



## Gospel Nonviolence & Just Peace

### Theological Reflection #1 Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence

#### Opening Prayer

O God of compassion and peace bless us with an awareness of your presence with us. We ask to be open and receptive to your call to Gospel nonviolence and just peace.

#### Introduction

Gospel nonviolence is about justice and right relationships – Shalom. It is not merely the absence of war; it is not passive, but active and it is rooted in the message of the Gospel. Affirming the vision and practice of active nonviolence is at the heart of the vision and message of Jesus and the life of the Catholic Church. At this time in history when there is great violence it is important to learn more about Gospel nonviolence and just peace, as well as study and practice Gospel nonviolence.

#### Education

Read or listen to any one or more of the articles or videos found below as a way to deepen an understanding of Gospel nonviolence and just peace.

#### Articles/Written Talks/Other

- **An Appeal to the Catholic Church to re-commit to the centrality of Gospel Nonviolence**  
Catholic Nonviolence Initiative. [www.nonviolencejustpeace.net](http://www.nonviolencejustpeace.net)
- **What is a Just-Peace Approach?** and **What is Active Nonviolence?** Catholic Nonviolence Initiative. [www.nonviolencejustpeace.net/resources/](http://www.nonviolencejustpeace.net/resources/)
- **Our nonviolence tradition** by Dr. Ken Butigan, DePaul University and Pace e Bene; Fr. John Dear, An Overview of Gospel Nonviolence in the Christian Tradition.  
[www.nonviolencejustpeacedotnet.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/our\\_nonviolence\\_tradition.pdf](http://www.nonviolencejustpeacedotnet.files.wordpress.com/2016/05/our_nonviolence_tradition.pdf)

#### Videos

- **John Dear talks Peace 2016** (19 min) - Published on Apr 5, 2016. Ankeny, Iowa, Catholic Peace Ministry, Bishop Dingman Peace Award ceremony. Rev. John Dear (S.J.) is a Jesuit priest, pastor, peace activist, organizer, writer, lecturer, and retreat leader.  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMGQt3ObqRw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMGQt3ObqRw)



- **A Brave and Startling Truth** (5:29 min) Published on May 28, 2014. Maya Angelou's Stunning Humanist Poem written to commemorate the UN's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, in 1995. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjEfq7wLm7M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjEfq7wLm7M)

### **Questions for Personal Reflection**

Take the main points to prayer and ask God where God is present in this.

- What resonates with you? What do you resist? What challenges you?
- How does this learning fit in your lived experience as a School Sister of Notre Dame, SSND Associate, or SSND colleague/friend? How does it fit your faith tradition?

### **Sacred Scripture**

Matthew 5:38-42

- How do you understand Jesus' proposed third way of nonviolence?
- How do you seek to understand someone who is different from you?
- How do you confront those who are violent or promote violence?

### **Sharing**

Identify insights and look for implications for action.

- What have you learned? • What are you called to do?
- Who will support you or what will you need to fulfill your intentions?
- What are the implications for your interactions with others and with all of creation?

### **Possible Actions**

- What exactly is it that you want to change? (long-term goal)
- What action are you going to take now? (short-term goal)
- Who can you involve in your action?

**Closing Prayer** Give us your peace – Pedro Casaldaliga

*Give us, Lord, that strange Peace  
That sprouts in the midst of struggle  
Like a flower of fire;  
That breaks in the middle of the night  
Like a hidden song;  
That arrives in the midst of death  
Like a longed for kiss.  
Give us the Peace of those always walking,  
Stripped of any advantage,  
Clothed in the wind of nebulous hope.*

*That Peace of the poor  
Who have already overcome fear.  
The Peace of the free  
Who cling to life.  
The Peace that is shared  
In fraternal equality  
Like water and the Host.  
Amen.*