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Re-Examining the Just War Theory
Holy Trinity Cathedral Precinct, Auckland
November 19, 2016

Privilege to be here with you at you in remembering Dorothy Brown a teacher not only in terms of schools but a teacher in the broad sense by bringing together in her life and relationships a passionate concerns for love, peace, justice and compassion. I am aware that there are many people who are often unnoticed who give great emphasis on peace with justice as we move into listening to the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth. To not do so, to not listen to the 'grasshoppers' then we cannot build the relationships that make for peace that is lasting, enduring and transforming.

War is obsolete.

We are not here to fight something or tear something down;

We are here to be the example of what is possible.

Any sane individual will tell you that violence is ... not the way...

Buckminster Fuller (Richard Buckminster 'Bucky' Fuller, American architect, systems theorist, author, designer and inventor. 1895-1983)

So instead of loving what you think is peace, love other [people] and love God above all. And instead of hating the people you think are war makers, hate the appetites and the disorder in your own soul, which are the causes of war. If you love peace, then hate injustice, hate tyranny, hate greed - but hate these things in yourself, not in another.

Thomas Merton, from New Seeds of Contemplation

I am aware that my brief today is to re-examine the Just War Theory that comes out of a tradition going back to St Augustine and developed by St Thomas Aquinas and later the Reformers. This tradition is not limited to the Catholic Church but used by other churches and also political institutions. Any conversation the ***Just War*** tradition cannot occur in isolation from the emerging thought and action towards ***Just Peace*** - as a way of relating to ourselves, one another, Mother Earth and our God. We already have the Earth Charter (<http://earthcharter.org/discover/the-earth-charter/>), The World Council of Churches superb 2012 document ***Just Peace Companion*** which was to be used alongside another document called ***An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace***, and now Pope Francis' June 2015 encyclical ***Laudato Si'*** (http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html).

From 2000-2010 the ***World Council of Churches*** studied how to overcome violence from which developed the two documents just mentioned. ***An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace*** declared the concept and the mentality of 'just war' to be obsolete. The ***Just Peace Companion***. offered extensive direction on implementation of just peace theology and practice through a

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comprehensive review of scripture, ethics, values, practices, curricula, human stories, and prayer to embody just peace within the Christian tradition and within the reality of our world. In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI preaching on Luke 6:27 ('Love your enemies'), said it 'is rightly considered the *magna carta* of Christian nonviolence'. It does not consist in succumbing to evil, as a false interpretation of 'turning the other cheek' claims, but in responding to evil with good and thereby breaking the chain of injustice.'

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

Having said this, the big difficulty, the monkey on our back is that the legitimization of war in Catholic social teaching remains. It remains as a default or fall-back position.

Jesus' mission was active nonviolence expressed in his engagement with friends and enemies. He models that 'just peace', in care for the outcast whether a sinner or a person in need of healing, love and forgiveness towards the enemies, welcoming of the stranger, as well as challenging domination by religious, political, economic, and military powers. Jesus centred 'shalom' on embodying mercy and compassion. Further, Jesus' 'new commandment' is to 'love as I have loved you,' i.e. the nonviolent love of neighbour, strangers and enemies. With Jesus' focus on healing and reconciliation, even with enemies, we learn that the kind of justice Christ turns us toward is restorative justice, i.e. to focus on the wounds to relationships and how to heal them. A loving regard or attitude should be based on each person bearing the image of God – an image often trashed when we dehumanise or neglect the other whether near or far. The summons of the Vatican Conference, which I have yet to speak about, was that it is by practicing love and not dehumanising the other that the transforming power of love and action becomes effective. A 'just peace' offers a vision and praxis where peace is built up as well the prevention, or defusing, and healing the damage of violence. It calls for a commitment to human dignity and thriving relationships.

In Psalm 85:10 we see embodied the vision in God's promise that 'justice and peace shall embrace' as the 'shalom' of God. Justice requires peace-making and peace requires justice-making. Pope Paul VI's 'no peace without justice' was extended by Pope John Paul II to '[no peace without justice and no justice without forgiveness](#)' in his 2002 World Day of Peace Message. Pope Francis has turned our attention to Jesus' focus on mercy being at the heart of 'shalom' and as the alternative to violence. He calls war the 'suicide of humanity,' while call us to 'give up the way of arms.' Our challenge is to decide what God we believe in, the *Dieu des armées* (God of armies) or *Dieu désarmé* (unarmed God).

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The 'just peace' approach is not pacifism but a challenge to become a peaceful and just people/community that includes compassion, mercy, solidarity, reconciliation. I mentioned earlier that the WCC's *Ecumenical Call to Justpeace* declared the concept and the mentality of 'just war' to be obsolete. It has been ineffective in achieving in limiting or preventing war and more often used to 'justify' war by religious (cf George Pell and Tom Frame vis-à-vis the 2003 invasion of Iraq), political and military decision-makers (Iraq). It is not possible for 'Just war' to cultivate the kinds of people that imagine and engage the broad-range of effective nonviolent peacemaking practices. The result has been the creation of a culture that often glorifies violent actors; and turns us away from the modelling of Jesus Christ. One condition of a 'just war' is that *'The probability of success would have to be greater than the damage caused. The violence committed within the conflict must be proportional to the damage inflicted, and civilian populations should as much as possible be distinguished from military aggressors.'*

We did not see that in **Iraq or Afghanistan** and such conditions could never be fulfilled in the context of a nuclear war where the damage would of necessity be disproportionate in relation to any gains achieved as civilian populations would be most affected by such strikes. Thus it is necessary to give pride of place to the Gospel of non-violence in order to declare any recourse to nuclear weapons to be absolutely illegitimate. And one can but regret that the local churches of the nuclear-armed countries should not have had the courage to demand the unilateral nuclear disarmament of countries, but have accommodated themselves to the premeditation of nuclear murder. In itself, such an accommodation is participation in a betrayal.

Our task is to find ways to build a better, more resilient peace. Just peace criteria include participatory process, right relationships, restoration, reconciliation and sustainability (these may be found at the end of this paper). Though wars end, they do not end with the positive peace of right relationships of God's reign. More than 25 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Cold War ended in a cold peace that continues and contributing to the problems we now face with nuclear weapons.

Rome Conference

So now to the conference I attended in Rome. In April 2016, this ground-breaking and unprecedented gathering occurred co-hosted by Pax Christi International the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. I went with objectives: to suggest or call for the end of the Just War tradition and to ask the conference to propose that Pope Francis publish an encyclical on peace and nonviolence. It was not necessary and many participants came with the exact same intention.

Jose Henriquez (previous secretary general of Pax Christi International) said: *'We need to go back to the sources of our faith and rediscover the nonviolence which is at the heart of the Gospel.'* That was our call and our task.

Here, the Church and an NGO (Pax Christi International) worked together for some years to bring together people to openly engage in conversation, not only about the absence of war but about *the presence of an alternative* – reflected in the appeal the participants issued for the Vatican to **‘re-commit to the centrality of gospel nonviolence.’** It was not something new but a return to our sources. Cardinal Peter Turkson relayed a message from Pope Francis with his enthusiastic backing. It **included** *‘your thoughts on revitalizing the tools of nonviolence, and of active nonviolence in particular, will be a needed and positive contribution’*. He acknowledged the work of various organisations that carry out peacebuilding measures and/or **‘unarmed civilian peacekeeping’** as carried out by the *Nonviolent Peaceforce* referred to the **‘tools of nonviolence’** as a way out of war as demonstrated by such organisations that work to head off local conflicts, rescuing child soldiers, protecting communities, and brokering peace agreements, e.g., the recent one in Mindanao in the Philippines. The gathering did not want to invent something new but of a return to the sources – to the experience of the early church. It agreed on a statement **‘An appeal to the Catholic Church to re-commit to the centrality of Gospel nonviolence’** which called for the Catholic Church to commit in **doctrine and practice** to the central importance of «the Gospel of non-violence». It was not content to add a paragraph on nonviolence within the doctrine of just war, but called into question a doctrine – some 1700 years old - that has been used to condone war rather than to prevent or restrain it. We called on all **‘not to promote theories of just war’**, but to **‘promote nonviolent practices and strategies’**.

Pope Francis’ letter to the conference echoed the messages of his predecessors but it went further. He wanted to activate the church of the poor, the church of the people. *‘Humanity needs to refurbish all the best available tools to help the men and women of today to fulfil their aspirations for justice and peace.....’* *‘Accordingly, your thoughts on revitalizing the tools of nonviolence, and of active nonviolence in particular, will be a needed and positive contribution.’*

The church needs a viable alternative to war... not preaching peace by righteous hand wringing. Francis noted that *‘It would be dangerous to identify the gospel message with this or that political program... (because)... The Christian contribution to peace must take a different path.’* Determining **‘a different path’** is the challenge. The answer lay in recommitting to the centrality of gospel nonviolence and developing practices of Catholic nonviolence and just peace.

I wondered how many people heard about the Vatican conference that took place in April this year. Unfortunately, it was largely ignored except for some mention in selected news services. The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference website had no mention of it. But it was exhilarating and inspiring to be with 85 people from 35 countries many of whom are active in peace work and human rights and determined to move our Church forward in its understanding of and commitment to nonviolence and away from the doctrine of Just War. They came from Africa (South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, Kenya), Asia (Afghanistan, Philippines), Europe (Croatia, Italy), the Middle East (Palestine, Iraq), Australia and the

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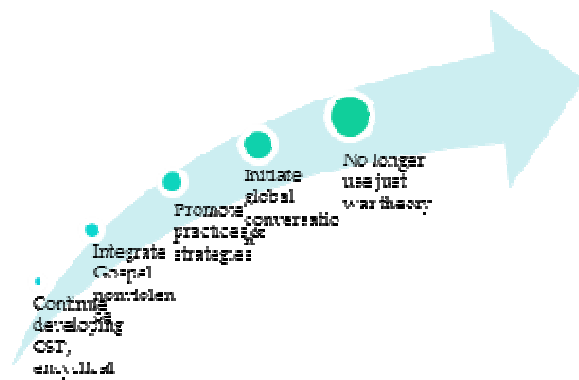
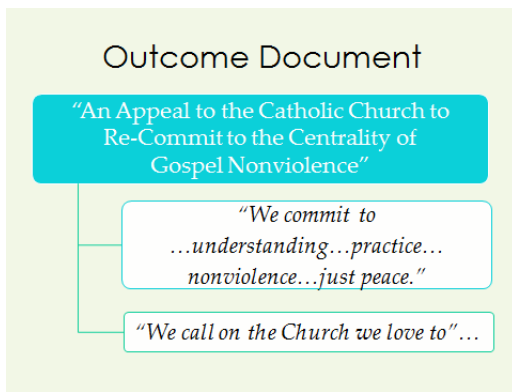
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Americas (USA, Colombia, Mexico) with their broad spectrum of peace-building and active nonviolence experiences. They shared their experiences, analysis and effective actions/strategies. I will make mention of some of these later. These people in my view are the experts on our subject today. They have made the daily choices to live nonviolently in violent situations. They have paid the price in so many ways. A Dominican Sister from Iraq said that we can dialogue with ISIS. A priest from Colombia declared that there is always scope for dialogue. A Ugandan bishop elaborated on how interreligious leaders had negotiated with the Lord's Resistance Army. The entry point was trust: identifying who the rebels trusted and making friends with them. Mairead Corrigan Maguire, spoke about Northern Ireland, and Katerina Kruhonja from Croatia and others shared how they were '**catapulted by violence**' into finding a faith-based response. US Foreign Policy specialist Maria Stephan, has shown that nonviolence was twice as effective as violence in the 323 conflict situations she analysed, and has a greater likelihood of producing a sustainable democratic society.

Not all present at the Rome gathering were of the same mind when it came to the long overdue consideration of the 'just war theory', which has been part of Catholic social teaching for some 1,700 years. Some defended the just war theory; others saw the point of using violent force in policing or peacekeeping; and others were committed to nonviolent resistance to injustice and violence. I must say that those who continued to support 'just war' tended to be academics and diplomats particularly from the United States and Western Europe. They maintained that just war criteria are useful for restraining excessive use of military force by a state. But, as I mentioned already, those who came conflict zones brought a different perspective. Their message was clear: Just war theory is not working. Catholic teaching still allows for a morally sanctified use of armed force. We cannot just condemn violence and call for peace. A viable alternative to war is necessary and this is not possible whilst there is a fall-back position to justify war. Nevertheless, the conference was a clear summons to the church to live walk **in the path of Jesus' nonviolence and turn to just peace**. It was a call to take steps to reaffirm:

- *the centrality of active nonviolence to the life of the Church,*
- *to prophetically proclaim another way,*
- *to commit to the long-term vocation of healing and reconciling both people and the planet – according to the vision and message of Jesus.*

Outcome: An Appeal to the Catholic Church to re-commit to the centrality of Gospel Nonviolence <https://nonviolencejustpeace.net/final-statement-an-appeal-to-the-catholic-church-to-re-commit-to-the-centrality-of-gospel-nonviolence/>.



Sr Matty, the Dominican Sister from Iraq just mentioned above, said: ‘We can’t respond to violence with worse violence. In order to kill five violent men, we have to create 10 violent men to kill them. This encourages the spiral of violence..... And the people are so exhausted because they don’t know what’s happening. It’s like a dragon with seven heads. You cut one and two others come up.’

A Third World War in Installments

Pope Francis is about to release his World Day of Peace (January 1) Message: **Non-Violence: A Style of Politics for Peace**. Clearly, he has taken note of the conference with this message and will probably be towards that encyclical we called for. We have a choice to build society – violence and peace. Francis has often spoken of the proliferation of hotbeds of violence in terms of ‘A Third World War in Pieces’ or ‘World War III—but in installments.’ which has produced serious negative social consequences. The church stands at a watershed: Will it reject the necessity or justification of armed force? Will it counsel the state against the use of violence? Will it promote active, effective alternatives to armed force? Will it confront the evil so clearly at work in the world?

The media is filled with the deafening clamour of war echoes but we do not always consider them as such. They occur in our city streets to the oil fields and beyond.

Do we not call it war:

- when young people are assaulted and killed by unruly police;
- when young people are increasingly marginalised from training and the ability to secure work;
- when Indigenous people stand up for their rights and dissent discriminatory treatment and they are confronted by a system that does not listen (nuclear waste dumping in South Australia; South Dakota pipe line; etc);
- when the indigenous health gap is still as wide as ever and they die 17 years earlier than others in the population, and when they are incarcerated at proportions beyond their population;
- when Indigenous people are killed and whose deaths are ignored when white people killed by Indigenous people is called murder;

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- when women, Muslims and gay people are vilified or branded as trouble-makers or are victims of violence;
- when people with a disability do not have full access to services and venues, railway stations, use of public transport; even churches;
- when women are denied education or equity in pay for the same work;
- when chainsaws clear forests or assault sacred lands for the sake of coal and national interest;
- when mountains lose their tops because of the minerals beneath them (Philippines, Brazil);
- when animals are abused in our chicken pens and pig pens and forests, jungles and oceans;
- Daniel Quinn (American writer) has written that *'We're not destroying the world because we're clumsy. We're destroying the world because we are, in a very literal and deliberate way, at war with it.'* The dominant culture – the mode of social and political organisation we call civilisation - is killing our planet, e.g., 90% of the large fish in the oceans are gone, 97% of native forests are destroyed, 98% of native grasslands are destroyed, amphibian populations are collapsing, fish populations are collapsing, and so on. 200 species become extinct daily. But those in power would tell that the status quo is natural, inevitable, even good for society. They imply by their action or inaction that everything is fine. Mass poverty is not a problem. Climate change is not an emergency. Those who warn of dangers and problems are just 'fear mongering'.
- Derrick Jensen poses two riddles: Q: What do you get when you cross a drug habit, a quick temper, and a gun? A: A long time in prison for murder. Q: What do you get when you cross two nation-states, a large corporation, forty tons of poison, and at least 8,000 dead human beings? A: Retirement, with full pay and benefits (CEO of Union Carbide, which caused the mass murder at Bhopal). Jensen asks if we will challenge an economic and social system – the military-industrial complex - that is at war with planet? Tweaking at the edges by buying hybrid cars, recycling or optimistically relying on renewal energy are not enough – because none of it is renewable. We need to open our eyes and see the world more clearly – see the injustice that is occurring, and once aware to recognise that we have a responsibility to act. Do we want to feel better or do we want to be effective? For 'sustainable' to mean anything, the bare truth that the planet is primary and finite must be embraced and defended. The life-producing work of a million species is literally the earth, air, and water that we depend on. More and more we see a glorification of the military as people identify with the state and its spectacular violence, and advertises the consequences of fighting back. In spite of feminist advances, civilization is patriarchal and exalts masculinity. It systematically oppresses women and indigenous people as it celebrates masculine expressions of power and violence. History shows us that agriculture depended greatly on slavery, serfdom, and cruelties. Industrial agriculture depends upon petroleum which cannot last. In both areas we see the rise of people living in new forms of slavery, bondage. The shortage of fossil fuels has found a new solution: cut down forests or use agricultural production not for food where it grows but to drive our cars in the

developed nations. The dominant culture isn't only a serial killer. It is a weapon of mass destruction. As we commemorated ANZAC and battles throughout history, the living world is perishing in its own Flanders and Verdun, as species become extinct each day. What about the forgotten wars in Australia – the wars of resistance and self-defense by Aboriginal people.

- Activities that destroy living communities, that fuel clear-cutting forests, mining and overgrazing rich land needed to grow food, draining wetlands, damming rivers and vacuuming the oceans must stop. These activities reside in the word civilisation. As developed countries are the greatest consumers, their ability to steal from the poor must be challenged. Derrick Jensen in ***Endgame: 'Bringing down civilization means depriving the rich of their ability to steal from the poor, and it means depriving the powerful of their ability to destroy the planet.'*** But *'Power concedes nothing without a demand; it never has and never will'* (Frederick Douglass). Capitalist investment does not provide for human needs like food, housing, or health care; it goes where the investors might make a profit. What the rich want is what will be produced. The political, social, physical, and technological infrastructure not only permits the rich to steal and the powerful to destroy, but rewards them for doing so.

St Catherine of Siena (12th century) said, 'Speak the truth in a million voices. It is silence that kills'. These are haunting words as we notice how much silence there is, and how it is growing. Sr Jeannine Gramick, a woman who has for decades worked with LGBTI people and suffered for it in the church, recently wrote about the violence of silence. *'One kind of violence not often recognized is the violence of silence.'* Referring to the Orlando massacre this year, she said some were guilty of this kind of violence. The media told us that the shooting occurred in a gay club, but statements from the Vatican press office, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Orlando's bishop conspicuously passed over references to the fact that those targeted were lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. Some bishops made no statement at all. Sr Jeannine said that *'Silence is violence when..... it denies the existence of a whole category of people, people who have been targeted with physical violence because of who they are. If I don't acknowledge your existence, I do not need to recognize your rights; I do not see that you need added protections. Furthermore, I am unable to know you or to relate to you in a meaningful way.'* [The violence of silence kills.](#) (Jeannine Gramick).

The Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers have a saying that *'talk of peace must walk'*. These young people no longer rely on their government, or the Taliban or the Coalition forces to bring peace but decided to do it themselves. They began by reaching across boundaries to other tribal groups –Hazaras, Tajiks, Uzbeks and Pastuns). They worked to build trust among each other and overcome suspicions and hatred by reaching out. They witness for peace by marching through Kabul and other places.

Peacebuilding and nonviolence can acquire a more comprehensive and new meaning as a realistic political method that gives rise to hope. If this political method flows from the rights

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and the equal dignity of every person which need to be safeguarded without any discrimination and distinction, then nonviolence, understood as a political method, can constitute a realistic way to overcome armed conflicts. A book I am reading by Yasmine Sherif called ***The Case for Humanity*** talks about the ***will to power*** versus the ***will to humanity***. A political approach recognises the force of right over the right of force. Dispute settlement may be reached through negotiation without degenerating into armed conflict. Within such a perspective the culture and identity of peoples are respected and it overcomes the view that some are morally superior to others. It means that no nation can remain indifferent to the tragedies of another. It means a recognition of the primacy of diplomacy over the noise of arms. Arms trade is so widespread that it is generally underestimated. Illegal arms trafficking supports not a few world's conflicts. *Non-violence* as a political style can and must do much to stem this scourge.

The World Council of Churches' ***An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace*** (page 12): *'To care for God's precious gift of creation and to strive for ecological justice are key principles of just peace. For Christians they are also an expression of the gospel's call to repent from wasteful use of natural resources and be converted daily. Churches and their members must be cautious with earth's resources, especially with water. We must protect the populations most vulnerable to climate change and help to secure their rights.'* This statement, as well those of Pope Francis in *Laudato si'* remind us that a just peace begins with an integral ecology – the recognition and embracing of the interconnected of all things and our relationship with God, each other and all creation. It is in hearing the cry of the poor and the cry of earth that we also hear the cry of God.

Presentations

Mairead Maguire, 1976 Nobel Peace Prize winner, said, *'If we haven't taught the church's way of nonviolence, then we only leave people with two options: fight or flight.'* The just war tradition taught how to fight. The 'pacifist' tradition often resulted in flight. I think there is another option: that of *accommodation*. But, Jesus showed us a fourth alternative: *the reign of God where we work to build an inclusive community, which includes so-called enemies, by using the power of nonviolent loving, willing-to-risk-suffering action. Instead of a narrow exclusion he called for the practice of arms-wide-open- inclusion.*

It is necessary to remember that that the ***goal of nonviolent resistance to injustice is to awaken humanity in every person.*** It begins with a vision that is founded on the understanding that everyone wants to be seen, heard and loved. The end of nonviolent resistance is reconciliation with those who have been the oppressor. Love overwhelms hate, making possible the creation of a community that would otherwise be impossible. It is not about passivity but a creative, active nonviolent resistance. We see examples of violence recognised by the disciples in the Sermon on the Mount: abuse toward a so-called inferior by a superior; taking another's coat to sue for his last stitch of security, the cloak that a poor person, already homeless, wrapped himself in at night to keep warm; and the demanding Roman soldier forcing a Jew to carry his service pack for a mile. The invitation is to be creative: the

listener is invited to think of or imagine further examples of everyday violence. This is an invitation to thought, creativity and imagination, not a law, where the hearer can see their situation in a new way and imagine new possibilities of action. All in all, Jesus is presenting an alternative way to what was perceived as limited choices of an oppressed people –which is neither flight, flight nor accommodation. It is a form of resistance without being contaminated by the violence that one is resisting. When one is able to see past the violent response, people have many possibilities. The call is to act against domination by using our imaginations, courage and strength.

I have mentioned that I understand the alternative to the Just War doctrine is that of Just Peace. Without it, peace is not possible. This is the peace that Pope Francis outlines in **Laudato Si'**. This is the way of gospel nonviolence. It cultivates justice and peace in ourselves, our relationships, our social and political structures, and our culture, whilst also resisting injustice and violence in these areas. To do this it is necessary to recognise and acknowledge suffering, violence and harm rather than blame and punish them. This is restorative justice.

The interlocking nature of injustice - the intersection of class, race, and gender - is clear. In his address to the UN General Assembly in September 2015, Pope Francis touched on themes around equitable decision-making, international governance and the distribution of power, and our relationship to each other and the environment.

<https://sojo.net/magazine/december-2016/seven-elements-just-peace> **Elements of Just Peace**

Just peace, active nonviolence has two sides to it:

- **the 'constructive' side** of promoting unity, healing, reconciliation and giving proper care and solidarity with the marginalised. (Terrence Rynne). This is the way of Jesus in his care for poor, women, children, sinners, Gentiles, and formation of a community of disciples. This is what the Year of Mercy is about, even though it should not be limited to a year.
- **the 'obstructive'** is that of non-cooperation with injustice or violence, such as strikes, boycotts, civil disobedience, or nonviolent civilian-based defense, or even not standing up when the national anthem is being played at a football match (Colin Kaepernick, *Love Makes a Way*) when it represents oppression of minorities from black people to LGBTIQ people. (Terrence Rynne).

Cardinal Turkson has repeatedly stated that one cannot stop war with war. He also underscored that Just War theory does not work. Just war criteria assume that a strategically applied use of violence under the right conditions will end violence, creating the possibility of peace. This approach does not work given the weapons of mass destructions available, particularly from the perspective of those on the receiving end of the of the one remaining superpower actions. Sr Matty (Dominican Sister from Iraq) said at the conference, 'You [Americans] ask, can we talk to terrorists, can we talk to ISIS in Iraq? The answer is yes!.....

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our destiny as Christians in Iraq is not controlled by ISIS. It is controlled by the United States. ISIS in Iraq is a bunch of desperately hungry people who will kill for some bread. But if the rich people in the U.S., in Russia, in Europe stop arming them, then we will have life. We will live. Otherwise, we will die. If the rich want us to stay alive—as Christians in Iraq—then we will live. If the rich want us to die, then we will die.'

Sr Matty and others, as I have said before, are the experts that we need to listen to. She proclaimed 'Just war is killing us! There is no just war'. This proclamation fell on very receptive ears. The aim of the conference was to listen carefully to what people in those conflict and violent situations have to say about the place of nonviolence in our church teaching. The message was clear. Just war theory is not working. What is needed from the church is leadership on strategic nonviolence and training in conflict resolution; study of the principles of active peacemaking; support for unarmed civilian protection teams; public stands against violence by bishops and priests; preaching on gospel nonviolence; and standing shoulder to shoulder with people in the streets. Together we wrestled with how we could 'recommit to the centrality of gospel nonviolence.' As Sister Matty witnessed members of her religious community die for lack of medical care during war, she asked '*Which of the wars we have been in is a just war?..... 'In my country, there was no just war. War is the mother of ignorance, isolation, and poverty. Please tell the world there is no such thing as a just war. I say this as a daughter of war.'*

Creating a theology of peace

The conversation in Rome was whether just war could ever be theologically permissible. Since the Second Vatican Council, there have been two key documents: ***The Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et spes***, 1965) and ***Peace on Earth (Pacem in terris***, 1963). Both repudiated war, especially the development of nuclear weapons, and advocated for a more comprehensive peace than a policy of 'mutual assured destruction.' The ***Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World*** (par. 82) and Pope Paul VI state that it is '*our clear duty to strain every muscle as we work for the time when all war can be completely outlawed.*' **The key goal is to outlaw war, not to legitimise or refine the criteria of war by using or teaching just war theory.** What is required is a new framework consistent with Gospel nonviolence and Catholic social teaching is pointing us in the direction of developing a just peace approach consistent with Gospel nonviolence.

Cardinal Turkson said that maintaining the just war theory has often obstructed our attention, imagination and will to commit to nonviolent practices. Unfortunately, there has been little or no awareness of this specific practice, although the organised practice has been around for decades; how rarely Catholic leaders speak about or promote nonviolent resistance (especially boycotts, strikes, civil disobedience, etc.) to injustice and violence; how little resistance is mounted by Catholic leaders to enormous military spending, primarily in countries with large militaries; how little we hear from Catholic leaders about the need to humanize or illuminate the dignity of our enemies, especially regarding people in groups like ISIS.

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Since the Rome gathering, a number of articles have appeared critical of the Statement handed to Pope Francis. Their focus, again has been on the relatively small just war part of the statement without giving attention to the call to develop nonviolent practices. The fact that so much response to the conference focused on just war and not on how the Catholic Church can and should develop more Gospel nonviolence in our education, sacramental life, preaching, seminaries, advocacy, funding, agencies, and practices illustrates why maintaining the just war theory in the church too often obstructs our attention, imagination, and even will to commit to more nonviolent conflict transformation.

Lisa Sowle Cahill, a Catholic ethicist, wrote, 'Although the idea and theory of a just war has not officially been repudiated, no pope since the Council has approved a war, or even mounted a defense of the justice of war in principle.' It was suggested that during the Council that every war should be condemned (Italian Bishop Luigi Bettazzi), 'That is what Pope John [XXIII] did when he claimed that thinking that wars can bring justice and peace was silly [*alienum est a ratione, or 'alien to reason'*]' Bettazzi continued, 'Now, every war is a total war, because they all affect the civil population, and therefore is against God and against humanity. [In this situation] a Catholic, a Christian, could never become a soldier.'

Pope Paul VI: 'the Church cannot accept violence, especially the force of arms.'

Pope John Paul II: 'violence is the enemy of justice,' and 'it violates our dignity';

Pope Benedict XVI: 'loving the enemy is the nucleus of the Christian revolution' and 'it's impossible to interpret Jesus as violent';

Pope Francis: '[T]he true strength of the Christian is the power of truth and love, which leads to the renunciation of all violence. Faith and violence are incompatible.'

The strong peace message of the Second Vatican Council drove some to embed just war criteria deeper into church teaching. Others in the church embraced **Pope Paul VI's** strong call on the World Day of Peace in 1972: '**if you want peace, work for justice!**' This led priests, religious, and lay people to throw themselves into the work for social justice, economic development, and the promotion of peace as an expression of their Catholic faith. These Catholics watched as a broad school of Christian thought developed - predominately in Protestant and Anabaptist traditions – judging just war to be obsolete and embracing a vision and practice known as 'just peace'. I have already alluded to this when in 2013 the World Council of Churches, representing over 560 million Christians in Protestant, Orthodox, and other Christian denominations, announced that '**by its calling and vocation the Christian church is to be a peace church.**' What if 1.2 billion Catholics did the same?

'The weapon of the church is love'

Bishop Paride Taban of South Sudan gave us a glimpse of what active nonviolence looks like. The 80 year old has lived through Africa's longest-running civil war. He has gone through it as an unarmed Christian peacemaker and stayed with the people in war. He, along with three

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priests, were taken captive by the Sudanese People's Liberation Army, a militant group in the second Sudanese civil war, for 100 days in 1999. They lived in the bush, eating dry maize and wild fruits. Like so many of his people, he still suffers the trauma of his experience. But, in the midst of this brutal sectarian war, he founded the South Sudan Council of Churches which was crucial in bringing about the 2005 peace accord, and which even now he works to maintain. He and his priests were trusted by all sides in the conflict – all of whom committed horrible atrocities, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and rape as a weapon of war. Taban said, *'To be a person of nonviolence is to have impartiality..... Be impartial! Not neutral, impartial. Have great love for the people. Be a shepherd. A shepherd is one who has love for all the sheep. That is what Jesus taught us.'* He founded the 2,500-acre Holy Trinity peace village in order to build a place where different tribes, with generations of animosity, could live together and provide for themselves. He lived there alongside 81 families. The village now has more than 3,000 people working productive fields. The village is a no-gun haven in a highly armed society. *'The weapon of the church is love'*, says Taban. There, the church remained with all the people and never advocated for weapons. Taban said, *'We need a clear message from the church—from the pope to the grassroots—that the church stands for nonviolence..... We are the voice of the church, and we are coming here to say that this is the need of the church. We want an encyclical.'*

'We need a clear message'

Francisco De Roux, a Jesuit priest said, Catholics living between brutal militants in Colombia faced radical opposition when working in the Magdalena region for 14 years. 'Our purpose was to accompany the regional communities in a program of development and peace in the middle of the conflict.' Despite these violent attacks, he said, *'I am certain that because of the generosity of my companions, women and men, and due to the way they devoted themselves to protect life and dignity in extreme difficulties, the Magdalena process became a reference [point] in the construction of structural peace.'* To most people's surprise, the recent peace treaty was rejected by a slim margin. He suggests now that despite losing they have won. Whatever the result of the referendum they would continue to build from the result, whatever it was. Their work was not about the political future of President [Juan Manuel] Santos, nor against the political future of former President [Alvaro] Uribe, nor the political future of the FARC. The *raison d'être* for the struggle was because they cared only to be able to live as human beings. They dreamt of taking a first step by approving the negotiations with the FARC, but this aim was not achieved. But as Antonio Machando says: *'The truth is what it is, and remains true though we may think the opposite.'* And yet this truth, the result of the referendum, may be the way that leads us to overcome the deepest of our problems – namely, ourselves – people who, as evidenced by this vote, exclude one another, are unable to grapple together on deep issues; and with the knowledge that our animosities and aggression – expressed in politics, in the media, in academic and faith-based debates, and within families – have lethal consequences among rural communities, and in the madness of war, where our young lose their lives, while other serious problems of the country remain unresolved. He said that perhaps we had not accepted the uncomfortable notion that we are part of the problem, and precisely because we are part of the problem, part of the crisis, our responsibility to be

part of the solution becomes more salient. It is time to listen to one another, to understand and reconcile with those who, for social, political, institutional and ethical reasons, think differently; to accept our differences; to examine from all viewpoints, what is it that each person must change, so that all of us may live in dignity and in a peace that brings us well-being to every woman, man and child.

'War changed my life'

One Conference participant *Katarina Kruhonja*, former Board member of Pax Christi International, and founder of the Centre of Nonviolence in Osijek, shared this:

'War changed my life. For us ordinary people of Croatia, the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia came so suddenly we were confused. The war and the logic of war spread like a violent fire. From a culture of nationalism to the fear-ridden images of the enemy, to being surrounded by Serbian forces bombing us. I found that I started to think like others, there was no other way. It is them or us.

'While we were thinking and praying in a small group we spoke about the meaning of love for our enemy in this very situation. Some said maybe the love of enemy now is to kill them, to prevent them from committing more atrocities. This kind of logic alarmed me deeply. I started to think, what would it mean to love my enemy in this time of war? I could not find the answer. But then I made a choice, from my will. I said, killing my enemy for sure is not the way Jesus would love his enemy. So, I chose to love my enemy as Jesus would. I did not know what this would mean. This choice was my first move from the logic of violence, and I felt I could breathe again.

'My next step was to think how would I defend life? I would defend life but not by killing. But what if I needed to defend the life of my children? I don't know what I would do in such a situation. But this passover from the logic of violence opened my heart and my mind to ask: what could I do for peace and the end of the war? I met someone who was an ethicist and then a conscientious objector. Together we began to think about how we could bring peace in the middle of the war. And this was the beginning of the peace movement, the Centre for Nonviolence and Human Rights in Osijek, from the middle of the war.

'We tried to find very concrete things we could do in our part of Croatia. Today, twenty years, on the situation is not as dramatic but we have the same challenge. How to be a person of nonviolence in a situation of polarisation like ours? How to interpret our past? It is the same question: How can I be a person of nonviolence and work to love my enemy and not be part of excluding the other?'

Effective alternatives to war

Just peace principles are becoming more robust. They have been applied in interfaith contexts, in arguing against drone warfare, in analysing the global war on women, and by Catholic aid agencies providing service in conflict zones. Effective alternatives to war are emerging. The conversation is no longer about justifying cases where armed force may be legitimised, nor is it about the pacifism of personal conscience. The focus is to apply the vast amounts of peacemaking research, civil resistance tactics, and just peace principles with the church's deep, pervasive peace theology. Pope Francis named his agenda: a church of the poor, praise

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of creation, and gospel nonviolence. His theme for this upcoming 50th celebration of the World Day of Peace on January 1, 2017 will be Nonviolence is style of politics for peace.

It extremely important for the Church to keep a just peace approach front and centre in all such cases and advocate, even in the midst of violence, for actions that will transform the violence with just peace. The Catholic Church does not need, and 'should not' provide, 'explicit justification or legitimation for military violence. When the level of dehumanisation is so high, then what is 'necessary' is not so much lethal force, but the willingness to risk one's life for the sake of the dignity of all people.'

Just peace can be thoroughly integrated with *Laudato Si'* in a manner that recognizes that violence done to human communities is often accompanied by devastating environmental destruction. *An integral ecology contributes to an integral just peace. 'For the Church a tradition of just peace has been ... given to us by Jesus. Jesus dialogued with enemies and with poor and marginalized persons, raising them up and healing impoverished, war traumatized peoples, driving out their demons. Jesus not only had a declaratory policy urging peace-building, he lived peace-building and commissioned us to follow him.'*

The church's role is to emphasise the protection of life, not to destroy it (human and otherwise, including creation) **by going to war**. If the Church made the shift to consistently promote nonviolence and just peace it would **liberate creative imagination and challenge the human community to commit human and financial resources to develop and commit to nonviolent practices and even draw society away from war sooner**. The Church should draw on the just peace approach and advocate for nonviolent strategies of protection the vulnerable whenever there is a threat. Even political and military planners decide on military action, the Church's role should be to insist that the answer is not war but protection and transformation, and name the atrocities and the responding military action as a tragedy, a failure on the way of just peace, and inconsistent with human dignity and a culture of human rights for all. The Church would not be abandoning the responsibility to protect. It is shifting the focus on how we might protect communities and transform the conflict.

Pope Francis in his previous encyclical *The Joy of the Gospel* has laid out his peace plan. In sum, he urges dialogue, dialogue, dialogue—within society, among states, with other faiths, with reason and science—to build a people of peace through reconciliation. Peace-building is people-building, Pope Francis tells us, and every person is called to be a peacemaker. Inequality and exclusion breed violence, so development is a path to peace. What can the church bring to that dialogue? Religious actors bring three 'I's' to world politics: institutions, ideas and imagination. The church has rich institutions to foster dialogue, reconciliation and right relationships through its justice and peace commissions, Catholic universities and N.G.O.'s, the pontifical academies and the Holy See's diplomatic corps. When action is stalled at the governmental level, the church can continue dialogue using this vast array of global institutions.

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The just peace approach means that we cannot settle for an end justifies the means approach because key ingredient that that the means are 'seeds of the ends', hence the need to use means that reflect the ends we hope to accomplish – if such an end is to be reached. The just peace approach is not easy or quick. It includes restorative justice, diplomacy, building community relationships and integral development, prevention of violent conflict, challenging the systems that profit from war, acknowledging our interconnection with and caring for the environment, conflict transformation, cultivating cultures of peace, and much more.

In response to those who have asked if 'just war' theory/approach could be held alongside nonviolence and just peace, we need to say that it is not consistent with the life and teaching of Jesus. As stated earlier, whether in a 'restrictive' or 'less restrictive' version, the 'just war' approach has functioned to more often to legitimise and perpetuate war rather than prevent and has established a mentality where the only response to conflict is more violence. We need only look at Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria to name a few countries, where war causes much suffering, waste of resources, spending on militarisation such as nuclear weapons, the arms trade, and a war system embedded in our economy and politics. If a moral framework has such a pervasive record of shortcomings or some might say failure through 1,600 years of ongoing evolution and refinement, it's reasonable and even urgent to develop a new moral framework. The 'just war' approach also obstructs the development of nonviolent conflict transformation and just peace because our attention, imagination, and will to commit to nonviolent practices is obstructed. ***A new moral framework is required and it included not limiting war but outlawing war. Holding fast to a just war approach limits our ability to find nonviolent responses and find resources and skills need to undertake the work. We rarely reflect on whether war works. We rarely take into account all the costs of war – economic, social, environmental and psychological in measuring its effectiveness. We rarely question whether the money spent on military budgets achieves the true peace and stability that so many seek.***

'[Unless we] are ready to start to die by the thousands in dramatic vigorous new exploits for peace and justice, we should sadly confess that we really never meant what we said... Unless we are prepared to pay the cost of peacemaking, we have no right to claim the label or preach the message.'

Ron Sider

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Just Peace Principles

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

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