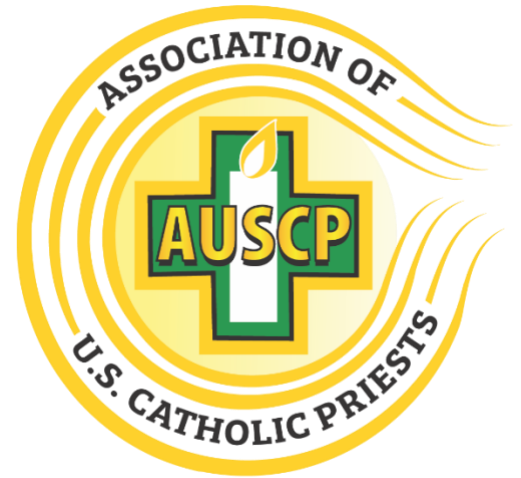


The Association of United States Catholic Priests (AUSCP) invite their brother priests, the Friends of AUSCP, fellow Catholics, and all peace-loving people to join in prayer and action. Attached you will find the following resources for prayer and action:

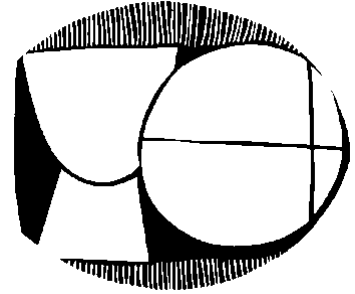


1. Rationale for the Eucharist of Gospel Nonviolence
2. Prayers for the Eucharist of Gospel Nonviolence
3. Possible Scripture Readings
4. Intercessory Prayers
5. Suggested Scripture Readings for Eucharist of Gospel Nonviolence
6. Eucharistic Prayer for Gospel Nonviolence—Option I
7. Eucharistic Prayer for Gospel Nonviolence—Option II
8. Other Resources for Prayer and Reflection:
 - Sample Homily for Gospel Nonviolence (with invited congregational survey/response).
 - Mysteries of the Rosary for Peace
 - Mysteries of the Rosary of Nonviolent Love
 - Prayer for a Nonviolent Heart

In the peace of the Risen Christ,

Gospel Nonviolent Working Group, AUSCP

Rationale for the Eucharist of Gospel Nonviolence



After prayer and discernment, we, the core members of the Working Group on Gospel Nonviolence for the Association of United States Catholic Priests (AUSCP), have chosen a pathway of action. We have prepared a Eucharist of Gospel Nonviolence that we are inviting our brother priests and their parish communities to pray during the Catholic Nonviolence Days of Action, September 21-October 2. In doing so, we will join with others in prayer and action on behalf of active Gospel nonviolence. Our action flows from our ongoing commitment to implement an integral approach to peacemaking as articulated in '*Artisans of Peace.*'

In the ancient tradition of the Church, the prayer of the community gathered at the Eucharistic table became the creative source of believing and living. In other words, prayer creates vision, which creates a way of life. Or, to use the ancient terminology, *lex orandi* shapes *lex credendi*, which in turn, forms *lex vivendi*.

What is the origin of this ancient pattern? The Church's tradition is grounded in the prayer, preaching, and practice of Jesus himself. If we study Paul's early account of the Eucharist (I Cor: 23-27) or read the Didache (a striking example of one of the earliest Eucharistic prayers), there is a clear connection to the all-inclusive, forgiving, nonviolent love of Jesus, the suffering servant of Abba.

In what way is Jesus and his ministry the source of these early Eucharistic prayers? The answer is both simple and historically complex.

At his baptism (described in all the Synoptic gospels), Jesus' encounter with God as '*Abba,*' the God who radically affirmed him as *agapetos* (which, in deep translation, means the '*Beloved Son whose life overflows with love*') became the grounding experience of his prayer, his parables, and his practice of inclusive love and mercy. In his experience of unconditional love, Jesus realized that this same

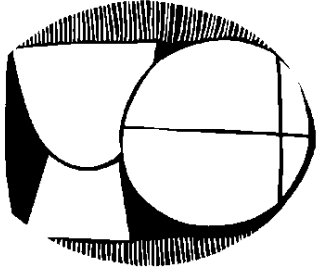
overflowing love becomes accessible to the entire human community. This conviction is clearly embodied in his teaching about forgiving enemies, putting away swords, his new commandment of inclusive love, confronting systems of domination, and his final embrace of his state-sponsored execution on the cross. His life, ministry, and death are a profound commitment to active nonviolent, transforming love. His resurrection is, in turn, his vindication by the same God of life who, through the power of the Spirit, creates the Body of Christ, the Church, as the presence of the Risen Christ in history.

Over the centuries, however, the communal prayer, the compassionate vision, and the nonviolent praxis of Jesus were gradually adapted to and replaced by the prayer, vision, and praxis of 'Christendom'—the 'empire' with its justification of peace through victory rather than peace through active nonviolent love and justice.

In our contemporary liturgy, the nonviolent Christ of the gospels is barely visible. In many ways, our community prayer is shaped more by prayers for peace through victory than peace through the power of nonviolent love. There are significant historical reasons for this, including the fact that the majority of bishops, priests, and laity in the United States are still shaped by a theology of 'redemptive violence' or peace through military strength, rather than the creative nonviolence of the Gospel.

Ironically, the teaching of all recent popes, but especially Pope Francis, is challenging the Church to choose peace through active nonviolence instead of peace through military victory.

This Eucharist of the Gospel Nonviolence is an initial effort to reclaim the *lex orandi*, the *lex credendi*, and the *lex vivendi* that flows from the prayer, the preaching, and praxis of the historical Jesus and the risen Christ. It seeks to embody his life of inclusive loving, forgiving enemies, resisting systems of violence, confronting the instruments of war, and the pursuit of active nonviolence in the communal prayer of the Church.



Prayers for the Eucharist of Gospel Nonviolence

Opening Prayer

God of life, you continue to create your universe with wondrous beauty and rich diversity. Send your Spirit of unity more deeply into our lives, so that we will not turn our diversity into division, or our fear into hatred. May your Risen Son, the Servant of Nonviolent Love, breath his peace into our minds and hearts. We ask this in his name, who lives forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer over the Gifts

Creator God, through this bread and wine, we unite our lives to the offering of your faithful servant, Jesus. May his body, broken in nonviolent love, and his blood poured out in healing forgiveness, rekindle our commitment to the work of justice and the pathway to peace. We ask this through Christ Our Lord.

Prayer After Communion

Loving and generous God, you have gathered us at this table of your remembrance. We thank you for nourishing your pilgrim community with the Bread of Peace and the Cup of Blessing. May this sacred food sustain our commitment to overcome fear with trust, injury with pardon, and hatred with nonviolent love. We ask this through the Risen Christ who lives forever. Amen.

Scripture Readings for Eucharist of Gospel Nonviolence

You may use the readings assigned for the day.

Or, if you prefer, choose from the Catholic Lectionary (Masses for Various Needs and Occasions), specifically in Masses for Peace and Justice, Nos. 887-891.

Intercessory Prayers for Gospel Nonviolence



For an end to all forms of violence whether perpetrated by harsh words, racist hatred, silent prejudice, systemic injustice, weapons of war, or cold indifference. May our homes, our nation, and countries around the world become communities of peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the wisdom to teach our children active Gospel nonviolence as a way of life and as a creative means to resolve differences with compassion and respect. And, for the courage to model it in our own behavior, let us pray to the Lord.

For our faith community, that we may celebrate and welcome the diverse faces of Christ in our worship, our ministries, and our leaders, and that we may act together to confront all forms of violence, let us pray to the Lord.

For our political and religious leaders, that they will strive to overcome systemic injustice by working for fair education, adequate housing, equal opportunities for employment, and abolishing nuclear weapons, let us pray to the Lord.

For our parish, that we may cultivate welcome, extend hospitality, and encourage the participation of people of all cultures, ethnicities and ways of life, let us pray to the Lord.

For the courage to have difficult conversations about racism, homophobia, misogyny, militarism, and other systemic structures of violence. And for a better appreciation of how our words and actions – or even our silence – can impact our communities, let us pray to the Lord.

For solidarity in our global human family, that we may work together to protect those who are most vulnerable and most in need, let us pray to the Lord.

For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, that we may hear and respond to his call for Gospel nonviolence in our church, in our culture, and in our world, we pray to the Lord.

Eucharist Prayer of Gospel Nonviolence

Option I

[Based on and following the Eucharistic Prayer of Reconciliation II]

Preface:

Loving Father, we praise you and thank you through our Lord Jesus Christ.

He is your faithful servant, our brother, who brings peace to our broken world through his self-emptying, nonviolent love.

Through his passion and death, he transforms our swords into plowshares, our animosity into reconciliation, our alienation into community, and our hatred into forgiveness toward our enemies.

Your Spirit changes our hearts: enemies begin to speak to one another, those who were estranged join hands in friendship, and nations seek the way of peace together.

The Spirit of the Nonviolent Christ is at work when understanding puts an end to strife, when hatred is overcome by compassion, and vengeance gives way to forgiveness.

For the gift of this transforming love, we never cease to thank and praise you. We join with all the choirs of heaven and with all the earth to proclaim your glory:

Holy, Holy, etc.

Eucharistic Prayer

God of love and compassion, we praise you through your Son, Jesus Christ who comes in your name.

He is the Word that brings liberation from injustice and violence.

He is the hand you stretch out to the poor and the oppressed.

He is the way that leads to peace.

God, our Father, because of fear, hatred, and ever-recurring wars, we had wandered far from your love.

But through your Son you have brought us back to you and to one another.

To overcome the reign of violence, he embraced the cross as the pathway to peace.

Therefore, we celebrate the promise of healing that [the Nonviolent] Christ has won for us.

Epiclesis

We ask you to sanctify these gifts by the power of your Spirit, as we now fulfill your Son's command.

While he was at supper on the night before he died for us, he took bread in his hands and gave you thanks and praise.

He broke the bread, gave it to his disciples and said:

Take this, all of you, and eat it; this is my body which will be given up for you.

At the end of the meal, he took the cup. Again, he praised you for your goodness, gave the cup to his disciples and said:

Take this, all of you, and drink from it; this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me.

Memorial Acclamation:

Priest: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. You are the Savior of the World.

Anamnesis, Offering, and Intercessions

God of Love, your Son has entrusted to us this new Passover meal, this pledge of his love.

We celebrate the memory of his death and resurrection and offer to you the gift that you have given us, the Bread of life and the Cup of salvation.

Therefore, we ask you, Father, to accept us, together with your Son.

Fill us with his Spirit through our sharing in this meal.

[(4 words were moved to the next line for visual clarity)]

May he take away all that divides us.

May his Holy Spirit keep us always in communion with Francis, our Pope, _____, our bishop, [_____] together with all our brothers and sisters. Loving Father, make your Church throughout the world a sign of unity and an instrument of your peace.

You have gathered us here around the table of your Son, in fellowship with the Virgin Mary, mother of God, Joseph her spouse, and all the [martyrs and] saints. In that new creation where the fullness of your peace will be revealed, gather people of every race, religion, language, and way of life to share in the one eternal banquet with Jesus Christ the Lord.

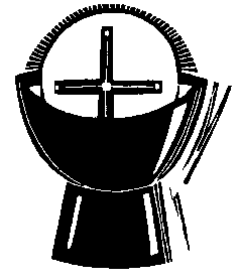
Doxology

Through Christ with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever.

Amen!

Eucharist Prayer of Gospel Nonviolence

Option II



Preface

God our Father and Mother, loving Source and Destiny of all life, we praise you and thank you through our Lord Jesus Christ.

He is your faithful servant, our brother, who brings peace to our broken world through his new commandment of love and his confrontation with the powers of evil [and injustice].

Through his self-emptying love, he transforms our swords into plowshares, our hostility into reconciliation, our alienation into community, and our hatred into forgiveness of our enemies.

Your Spirit changes our hearts: enemies begin to speak to one another, those who were estranged join hands in friendship, and nations seek the way of peace together.

The Spirit of the Nonviolent Christ is at work when understanding puts an end to strife, when hatred is overcome by mercy, and revenge gives way to forgiveness.

For the gift of this transforming love, we never cease to thank and praise you. We join with all the choirs of heaven and all the earth as we sing for ever to your glory:

Holy, Holy, etc.

Eucharistic Prayer

Blessed are you compassionate and faithful God. We do well always and everywhere to give you thanks. You have no need of our praise, yet our desire to thank you is itself your gift to us.

With loving tenderness, you have gathered your people and filled us with a longing for peace that would last, and for justice that would never fail. Through countless generations, your people hungered for the bread of freedom. From them, you raised up Jesus, the Living Bread, in whom ancient hungers were satisfied.

He is the Word that brings liberation from injustice and violence.
He is the hand you stretch out to the sick, the poor, and the oppressed.
He is the way that leads to peace.

On the night before he went forth to his life-giving death, rejecting violence, loving his enemies, and praying for his persecutors, [(note the words shifted)]
He gave his disciples a new commandment:
'Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another.'

With a love stronger than death, he opened his arms wide and surrendered his Spirit in suffering service.

Epiclesis

Loving God, send your Holy Spirit to heal our lives and to make holy these gifts of bread and wine, that they may become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

While he was at supper on the night before he died for us, he took bread in his hands and gave you thanks and praise.

He broke the bread, gave it to his disciples and said:
Take this, all of you, and eat it; this is my body which will be given up for you.

At the end of the meal, he took the cup. Again, he praised you for your goodness, gave the cup to his disciples and said:
Take this, all of you, and drink from it; this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me.

Memorial Acclamation:

Priest: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: Lord, by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free. You are the Savior of the World.

Anamnesis, Offering, and Intercessions

Loving God, with gratitude we call to mind the passion of your Son, Jesus. We remember his suffering at the hands of a broken humanity filled with the spirit of violence and enmity. We remember that He endured his passion with a love free of retaliation, revenge, and retribution. We recall his execution on the cross, but we also recall that He died loving his enemies and praying for his persecutors.

We celebrate that you raised him on the third day as your vindication of His love for his brothers and sisters in the human community and for all of creation.

Therefore, with grateful hearts we offer to you the gift that you have given us, the Bread of life and the Cup of salvation.

We ask you, Father, to accept us, together with your Son.

Fill us with his Spirit through our sharing in this meal.

May his Spirit of peace take away all that divides us.

And may this same Holy Spirit keep us always in communion with Francis, our Pope, _____, our bishop, [_____,] together with all our brothers and sisters, living and deceased.

Loving Father, make your Church throughout the world a sign of unity and an instrument of your peace.

You have gathered us here around the table of your Son, in fellowship with the Virgin Mary, mother of God, Joseph her spouse, and all the [martyrs and] saints. In that new creation where the fullness of your peace will be revealed, gather people of every race, language, religion and way of life to share in the one eternal banquet with Jesus Christ the Lord.

Doxology

Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever. Amen!

Additional resources for prayer and action



Sample homily on Gospel nonviolence

[For use in a parish weekend Mass setting, inviting an active response]

It's during Holy Week that we hear about Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. Saint Matthew's version reads this way:

"Then stepping forward they laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. And behold, one of those who accompanied Jesus put his hand to his sword, drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot call upon my Father and he will not provide me at this moment with more than twelve legions of angels?'" (Matthew 26:50-53).

Saint John the Evangelist's version, John 18:11, identifies the swordsman as Saint Peter:

"Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword into its scabbard. Shall I not drink the cup that the Father gave me?'" John 18:11

St Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits in the 16th century, had been wounded as a soldier. After his recovery and conversion, he is pictured laying his sword on the altar as a sign that he is giving up that career to follow the nonviolent Jesus. **St Martin of Tours** who lived during the Roman Empire times did something similar: As he was retiring, he said he could no

longer submit to the authority of his former officer, telling him, "I am the soldier of Christ: it is not lawful for me to fight."

Even today it happens that a person who once entered the military has an epiphany, an awakening that leads him to leave the military which he sometimes does quietly, sometimes publicly by renouncing his former employment as having been a mistake. It can be because he discovers the nonviolent Jesus or simply because he has learned a thing or two, he wasn't aware of when younger.

We've been made aware as U.S. Americans, especially after World War I and all wars since, that many are the former soldiers who are psychologically and spiritually wounded by their war experience. It has a name: PDS, *Post Deployment Syndrome*. Also: PTSD, *Post Traumatic Stress Disorder*. Doesn't Jesus know that when he orders Peter to put up his sword? His words are hauntingly true: "...for all who take up the sword will perish by the sword." The number of suicides by former soldiers is because they PERISH by despair brought on by what they've seen or done in war.

Next week we'll consider two 20th century Catholics who renounce the sword because they came to understand it wasn't Jesus' way. This week, I invite you to consider the case of a U.S. American who over the last ten years or so matured into an understanding that did not come from our Christian Faith but from a personally shattering experience that led him to Federal Court in July 2021 where he wrote the judge the letter you can find as a bulletin insert this weekend. I ask you to put yourself in the judge's and juries' shoes in making your decision: Innocent or guilty?

I invite you to write down your decision and get it back to me before next Friday in time for me to be able to quote from it. If you want your name withheld, make that clear as well. It's unlikely even among ourselves as Mass-going Catholics, there's going to be agreement. But we do need to listen to each other. After all, here we are at Mass, praying together, communing together on the Body and Blood of Jesus, as we remember his life, passion and death and resurrection and as we await his return in glory.

Duration: Eight minutes, unless one elaborates a bit on the hand-out (bulletin insert)

Attached: Dan Hale's letter to judge (six pages, three pages double-sided)

Conscience and Gospel nonviolence

A contemporary example

(To be included in the parish bulletin for this week)

Alexandria, VA — *Daniel Everette Hale, a former Air Force intelligence analyst who pleaded guilty to sharing classified documents about US Military drone programs with a reporter was sentenced to 45 months in Federal Prison. Ahead of his sentencing Hale's lawyers submitted an 11-page letter handwritten by Daniel from his jail cell to US District Judge Liam O'Grady. Hale's deeply personal letter paints a gruesome picture of the US Drone Program, and explains in detail how it was a crisis of conscience that led Hale to leak secrets about the program to a reporter.*

Below is Daniel Everette Hale's letter to Judge Liam O'Grady in its entirety:

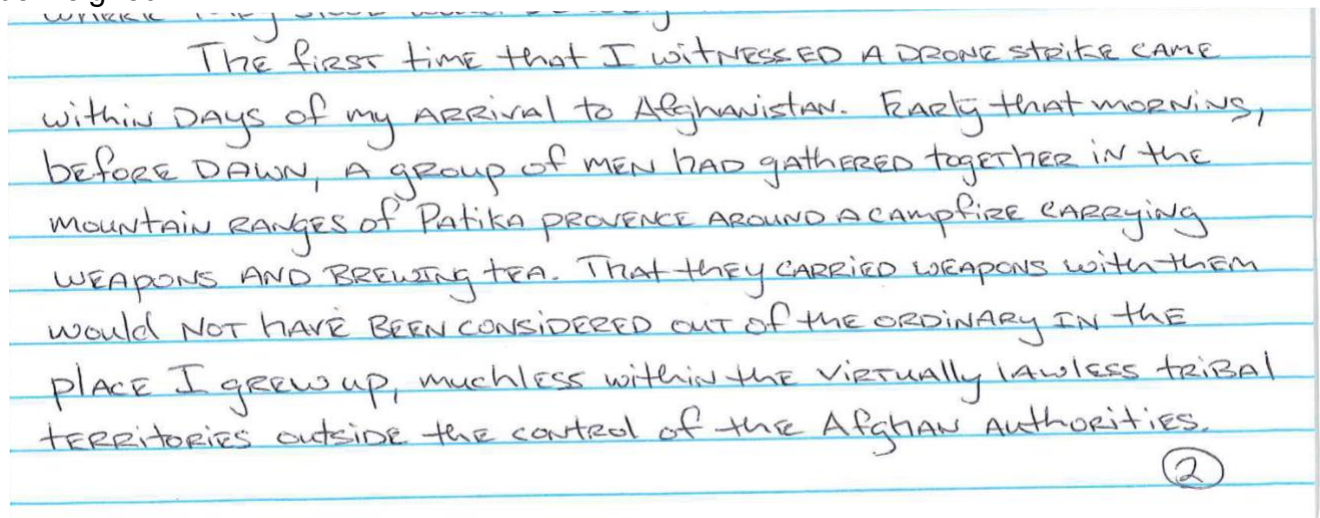
Dear Judge O'Grady,

Former Air Force intelligence analyst Daniel Everette Hale, 2012

It is not a secret that I struggle to live with depression and post traumatic stress disorder. Both stem from my childhood experience growing up in a rural mountain community and were compounded by exposure to combat during military service. Depression is a constant. Though stress, particularly stress caused by war, can manifest itself at different times and in different ways. The tell-tale signs of a person afflicted by PTSD and depression can often be outwardly observed and are practically universally recognizable. Hard lines about the face and jaw. Eyes, once bright and wide, now deep set and fearful. And an inexplicably sudden loss of interest in things that used to spark joy. These are the noticeable changes in my demeanor marked by those who knew me before and after military service. To say that the period of my life spent serving in the United States Air Force had an impression on me would be an understatement. It is more accurate to say that it irreversibly transformed my identity as an American. Having forever altered the thread of my life's story, weaved into the fabric of our nation's history. To better appreciate the significance of how this came to pass, I would like to explain my experience deployed to Afghanistan as it was in 2012 and how it is I came to violate the Espionage Act, as a result.



In my capacity as a signal's intelligence analyst stationed at Bagram Airbase, I was made to track down the geographic location of handset cellphone devices believed to be in the possession of so-called enemy combatants. To accomplish this mission required access to a complex chain of globe-spanning satellites capable of maintaining an unbroken connection with remotely piloted aircraft, commonly referred to as drones. Once a steady connection is made and a targeted cell phone device is acquired, an imagery analyst in the U.S., in coordination with a drone pilot and camera operator, would take over using information I provided to surveil everything that occurred within the drone's field of vision. This was done, most often, to document the day-to-day lives of suspected militants. Sometimes, under the right conditions, an attempt at capture would be made. Other times, a decision to strike and kill them where they stood would be weighed.



The first time that I witnessed a drone strike came within days of my arrival to Afghanistan. Early that morning, before dawn, a group of men had gathered together in the mountain ranges of Patika province around a campfire carrying weapons and brewing tea. That they carried weapons with them would not have been considered out of the ordinary in the place I grew up, much less within the virtually lawless tribal territories outside the control of the Afghan authorities.

(2)

(Above) Daniel Hale's deeply personal letter paints a gruesome picture of the US Drone Program, and explains in detail how it was a crisis of conscience that led him to leak secrets about the program to a reporter.

The first time that I witnessed a drone strike came within days of my arrival to Afghanistan. Early that morning, before dawn, a group of men had gathered together in the mountain ranges of Patika province around a campfire carrying weapons and brewing tea. That they carried weapons with them would not have been considered out of the ordinary in the place I grew up, much less within the virtually lawless tribal territories outside the control of the Afghan authorities. Except that among them was a suspected member of the Taliban, given away by the targeted cell phone device in his pocket. As for the remaining individuals, to be armed, of military age, and sitting in the

presence of an alleged enemy combatant was enough evidence to place them under suspicion as well. Despite having peacefully assembled, posing no threat, the fate of the now tea drinking men had all but been fulfilled. I could only look on as I sat by and watched through a computer monitor when a sudden, terrifying flurry of hellfire missiles came crashing down, splattering purple-colored crystal guts on the side of the morning mountain.

Since that time and to this day, I continue to recall several such scenes of graphic violence carried out from the cold comfort of a computer chair. Not a day goes by that I don't question the justification for my actions. By the rules of engagement, it may have been permissible for me to have helped to kill those men—whose language I did not speak, customs I did not understand, and crimes I could not identify—in the gruesome manner that I did. Watch them die. But how could it be considered honorable of me to continuously have laid in wait for the next opportunity to kill unsuspecting persons, who, more often than not, are posing no danger to me or any other person at the time. Never mind honorable, how could it be that any thinking person continued to believe that it was necessary for the protection of the United States of America to be in Afghanistan and killing people, not one of whom present was responsible for the September 11th attacks on our nation. Notwithstanding, in 2012, a full year after the demise of Osama bin Laden in Pakistan, I was a part of killing misguided young men who were but mere children on the day of 9/11.

Nevertheless, in spite of my better instincts, I continued to follow orders and obey my command for fear of repercussion. Yet, all the while, becoming increasingly aware that the war had very little to do with preventing terror from coming into the United States and a lot more to do with protecting the profits of weapons manufacturers and so-called defense contractors. The evidence of this fact was laid bare all around me. In the longest or most technologically advanced war in American history, contract mercenaries outnumbered uniform wearing soldiers 2 to 1 and earned as much as 10 times their salary. Meanwhile, it did not matter whether it was, as I had seen, an Afghan farmer blown in half, yet miraculously conscious and pointlessly trying to scoop his insides off the ground, or whether it was an American flag-draped coffin lowered into Arlington National Cemetery to the sound of a 21-gun salute. Bang, bang, bang. Both served to justify the easy flow of capital at the cost of blood—theirs and ours. When I

think about this I am grief-stricken and ashamed of myself for the things I've done to support it.

The most harrowing day of my life came months into my deployment to Afghanistan when a routine surveillance mission turned into disaster. For weeks we had been tracking the movements of a ring of car bomb manufacturers living around Jalalabad. Car bombs directed at US bases had become an increasingly frequent and deadly problem that summer, so much effort was put into stopping them. It was a windy and clouded afternoon when one of the suspects had been discovered headed eastbound, driving at a high rate of speed. This alarmed my superiors who believe he might be attempting to escape across the border into Pakistan.

A drone strike was our only chance and already it began lining up to take the shot. But the less advanced predator drone found it difficult to see through clouds and compete against strong headwinds. The single payload MQ-1 failed to connect with its target, instead missing by a few meters. The vehicle, damaged, but still drivable, continued on ahead after narrowly avoiding destruction. Eventually, once the concern of another incoming missile subsided, the driver stopped, got out of the car, and checked himself as though he could not believe he was still alive. Out of the passenger side came a woman wearing an unmistakable burka. As astounding as it was to have just learned there had been a woman, possibly his wife, there with the man we intended to kill moments ago, I did not have the chance to see what happened next before the drone diverted its camera when she began frantically to pull out something from the back of the car.

A couple of days passed before I finally learned from a briefing by my commanding officer about what took place. There indeed had been the suspect's wife with him in the car. And in the back were their two young daughters, ages 5 and 3 years old. A cadre of Afghan soldiers were sent to investigate where the car had stopped the following day. It was there they found them placed in the dumpster nearby. The eldest was found dead due to unspecified wounds caused by shrapnel that pierced her body. Her younger sister was alive but severely dehydrated. As my commanding officer relayed this information to us she seemed to express disgust, not for the fact that we had errantly fired on a man and his family, having killed one of his daughters; but for the suspected

bomb maker having ordered his wife to dump the bodies of their daughters in the trash, so that the two of them could more quickly escape across the border. Now, whenever I encounter an individual who thinks that drone warfare is justified and reliably keeps America safe, I remember that time and ask myself how could I possibly continue to believe that I am a good person, deserving of my life and the right to pursue happiness.

One year later, at a farewell gathering for those of us who would soon be leaving military service, I sat alone, transfixed by the television, while others reminisced together. On television was breaking news of the president giving his first public remarks about the policy surrounding the use of drone technology in warfare. His remarks were made to reassure the public of reports scrutinizing the death of civilians in drone strikes and the targeting of American citizens. The president said that a high standard of “near certainty” needed to be met in order to ensure that no civilians were present. But from what I knew, of the instances where civilians plausibly could have been present, those killed were nearly always designated enemies killed in action unless proven otherwise. Nonetheless, I continued to heed his words as the president went on to explain how a drone could be used to eliminate someone who posed an “imminent threat” to the United States. Using the analogy of taking out a sniper, with his sights set on an unassuming crowd of people, the president likened the use of drones to prevent a would-be terrorist from carrying out his evil plot. But, as I understood it to be, the unassuming crowd had been those who lived in fear and the terror of drones in their skies and the sniper in this scenario had been me. I came to believe that the policy of drone assassination was being used to mislead the public that it keeps us safe, and when I finally left the military, still processing what I’d been a part of, I began to speak out, believing my participation in the drone program to have been deeply wrong.

I dedicated myself to anti-war activism, and was asked to partake in a peace conference in Washington, DC late November, 2013. People had come together from around the world to share experiences about what it is like living in the age of drones. Fazil bin Ali Jaber had journeyed from Yemen to tell us of what happened to his brother Salem bin Ali Jaber and their cousin Waleed. Waleed had been a policeman and Salem was a well-respected firebrand Imam, known for giving sermons to young men about the path towards destruction should they choose to take up violent jihad.

One day in August 2012, local members of Al Qaeda traveling through Fazil's village in a car spotted Salem in the shade, pulled up towards him, and beckoned him to come over and speak to them. Not one to miss an opportunity to evangelize to the youth, Salem proceeded cautiously with Waleed by his side. Fazil and other villagers began looking on from afar. Farther still was an ever-present reaper drone looking too.

As Fazil recounted what happened next, I felt myself transported back in time to where I had been on that day, 2012. Unbeknownst to Fazil and those of his village at the time was that they had not been the only watching Salem approach the jihadist in the car. From Afghanistan, I and everyone on duty paused their work to witness the carnage that was about to unfold. At the press of a button from thousands of miles away, two hellfire missiles screeched out of the sky, followed by two more. Showing no signs of remorse, I, and those around me, clapped and cheered triumphantly. In front of a speechless auditorium, Fazil wept.

About a week after the peace conference I received a lucrative job offer if I were to come back to work as a government contractor. I felt uneasy about the idea. Up to that point, my only plan post military separation had been to enroll in college to complete my degree. But the money I could make was by far more than I had ever made before; in fact, it was more than any of my college-educated friends were making. So, after giving it careful consideration, I delayed going to school for a semester and took the job.

For a long time I was uncomfortable with myself over the thought of taking advantage of my military background to land a cushy desk job. During that time I was still processing what I had been through and I was starting to wonder if I was contributing again to the problem of money and war by accepting to return as a defense contractor. Worse was my growing apprehension that everyone around me was also taking part in a collective delusion and denial that was used to justify our exorbitant salaries, for comparatively easy labor. The thing I feared most at the time was the temptation not to question.

Then it came to be that one day after work I stuck around to socialize with a pair of co-workers whose talented work I had come to greatly admire. They made me feel welcomed, and I was happy to have earned their approval. But then, to my dismay, our

brand-new friendship took an unexpectedly dark turn. They elected that we should take a moment and view together some archived footage of past drone strikes. Such bonding ceremonies around a computer to watch so-called “war porn” had not been new to me. I partook in them all the time while deployed to Afghanistan. But on that day, years after the fact, my new friends gaped and sneered, just as my old one’s had, at the sight of faceless men in the final moments of their lives. I sat by watching too; said nothing and felt my heart breaking into pieces.

Your Honor, the truest truism that I’ve come to understand about the nature of war is that war is trauma. I believe that any person either called-upon or coerced to participate in war against their fellow man is promised to be exposed to some form of trauma. In that way, no soldier blessed to have returned home from war does so uninjured. The crux of PTSD is that it is a moral conundrum that afflicts invisible wounds on the psyche of a person made to burden the weight of experience after surviving a traumatic event. How PTSD manifests depends on the circumstances of the event. So how is the drone operator to process this? The victorious rifleman, unquestioningly remorseful, at least keeps his honor intact by having faced off against his enemy on the battlefield. The determined fighter pilot has the luxury of not having to witness the gruesome aftermath. But what possibly could I have done to cope with the undeniable cruelties that I perpetuated?

My conscience, once held at bay, came roaring back to life. At first, I tried to ignore it. Wishing instead that someone, better placed than I, should come along to take this cup from me. But this too was folly. Left to decide whether to act, I only could do that which I ought to do before God and my own conscience. The answer came to me, that to stop the cycle of violence, I ought to sacrifice my own life and not that of another person.

So, I contacted an investigative reporter, with whom I had had an established prior relationship, and told him that I had something the American people needed to know.

**Respectfully,
Daniel Hale**

The Mysteries of the Rosary for Peace

O Prince of Peace, Nonviolent Christ, grant that I may follow You faithfully as a pilgrim of peace in every area of life. Through the reconciling power of Your Mercy, may our world witness the miracle of Your love and peace anew.

1. Peace in our hearts:

Lord you ask me, "Where do the conflicts and disputes among you originate? Is it not our inner cravings that make war within your members?" (James 4:1) Forgive me for not being at home in my own house. I am so easily affected by fear and mistrust. I am anxious and upset about many things. Open my heart to Your peace. My heart is restless until I find my rest in You. "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me!" Thank you, Jesus, for saying to me, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you." (John 14:27).

2. Peace in our families:

Forgive me, O God, for not being at home when I am with my family and close friends. I have sought a separate peace which excludes them from my heart. I have not entrusted to them my needs, fears, and hopes. But You are my peace. You have broken down the dividing wall of hostility to reconcile us. (Ephesians 2:14)

3. Peace in our Church:

You, Lord, call me beyond my comfortable circle of friends to value others who are so different from me! Help me to really believe in the larger Body of Christ that we are ... "that there may be no dissension in the Body, but that all members may be concerned for one another." (1 Cor 12:25) Disarm my heart so that I may learn to respect others and to reconcile myself to their differences, in church and community.

4. Peace in our cities and nation:

"Coming within sight of the city, He wept over it and said: 'If only you had known the path to peace this day; but you have completely lost it from view...because you failed to recognize the time of your visitation'." (Luke 10:41 & 44) Jesus, You weep today over our cities and our nation. We fail to recognize the invitation of Your Spirit or the presence of Your Kingdom. By clinging to the material comforts of our nation, we are ravaged by our own social sins: corporate greed; racism; sexism; alcoholism; militarism; and homelessness. We would heed Your call, to co-create with You in the work of redemption, to build the "City of God." Give us contrition to confess our failure. Give us courage to risk beginning again.

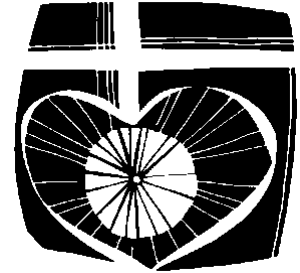
5. Peace in our global village:

O Jesus, You have revealed that every inch of earth is the dwelling place of Your Spirit. The earth is the motherland of all Our Father's children. But we have only paid You lip service in this. Our nations are greedy and hoard our mother's gifts. In fear and in the name of "national security" we have chosen bombs instead of bread for Your helpless little ones who starve to death. Help us see the light of "common security" as you weave the web of life anew and invite us to interdependence. As pilgrims of

peace, help us surrender our fears to You and to each other that we might create new ways to live together in peace. Then may we be one Body, one people, one family, one Spirit in Christ. Amen

Mysteries of the Rosary for nonviolent love

Jesus bids us to follow his example and move out to actively care for others by refusing to let people be used as things. His compassionate presence to persons calls us pilgrims out of passive piety into decisive action.



1. **The teaching of nonviolence** (Luke 4:17-21): Jesus is living as God's "Beloved One." Confident in the anointing that has freed him to genuinely love every person, he embodies the redeeming compassion of Isaiah's mysterious suffering servant.
2. **The practice of nonviolent tactics** (Luke 4:22-30): As Jesus encounters the closed-mindedness of a fickle congregation he peaks their indignation, only to disarm their anger somehow in his person-to-person contact.
3. **Speaking truth to power** (Luke 11:39-54, Mt. 23:2-6): Jesus points out the violence of the powerful who manipulate and oppress others. He deals simply and directly with the scribes and pharisees even while they try to entrap him.
4. **Nonviolent direct action** (Matthew 21:12-13; John 2:14-17): The heart of God is on fire in love with the dignity of every person. Jesus will not let what is most sacred be abused. His active caring is expressed in holy anger and a direct rejection of evil as he drives the moneychangers from the temple.
5. **Loving your enemies** (Luke 23:34): Because Jesus saw beyond the cycle of violence to the helplessness of each person caught in it, he prayed for his executioners, "Father, forgive them. they know not what they do." Violence ends where love begins.

Prayer for a nonviolent heart

Recognizing the violence in our own hearts, yet trusting in the goodness and mercy of God, we ask you, O Nonviolent One, to help us practice today what you taught us in the Sermon on the Mount: to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us that we might be daughters and sons of our Creator in heaven.

We ask that today we might carry out in our lives the love and example you gave us:

- by striving for peace within ourselves and seeking to be peacemakers in our daily lives;
- by refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence;
- by persevering in nonviolence of tongue and heart;
- by living conscientiously and simply so that we do not deprive others of the means to live;
- by actively resisting evil and working nonviolently to abolish war and the causes of war from our own hearts and from the face of the earth.

O God, we trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave us the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill this prayer. Amen.
