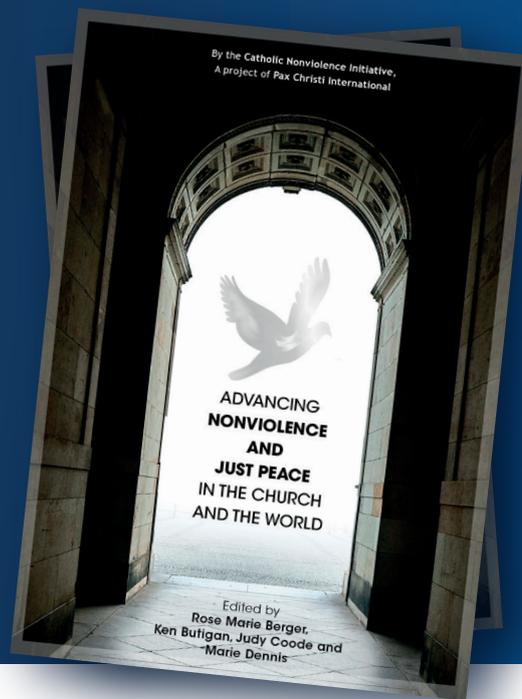


ADVANCING NONVIOLENCE AND JUST PEACE IN THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

A STUDY GUIDE



This study guide was prepared by members of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative education committee. We encourage groups to also consider applications, discussion questions, and additional resources from your own cultural context.

PREFACE: WHY "NONVIOLENCE" ?

(pages 7-15)

Key argument

This section maintains that nonviolence is consistent with human dignity and sustains our interconnectedness, while violence is not in accord with dignity and undermines our interconnectedness. We need a paradigm shift to full-spectrum nonviolence.

Key themes

- > Nonviolence is a core Gospel value, constitutive of the life of faith
- > Nonviolence is essential to transforming violence and injustice
- > Nonviolence is a universal ethic
- > Nonviolence is a necessary foundation, means, and vision for a culture of peace

Sample applications

Consider nonviolent Christian models in your social context. Try to live nonviolence in your family, in your school or workplace for one week and

track how this impacts you, others, conflicts, and the culture of that community.

Discussion questions

- How does violence obstruct a sense of human dignity and undermine interconnectedness?
- How do you think nonviolence illuminates human dignity and sustains our interconnectedness?
- What are some examples that suggest nonviolence is a necessary foundation, means, and vision for a culture of peace?

Further resources

Pope Francis, [Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace](#), World Day of Peace Message, 2017

[Living a Nonviolent Life](#), a reflection booklet from the Marianites of the Holy Cross

PART I: RETURNING TO NONVIOLENCE

INTRODUCTION

(pages 17-28)

Key argument

Nonviolence is the basis of Christian tradition, which inspires a recommitment to the centrality of Gospel nonviolence as a universal ethic.

Key themes

- > Nonviolence is a core value of the Gospel
 - o Nonviolence is a way of life and a spirituality
 - o Nonviolence provides strategies for engaging with direct and structural violence
- > Growing momentum for nonviolence in the Church
 - o Vatican and Pax Christi International conferences promoting nonviolence have inspired deeper conversations on nonviolence, publications, and curricula to promote nonviolence
 - o Pope Francis' continuous call for nonviolence through his statements, writings, and interviews
- > Reaffirming the nonviolent way of Jesus
 - o Jesus' death and resurrection are at the centre of Gospel nonviolence
 - o Fostering a culture of peace through nonviolence
 - o Christians and people of all faiths have discovered the power of nonviolence

Sample applications

Breaking cycles of violence through nonviolence (no retaliation and love of one's enemies)
mediation of personal, interpersonal and intergroup conflicts, using nonviolent action

(protests, strike action, boycotts) to engage with oppressive structures, research to expand nonviolence, empathic listening, engaging in self-empathy, speaking out when one identifies injustice, nonviolent communication, decision-making processes, dialogue, and restorative circles.

Discussion questions

- How can nonviolence support us in creating a culture of peace rooted in integral ecology?
- What means can we use to promote the spirituality of nonviolence?
- In what ways can the Church promote nonviolence as a universal ethic?

Further resources

Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, a project of Pax Christi International, provides lists of educational resources, documents, and other materials:

<https://nonviolencejustpeace.net/resources/>

Marshall Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*, PuddleDancer, 2015

Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Porter Sargent, 1973, pages 114, 348, 466

PART I: RETURNING TO NONVIOLENCE

A SIGN OF THE TIMES: THE SPREAD OF NONVIOLENCE

(pages 29–62)

- A sign of the times: The spread of nonviolence
- Nonviolence in action: Contemporary Catholic experience
- Seven stories: Contemporary examples of Catholic nonviolent responses to violence
- Nonviolence: A force more powerful than violence

Key argument

Vatican II urged all people of goodwill to see and respond to the 'signs of the times'. Today we live with a crisis of violence which is structural and institutional, and which impinges on people and the planet. Violence will not answer the crisis of our time: climate change, poverty, migration, the pandemic of COVID-19. At the same time the people of God and parts of the institutional Church offer experiences of nonviolence in action, generating hope and contributing to the teaching of the Church on nonviolence.

Key themes

- > Violence is identified as being:
 - > Non-militarised and structural
 - Militarised
 - Militarised commercial
- > It is not only war, but also widespread and systemic
- > Nonviolent approaches include both obstructive (*intervenes, seeks to break cycles of violence*) and constructive (*empowering, proactive, builds and strengthens community*) strategies and methods
- > Because our churches globally are embedded in communities, they are well placed to draw upon and build on the knowledge and resources of communities AND bring their international experiences and knowledge to situations of violence and conflict

Sample applications

Explore, through intergenerational conversations, an understanding of community conflict and violence and responses to it. Identify links between religious identity and violent nationalism. How do Christian values of reconciliation, forgiveness, love of enemy impinge on this?

Investigate the role of radio, television, social media in generating conversations between 'enemies' and exploring responses to community/commercial violence. How might the 'binding' (*addressing negative, destructive forces*), 'bonding' (*helping to articulate a vision, where people want to go*), 'bridging' (*enabling opposing sides to come together*) approach be applied to your context?

Discussion questions

- There are many signs that the people of God/our Church is well placed in using its resources, space, skills, personnel to grow and nourish active nonviolence. How do the examples offered in the seven stories relate to your own experiences? How might you be able to build on this?
- What do you make of the idea of bishops/the Church as institution/well-known figures in a community contributing to the 'moral reserve' of that community – 'putting its body' into public actions, identifying with those who experience violence? Where have you seen such responses in your own context?

PART I: RETURNING TO NONVIOLENCE A SIGN OF THE TIMES: THE SPREAD OF NONVIOLENCE

(pages 29–62)

Further resources

[Planning for nonviolence](#), a video produced by Tom Eddington on behalf of Pax Christi International (12 minutes)

[Nonviolence in action](#), a video produced by Tom Eddington on behalf of Pax Christi International (14 minutes)

Maria Stephan, [How domestic civic movements could reshape U.S. foreign policy](#), Just Security, February 2021

Pope Francis, [Good politics at the service of peace](#), World Peace Day Message, 2019

Gene Sharp, [198 methods of nonviolent action](#), Albert Einstein Institution

PART I: RETURNING TO NONVIOLENCE

A SIGN OF THE TIMES: THE SPREAD OF NONVIOLENCE

(pages 62-73)

- Looking pernicious, multidimensional violence in the eye
- Two particular concerns: Women and creation
- Renewing the Church's commitment to Gospel nonviolence

Key argument

God's all-inclusive love for the world is undermined by a culture of violence that dehumanises and destroys. The all-consuming, relentless nature of modern warfare has been consistently challenged by the church from popes to national conferences of bishops and the people of God. Jesus' third way of challenging violence with love, courage, creativity and sacrifice is taught and embraced by communities around the world.

Key themes

- > The aggressive development and promotion of military technologies is driving conflict – moving it from the traditional battlefields of war to civilian populations
- > Internal conflicts, the fear of terrorism and the rise of popular civil movements have become focal points for state and military violence – fewer wars but greater violence
- > The use of sexual violence as a tactic and consequence of war exacerbates the vulnerability of women and girls in contexts of conflict and war
- > Wars and the development of military technologies have a devastating impact on the environment
- > The drive to privatise natural resources such as water and extractives, fed by greed and unthinking consumption, are a form of violence to communities and the earth

Sample applications

It is important to continually challenge military models of security and budgets/spending priorities – a budget is the measure of where the heart is. When analysing what is happening in our world, make the connections between poverty, climate change, war and militarism. Create spaces where women can articulate their experiences of violence and share their responses to violence. What can be learned from this? Learn from grassroots communities who seek to protect themselves/others/the earth using Jesus' third way of active nonviolence.

Discussion questions

- In *Fratelli Tutti* (258) Pope Francis says: 'We can no longer think of war as a solution, because its risks will probably always be greater than its supposed benefits... [It] is very difficult nowadays to invoke the rational criteria elaborated in earlier centuries to speak of the possibility of a "just war"'. How do we help our Church/local communities explore the implications of this for the economy and our engagement in the world?
- What are the ways in which you/your group/parish can share and learn from the nonviolent approaches offered in the seven stories and subsequent stories on pages 71-73?

Further resources

Paul Rogers and Geoff Tansy, [A century without war needed to survive environmental threats](#), Open democracy, February 2021

Extracts from [Fratelli Tutti](#) speak to these themes:

- No. 36, community
- No. 54, hope
- Nos. 121-126, war

PART II: FOUNDATIONS OF NONVIOLENCE

THE VOICE OF THE CHURCH ON NONVIOLENCE

(pages 75-92)

Key argument

Beginning with Vatican II until today, Church teaching documents especially pronouncements from the Popes have elaborated more clearly the centrality and urgency of the Gospel call for all disciples and Christian communities to imitate the nonviolent love and peacemaking of Christ Jesus.

Key themes

- > The moral failure of war as a proposed means to justice
- > Saying no to violence and yes to nonviolent peacebuilding
- > The normative Christian path entails forgiveness, dialogue and reconciliation
- > The challenge to go beyond norms and make nonviolent peacebuilding a lived practice for the individual, family, parish, diocese and Church
- > Papal teaching, 2017 World Day of Peace Message on nonviolence, episcopal statements

Sample applications

Speak out on contemporary realities of violence (e.g., the arms race, preparations for war, ecological destruction, the death penalty, structural violence within legal frameworks) with a Christian voice, drawing on Church teaching documents.

For example, contact your national political representatives; write an article in a national media source or local Catholic newspaper; speak with your peers, in classes, at events, conferences, in campus ministry, or at your parish; seek opportunities to dialogue with the local bishop and diocesan priests; or create a Pax Christi group at your university.

Discussion questions

- How can our reading of Church teaching documents on peacemaking and nonviolence help to transform our study of the Bible, our prayer life, and our participation in the Mass?
- In what ways can we better incarnate the nonviolent love of Jesus in our family, parishes, friendships, schools, workplaces?
- How can we work with groups outside of Christianity to cultivate active nonviolence and build movements for social transformation?

Further resources

[The moral compass of Benedict XVI](#), *The Sign of Peace*, Catholic Peace Fellowship, Spring 2006, 5.1, pages 16-22

[‘The Challenge of Peace’ 25 years later](#), *The Sign of Peace*, Catholic Peace Fellowship, Summer 2008, 7.1, pages 6-13

Lisa Sowle Cahill, [Just War, Pacifism, Just Peace, and Peacebuilding](#), *Theological Studies*, 2019, Vol. 80, No. 1, pages 169–185

PART II: FOUNDATIONS OF NONVIOLENCE

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF NONVIOLENCE

(pages 93-147)



Key argument

In the context of a Holy creation, the Hebrew scriptures offer a story about how the Israelites refuse to resign themselves to the violence around them as they try to discover who God is and how God calls us. The Christian scriptures extend this journey as Jesus illuminates a God of nonviolent love with a broad spectrum of nonviolent peacemaking lessons for us to live into.

Key themes

- > The God of the Bible is near us throughout history, debating and defying the violence that we do to each other. God meets us where we are
- > God does not magically eliminate violence to move closer to love but takes violence upon Godself in order to break this diabolical process
- > Cain and Abel; Sacrifice of Isaac; Suffering Servant of Second Isaiah
- > God ensures accountability not by killing or eliminating but by engendering again, that is, making mercy an encompassing trait and saving us from destructive escalation
- > Jesus' teaching of love of enemies is theological and includes political enemies
- > Jesus' path of creative nonviolence offers key lessons about: how to transform violence with nonviolence, how to resist structural violence, how to reconcile and heal people including restorative justice, how to nonviolently defend individuals from violence, how to build a culture of nonviolence, how to live a life of nonviolence to the full, and how the Risen Jesus shares the ultimate power of nonviolent love

Sample applications

Consider how Caritas International, Operation Dove, Pax Christi International, Sant'Egidio, and others focus on accompaniment of people in really difficult, even violent situations. With this closeness and shared risk, the communities are better enabled to seek ways to break cycles of violence. Consider the movement of restorative justice in schools, communities, judicial systems, the church, and truth commissions. Consider the courageous nonviolent interposition of [Sr Ann](#) in Myanmar to [save demonstrators from police violence](#).

Discussion questions

- What might we learn from the stories of Cain and Abel, the sacrifice of Isaac, and the Suffering Servant about who God is and about the human journey?
- How would you respond to someone who says God is violent and supported war in the scriptures?
- How did Jesus' understanding of God's compassionate love for humanity grow out of his reading of the prophets? How would you explain his teaching on 'love of enemies'?
- What are some examples of Jesus helping us learn to resist interpersonal, structural, and cultural violence? How did Jesus build a culture of nonviolence?
- What does his death and resurrection illuminate about nonviolent love, and our call to 'carry our cross'?

PART II: FOUNDATIONS OF NONVIOLENCE

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF NONVIOLENCE

(pages 93-147)

Further resources

Rene Girard, [*Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*](#), Stanford University Press, 1987

Maria Clara Bingemer, [*Alteridade e Vulnerabilidade*](#), Edições Loyola, 1993

Reuven Kimelman, [*Nonviolence in the Talmud*](#), *Roots of Jewish Nonviolence*, ed. by Allan Solomonow, Jewish Peace Fellowship, 1985, pp. 24-49

Bernard Haring, [*The Healing Power of Peace and Nonviolence*](#), Paulist Press, 1986

Martin Luther King Jr., '[*Loving Your Enemies*](#)', *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. Vol. VI: Advocate of the Social Gospel*, September 1948-March 1963

Pope Benedict, [*Midday Angelus*](#), 18 February 2007

Glen Stassen, [*Fourteen Triads of Sermon on the Mount \(Matthew 5:21-7:12\)*](#), *Journal of Biblical Literature* 122, no. 2, Summer 2003, pages 267-308

PART II: FOUNDATIONS OF NONVIOLENCE TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF NONVIOLENCE

(pages 148-226)

Key argument

This section elucidates the theology of nonviolence in the light of creation and anthropology, Christology, pneumatology, and ecclesiology.

Key themes

- > Creation is good and without violence; humans are made in God's image; the powers have fallen
- > Jesus reveals that God redeems by absorbing, not legitimating violence
- > Incarnation, peace in New Testament, Christ's peace via Christ's wounds, witnessing
- > Spirit in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures; nonviolence and gifts of the Spirit; Trinitarian God, Spirit and encounter
- > Church as sacrament and countersign;
- > Tradition of justified violence; religious roots of violence against women; confession and reclaiming; ecological violence
- > Church's history of nonviolence; formation in nonviolence; spirituality of nonviolence; sacraments; sign of peace

Sample applications

Consider the role of some Christian leaders supporting slavery, colonialism, and many wars. Consider also St Maximilian Kolbe, St Francis and St Clare, Dorothy Day, Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, St Oscar Romero, Catholic sisters and Cardinal Sin in the Philippines, and Leymah Gbowee. Ask your university to offer a class on the theology of nonviolence. Ask your priest to speak about the theology of nonviolence in their sermons. Ask your parish to offer study sessions and religious education about the theology of nonviolence. Identify ways to impact the liturgy more toward nonviolence, such as in the prayers of petition to pray for nonviolent leaders.

Discussion questions

- What gets in the way of us recognising God's image in every human being and creation as good?
- How would you explain Jesus' nonviolence and what that reveals about God?
- How can we better sense the Spirit of nonviolence and permeate the Church with a spirituality of nonviolence?

Further resources

Emmanuel Katongole, 'The Church of the Future: Pressing moral issues from Ecclesia in Africa', [*The Church We Want: African Catholics Look to Vatican III*](#), ed. A. Orobator, Orbis Books, 2016, page 166

William Cavanaugh, 'Pilgrim people', [*Gathered for the Journey*](#), eds. David McCarthy and Therese Lysaught, Eerdmans, 2007, pages 88-105

Michelle Gonzalez, [*Created in God's Image: An Introduction to Feminist Theological Anthropology*](#), Orbis Books, 2007

PART III: THE PRACTICE AND POWER OF NONVIOLENCE THE TRANSFORMATIONAL IMPACT OF NONVIOLENCE

(pages 148-226)



Key argument

Nonviolence can be grounded globally and Catholics have often been part of these nonviolent movements. There are many stories and examples of nonviolence that have transformed history, which can still invite nations to consider such a positive impact of a reflective approach toward coexistence and harmony among nations despite the diversity.

Key themes

- > Faith as a guide and motivator to nonviolent action
- > Empowering communities to act without violence
- > Be in conversation with social scientists
- > Maintain values and consider their impacts on the life of the young generation
- > Nonviolence is a process of self-discipline, commitment and engagement in real life goals that can be transferred into a real and concrete pedagogical intervention

Sample applications

In 2013 the World Health Organization declared that violence is not just an issue that must be addressed by politics or jurisprudence, but it is a public health issue. We might see school as an important agency of change in front of this devastating phenomenon. An efficient educational action can guide and lead the civil community towards situations that reduce the probability of interpersonal violence and delinquency, while promoting community belonging and developing positive skills for young people and their emotional well-being is something that should be considered. It is about proposing transferable practical skills

and competences that can help young people grow in their humanity:

1. facilitate the growth of skills and attitudes of nonviolence, proposing alternatives to violence;
2. promote the awareness of young people on communication content and methods: Good communication is important in the process of nonviolence – listening, serene exposition of one's point of view;
3. facilitate ways of growth in the recognition and appreciation of personal value (increase self-esteem) in a difficult context;
4. help to acquire a greater acceptance of oneself and of others;
5. helping people to become more functional in contexts of violence;
6. helping young people to acquire skills in the use of information and communication technologies on issues related to nonviolence; and
7. helping young people to acquire the ability to apply knowledge in the practical situation.

Discussion questions

- How can we empower communities, especially young people to adapt nonviolent practices and obtain competences and skills to create a respectful and reflective context where dialogue and understanding can dwell among rivals?
- What are the most effective ways to motivate mutual dialogues based on understanding despite the divergence of opinions?

PART III: THE PRACTICE AND POWER OF NONVIOLENCE THE TRANSFORMATIONAL IMPACT OF NONVIOLENCE

(pages 148-226)

Further resources

Nonviolent Peaceforce, <https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/>

Nonviolent Social Movements: A Geographical Perspective, eds. Stephen Zunes, Lester Kurtz, Sarah Beth Asher, Blackwell, 1999

[Sami Basha](#), Pedagogy of Liberation, A Palestinian perspective. Cultivating new ways to engage each other in a context of conflict. Erickson, Orientamenti Pedagogici. Vol. 64, n. 1, January-March 2017, pages. 53-69

Sami Basha, The Palestinian Christians' Incarnated Contribution, a bridge for dialogue and reconciliation in a context of conflict. In Phôs. 2020

Sami Basha, L'impatto psico-sociale delle proposte aggravanti sull'esperienza religiosa dei giovani. Itinerario pastorale per una nuova generazione italiana rinnovata. Synaxis, XXXVII/2-2019

Sami Basha, Scelte civili e non violente in Terra Santa. Verso una pedagogia della liberazione, in Per una cultura di pace in Terra Santa, Unicatt-Università Cattolica di Milano, Dicembre 2009

PART III: THE PRACTICE AND POWER OF NONVIOLENCE DIFFERING TECHNIQUES OF ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE

(pages 236-253)

Key argument

Nonviolent resistance is more effective than violent resistance, and differing techniques of nonviolent resistance are available to those who do not want to use violence in the face of oppression and injustice. There are also signs of hope addressing ecological violence as well as the role of women in creative, active nonviolence.

Key themes

- > Power of government is derived from the consent of people. If people withdraw this consent, power disintegrates.
- > Social media technologies have expanded the list of methods nonviolent activists have at their disposal
- > Strategic planning over short-term tactical strategies is an essential element of successful nonviolent movements
- > Research shows that nonviolent resistance movements are at least two times more successful than violent campaigns and at least ten times more likely to lead to durable democracies
- > An important fact to remember for those who put a premium on the protection of life is that armed struggles almost never produce democratic societies and are often followed by relapses into civil war
- > The Global Catholic Climate Movement is generating significant nonviolent resistance to ecological violence, including growing Catholic institutional commitments to fossil fuel divestment
- > Women such as Leymah Gbowee have been incredible leaders in nonviolent movements; we can do better highlighting their contributions

Sample applications

Identify a situation of injustice in your community. Create a strategic plan on how to nonviolently address the situation using a strategic estimate through a schema of questions: What is your objective? Who is the opponent? What are their and your pillars of support? What are your strengths? What techniques will you use to meet your objectives? What will be helpful if the going gets tough? How can you sustain participation and resistance?

Discussion questions

- How have spiritual beliefs and motivations and religious organisations and institutions played critical roles in nonviolent movements?
- What Catholic teachings can provide inspiration, strength and resilience to carry out and sustain nonviolent direct action?
- “The means by which people challenge injustice strongly influence the character of the societies that follow.” Why is this proposition significant to those who wage nonviolence from the lens of morals and ethics?

PART III: THE PRACTICE AND POWER OF NONVIOLENCE DIFFERING TECHNIQUES OF ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE

(pages 236-253)

Further resources

Martin Luther King, Jr., [Letter from Birmingham Jail](#) (1963), *Nonviolence in Theory and Practice*, eds. Robert L. Holmes and Barry L. Gan, Waveland Press, Inc., 2005

Gene Sharp, [Nonviolent action: An active technique of struggle](#), *Nonviolence in Theory and Practice*, Robert L. Holmes and Barry L. Gan (eds.), Waveland Press, Inc., 2005

Loreta Castro and Jasmin Nario-Galace, [Peace education: A pathway to a culture of peace](#), Center for Peace Education, Quezon City, 1987

Gene Sharp, [How nonviolent struggle works](#), Albert Einstein Institute, 2013

Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, [Why civil resistance works: The strategic logic of nonviolent conflict](#), Columbia University Press, 2012

[Active nonviolence in action: The Philippine experience](#), World Council for Curriculum and Instruction, 1987

PART IV: EMBRACING NONVIOLENCE A NEW MORAL FRAMEWORK FOR CATHOLIC THEOLOGY

(pages 255-272)

Key argument

This section argues for a new moral framework of active nonviolence and just peace. Taking a pastoral approach more in line with our mission and the Gospels, a Just Peace framework offers norms to engage conflict constructively, break cycles of violence, and build sustainable peace.

Key themes

- > Characteristics of a new moral framework to better respond to conflict and violence
- > Renewing the narrative for an ethic of nonviolence and just peace
- > Positive peace and transforming initiatives
- > Approach to difficult ethical decisions: humility, accompany, advocacy, pastoral, normative guidelines
- > Reflexivity: Means reflective of and consonant with ends
- > Just Peace norms: Action and strategy should enhance and not obstruct any of these norms
- > Just and effective governance

Sample applications

The Just Peace norms apply to a range of situations, such as immigration, ecological destruction, death penalty, gang violence, ethnic conflict, civil war, and violent extremism. They can also apply and impact institutions such as civil society organisations, government, policing, and militaries. Consider applying these norms to local community conflicts, national policy, and global challenges through written articles, policy briefs, or advocacy campaigns. Encourage Catholic leaders and organisations to mainstream this Just Peace framework in their public comments and advocacy strategies.

Discussion questions

- How can the Just Peace framework apply and assist in dealing with a critical conflict in your community or society?
- What would it look like for your local parish, Catholic school/university, or Catholic organisation to orient its engagement of conflict with a Just Peace framework?
- How does the “just war” framework obscure or distract us from nonviolence and a sustainable just peace?

Further resources

Pope Francis, [Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace](#), World Day of Peace Message, 2017

[Just Peace Ethic Primer: Building sustainable peace and breaking cycles of violence](#), ed. Eli McCarthy, Georgetown University Press, 2020

Gerald Schlabach, [Just War? Enough already](#), *Commonweal*, May 31, 2017 and [Letters: More Just War](#), *Commonweal*, Sept. 20, 2017

PART IV: EMBRACING NONVIOLENCE A NEW MORAL FRAMEWORK APPLIED

(pages 272-283)

Key argument

This section offers some brief summaries of case studies drawing on a nonviolent just peace framework, while also addressing the issues of policing and responsibility to protect.

Key themes

- > Cases on migration at the U.S. and Mexico border, gang violence in El Salvador, civil war in South Sudan, and civil/proxy war in Syria and Iraq
- > Focus on human needs that policing with its best intentions seek to meet
- > Drawing on lens of the Eucharist to help seek alternative community protection models, such as unarmed civilian protection, public health approach, and credible messengers
- > Shared agreement to protect others, as well as concerns raised with armed intervention and the 'responsibility to protect' international norm

Sample application(s)

The Nonviolent Peaceforce, Christian Peacemaker Team, and Operation Dove offer proven examples of unarmed civilian protection (UCP) in violent conflict zones. Cure Violence offers a public health approach utilising credible messengers. The DC Peace Team offers regular online training in unarmed civilian protection, bystander intervention, restorative circles, and nonviolent communication. Consider how you can scale-up or develop local UCP units or peace teams in your area. Explore alternative community protection mechanisms that can shift investments from armed policing to nonviolent institutional mechanisms.

Discussion questions

- How do the cases help illuminate the value of Just Peace norms? What other norms might be relevant for these cases?
- How can you scale-up or develop alternative community protection mechanisms, such as UCP units or peace teams, in your local community?
- What is the role of the Church and Christians in difficult, large-scale situations that signal the 'responsibility to protect'?

Further resources

Pope Francis, [*Fratelli Tutti*](#), sections 255-270

Evan Perkoski and Erica Chenoweth, [Nonviolent resistance and prevention of mass killings during popular uprisings](#), International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, Vol. 2, April 2018

Peter Ackerman and Hardy Merriman, [Preventing mass atrocities: From a Responsibility to Protect \(RtoP\) to a Right to Assist \(RtoA\) campaigns of civil resistance](#), International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, May 2019

Eli McCarthy, [Catholic nonviolence: Transforming military institutions](#), *Expositions: Special Issue on the Future of Nonviolence in Catholic Social Teaching*, v.13 no.2, 2019, pages 113-136

Movement for Black Lives, [Defunding police: What it takes to end police violence](#), *Medium*, June 5, 2020; and Philip McHarris and Thenjiwe McHarris, [No more money for police](#), *New York Times*, May 30, 2020

Jon Kelly, [Why British police don't have guns](#), *BBC News*, Sept. 19, 2012

PART IV: EMBRACING NONVIOLENCE INTEGRATING NONVIOLENCE THROUGH OUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

(pages 284-304)

Key argument

The Catholic Church could make a major contribution to a more just and peaceful world by integrating the study and application of nonviolent practices explicitly into the life and work of the institutional Church and the Catholic community worldwide.

Key themes

- > The Church should bring nonviolence from the periphery of Catholic thought to the centre, mainstreaming nonviolence as a spirituality, a lifestyle, a program of societal action and a transformative universal ethic
- > Catholic dioceses, parishes, schools, universities, seminaries, religious orders, voluntary associations, agencies and Church ministries throughout the world should develop strategies and programs for the study of nonviolence and its practical application at a personal and societal level
- > For the Church to focus on nonviolence and just peace has deep pastoral implications for individuals, social movements, public officials, the private sector and the Church herself

Sample application

Nonviolence should not be considered an option only for individuals and social movements but should be the first and consistent response of the Church to violence, repression and injustice. For example, we might consider how, in the Philippines, the Church led the People's Power movement in 1986 to prevent a violent military clash and to move dictator Ferdinand Marcos out of power.

Discussion questions

- What difference would it make if the 1.3 billion Catholics worldwide had a full understanding of the power and effectiveness of active nonviolence and the connection of

nonviolence to the heart of the Gospel?

- How would a commitment to nonviolence and just peace affect the Church's pastoral practice?
- What impact would a commitment to nonviolence and just peace have on the moral guidance the Church would give to voters, political decision-makers and business or military leaders?
- For the Church to recommit to the centrality of Gospel nonviolence will require an examination of the Church's own violence. What might be the result of the Church's internal commitment to nonviolence?
- Based on your own experience, of all the opportunities for discernment about how to integrate nonviolence and just peace into the life and work of the Church listed on pages 289-302, which strike you as most urgent in the short term and which are most likely to have a long-term positive impact in nurturing a more just and peaceful world?

Further resources

Pope Francis, [*Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace*](#), World Day of Peace Message, 2017

Ken Butigan, [*The university's responsibility for peace and nonviolence*](#), *Educatio Catholica*, Congregation for Catholic Education, May 2020

[*Call to the international community to support policies that promote nonviolent approaches to sustaining peace*](#), Pax Christi International, May 2018

[*Catholic Nonviolence Days of Action*](#), September 21- October 2 annually