, No. 1, January 2005), 19.

[xxix] See the Six-Point Plan and Glen H. Stassen, "Winning the Peace," (Sojourners, Vol. 34, No. 1, January 2005), 19.

[xxx] Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, "A Just Peace Future," part 1 (United Church News, 5 June 2011) and part 2 (United Church News, 12 June 2011). For more see the Just Peace Church Handbook (United Church of Christ: Justice and Witness Ministries, 2015) http://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/just-peace-handbook-06-2015.pdf

[xxxi] See Interfaith Just Peacemaking: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives on the New Paradigm of Peace and War, edited by Susan B. Thistlethwaite (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2012)

[xxxii] See Women's Bodies as Battlefield: Christian Theology and the Global War on Women by Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2015)

[xxxiii] Glen H. Stassen, Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives for Justice and Peace (Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 93-94.

[xxxiv] Glen H. Stassen, "Just-Peacemaking Theory," Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics, eds. Joel B. Green, Jacqueline Lapsley, Rebekah Miles, Allen Verhey (Baker Publishing Group, 2011), 443.

[xxxv] Glen H. Stassen, "Transforming Initiatives of Just Peacemaking Based on the Triadic Structure of the Sermon on the Mount," a paper prepared for the Society of Biblical Literature, 2006. https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/Stassen_Transforming.pdf

[xxxvi] Eli S. McCarthy, "Called to Holiness: Integrating the Virtue of Nonviolent Peacemaking," Journal of Catholic Social Thought (Volume 11, Issue 1, Winter 2014), 67-92.

[xxxvii] McCarthy "Called to Holiness," 67-92.

[xxxviii] See Emmanuel Charles McCarthy's "The Nonviolent Eucharistic Jesus: A Pastoral Approach" (Center for Christian Nonviolence) http://www.centerforchristiannonviolence.org/data/Media/NV_Eucharist_PastoralApproach_01d.pdf and Raniero Cantalamessa's sermon "Eucharist Is 'God's Absolute No' to Violence" (3rd Lenten Sermon, delivered 11 March 2005) https://zenit.org/articles/eucharist-is-god-s-absolute-no-to-violence/

[xxxix] For more see "Just Peacemaking: Challenges of Humanitarian Intervention" by Martin L. Cook (Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics, Vol. 23, No. 1, 2010), 241-253.

[xl] Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home makes it clear that care for creation is integral to human flourishing and abuse of creation leads to conflict and war. One avenue of exploration is to ask how the Earth Ethics Charter or the emerging field of Earth Law fit in the just peace paradigm? Restorative justice practitioner Elaine Enns uses restorative justice principles in determining moral responsibility with regard to "injured" biosystems. How might this fit in a just peace ethic? See "Healing the Ventura River" by Elaine Enns (February 2010) from personal correspondence with author. See also "Galvanizing Will: What 'restorative justice' means to the voiceless victims" by Elaine Enns (Sojourners, August 2010) https://sojo.net/magazine/august-2010/passion-gulf

[xli] Eli S. McCarthy "Summoning the Catholic Church: Turn to Just Peace," (2016). https://www.academia.edu/22270049/Summoning_the_Catholic_Church_Turn_to_Just_Peace

[xlii] McCarthy, "Summoning the Catholic Church: Turn to Just Peace," and "Beyond Just War: Pope Francis and Justpeace" (Catholic Moral Theology blog, 3 June 2014) http://catholicmoraltheology.com/beyond-just-war-pope-francis-and-justpeace/

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[xliv] Maryann Cusimano Love, "Building a Better Peace: A future worthy of our faith" (America, Vol. 213 No. 3, 3-10 Aug. 2015). http://americamagazine.org/issue/building-better-peace

[xlv] Love, Building a Better Peace.

[xlvi] President Barack H. Obama, "A Just and Lasting Peace," (10 Dec. 2009). http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2009/obama-lecture.html

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[xlviii] Press briefing by White House press secretary Jeff Carney on 5 Feb. 2013. https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/02/05/press-briefing-press-secretary-jay-carney-2513

[xlix] See presentation by Maryann Cusimano Love, "Drones: Ethics and Use" (4 Feb. 2014). http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/upload/drones-ethics-and-use-2014-02-04.pdf

[l] Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, "Just War, Just Peace and Drones" (Interfaith Drone Network).

[li] Eli S. McCarthy, "What Are Drones Doing to Us?" (America, blog post,2 April 2013). http://americamagazine.org/content/all-things/what-are-drones-doing-us

[lii] McCarthy, "What Are Drones Doing to Us?"

[liii] McCarthy, "What Are Drones Doing to Us?" For other examples see McCarthy, "Just Peace Response to Syria," (America, 24 Feb. 2012); McCarthy, "Interrupting Hostilities and Seeking Justice in Syria," (America, 4 Sept. 2013); and McCarthy, "Religious Leaders Urge a JustPeace Response to ISIS," (Huffington Post, 19 Sept. 2014).

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[lvi] See After the Smoke Clears: The Just War Tradition and Post War Justice by Mark J. Allman and Tobias L. Winright (Orbis, 2010)

[lvii] Maryann Cusimano Love, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[lviii] Maryann Cusimano Love, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[lix] Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[lx] Eli S. McCarthy "Summoning the Catholic Church: Turn to Just Peace," (2016). https://www.academia.edu/22270049/Summoning_the_Catholic_Church_Turn_to_Just_Peace

[lxi] Maryann Cusimano Love, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[lxii] Can War Be Just In The 21st Century?: Ethicists Engage the Tradition, eds. Tobias Winright and Laurie Johnston (Orbis, 2015, ebook), section "Just War and the Gospel Today."

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[lxiv] See Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, Women's Bodies as Battlefield: Christian Theology and the Global War on Women (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2015).

[lxv] Eli S. McCarthy, personal email correspondence with author (14 March 2016).

[lxvi] Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, 1965, par. 81. Pope Paul VI, World Day of Peace Message, 1975.

[lxvii] Maryann Cusimano Love, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[lxviii] Gerald W. Schlabach, "Just Policing: How War Could Cease to Be a Church-Dividing Issue." http://www.geraldschlabach.net/documents/policing.htm

[lxix] Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016). Here she quotes from "In Whose Name? A critical review on the responsibility to protect" by Lou Pingeot and Wolfgang Obenland (Global Policy Forum, May 2014). https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/images/pdfs/In_whose_name_web.pdf

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[lxxi] Maryann Cusimano Love, "Building a Better Peace: A future worthy of our faith" (America, Vol. 213 No. 3, 3-10 Aug. 2015). http://americamagazine.org/issue/building-better-peace

[lxxii] Pope Francis, "Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy" (11 April 2015). https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_bolla_20150411_misericordiae-vultus.html

[lxxiii] Excerpt from Otto Rene Castillo's poem "Frente al Balance, Mañana" ("Before the Scales, Tomorrow") with translation by Barbara Paschke and David Volpendesta. Reprinted with permission of the translators.