



educatio *catholica*

The University's Responsibility for Peace and Nonviolence

Ken Butigan

Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies,
DePaul University
Chicago, Illinois (USA)

This article examines the powerful responsibility that Catholic universities possess to nurture such a nonviolent shift by reflecting on the following four ideas: The way of peace and nonviolence is not a narrow specialization but a calling to all; the way of peace and nonviolence is a comprehensive ethic; the way of peace and nonviolence is increasingly being recognized by the institutional Catholic Church as a universal ethic central to the life of the Church and the world, and the Catholic university has a special role in integrating the way of peace and nonviolence in the Church and the world.

>>>

In this harrowing time of global violence and injustice, each of us is called to grapple with these monumental challenges and to seek a new, more nonviolent course forward. Universities are uniquely situated to play a leading role in this important task. This is especially true of Catholic universities in light of the institutional Church's growing embrace of the universal ethic of nonviolence and its promotion of a culture of peace. In Christian theological terms, this is a Kairos moment – a moment of great decision, a time for choosing a way forward toward a more nonviolent world – to which institutions of higher education around the world are being called.¹

This article examines the powerful responsibility that Catholic universities possess to nurture such a nonviolent shift by reflecting on the following four ideas:

- The way of peace and nonviolence is not a narrow specialization but a calling to all
- The way of peace and nonviolence is a comprehensive ethic
- The way of peace and nonviolence is increasingly being recognized by the institutional Catholic Church as a universal ethic central to the life of the Church and the world, and
- The Catholic university has a special role in integrating the way of peace and nonviolence in the Church and the world

Peace and Nonviolence: All Are Called

As someone who has been part of the academy for many years, but also involved in peacebuilding and the work of nonviolence for decades, I have long seen the university as an environment for discovering, teaching and training in the ways of peace. My own vision of higher education is that it is a culture where all constituencies – students, faculty, administration and alumni– are called to be agents of non-violent change.

This vision, however, has not always been shared. Sometimes there has been hostility to what is perceived as an activist agenda at odds with the neutrality and objectivity that the university is supposed to maintain. Or sometimes the obstacle has not been opposition but specialization. When I taught for several years in a Franciscan seminary, any mail that came to the school regarding peace, justice or non-

¹ This article is based on a presentation delivered at a conference held September 30-October 1, 2019 at Seton Hall University, New Jersey (USA), entitled "Just Peacemaking through Nonviolence."



violence was invariably put in my mailbox. While I understood that this was organizationally efficient, I felt it was communicating the idea that peace was only the purview of the professor who happened to teach classes on it rather than the responsibility of the entire community. Peace has often been pigeon-holed, and not simply in schools (including Franciscan seminaries), but throughout the Christian community and tradition, and, of course, in the larger world.

The way of peace and nonviolence is not a specialization. It is the work and calling of every person. It is at the core of existence and at the very heart of every human life. It is foundational to our thriving as human persons and our survival as a human species. It is constitutive of being human. In fact, our core identity as human beings is to be peacemakers.

Each of us faces a lifetime of conflicts. If we are going to wage those conflicts successfully – and, most importantly, learn from them and build a world where their root causes are transformed – then all of us must become the peacemakers we are called to be.

The good news is that many members of the human family have, knowingly or not, activated basic peacemaking skills from the beginning of time. As a species we have endured because our deeply-embedded tendencies toward nonviolent options have found ways to trump our deeply-embedded tendencies toward violence.

When Mohandas Gandhi said “nonviolence is as old as the hills,” he meant this not as a rhetorical flourish but as a matter of the human record. Without nonviolent options and practices, violence would have spun irretrievably out of control long ago, propelled by its retaliatory and escalatory logic. We likely would have disappeared as a species had we not used the “breaks” of nonviolence. Called by many names over the millennia, ad hoc practices of nonviolent peacemaking, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping have often neutralized that logic and spawned a saner alternative.

Unfortunately, we have tended to remember our violence much more sharply than our nonviolence. Violence persists in our memory because it is dramatic, because it sparks the lust for revenge, and because it unleashes trauma’s corrosive half-life. Nonviolence has generally not had its chroniclers tracking the moment-to-moment, hour-to-hour, day-to-day peace accords that many millions of us have struck over our long history. It is, however, those often-unreported processes of conflict

resolution and restorative justice that have gotten us through. We have survived thus far by the skin of our teeth because of nonviolence.²

Unpacking Nonviolence

This does not mean, however, that nonviolence always works or that violence is easily vanquished. A perennial problem with nonviolence is that we often think of it in purely utopian terms. If there is a utopia to be had, it is in God's hands: the coming of the Reign of God, the "new creation" where all will be reconciled at the end of time, as attested to by the Christian tradition. But nonviolence does not begin with – or expect – an ideal society any time soon. Instead, it is a worldview which holds that nonviolent options are possible and that we can take concrete steps to put them into practice. Nonviolence is not a dream – it is, instead, the process of prayer, knowledge, transformation, tools and methods with which to struggle bravely against violence and injustice with peaceful and just means.³

Nonviolence is a method for addressing reality, including the reality of systemic violence. The tsunami of environmental destruction, racial injustice, economic inequality, gender violence, cyber-violence, and wars being waged in real-time throughout the world confront us with a Gestalt of violence, where the entirety of destructiveness is greater than the sum of its parts, a horrific Gestalt that is overwhelming in the suffering it wreaks everywhere. To affirm nonviolence is not to pretend that violence has disappeared. Instead, to activate nonviolence is to reach for a response that is beyond either fearful passivity or cruel retribution. It is fighting fire with water, not more fire.

Although nonviolence has often been dismissed as ineffective and otherworldly, we are presently in the midst of a revolution in our understanding of this powerful dynamic. Nonviolence may be as old as the hills, but it has dramatically proliferated over the past century, where we have seen a dramatic upsurge in effective nonvio-

² 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's 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 paradigm of the fullness of life, which its etymological roots shine light on. Nonviolence is the English translation of the Sanskrit term "ahimsa" (literally "non-violence"). Gandhi drew on this ancient term to convey his powerful, active, and deeply grounded approach. As nonviolence scholar Michael Nagler writes, "In Sanskrit abstract nouns often name a fundamental positive quality indirectly, by negating its opposite. Thus, courage is conveyed by 'abhaya', which literally means 'non-fear'; or we encounter 'akrodha', 'non-anger', for 'kindness', and the Buddha's 'avera', 'non-hatred', meaning 'love'. The reason ancient India's great thinkers expressed themselves in this apparently oblique way is that phenomena such as love, absolute courage, and compassion are primordial things that cannot be fully expressed in fallible, conditioned human language.... 'Ahimsa' is not really a negative term ... 'Ahimsa' suggests something profoundly positive, which would not be possible to name directly. 'Ahimsa', a kind of double negative, actually stands for something so original that we cannot quite capture it with our weak words." (Michael Nagler, *The Search for a Nonviolent Future* [Inner Ocean Publishing, 2004]).



lent movements around the world.⁴ These efforts have revealed that the stereotypes of nonviolence – that it is ineffective, passive, weak, utopian, naïve, unpatriotic, marginal, simplistic, and impractical – do not hold up. Instead, we have learned to see – and name – this reality more clearly. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called nonviolence “the love that does justice.”⁵ Dorothy Day named it “love in action.” Historian Jonathan Schell designated it “cooperative power,”⁶ while the nonviolence scholar Stellan Vinthagen called it “a stand against violence without using violence.”⁷

Each of these ideas can be crystalized in the following general description: “Nonviolence is a spiritual journey, a constructive force, an active method, and a courageous way of life rooted in the power of love in action that challenges violence without using violence, transforms and resolves conflict, and seeks justice, peace and reconciliation for all.” Or, to put it more simply, “Nonviolence is the use of peaceful means to create change.”⁸

But nonviolence is deeper still. Nonviolence is a radical engagement with the suffering of our world and all the forms of violence which spawn that suffering. Our own violence. The violence between persons. The violence a community experiences. The violence of structural injustice that excludes, diminishes and oppresses some and not others. The violence nations impose on nations. The wounded violence inflicted on the earth. And the violence experienced in our Church. Each of these unleashes waves of suffering.

The nonviolent life is a resolve to engage and end this suffering by confronting violence – the domination, separation, and hatred we see all around us, and sometimes within us, which is often rooted in the trauma and unrelieved pain of the

³ Though nonviolence does not always work – and, in terms of Christian faith, its outcomes are in the hands of God – it is worth noting that recent scholarly research has demonstrated that nonviolent strategies for social change are twice as effective as violent ones. These findings were documented and reported in Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works* (Columbia University Press, 2011), which quantitatively analyzed 323 cases across the globe where dictators were removed and where nations were liberated from foreign occupation between 1900 and 2006.

⁴ Nonviolence has increasingly been unleashed to create powerful social change. Beginning in the 20th century, this momentum accelerated with Gandhi’s application of nonviolence to win Indian independence and with the use of disciplined nonviolence by the U.S. civil rights movement. These and other pioneering campaigns have inspired countless nonviolent struggles. Some examples include successful pro-democracy movements in Spain and Portugal (1970s), the Philippines (1986), Chile (1980s), Argentina (1980s), Soviet bloc states including the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany, etc. (1989); the thwarted coup in the USSR (1991); South Africa (1980s-1990s); Indonesia (1998); East Timor (2000); Serbia (2000); Georgia (2003); Ukraine (2004); Liberia (2005); and Tunisia and Egypt (2011). Source: “The Power and Practice of Nonviolence,” a chapter in “Advancing Nonviolence and Just Peace in the Church and the World: Biblical, Theological, Ethical, Pastoral and Strategic Dimensions of Nonviolence” (July 2019).

⁵ Greg Moses, *Revolution of Conscience: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Philosophy of Nonviolence* (The Guilford Press, 1997).

⁶ Jonathan Schell, *The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and The Will of the People* (Metropolitan Books, 2003).

⁷ Stellan Vinthagen, *A Theory of Nonviolent Action: How Civil Resistance Works* (Zed Books, 2015).

⁸ <http://nonviolencenow.org>.

small and wounded ego – with love and determination. It is an ongoing, step by step process using what author Barbara Deming called “the two hands of nonviolence,” where one hands says, “No, I will not cooperate with this injustice” and “Yes, I will be open to the humanity of myself and others, including my opponent.”⁹

The Universal Ethic of Nonviolence and the Mission of the Church

We are fortunate to be living in a time when our Catholic universities can draw inspiration from a renewed engagement with nonviolence by the institutional Church rooted in the life and mission of Jesus.

Jesus proclaimed a universal ethic of nonviolence: relieving suffering, rejecting violence and killing, returning good for evil, healing divisions, responding to the cry of the poor, and putting sacrificial love into action for a just, peaceful, and reconciled world.¹⁰ In its first three centuries, the Roman Catholic Church publicly practiced the nonviolence that Jesus taught and lived, and since then the spirit of Gospel nonviolence has been kept alive by particular individuals, communities and movements within the Church. Too often, however, the institutional Church has perpetrated or failed to prevent egregious violence, reinforced by a theological, pastoral and ecclesiastical culture that has often permitted and even sanctified violence.

In an era of global, structural violence – and when the Catholic Church itself is grappling with its own violence, including clergy sexual abuse – the Church at the same time has begun to rediscover and reaffirm the centrality of Gospel nonviolence to the way of Jesus and the life of the Church, underscored by Pope Francis’s 2017 World Day of Peace message entitled, “Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace.”¹¹ and two landmark conferences on nonviolence at the Vatican in 2016 and 2019.¹² As one of the bishops succinctly put it toward the end of the second conference, “We need to mainstream nonviolence in the Church. We need to move it from the margins of Catholic thought to the center. Nonviolence is a spirituality, a lifestyle, a program of societal action, and a universal ethic.”¹³

⁹ Barbara Deming, *On Revolution and Equilibrium* (Liberation, 1968).

¹⁰ Gospel nonviolence begins, not with strategies or methods, but with a foundational understanding of God—and God’s vision for humanity. Jesus made visible the nonviolence of God, who created the universe not out of violence but out of love. Creation is good, as the Book of Genesis tells us, and human beings are made in the image of the God who declares this goodness. Nonviolence is the nature of creation and points us toward the “new creation”, where all will be reconciled.

¹¹ Pope Francis, 2017 World Day of Peace, January 1, 2017.

¹² The Vatican has co-sponsored two important gatherings advancing nonviolence. From 11-13 April 2016, the Holy See’s Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (now the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development) and Pax Christi International co-led a landmark conference at the Vatican entitled “Nonviolence and Just Peace.” From 4-5 April 2019, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and Pax Christi International’s Catholic Nonviolence Initiative co-sponsored a follow-up gathering entitled “Path of Nonviolence: Towards a Culture of Peace.”

¹³ “Path of Nonviolence: Towards a Culture of Peace,” 4-5 April 2019, held at the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.



Both gatherings began to imagine how the Church could integrate this universal ethic throughout the life and mission of the Church. What would it look like to take seriously Gospel nonviolence in our individual lives? In our parishes? In our dioceses? In our religious orders? In our relationships with the larger world? And in our universities?

Nonviolence and the University

The university has an unparalleled opportunity to be a culture of nonviolence. The added value that nonviolence can bring to all the good things that the university already does includes: promoting the norms of the nonviolent life; advancing an unmistakable stand against the culture of violence; evincing a firm commitment to the nonviolent shift that the world so desperately needs; equipping students with spiritual grounding, knowledge, tools and experiences of nonviolent options and strategies to do no harm; promoting quantitative and qualitative research on nonviolence and nonviolent methods for personal transformation and social change; and advancing the discipline of peace and nonviolence studies.

Our universities have the opportunity to prepare a new generation of nonviolent practitioners to tackle the monumental challenges of our time. For example, a university's commitment to teaching, researching and activating the principles and strategies of nonviolence will support the achievement of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals – the commitments that the nations of the world made in 2015 to achieve enormous change by 2030 for the well-being of the planet and its inhabitants, including dramatically alleviating poverty, hunger, and inequality; dramatically spreading quality education and health care; dramatically promoting gender equality and economic growth; and dramatically tackling the climate crisis, among others.

None of these problems will be achieved by violence. They require the *strategies* of nonviolence: nonviolent communication, conflict transformation, restorative justice, anti-racism training, intersectional analysis, movement-building, and what Gandhi called the constructive program: building out nonviolent structures, services and policies. At the same time, solving these problems will require the *qualities* of nonviolence – empathy, compassion, mercy, risk-taking, creativity, transforming us-versus-them thinking, and deepening our commitment to the well-being of all.

We will not achieve environmental healing and these other critical goals through violent tactics. Instead, it will require strategic cooperation *and* nonviolent struggle; compassionate listening *and* direct action campaigns; leadership from among those

are most impacted by violence and injustice around the world *and* allyship from others; and confronting structural obstacles *and* discovering points of agreement. All of these are facets of the paradigm of nonviolence that can seek specific outcomes and, more broadly, challenge the deeply-entrenched paradigm of violence. The university can help all of us acquire each of these pieces of the puzzle. Here are some concrete initiatives that could support the university's nonviolent culture, including Nonviolent Values and Mission, Teaching and Research.

Nonviolent Values and Mission

At its most comprehensive, universities should consider initiating a fundamental review of their mission and values: the foundation which guides its direction and decisions. Does the current mission and values statement challenge the global culture of violence and support the emergence of a more just, peaceful and nonviolent world? If not, they could seriously consider integrating nonviolence as a core value – and adjust the mission to concretely guide the decisions about programming and curricula in light of advancing peace and nonviolence across the university.

Naming matters. Explicitly establishing peace and nonviolence as a core value of the university can have wide impact on not only particular departments and programs, but on the corporate identity of the institution. A peace and nonviolence mission creates a foundation for educational priorities, programming, and a culture attuned to formation research and training. It commits the university to challenge violence and to take up the nonviolent life of sacrificial love, peacebuilding and reconciliation.

And it invites students, administrators and faculty to explore and deepen how they can be agents of nonviolent change. The vision and tools of peace and nonviolence can strengthen every walk of life, every major, every vocation, every job we take. It also prepares all people associated with the university to be part of the local, national and global initiatives for confronting violence and building nonviolent options for a better world.

Departments and Programs

Undertaking such a comprehensive process could help shape concrete decisions that the university could make. For example, establishing Peace and Nonviolence Studies Departments offering undergraduate majors and minors, and launching graduate programs offering masters and doctoral degrees. Some Catholic universities have established such programs, and others are moving in this direction. This needs to be encouraged worldwide.



Other steps could include requiring a course on Peace and Nonviolence Studies that all students would take before graduation; offering shorter “workshop” courses (1- or 2-units) in, for example, Nonviolent Skills, Restorative Justice Peace Circles, or Movement-Building. Establish Peace and Nonviolence student organizations. (At DePaul University where I teach, a student organization called Campaign Nonviolence DePaul was just established. It plans to do nonviolence training at the school and organize nonviolent action.) Find ways across the university to activate, celebrate, and raise the visibility of the power of active nonviolence and our commitment to it. In short, seek to “mainstream nonviolence” on campus.

Such a shift is not easy. At DePaul it took us ten years to establish first the minor, then the major, and we are still working on integrating it into what is called the “Vincentian values” at my university. Such a paradigm swerve takes an overarching vision and institutional structures. It takes interdisciplinary programming and strategies. It takes buy-in from departments. It takes new research agendas. And it takes dedicated students, administration and faculty.

As challenging as this it, it can have powerful impacts. Most of my students tell me that, before taking such courses, they had never been aware of the nonviolent power they have, of the nonviolent alternatives that are available, of the history of effective nonviolence, or of the powerful nonviolent efforts taking place right now in real time now around the planet. Usually when students find out that they have this nonviolent power, their capacity as a human being – their human development – opens up in powerful ways.

The idea is not to make them narrowly defined “activists” with a particular “agenda.” It is, instead, to invite all students – and all people – across the university (no matter their major or discipline) to include in their personal toolbox this power of transformation, healing and constructive purpose. Everything we do – from physics to finance to the arts to running a university – improves with the vision and tools of peace and nonviolence. We have more power than we think, and our universities can increase its “nonviolence literacy” through these forms of “remedial education” for peace and goodness.

Research

In addition to teaching, universities can promote critically needed peace and nonviolence research. We need a proliferation of research on the history, phenomena, methods and effectiveness of peace and nonviolence strategies. Building on the

growing datasets of nonviolence for social change,¹⁴ the university can contribute to a comprehensive tracking and evaluation of historic and contemporary nonviolent initiatives for justice and peace. Such research need not be limited to civil resistance or large-scale social change. It can also pursue innovative research on nonviolent dynamics applicable to all dimensions of life, including the everyday technologies of nonviolence. Catholic universities – including Catholic Studies Departments and Catholic centers and institutes – can make important contributions to research and writing on the theology, biblical exegesis, sacramental theology, ecclesiology and spirituality of Gospel nonviolence.

Lessons from the Shift to Justice

Such a comprehensive shift, though, raises lots of questions. Is this really the mission of the university? What would it mean for the existing school? How could such a new direction be organized? In thinking about these questions, I looked for a parallel example that might shed some light on this. I settled on a transformative shift that the Society of Jesus (the Jesuit order) undertook in 1975. That year, during its worldwide meeting that year, the Jesuit order made the decision in the wake of Vatican II to dramatically embrace justice as being core to its identity.

Up to then, while “justice” was something that a few Jesuits pursued, it was not constitutive of being a Jesuit. To be told all of a sudden that it was central to being a Jesuit was disorienting, as the Superior General of the Jesuits, Rev. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., declared in a talk he gave at the University of Santa Clara in California in the year 2000, 25 years after this institutional move.¹⁵

Since many Jesuits worked in the order’s educational institutions, they wondered how they were to suddenly bring the theme of justice and injustice into the classroom? Others took this new direction to mean that they were to give up teaching altogether and work directly with the poor. The then-Superior General Pedro Arrupe said that the education “apostolate” should continue, but they should clearly integrate reflection on justice into their teaching and research to educate “the whole person.”

It was not easy, making this shift. As Kolvenbach stressed, Father Arrupe rightly perceived that his Jesuits were collectively entering upon a more severe way of the

¹⁴ For example, the Global Nonviolent Action Database, <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu>. The Global Nonviolent Action Database has documented over 1,000 nonviolent campaigns, with many of them successfully achieving their objectives.

¹⁵ Rev. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., “The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice in American Jesuit Higher Education,” October 2000. I am grateful to Dr. Jeanette Rodriguez at Seattle University for alerting me to these materials.



cross, which would surely entail misunderstandings and even opposition on the part of civil and ecclesiastical authorities, many good friends, and some of our own members.” But, as Kolvenbach stated, “this option has [now, 25 years later] become integral to our Jesuit identity, to the awareness of our mission, and to our public image in both Church and society,” including in its universities.

One of the Jesuits who lived this shift was Fr. Ignacio Ellacuría, the rector or president of the Jesuit University of Central America in El Salvador, who also gave a talk at the University of Santa Clara in 1982 on the role of the university in a world of structural violence. In his talk he said that the university is a social force that must “transform and enlighten the society in which it lives – to “do everything possible so that liberty is victorious over oppression, justice over injustice, love over hate,” and to do so using its special gifts: “The university must carry out this general commitment with the means uniquely at its disposal: we as an intellectual community must analyze causes; use imagination and creativity together to discover the remedies to our problems; communicate to our constituencies a consciousness that inspires the freedom of self-determination; educate professionals with a conscience, who will be the immediate instruments of such a transformation; and constantly hone an educational institution that is both academically excellent and ethically oriented,” with all of this “taking into account the gospel preference for the poor.”

This, in fact, is what his university had done. It is said that every department of the University of Central America had to justify its existence in terms of how it was contributing concretely to ending the suffering of the Salvadoran people. Ellacuría says that sometimes they were applauded for this commitment to ending structural injustice – but also, they had been persecuted and attacked by bombings and repression. Ellacuría emphasized in his California talk that this is the cost of challenging injustice, saying, “In a world where injustice reigns, a university that fights for justice must necessarily be persecuted.” And, of course, he, five of his brother Jesuits, and their housekeeper and daughter were assassinated six years after this talk for taking this stand.

Ellacuría had discovered the pearl of great price – the work for dignity and a world where everyone counts and gets what they need. And, just like in the Gospel, he gave everything he had for this vision of the Reign of God among us. The Church’s growing recommitment to Jesus’ nonviolence shares some similarities to the post-Vatican II embrace of justice. Set against the catastrophe of violence facing the world globally, the acceleration of secular methods for nonviolent social change,

and the nonviolent efforts of Catholics and others around the world, the Church's gradual re-discovery of the nonviolence of Jesus has slowly but steadily emerged.¹⁶

Now that a growing number of papal and episcopal statements – and international Vatican conferences – have reiterated this growing rediscovery of the centrality of Jesus' nonviolence to the core identity of the Church, we are beginning to find ourselves in a position analogous to the one that the Jesuits were in back in 1975: beginning, in this case, to see the theology, spirituality and practice of nonviolence gravitate from the margins toward the center of our faith.

This is not to say that nonviolence is supplanting justice. As we have seen, “nonviolence is the love that does justice.” Justice and nonviolence are integrally and synergistically at the heart of Christian faith in a just and nonviolent God. Indeed, the search for justice invites us to assiduously pursue nonviolent solutions that can prompt restorative justice, reconciliation and what Dr. King called “the Beloved Community.” Nonviolence has been a central value of Christianity from the beginning – our history of nonviolent martyrs and saints testify to this – just as justice has been.¹⁷ But, like justice, it has often been forgotten and, most importantly, not been taught or practiced as forthrightly as it could be. The growing re-discovery of nonviolence in our own time reveals another clear core Gospel value by which justice and faith can flower. Active nonviolence stands against the suffering that the culture of violence wreaks across our planet, and commits itself to nonviolent formation, practices, organizations, communities, societies—and universities.

Conclusion

While we can pass laws against violence, we can't pass laws mandating nonviolence. Instead, we have to build a culture where the nonviolent option is credible, documented, told, learned, and activated. In its own way, the Church is increasingly fostering such a culture, and universities have an essential role in doing the same. I have been privileged to teach over 100 course offerings on nonviolence in my career

¹⁶ Like the prophets and theologians of justice who during and after the Second Vatican Council helped call on the Church to re-read the Gospels and to see that works of justice were at least as important as the works of mercy – people such as Gustavo Gutierrez, Leonardo Boff, Dorothee Soelle, Jon Sobrino, and St. Oscar Romero—a lineage rediscovering Gospel nonviolence also has been slowly at work over the past half-century. Dorothy Day, Dr. King, Cesar Chavez, Daniel Berrigan, Cardinal Jaime Sin and Dom Helder Camara have been every bit as important in this theological revolution as the scripture scholars and theologians who have helped us see again the nonviolent Jesus, including Howard Thurman, Andre Tromé, Bernard Haring, Thomas Merton, James W. Douglass, Walter Wink, Ched Myers, Terrence Rynne and John Dear.

¹⁷ There is a growing body of research emerging on Catholic individuals and movements throughout the tradition who have sought to live nonviolently. See *Advancing Nonviolence and Just Peace In the Church and the World: Biblical, Theological, Ethical, Pastoral and Strategic Dimensions of Nonviolence*, by the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, a project of Pax Christi International (unpublished manuscript, July 2019).



at several universities, and to facilitate about 200 trainings and workshops. In all of these settings, it has been very moving to see students and participants discover and deepen their power to live more nonviolent lives.

By explicitly and deliberately naming and embracing nonviolence as a core value, universities will be even more fully fulfilling its responsibility to nurture “the whole person” equipped for our times and to contribute even more sharply to fostering a world that relieves suffering and pursuing peace, justice and the well-being of all.