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**Just Peacemaking Initiative: The Challenge and Promise of Nonviolence for Our Time**  
**Participant Packet**  
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Module documents online:

Images:
- The Works of Mercy – by Rita Corbin (ritacorbin.com)
- Shekenia Gay, Gainesville Catholic Worker – by John Zokovitch
True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice.  
Martin Luther King, Jr., during the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955

Welcome to the JustMatters module on just peacemaking. We are most grateful for your willingness to participate in this module. The process you are engaged in will hopefully be as transformative as it is challenging and interesting.

In 2002, JustFaith Ministries was invited to join 21 other “initiating organizations” to work on The Peoples’ Peace Initiative, a Pax Christi USA-led collaborative grassroots process of reflection on the challenges and opportunities for peacemaking in the 21st century. The resulting document from that six-year process, Called to be Peacemakers, leads us to this place and this time.

The peoples’ peacemaking initiative now continues with you and is more important than ever. We invite you to continue or embark on this journey and help us create a more just and nonviolent world. Peace with justice.

More than ever, our world needs this kind of bold peacemaking work. Just peacemaking must be waged in a spirit-filled and nonviolent campaign that begins with the each person and moves out into our communities and our world, never taking our eyes from the root causes: poverty, racism and militarism.

This module focuses on making connections: with each other, with economic and racial justice, with budget priorities, with corporate greed, with militarism. You will be making those connections and committing to each other to include "peacemaker" as part of your core identity.

The process asks more from you than just discussing peacemaking through a lens of political and social analysis. It will ask you for something in the end that really matters—making a covenant to yourself and to one another to make just peacemaking part of your core identity rooted in faith: who you ARE in this world.

We have worked with Pax Christi USA to create a rich experience that includes readings, films, discussion, activities and opportunities to engage each other and your broader community. We have included voices of peacemakers "at home" and abroad. Throughout the process, we stress the importance of ecumenical and interfaith work on just peacemaking.

We are inspired by your commitment, encouraged by your spirit, and we look forward to hearing about your journey as just peacemakers.

It isn’t enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to believe in it. One must work at it.  
Eleanor Roosevelt
From Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN
Executive Director, Pax Christi USA

The mission statement of Pax Christi USA begins, “Pax Christi USA strives to create a world that reflects the Peace of Christ by exploring, articulating, and witnessing to the call of Christian nonviolence.” The word “peace” is right there at the beginning of our mission and it is incorporated right there into our name (Pax Christi is Latin for “Peace of Christ”). Working for peace with justice is who we are. And we hope that this module will encourage some of you to join us in this work, and deepen the commitment to peacemaking of others who are already with us.

I cannot think of a more poignant time than now for people of faith to delve into and hopefully take up the gospel imperative of peacemaking. I am confident that those who participate in this module – a prophetic and eloquent collaboration between JustFaith Ministries and Pax Christi USA and led by Pax Christi USA National Council member Scott Wright – will have their hearts and minds opened to and transformed by what they find here. One of our Ambassadors of Peace, Colman McCarthy, wrote, “The earth is too small a star and we too brief a visitor upon it for anything to matter more than the struggle for peace.” I think that once you and your small group have engaged in this process, you may feel exactly the same way.

But the work of peace in our world is not a work that we shoulder alone. We have recognized that there is power in numbers, and that we need each other in order to stay with this work for the long haul. We meet the challenge and promise of nonviolence together, as community, as Church, as God’s family, brothers and sisters to one another. We take strength in our diversity and recognize the power that we exercise when we join hands, stand and walk forward together. We hope that you will reach out and join hands with others who are seeking to live nonviolently, act justly, and witness to peace, so that together we can realize our power to change the world.

In speaking to Pax Christi members from around the world in 1995, Pope John Paul II called the movement for peace within the Catholic Church “precious.” He stated that our movement helps “to develop conscience, so that justice and the search for the common good can prevail in relations between individuals and peoples. These are the foundations for lasting peace.” We are so happy that you have entered into this process to explore “just peacemaking” and the challenge and promise of nonviolence for our time. Most of all, we hope that this is just the beginning for you, the first steps in taking on the mantle of peace. We all long for that “lasting peace” of which Blessed John Paul II speaks. We need more people who are willing to help build those foundations which lead to it. We at Pax Christi USA are ready to stand with you and accompany you in this heroic, life-giving work.

In Christ’s peace,

Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN
From Marie Dennis
Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace
Co-President, Pax Christi International

A Life-giving Pathway to Just Peace

A closed door dialogue between civil society actors from Israel and Palestine – a conference on conflict resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo based on experience in Ituri and Kivu – a series of trainings on peace, reconciliation and respect for human rights for the Pax Christi network in the Great Lakes region of Africa – trainings for young politicians in Macedonia – dialogues between Serbian and Albanian youth in Kosovo and between youth from Kosovo and youth from Northern Ireland – courses in preventive reconciliation using the principles of Aikido in the Philippines – international youth seminars on topics such as peace-building, organizational management and media awareness – “peace week” initiatives, many of them annual, in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, France, UK, the African Great Lakes region, Kosovo, Russia, Croatia, the Philippines and Colombia – exchanges of experience between civil society from the Middle East and from Central Europe on their role in bringing about nonviolent social change – training courses on nonviolence in Lebanon and Jordan – more than 30 years of dialogue with the Russian Orthodox Church ...

Dear Friends – as you embark on this JustFaith Ministries process, you will be joining a multitude of faithful people around the world who are making peace in the ordinary and extraordinary, local and global, grassroots and day by day dimensions of life. The activities of these peacemakers around the world and in the U.S. are Pax Christi’s strength and shape its vision. Pax Christi USA, for example, is deeply committed to a multiyear antiracism strategy that facilitated a remarkable multiracial, multicultural reflection about the challenges of peacemaking in the 21st century. The fruit of that reflection forms the basis of this process.

Pax Christi is an international Catholic peace movement founded in France in 1945 by a lay woman, Marthe Dortel-Claudot, and a Catholic bishop, Pierre-Marie Theas, who had been arrested by the Gestapo for speaking out against persecution of the Jews. Its purpose was to promote reconciliation between the French and the Germans at the end of World War II. Pax Christi now includes member organizations and partners in over 60 countries on five continents, with over 100,000 members worldwide. This global presence is reflected in the composition of the Executive Committee with members from South Africa, the Netherlands, Croatia, Colombia, Germany, Lebanon, Portugal, France, New Zealand, Kenya, the United States and Belgium. In our movement, lay people, clergy and members of the hierarchy work together on an equal and democratic basis.

As a Catholic movement and global network, Pax Christi International brings together people from many different backgrounds, cultures and faith traditions to make real their shared vision of peace, reconciliation and social justice. Believing that religion should always be a force for peace and social justice, we work for the transformation of a world shaken by violence, terrorism, deepening inequalities and global insecurity.

Pax Christi’s efforts to foster a culture of nonviolence, to nurture programs of peace education and training, mediation, reconciliation and nonviolent action are central to our mission. Pax Christi
combines activism with a strong spirituality inspired by a commitment to peace and reconciliation. By developing a spirituality and theology of peace, Pax Christi seeks to insert moral and ethical principles on issues of war and peace into the public and political arenas.

One of the great privileges of my life has been to serve as the first lay president of Pax Christi International, a position I shared first with Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and now with Bishop Kevin Dowling from South Africa. My prayer for you as you embark on this journey and wrestle with hard questions about how to make peace real in our broken world is that you will experience the enormous richness of Pax Christi’s global embrace.

Marie Dennis
DOROTHY DAY, UNION SQUARE SPEECH  
(NOVEMBER 6, 1965)

It is not just Vietnam, it is South Africa, it is Nigeria, the Congo, Indonesia, all of Latin America. It is not just the pictures of all the women and children who have been burnt alive in Vietnam, or the men who have been tortured, and died. It is not just the headless victims of the war in Colombia. It is not just the words of Cardinal Spellman and Archbishop Hannan. It is the fact that whether we like it or not, we are Americans. It is indeed our country, right or wrong, as the Cardinal said in another context. We are warm and fed and secure (aside from occasional muggings and murders amongst us). We are the nation the most powerful, the most armed and we are supplying arms and money to the rest of the world where we are not ourselves fighting. We are eating while there is famine in the world. Scripture tells us that the picture of judgment presented to us by Jesus is of Dives sitting and feasting with his friends while Lazarus sat hungry at the gate, the dogs, the scavengers of the East, licking his sores. We are the Dives. Woe to the rich! We are the rich. The works of mercy are the opposite of the works of war, feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, nursing the sick, visiting the prisoner. But we are destroying crops, setting fire to entire villages and to the people in them. We are not performing the works of mercy but the works of war. We cannot repeat this enough. “In Peace is My Bitterness Most Bitter,” The Catholic Worker, January 1967, 1-2.
Introduction

“At the beginning of the last century nine out of ten people killed in war were soldiers... 
At the beginning of this century nine out of ten people killed in war are civilians... Most of 
them are children.” – A Child’s Century of War, First Run / Icarus Films, 2001

"We are against war because it is contrary to the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and the only 
important thing is that we abide in His Spirit. It is more important than being American, 
more important than being respectable, more important than obedience to the State. It 
is the only thing that matters." – Dorothy Day, The Catholic Worker, April 1948

By Scott Wright
National Council, Pax Christi USA

Welcome to the Just Peacemaking Initiative! On behalf of Pax Christi USA and JustFaith, we 
want to thank you for your participation in what we hope will be for you a journey of 
transforming faith into action. In the weeks and months that follow, we invite you to share your 
journeys with each other, knowing that we are bound together by a broken world we share, and 
by the dreams and longings we have for peace. Though we may often feel alone and 
overwhelmed by the violence in our midst, as people of faith we know we are surrounded by a 
cloud of witnesses – all those holy women and men of faith who have gone before and those who 
will come after – joining us together in a living tradition and witness for justice and peace. Each 
of us can do something to end violence and war and bring peace into our world, and together, 
with God’s help, we can make a difference.

Just Peacemaking Initiative: The Challenge and Promise of Nonviolence for Our Time is a study 
guide designed to deepen the commitment of Christians and people of good will in our vocation 
as peacemakers. Through a process of prayer, study, and action, we hope to share with one 
another what the Gospel and the Christian tradition have to say about war and peace, and take up 
the challenge and promise of nonviolence as a response to what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. 
called “the giant triplets of evil” – the poverty, racism and violence so destructive of human life, 
God’s creation, and Gospel values, both at home and abroad.

We live in a world that is permeated by hatred and violence at all levels of society. But there is 
also hope – enduring hope – in the emergence of countless “Occupy Wall Street” movements for 
global economic justice, and countless “Arab Springs” for justice and peace. These social 
movements are reminiscent of the non-violent civil rights and farmworker movements in the 
1960s and 1970s in the United States, and the non-violent movements in the 1980s and 1990s in 
Eastern Europe that led to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communism.

Just as Dr. King realized he could not advocate for the pursuit of nonviolent social change at 
home while remaining silent about the war in Vietnam, so, too, we cannot remain silent about the 
poverty, racism, and violence that affects the poor and people of color at home in our efforts to
end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and to achieve peace. As Martin Luther King said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” so too, “Violence anywhere is a threat to peace everywhere.”

A Spirituality of Nonviolence and Just Peacemaking

Now more than ever we need to ground our lives in a spirituality of nonviolence and just peacemaking. For decades, Christians have worked for peace grounded in the words: “If you want peace, work for justice.”

Since 9/11, the U.S.-led “war on terror” has done serious damage to the basic principles of international human rights and humanitarian law. The increasing militarization and domination of the planet, the proliferation of military bases across the globe, the proliferation of conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction, the reliance on high-tech military weapons and unmanned drones, the creation of an all-volunteer standing army and reliance on military contractors to fight our wars, and a permanent war economy based on corporate power indicate that we have far surpassed the fear expressed by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when he said: “A nation that spends more and more on weapons of war than on programs of social uplift is fast approaching spiritual death.”

In addition to these concerns, the cycles of violence and hatred between ethnic and religious groups is such that – whether it be in the Balkans, the Indian subcontinent, the Great Lakes region of Africa, the Philippines, Colombia, or the Middle East – a still deeper grounding in nonviolence is necessary, based on mutual forgiveness and reconciliation with justice.

Just Peacemaking, Economic and Interracial Justice

Violence today comes in many forms, and the connections between just peacemaking, economic and interracial justice are woven deep. Poverty is the result of economic systems and structures that may be characterized as “institutionalized violence,” and it intersects with the violence of institutional racism in ways that disproportionately affect people of color. Gender violence further oppresses and excludes poor women, and most especially poor women of color.

Equally disturbing is the mass incarceration of people of color. The number of African Americans imprisoned each year has increased 26 times since 1983, while the number of Latino immigrants detained in detention centers and eventually deported has increased from 10,000 in 1996 to more than 400,000 a year under the Bush and Obama administrations.

Since 9/11, the military budget in the United States has grown from $350 billion to $700 billion a year, while the wealth gap between white families and people of color families has doubled with

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1 This is the conclusion to the 2008 International Commission of Jurists report on “Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights.”
the collapse of the housing market. The average African American or Hispanic family now has twenty times less wealth than the average white family.

Global corporations and nations alike vie for control and access to valuable natural resources, while military contractors and defense industries increase their share of the global economy and deprive the poor on all continents of the resources they need for a dignified human life. In the last thirty years there has been a huge transfer of wealth in the United States from the poor and middle class to the wealthiest one percent.

**Just Peacemaking, Disarmament and Reconciliation with Justice**

On both a domestic and international scale, the production and proliferation of weapons has increased the levels of violence in our city streets and fueled wars on nearly every continent, making urgent the call for *just peacemaking, disarmament and reconciliation with justice* at every level of society.

Since the end of World War II, the United Nations, the Holy See, and the World Council of Churches have all put forward the urgent need to abolish nuclear weapons, and have further discredited the morality of deterrence as a justification for possessing them. International terrorism and the global war on terror have only brought to light the need to further restrain the use of violence and move closer to the day when war itself is abolished. We need to develop nonviolent strategies and practices to prevent war, diminish the actual violence of war, and create ways to heal the wounds of war in post-conflict situations.

**Just Peacemaking, Human Rights and Global Restoration**

Violence and war are so interconnected that increasingly the very future of our planet is at stake. Global warming, desertification, and the corporate pillage of scarce natural resources – including arable land and potable water – are increasing levels of violence, massive human migration, famine, and disease across the global South. We need to work for *just peacemaking, human rights and global restoration*.

One promising response to war and violence is the developing field of just peace-building, which focuses on violence prevention and restorative justice. At the heart of just peace-building is the intentional building of relationships at every level of society dedicated to nonviolent transformation of conflict, the pursuit of social justice and the creation of cultures of sustainable peace.

These four dimensions of just peacemaking – a spirituality of nonviolence and peacemaking, the connections between economic justice and interracial justice, the call for disarmament and reconciliation with justice, and the work of human rights and global restoration – form the four priority areas of the work of Pax Christi USA. The vision of just peacemaking put forward in this module is a comprehensive approach to peace and nonviolence, and it responds both to the
traditional work of Pax Christi since its founding at the conclusion of World War II, as well as to the changing signs of the times in our world today.

“We Must Proceed Resolutely Toward Outlawing War Completely”

In 1993, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the bishops’ pastoral letter, The Challenge of Peace, the U.S. bishops affirmed a similar comprehensive vision of peace, and the essential vocation of peacemaking, in their anniversary reflection entitled The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace that still serves as a clear and comprehensive presentation of Catholic social teaching on the call to peacemaking in a new world:

“At home and abroad, we see the terrible human and moral costs of violence. In regional wars, in crime and terrorism, in ecological devastation and economic injustice, in abortion and renewed dependence on capital punishment, we see the tragic consequences of a growing lack of respect for human life. We must stand up for human life wherever it is threatened. That is the essence of our consistent life ethic and the starting point for genuine peacemaking.”

The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace concludes with a passionate appeal to outlaw war completely:

“As history’s bloodiest century ends, there should be no question that, in the words of Pope John Paul II, ‘we must proceed resolutely toward outlawing war completely and come to cultivate peace as a supreme good.’”

“Called to Be Peacemakers: A People’s Peace Initiative”

In 2003, to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the U.S. Catholic Bishops’ landmark peace pastoral, The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response, and the fortieth anniversary of the papal encyclical Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth), Bishop Wilton Gregory, then-president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued a statement entitled: “Called to Be Peacemakers.” It reaffirmed the centrality of the peacemaking vocation and included an invitation to the faithful:

“We invite dioceses, parishes, schools and universities, and other Catholic institutions and organizations to consider how they might use this moment and these anniversaries to raise up the essential vocation of peacemaking. . . . We invite all Catholics to reflect on ways they can be ‘sentinels of peace’. . . . ”

In response to this invitation by the bishops, Pax Christi USA began a six-year conversation with other national Catholic organizations to explore how we might collaborate on such an effort to engage Catholics in reflecting on this “essential vocation of peacemaking.” The fruit of this collaboration issued in a process of grassroots reflections that became known as “A People’s

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3 The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, p. 3.
4 The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, 50, John Paul II’s “Address to the Diplomatic Corps,” 531.
Peace Initiative.” This initiative gathered the “wisdom of the people” in dozens of diverse communities across the United States, rich and poor, white and people of color, U.S.-born and immigrants. The fruit of this labor is a summary document issued in 2008 entitled: “Called to Be Peacemakers: The Challenge and Promise of Peace in the 21st Century.”

A Just Peacemaking Initiative: The Challenge and Promise of Nonviolence for Our Time

Today, JustFaith and Pax Christi USA are together taking the next step in this process, with the promotion of a new resource: Just Peacemaking Initiative: The Challenge and Promise of Nonviolence for Our Time. Our hope is that these twelve study sessions on “Just Peacemaking” may provide a means by which Christians and people of good will may engage the heart of Christian teaching on war and peace. We especially draw attention to the connections between the wars abroad and the wars at home, and between peacemaking abroad and peacemaking at home.

We believe that Christians, by vocation, are called “to be peacemakers,” and that when we bear witness to the Gospel through our actions we are also contributing to the witness of the Church to be a sign of justice, peace, and reconciliation in the world today.

When the people of Eastern Europe tore down the Berlin Wall in 1989, they not only challenged a system of oppression through their nonviolent witness, they inspired a major development in the teachings of the Church and brought nonviolence into the public square as a legitimate and effective witness for justice and peace – just as the civil rights and farmworker movements did a generation ago, and people across the Middle East and North Africa are doing today as part of the “Arab Spring.”

Our firm conviction is that by bearing witness to the Gospel call to Just Peacemaking for Our Time, we may truly put into practice these inspiring words of John Paul II:

“It is by uniting our own suffering for the sake of truth and freedom to the sufferings of Christ on the cross that we are able to accomplish the miracle of peace and are thus in a position to discern the often narrow path between the cowardice which gives in to evil and the violence which, under the illusion of fighting evil, only makes it worse.”5

The Development of Nonviolence in Christian Life and Social Teaching

The condemnation of violence and war should not be surprising, given the millions who were slaughtered by war during the past century. The preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, which was signed on June 26, 1945, begins on a note of sorrow: “We the people of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind… and to live in peace with one another as good neighbors…”

5 Centesimus Annus, A Hundred Years of Catholic Social Teaching, 25.
More often than not, wars have been fueled by racial, ethnic, and religious violence, including genocide, as well as the greed of nations and corporations to control vital natural resources. For that reason, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke of the need to resist the “giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism.”

Traditionally, the Catholic Church has taught that war might be justified if certain conditions were met: just cause, legitimate authority, just intention, probability of success, last resort, and proportionality – which states that the overall destruction expected from the use of force must be outweighed by the good to be achieved.

The massive destructiveness of the Second World War, however, as well as the development and use of nuclear weapons, raised questions as to whether any war fought in the 20th century could meet the necessary conditions of a “just war.” The potential for a nuclear holocaust brought about a major shift in Catholic social teaching on war and peace during the Second Vatican Council.

**Paul VI: “No More War, War Never Again!”**

Pope John XXIII, in his 1961 encyclical letter *Pacem in Terris*, echoed this cry with his plea for an end to the arms race and a ban on nuclear weapons:

“We are deeply distressed to see the enormous stocks of armaments that have been, and continue to be, manufactured in the economically more developed countries... The people of these countries are saddled with a great burden, while other countries lack the help they need for their economic and social development... Justice, right reason, and the recognition of man’s dignity cry out insistently for a cessation to the arms race... Nuclear weapons must be banned.”

Four years later, the Second Vatican Council, in its *Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World*, called for “an evaluation of war with an entirely new attitude.”

The Council condemned, in no uncertain terms, “those actions designed for the methodical extermination of an entire people, nation or ethnic minority,” as well as “any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or extensive areas along with their population,” calling such actions “a crime against God and humanity, meriting unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation.” Both the Holocaust, and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, fall under this judgment.

In 1965, on the feast of St. Francis, Pope Paul VI made a passionate plea to the United Nations General Assembly and called for war to be abolished once and forever:

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6 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence,” delivered in Riverside Church in New York, April 4, 1967, exactly one year to the day before his assassination.


8 *Gaudium et Spes*, The pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World, 80.1.


10 *Gaudium et Spes*, The pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World, 80.3.
“If you want to be brothers [and sisters], let the weapons fall from your hands. You cannot love with weapons in your hands... It suffices to remember that the blood of millions of men and women, numberless and unheard of sufferings, useless slaughter and frightful ruin... unite you with an oath which must change the future history of the world: No more war, war never again! Peace, it is peace which must guide the destinies of peoples and of all humankind.”

John Paul II: “War is a Defeat for Humanity!”

Since 1989, and the inspiring nonviolent resistance of ordinary citizens that led to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, Catholic social teaching has undergone an amazing development. Both the devastating consequences of war and the inspiring witness of nonviolence led to a radical reappraisal of nonviolence in Christian social teaching that strongly condemns war as a means to resolve conflict and strongly affirms the power of nonviolence to achieve justice.

Pope John Paul II, speaking of these events in his encyclical letter, Centesimus Annus, was unequivocal in his admiration and support for nonviolence as an alternative to war:

“It seemed that the European order resulting from the Second World War and sanctioned by the Yalta agreements could only be overturned by another war. Instead, it has been overcome by the nonviolent commitment of people who, while always refusing to yield to the force of power, succeeded time after time in finding effective ways of bearing witness to the truth.”

Pope John Paul II, whose native Poland was victim to aggression both by German fascism and Soviet communism, was even stronger is his condemnation of war after the 1991 Persian Gulf War:

“No, never again, war, which destroys the lives of innocent people, teaches how to kill, throws into upheaval even the lives of those who do the killing and leaves behind a trail of resentment and hatred, thus making it all the more difficult to find a just solution to the very problems which provoked the war.”

This condemnation of war reached its strongest expression on January 1, 2000, the first day of the new century, when John Paul II spoke eloquently of the challenge of peace in his World Day of Peace message:

“In the century we are leaving behind, humanity has been sorely tried by an endless and horrifying sequence of wars, conflicts, genocides and ‘ethnic cleansings’ which have caused unspeakable suffering; millions and millions of victims, families and countries destroyed, an ocean of refugees, misery, hunger, disease, underdevelopment and the loss of immense resources. . . . The twentieth century bequeaths to us above all else a warning: wars are often the cause of further wars because they fuel deep hatreds, create situations of injustice and trample

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11 John Paul II, Centesimus Annus, A Hundred Years of Catholic social teaching, 23.
12 Centesimus Annus, A Hundred Years of Catholic social teaching, 52.
upon people’s dignity and rights. . . . War is a defeat for humanity. Only in peace and through peace can respect for human dignity and its inalienable rights be guaranteed.”

Benedict XVI: “The Kingdom of Christ Cannot Be Built by Force”

More recently, Pope Benedict XVI echoed this Gospel mandate to end violence on October 26, 2011, in the Italian town of Assisi, just prior to a “Day of Reflection, Dialogue and Prayer for Peace and Justice in the World: Pilgrims of Truth, Pilgrims of Peace.” In a general audience to those who had made a pilgrimage to the birth place of St. Francis, he said:

Jesus did not enter Jerusalem accompanied by a mighty army of chariots and horsemen. He is a poor king, the king of the poor of God . . . . of those who have inner freedom enabling them to overcome the greed and selfishness of the world, of those who know that God alone is their treasure . . . . He is a king who will make the chariots and steeds of battle disappear, who will break the weapons of war, a king who brought peace on the Cross, uniting heaven and earth and building a bridge between all mankind. The Cross is the new arch of peace, the sign and instrument of reconciliation . . . . the sign that love is stronger that any form of violence or oppression, stronger than death. Evil is overcome through goodness, through love.”

Ultimately, it is by our faithfulness to the Gospel call to be just peacemakers that we begin to make “the teaching and practice of active nonviolence a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel in the face of terrorism and contemporary ways of war.” Only then will we truly “proceed resolutely toward outlawing war completely… and cultivate peace as a supreme good,” and in this way move closer to the day when the ancient dream of the prophets and Christ’s gift of peace may finally become a reality for us and for all generations to come:

“For God will judge between the nations,
And shall decide for many peoples;
And they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war anymore.” (Isaiah 2:4)

15 Mary Evelyn Jegen, S.N.D., first National Coordinator of Pax Christi USA and Ambassador of Peace, Forward in a Great Tradition: The Development of Nonviolence in Catholic Life and Social Teaching. The original passage from Justice in the World, 6, reads: “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel.”
The Module

Overview and Logistics for Just Peacemaking Initiative:

The Challenge and Promise of Nonviolence for Our Time

This twelve-session module, Just Peacemaking Initiative: The Challenge and Promise of Nonviolence for Our Time, is the fruit of many consultations and contributions from Pax Christi USA and JustFaith members. It reflects a desire to link the experience of violence at home and abroad with the stories of just peacemakers and just peacemaking communities at home and abroad.

The module includes excerpts from the U.S. Catholic Bishops document, The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace, and from the most recent contribution of the World Council of Churches, An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace. It appeals as well to the best insights and witness of the historic peace churches and peacemakers of all faith traditions.

The heart of the module comes from Pax Christi USA’s summary reflection on the People’s Peace Initiative, entitled Called to Be Peacemakers: The Challenge and Promise of Peace in the 21st Century. This reflection marks the culmination of a six-year process convened by Pax Christi USA, including national Catholic organizations representing racially diverse communities, and will be read in its entirety during the twelve sessions.

The module is divided into four sections with three sessions each. Each section is based on one of the four priority areas chosen by Pax Christi USA and addresses an important aspect of the Christian tradition and witness to just peacemaking and nonviolence. Each of the four sections includes a film to be viewed and discussed by participants. These films are selected both to deepen reflection on the overall theme of just peacemaking, as well as to provide an alternative format for how the groups can engage in conversation about just peacemaking. These twelve sessions are outlined as follows:

Section I: Spirituality of Nonviolence and Just Peacemaking

1. The Challenge and Promise of Just Peacemaking for Our Time
2. Film: Joyeux Noel: Christmas Eve Truce, 1914
3. Called to Be Just Peacemakers at Home and Abroad. Film: Franz Jägerstätter: A Man of Conscience

Section II: Just Peacemaking and Economic and Interracial Justice

4. Making the Connections: Just Peacemaking at Home and Abroad
5. Film: Why We Fight: A Look at Where We Are Today
6. Economic Conversion: Turning Swords into Plowshares

Section III: Just Peacemaking, Disarmament and Reconciliation with Justice

7. The Challenge of Just Peacemaking at Home and Abroad
8. Film: The Forgotten Bomb: Remembering Hiroshima & Nagasaki
9. Disarming Our Communities at Home and Abroad

Section IV: Just Peacemaking, Human Rights and Global Restoration

10. Just Peacemaking and Peace Building at Home and Abroad
12. Building the Beloved Community and Renewing Creation

Each person in the group will receive a Participant Packet with the assigned readings. There will be several short readings for each session and these readings will provide a foundation for the following week’s session. Participants also will be asked to keep a journal in which they will reflect on the readings and write down questions that they might be grappling with. These reflections and questions will help animate the group discussions as well as provide a rich journaling experience for each participant. The focus, however, is not on the readings, but on the participants, and the search for ways to put into practice, in one’s personal life and in the local community, what has been learned in this twelve-session process.

For those who would like to do additional reading while engaged in this module, we recommend Tom Cordaro’s book, Be Not Afraid: An Alternative to the War on Terror (Erie, Pennsylvania: Pax Christi USA, 2008). This book provides an historical framework to engage in discussion about what just peacemaking means in light of the changes in the United States and in the world since 9/11. We include this link to the study guide for the book, which is also noted in Appendix III – Resources. [http://tinyurl.com/justfaith-org](http://tinyurl.com/justfaith-org)

Participant Packets
This Participant Packet has information on the module, a copy of the opening and closing prayers, and all reading assignments or the links to reading assignments. This Participant Packet also contains some of the questions that will form the basis for some small- and large-group discussions as well as provide “guideposts” for your own journaling and reflection.

For your convenience (and to save expensive printer cartridges) the Participant Packet is available preprinted from JustFaith Ministries Books and Videos. It is also available from the
facilitator as a separate PDF file that can be downloaded and printed locally or emailed to participants. This additional electronic access would be helpful to follow internet links provided in the documents for resources, article links, etc.

**The Session Structure**
The curriculum in this module is challenging, both in content and in what it asks of participants. We recommend that the group meets at least two to two-and-one-half hours every week, to give participants sufficient time to reflect on their experience in light of the readings. However, the length and frequency of the sessions is entirely up to the group, and "session" does not necessarily equate to "week".

**A typical session is structured this way:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welcome and Opening Prayer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part 1 - Discussion activity based on readings:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stories of Just Peacemakers at Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Called to Be Peacemakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 2 - An activity or participant report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 3 - Discussion activity based on readings:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stories of Just Peacemakers Abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Selected Readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing Prayer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is strongly recommended that groups organize at least one additional session midway through the module. If only one extra session is planned, we recommend that this session focus entirely on the issues of women and war given the devastating effects war making has always had on women and children. An excellent film is suggested for this session in Appendix I, Possible Projects, Reports and Activities. Additional sessions or activity time can be added to invite those who have experienced violence or war in their communities to speak to the group. Invited speakers might include victims of domestic violence or crime, veterans of foreign wars, immigrants or survivors of torture, former prisoners or gang members.

These “in-between” sessions might also be centered on the witness of just peacemakers in your community, be they the parents of victims of violence or young activists, or stories from the cloud of witnesses who continue to inspire our just peacemaking efforts.
Scripture reflection and prayer appropriate to the liturgical season may also be the center of an “in-between” session. The entire module may be completed in twelve weeks, and may be coordinated with the liturgical calendar: September – December (Advent / Christmas), January – April (Lent / Easter), or May – August (ordinary time). Other ideas for an optional session are included in Appendix I – Possible Projects, Reports and Activities.

**The Hoped for Outcome**

Our hope is that at the end of the twelve sessions participants will be inspired by examples of moral courage and your own understanding of the Christian tradition and of the Gospel to respond as a community to the difficult and troubling reality of violence and war of our times. With that in mind, we ask participants to consider organizing a just peacemaking dialogue in your own community, inviting local community groups and faith-based organizations to a conversation about working together to create alternatives to violence, racism and poverty.

We hope, too, that such efforts will bring JustFaith participants and Pax Christi USA members into a closer relationship, enabling us to more effectively and more prayerfully respond to the problems of violence in our communities, and to make the connections between the war at home and the war abroad. In the end, it is about building relationships of trust and seeking common ground across the racial, class and national barriers that often divide us.

**The Method**

Participants will focus on the subject of violence, war, and just peacemaking in light of the Christian tradition and particular Christian virtues – human dignity, hope, love of enemy, solidarity – and what these have to say about your own experience of violence, war, and the call to become peacemakers. Each session includes inspiring examples of Christian responses to violence and war by survivors and peacemakers alike. These examples are meant to engage participants in thinking critically about your own history and your own communities, and to move people toward action. Participants are encouraged to bring your own examples of inspiring peacemakers and spiritual companions to share with the group.

Four sessions will be devoted to viewing films. These films provide another format to share our journeys as just peacemakers. A fifth, shorter film, will be included in the third session. The films are:

- *Joyeux Noel* (Session 2) – 115 minutes
- *Franz Jägerstätter: A Man of Conscience* (Session 3) – 25 minutes
- *Why We Fight* (Session 5) – 100 minutes
- *The Forgotten Bomb* (Session 8) – 94 minutes
- *A Force More Powerful* (Session 11) – 90 minutes

In the final session, participants will share what they have learned by writing a Covenant of Just Peace together, based on reflections, thoughts and questions "harvested" throughout the module. Throughout the sessions, participants will develop four areas for the group to recall during this
final session. The ideas for each of these four areas should be identified and written on flip chart paper by a scribe as soon as they are shared. These ideas will form the framework for the covenant of Just Peace.

The four areas for developing are: (1) Lamentations – the violence in our world and our complicity in the violence for which we are truly sorry, (2) Signs of Hope – those concrete signs in history that inspire us and give us hope, (3) Questions and Petitions – those things for which we do not have a clear answer, and for which we ask God for wisdom, and (4) Bearing Witness – those actions to which we commit ourselves in the future as a witness to the Gospel call to nonviolence and just peace.

**Possible Projects, Reports and Activities.**

As described earlier, adding an "in between" session would be ideal for an additional film or outside speaker. However, there is also time allotted (30-60 minute blocks) in Sessions 7, 9, and 10 for individual projects, research or activities presented by participants. See a list of suggestions in Appendix I – Possible Projects, Reports and Activities. The idea is to add additional topics relating to the exploration of just peacemaking as well as different voices and learning activities to the standard reading, writing, watching and discussing. These projects and presentations could be of varying lengths and could include art, music, and movement. There is discussion about these options, who, when, etc. in the Business and Announcement section of Sessions 4 & 6.

**Culminating Session – Creating a Covenant of Just Peace**

Pax Christi USA and JustFaith Ministries have identified at least three benefits from participating in this module:

- being able to delve deeply into the topic of just peacemaking,
- creating a sense of community within the group over the course of the module, and
- moving from a "study group" to an action or mission based orientation – from the head to the heart to the feet.

As mentioned earlier, in the final session participants will be invited to share what they have learned by writing a Covenant of Just Peace together using these four areas as a framework: (1) Lamentations – the violence in our world and our complicity in the violence for which we are truly sorry, (2) Signs of Hope – those concrete signs in history that inspire us and give us hope, (3) Questions and Petitions – those things for which we do not have a clear answer, and for which we ask God for wisdom, and (4) Bearing Witness – those actions to which we commit ourselves in the future as a witness to the Gospel call to nonviolence and just peace.

**Collecting the Sense of the Group**

To set the stage for the covenant to emerge in the last session, facilitators will briefly describe this process for participants in Session 1, and follow up on it during each subsequent session. At
each session, have available four pages of flip chart paper labeled with the areas described above: Lamentations, Signs of Hope, Questions and Petitions, Bearing Witness.

During discussions, exercises and presentations, the group should be comfortable adding to each the comments, suggestions, "ah ha" moments or ideas as the "running consciousness" of the group. This is also an excellent way to gently and positively move from a conversation that has been overwhelmed with strong opinions or emotions.

Between sessions 10 and 12, the facilitator will ask for a volunteer group to transcribe the words and phrases into an electronic format from the flip chart papers and categorize them, summarizing and looking for similar comments.

**Guest Speakers and Field Trips**
Be open for guest speakers or “field trips” that might be appropriate for your group. Depending on the resources available in your community, you may have access to individuals or organizations actively involved with peacemaking activities and programs. Add yourself to mailing lists for local and regional organizations to learn about their activities. Attend a peace vigil or other action focused on a particular aspect of peacemaking. Seek out veteran’s peace organizations as well as those who assist with conscientious objection to war. See Appendix I – Possible Projects, Reports and Activities for a list of suggested speakers.

**Group Guidelines**
It is important to create an environment where each participant feels free to share his/her ideas and feelings and where each individual is committed to considering, carefully and genuinely, what each of the other participants has to say. During Session 1, the group will discuss some ground rules or guidelines for discussion. A sample of Group Guidelines is provided in this document (Session One-Attachment A).

**Journals**
Some people love to keep a journal. Others just can’t get in the routine. Suggest that participants try to keep a journal and to do some quiet reflecting after each session and to take notes on readings based on the questions posed. Encourage participants to make notations in the margins of the packet or to highlight various points they may wish to bring up in discussion. One method is suggested in the Participant Packet:
Evaluations
JustFaith Ministries provides both a participant and a facilitator evaluation, and each is helpful to the ongoing development of modules in the JustMatters program. Please complete the evaluation when the module is completed. The facilitator will remind the group about this.

Both the facilitator and the participant evaluation forms are online documents. Doing the evaluations online saves paper and time and allows the JustFaith Ministries staff to analyze the responses more effectively. Also, the online evaluations are easy to complete and should not take more than fifteen minutes. These online evaluations can be accessed at:
http://justfaith.org/JustMatters/Evaluations/justpeacemaking.html

There is a “clickable” link to the participant evaluation in the Participant Packet at the end of the table of contents.

Next Steps
Appendix II reflects a number of options for the group after the module is completed. During the final session of Just Peacemaking, there will an opportunity (1) to talk about what to do with the information shared during the course of the module, (2) to discuss whether the group would like to continue to meet, and (3) if so, under what structure and with what focus. A discernment document, Engaging the World Together, is included as a reading for the final session and will be helpful in this discussion. In addition, much of the discussion around the group’s Just Peacemaking Covenant will relate to the group's next steps. Engaging the World Together is provided as a link to a JFM website document.
In addition to the Additional Resources list provided in Appendix III, JustFaith Ministries also provides an online document, *Taking Action Resource Guide* [http://www.justfaith.org/graduates/pdf/takeaction_resourceguide.pdf](http://www.justfaith.org/graduates/pdf/takeaction_resourceguide.pdf) to help participants learn more in your area(s) of interest. This document also could be used individually or as a group during the final session. The online link to this document is included in Appendix II - Next Steps.

All of these resources will help you move from formation to action. They will also help bring closure to the *Just Peacemaking* module experience.

Important things to keep in mind as you prepare for the final session include the following: First, each participant will most likely have interest in and passion for different types of ministry, offer varied gifts, and differ on time available. Second, the work of social change and social ministry is often done best in groups. The formation and nurturing of groups is at the heart of the mission for both Pax Christi USA and JustFaith Ministries. Much of this work requires changing policies and structures and is often long term; in other words, it is work that is enhanced by joining with many people who have similar goals. Third, the spiritual journey that may have started with the module will not stop here. Most participants will continue the process of integrating your faith with the needs of the world and may or may not be ready to engage the world together. Encouraging such activity, though, is important.
Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of JustFaith and Pax Christi USA, who announced in 2010 a new partnership focused on promoting and practicing just peacemaking at home and abroad. It is our hope that this module will contribute to this new partnership, and help educate a Christian audience and people of good will about what the Gospel and our Christian tradition have to say about just peacemaking, and the challenge and promise of nonviolence for our time.

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SECTION I

Spirituality of Nonviolence and Just Peacemaking

As people of faith, we promote Christian nonviolence on a personal, communal, national, and international level. Believing in the Gospel call to conversion as found in the Beatitudes, we denounce and resist the evils of violence while striving to reflect the Peace of Christ.
Welcome to the *Just Peacemaking Initiative: The Promise and Challenge of Nonviolence for Our Time*. At the beginning of each of the 12 sessions, we would like to share a few words with you about what we hope to accomplish in each session. This first session will set the tone for all of the other sessions that follow, so we will take a little more time to share with you our hopes for the module. Above all, we want you to share with each other what you hope to discover in these 12 weeks together, and we will begin this session with some time to do just that.

For our part, the editors of this module are many, but we share a common desire and commitment to justice and peace. We are concerned about our world, and as people of faith, with roots in JustFaith and Pax Christi, we want to lift up and follow the Gospel call to just peacemaking and the prophetic tradition of our churches as a way of contributing to the healing and transformation of our broken world.

Throughout this module, we will be highlighting three things:

1. **Just Peacemaking.** Just Peacemaking is a new and promising way of understanding the church’s teaching on war and peace. It is based both on a careful reading of the signs of the times, where the Spirit of God is acting in history, and a careful discernment of what the Gospel is calling us to do as a People of God. Following the devastation of the Second World War, churches across the ecumenical spectrum have moved in a steady fashion away from the tradition of just war to what today is referred to as just peace. Each session will begin with readings from the Catholic and Protestant traditions that reflect this transformation. A century of war and the war on terror in Iraq and Afghanistan offer clear examples of why the Gospel calls us to search for nonviolent alternatives to prevent war, protect the innocent, and defend justice and peace in the world.

2. **The War at Home / The War Abroad.** On the 20th anniversary of the U.S. bishops’ pastoral letter on peace, Pax Christi USA initiated a process with more than a dozen national Catholic organizations called “The People’s Peace Initiative.” One of the goals of this ongoing process is to make connections between the violence at home and the violence abroad, as well as to lift up examples of just peacemakers at home and abroad. This is in line, too, with connecting the dots that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. pointed out in his 1967 address against the war in Vietnam, between poverty, racism and militarism. Today, in addition to the violence done against people, we see the same pattern of violence against the creation itself.

The structure of the module is built on the connections between the violence at home and the violence abroad, and each session includes readings that address the situation of violence both at home and abroad. In addition, the entire module addresses the four strategic priority areas of Pax Christi USA: (1) the Spirituality of Nonviolence and Just Peacemaking, (2) Just Peacemaking...
and Economic and Interracial Justice, (3) Just Peacemaking, Disarmament, and Reconciliation with Justice, and (4) Just Peacemaking, Human Rights, and Global Restoration.

(3) **Bearing Witness.** Finally, the overarching goal of these 12 sessions is to better prepare us to bear witness to our faith as we respond to the challenges and promises of our time. The module follows a process that is common today, of Prayer – Study – Action. This process has been a part of Pax Christi since it was founded near the conclusion of the Second World War, and it is central to the work of JustFaith as well. Our hope is that we will help prepare each other to bear witness together, in our families, our local faith communities or parish neighborhoods, and in our broader local community and world. That is why we include the word “Initiative” to call attention to this hope that we bear witness to our faith by joining with other communities and people to pray, dialogue, and take action together against poverty, racism, and violence at home and abroad.

This is our hope, now we invite you to share yours.
SESSION ONE
The Challenge and Promise of Just Peacemaking for Our Time

Goals of the Session:

- To respond to the call to strengthen just peacemaking as an essential dimension of our faith, reminding us that Jesus called us to be peacemakers.
- To deepen our understanding of Catholic Social Teaching on peace in light of the challenges of a world torn by violence and war.
- To participate in this module of just peacemaking as a way to become more actively involved in the ministry of JustFaith and the witness of Pax Christi for peace.

Readings for this session:

- Introduction sections in Participant Packet.
- Note to Participant for Section I, Sessions 1-3.
- “Group Guidelines” from Attachment A - Participant Packet.

Part One: Just Peacemaking at Home

- Ecumenical Statements on Just Peacemaking.
- Stories of Just Peacemakers at Home “Ten Years After 9/11, the Last Word is Love” – by Colleen Kelly, Pax Christi USA 2011 Teacher of Peace.
- Called to Be Peacemakers: The Challenge and Promise of Peace in the Twenty-First Century: I. Reading the Signs of the Times – A. Raising Our Voices: Our Lived Experience, Our Longings (1-3).

Part 3: Just Peacemaking Abroad

- “What Peacemaking Means to Me” – by Jessica Brown, Law Student, Pax Christi International Youth Forum Coordinator, California, USA.
- “No Peace without Justice, No Justice without Forgiveness” – by H.B. Michel Sabbah, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and former President of Pax Christi International.

OPENING PRAYER

Three readers to repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between.

Scripture Reading: “To do justice and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8b).”

Light the first candle, and place on the map in the group’s geographic location

Leader: The following reading is from The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, a Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the 10th Anniversary of bishops’ pastoral, The Challenge of Peace.

Leader: We cannot really be peacemakers around the world unless we seek to protect the lives and dignity of the vulnerable in our midst. We will read excerpts from The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace: The Call to Peacemaking in a New World.

Reader 1: We renew our call to peacemaking in a dramatically different world. The ‘challenge of peace’ today is different, but no less urgent. Although the nuclear threat is not as imminent, international injustice, bloody regional wars, and a lethal conventional arms trade are continuing signs that the world is still marked by pervasive violence and conflict.

Reader 2: At home and abroad, we see the terrible human and moral costs of violence. In regional wars, in crime and terrorism, in ecological devastation and economic injustice, in abortion and renewed dependence on capital punishment, we see the tragic consequences of a growing lack of respect for human life. We cannot really be peacemakers around the world unless we seek to protect the lives and dignity of the vulnerable in our midst. We must stand up for human life wherever it is threatened. This is the essence of our consistent life ethic and the starting point for genuine peacemaking.

Pray Together: Prayer for the Decade of Nonviolence

I bow to the sacred in all creation.
May my spirit fill the world with beauty and wonder.
May my mind seek truth with humility and openness.
May my heart forgive without limit.
May my love for friend, enemy and outcast be without measure.
May my needs be few and my living simple.
May my actions bear witness to the suffering of others.
May my hands never harm a living being.
May my steps stay on the journey to justice.
May my tongue speak for those who are poor without fear of the powerful.
May my prayers rise with patient discontent until no child is hungry.
May my life’s work be a passion for peace and nonviolence.
May my soul rejoice in the present moment.
May my imagination overcome death and despair with new possibility.
And may I risk reputation, comfort and security to bring this hope to the children.

Leader: Pray to develop a spirituality of peace and nonviolence. Pray daily for a gentle heart and a generous spirit. Pray to become a seeker of truth, a worker for justice, a channel of Christ’s peace.

Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB. Pax Christi USA, 2000

READINGS PART 1 - Just Peacemaking at Home

As you read, consider these questions:
- Have our churches, local and institutional, been as engaged with peacemaking as you think they should be?
- How do you experience violence in your life? In your community?
- How is God calling you, your community and your parish, to something new?
- What are your hopes for these 12 sessions together?

Reading 1 - Ecumenical Statements on Just Peacemaking

Catholic Perspectives on Peace

An often neglected aspect of Catholic perspectives on peace is the spirituality and ethics of peacemaking. At the heart of our faith lies "the God of peace" (Romans 15:33), who desires peace for all people far and near (Psalm 85; Isaiah 57:19). That desire has been fulfilled in Christ in whom humanity has been redeemed and reconciled. In our day, the Holy Spirit continues to call us to seek peace with one another, so that in our peacemaking we may prepare for the coming of the reign of God, a kingdom of true justice, love and peace. God created the human family as one and calls it to unity. The renewed unity we experience in Christ is to be

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17 This section is excerpted from the U.S. Catholic Bishops’ 1993 Pastoral Letter, The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace.
lived out in every possible way. We are to do all we can to live at peace with everyone (Romans 12:18). Given the effects of sin, our efforts to live in peace with one another depend on our openness to God's healing grace and the unifying power of Christ's redemption.

Change of mind and heart, of word and action are essential to those who would work for peace (Romans 12:2). This conversion to the God of peace has two dimensions. On the one hand, in imitation of Christ we must be humble, gentle and patient. On the other, we are called to be strong and active in our peacemaking, loving our enemies and doing good generously as God does (Luke 6:35-36, 38), filled with eagerness to spread the gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15).

Likewise, discovering God's peace, which exceeds all understanding, in prayer is essential to peacemaking (Philippians 4:7). The peace given in prayer draws us into God, quieting our anxieties, challenging our old values and deepening wells of new energy. It arouses in us a compassionate love for all humanity and gives us heart to persevere beyond frustration, suffering and defeat. We should never forget that peace is not merely something that we ourselves as creatures do and can accomplish, but it is, in the ultimate analysis, a gift and a grace from God.

By its nature, the gift of peace is not restricted to moments of prayer. It seeks to penetrate the corners of everyday life and to transform the world. But, to do so, it needs to be complemented in other ways. It requires other peaceable virtues, a practical vision of a peaceful world and an ethics to guide peacemakers in times of conflict.

True peacemaking can be a matter of policy only if it is first a matter of the heart. In the absence of repentance and forgiveness, no peace can endure; without a spirit of courageous charity, justice cannot be won. We can take inspiration from the early Christian communities. Paul called on the Corinthians, even in the most trying circumstances, to pursue peace and bless their persecutors, never repaying evil for evil, but overcoming evil with good (Romans 12:14, 17, 21).

Amid the violence of contemporary culture and in response to the growing contempt for human life, the Church must seek to foster communities where peaceable virtues can take root and be nourished. We need to nurture among ourselves faith and hope to strengthen our spirits by placing our trust in God, rather than in ourselves; courage and compassion that move us to action; humility and kindness so that we can put the needs and interests of others ahead of our own; patience and perseverance to endure the long struggle for justice; and civility and charity so that we can treat others with respect and love.

"The goal of peace, so desired by everyone," as Pope John Paul has written, "will certainly be achieved through the putting into effect of social and international justice, but also through the practice of the virtues which favor togetherness and which teach us to live in unity."
A practical complement to the virtues of peacemaking is a clear vision of a peaceful world. Thirty years ago Pope John XXIII laid out before us a visionary framework for peace in his encyclical letter *Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth)*, which retains its freshness today. *Pacem in Terris* proposed a political order in service of the common good, defined in terms of the defense and promotion of human rights. In a prophetic insight, anticipating the globalization of our problems, Pope John called for new forms of political authority adequate to satisfy the needs of the universal common good.

Peace does not consist merely in the absence of war, but rather in sharing the goodness of life together. In keeping with Pope John's teaching, the Church's positive vision of a peaceful world includes:

- the primacy of the global common good for political life,
- the role of social and economic development in securing the conditions for a just and lasting peace, and
- the moral imperative of solidarity between affluent, industrial nations and poor, developing ones.

### The Witness of the Historic Peace Churches

For the Mennonite Church, peace has its basis in the love of God as revealed in creation, in God’s story with his people, and in the life and message of Jesus Christ. . . . God’s peaceable kingdom is expressed definitively in Jesus Christ, for “he is our peace, who has made us both [Gentile and Jew] one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility” (Ephesians 2:14). In Christ we see that God’s love is radical, loving even the enemy. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the ultimate sign of the victory of the way of Jesus. Salvation and ethics are based on and permeated by this way of Jesus.

A peace church is a church called to bear witness to the gospel of peace grounded in Jesus Christ. The peace church places this conviction at the center of its faith and life, its teaching, worship, ministry and practice, calling Jesus Lord and following him in his nonresistant and nonviolent way. A peace church is nothing other than the Church, the body of Christ. Every Church is called to be a peace church.

For Mennonites, traditional Christology is often seen to have been weakened by Constantinianism, with the result that the normative character of the teachings of Jesus is too often depreciated in ethics and ecclesiology. In addition, theology too tightly tied to state structures has often formulated social ethics from a top down perspective, looking to political leaders for articulation of what is possible rather than focusing on what Jesus taught his disciples and how that can concretely be lived out by the body of Christ in the world.

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The teachings and the example of Christ give orientation for our theology and teaching on peace. The concept of discipleship, of following Christ in life, is central for Mennonite theology. Mennonites insist that confessing Jesus Christ as Lord means that the humanity of Christ has ethical relevance. Though the decisions he made and the steps he took leading to his crucifixion must be interpreted in the context of his times; they reveal the love of God for his followers. Christian love includes love of enemy, the message of forgiveness as a gift for everybody, the concern for those at the margins of society, and the call for a new community.

An ultimate theological challenge is to spell out the consequences of the cross for our teaching on peace and war. The atonement is the foundation of our peace with God and with one another. Reconciliation and nonviolence belong to the heart of the Gospel. Therefore an ethic of nonresistance, nonviolence, and active peacemaking corresponds to our faith in God. God revealed his love for humanity in Jesus Christ, who was willing to die on the cross as a consequence of his message of the Kingdom of God. Thus the cross is the sign of God’s love of his enemies (Romans 5:10f.). In the resurrection God confirms the way of Jesus and establishes new life. The conviction that ‘love is stronger than death’ sustains Christians where their faith leads to suffering.

Reading 2 - Stories of Just Peacemakers at Home

“Ten Years After 9/11, the Last Word is Love”
by Colleen Kelly, Pax Christi USA 2011 Teacher of Peace. Visit http://peacefultomorrows.org/

My brother, Bill Kelly Jr. died in Tower 1 on September 11th. He wasn’t supposed to be there. He didn’t work at the Trade Center. Ironically, Bill’s prior visit to Windows on the World was in December 2000 to receive an employee recognition award. Who knew that the one-day conference Bill was attending on September 11th, the conference he persuaded his boss into letting him attend, would be an event from which he would never return.

What did I feel on that day? Moral outrage – certainly. At the extremists that murdered my brother. At the twist of fate that led him to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. At a humanity that allows for violence as a means to make a point, state your case, right perceived wrongs. At anyone who dared exult in the agonizing smoke and fire.

Then came feelings of confusion – at my country, now planning to bomb others a world away. Didn’t we … yes we … just live through terror and horrific violence? So then how could we … yes we … be the cause of similar harm to others? Confusion also with my church. What is a just war exactly? Why does the justification to injure others seem so hypocritical … and human? And how does one truly live out the gospels - or are they simply a collection of beautiful stories?
Finding a group of 9/11 family members who had these and similar concerns was a true blessing. In February of 2002, we formally became an organization – September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows. We have been working together to break cycles of violence ever since, and our members are ‘the best friends I never wanted to know’.

I have learned that moral repair will take a lifetime, and then some (I believe). September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows is a large part of this process for me. Bill is gone; and safe; and no longer in pain. I also like to believe he is surrounded by love. My faith tells me so.

But I learned another lesson in moral repair at Fordham, from one of the speakers – a rabbi named Irwin Kula. He pointed out a truth that I desperately believe in – the most important and sacred value in our very fragile human lives is love.

In the months following 9/11, Rabbi Kula became fascinated with the last words of those killed on September 11th. After reading a few stories in the paper, he began seeking out the last words and sentences of anyone he could find who was killed that day. And you know what he discovered? Not a single person said “Kill them.” “Avenge my death.” No. Last words were not about hatred; they were sometimes about fear, but ultimately, and overwhelmingly, the last words of those killed on 9/11 were about love. “Tell mom and dad I love them.” “Tell the kids I’ll miss them and I love them.” “Julie, it’s bad, but know that I love you.”

So what do these last words tell us? I like to think they teach a lesson. There’s a time for righteous moral outrage, just as there’s a time for accountability, and justice. Peaceful Tomorrows helps with these vital goals. But in the end, it’s about love, and my brother Bill. How much he loved and was loved. How much I miss him. And how much I want the world to be a place where last words are never the end result of political violence, but instead reflect a full and just life, well lived.

Reading 3 - *Called to be Peacemakers*

I. **Reading the Signs of the Times** (Excerpted from Pax Christi USA’s 2008 document, *Called to Be Peacemakers.*)

Any reflection on the challenges of peace today needs to begin with casting our eyes, ears, and hearts to the world around us, to view it particularly from the perspective of the victims of violence, poverty, and oppression. We seek to discern what is happening in the diverse communities that make up the cultural fabric of the United States, to reflect on how God is present in these places, and to discover how we might be called to participate—each with our own gifts—in what God is doing in our world. In the Gospel, Jesus talks about this as “reading the signs of the times” (Luke 12:54-56). In *The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, the Church speaks about the task in this way:
The Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. Thus, in language intelligible to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions which people ask about this present life and the life to come, and about the relationship of the one to the other. We must therefore recognize and understand the world in which we live, its explanations, its longings, and its often dramatic characteristics.

What can we say about the times in which we live?
Do these signs look different to those who are privileged than to those who are impoverished or marginalized?
What does violence look like from the perspective of the varied communities of color in our country, as well as around the world?
How can we give expression to longings for peace that are common and that cross the divides of race, class, and/or gender?
How can we respond to the “essential vocation of peacemaking” to address the urgent challenges of peace today?

A. Raising our Voices: Our Lived Experience, Our Longings

At this moment in history, we can witness destructive forms of political violence, economic apartheid, social exclusion, and misplaced priorities in our local communities and in our world. There is a false notion of national security based on military might and political hegemony, not on the common good based on justice and integral development for all. The economy favors irrational wealth accumulation and profits for the few and decline in the quality of life for the majority.

We find, too, that we are living in a society increasingly marked by isolation, alienation, and the disintegration of social, political, cultural, and community cohesion. In the past, this cohesion provided individuals with a sense of identity, meaning, and purpose. Today, a “community of consumption” has been created whereby identity is more tied to the products and services we consume than to the cultural and religious identities of our ancestors. Because of the false gratification of this community of consumption, we are often left empty and unfulfilled.

As more and more people take their cues from the powerful socializing influence of popular culture transmitted by our media, traditional sources of wisdom and community are forgotten and are losing their influence. Often we feel more kinship with those who share our consumer preferences than we do with members of our families, those who live in our own neighborhoods, and those with whom we share a common cultural background. As a result of this isolation, we see the breakdown of families and traditional communities across all racial, class, and ethnic backgrounds.

This loss of family and community support is further compounded by a loss of credibility in our social institutions (political, economic, educational, religious, and scientific). At one time, these
institutions were vital links of support and sources of identity, meaning, and purpose. But over time, many have become more focused on self-perpetuation and survival than with serving the needs of the communities that created them.

Without genuine forms of community from which we can receive authentic identities and meaning for our lives, we experience an increasing level of fear and distrust within ourselves and between social groups. We seldom live, worship, or socialize with people from a different race, class, or ethnic background. As a result, there is little opportunity for mutual exchange and solidarity between our communities.

1. Our Varied Communities Are in Distress but We Remain Strong

Many of our urban communities feel under siege by economic disintegration, lack of adequate housing and employment, gun violence, the drug trade, and gangs. While the media often portray our neighborhoods as nothing more than “war zones,” the vast majority of us struggle day in and day out to create better lives for our children and ourselves. At the same time we often feel that those outside of our communities—those who control most of the resources and who regularly make decisions that impact our lives—have all but written us off. We are often dismayed and frustrated that those who know our struggles only from the distorted images portrayed in the news media and entertainment industry have come to fear us. Yet our resilience and bonds of community are strong and rooted deep.

Those who live in economically prosperous suburbs often choose these communities in hopes finding security from the perceived threats coming from economically distressed urban communities. We may live in neighborhoods and homes that lack for nothing, allowing us to live in splendid isolation from one another. A sense of emptiness, however, is also felt. In the current global economic crisis, even middle class communities are facing financial hardships. At our deepest levels, we know that the walls we construct to keep us “safe” cannot provide the security we seek. Many of us are finding ways to build bridges to communities outside of our suburban world, and we are finding that those whom we have been socialized to fear can become our friends.

Those who live in rural agricultural and ranching communities have suffered an enormous amount of economic, social, and cultural disintegration. Over the years, we have seen our way of life steadily erode as our rural towns and communities disappear along with the family farms that once provided their economic support. Our agricultural way of life is being overtaken by an agribusiness model with factory farms and industrialized animal processing plants that are increasingly controlled by global speculators and traders. Even though powerful economic forces want to consign our family farms along with our small towns to eventual extinction, we strive to find ways to survive and thrive, sometimes partnering young farm families with older farmers to ensure that the family-farming way of life will continue.
Many of us who live in the mining communities of Appalachia and other economically distressed places also have seen our way of life steadily erode as we continue to lose control of our resources to outside economic actors who impose their will without regard for our people or our land. Often we do not even own the resources just below the surface of the land we have called home for generations. Many times mining companies come and take what they want and leave us with environmentally toxic results. We have learned, however, to organize and struggle to challenge the ecological destruction and to work to protect our land and our communities by creating new, locally controlled businesses that can provide sustainable development for our people.

Our migrant worker communities are undergoing an enormous amount of economic distress and dislocation. We have always struggled to provide for ourselves and our families, while demanding to be treated with dignity and respect. Many of us, in order to survive, have been forced to leave family members and the land of our birth as global markets have destroyed our livelihoods and given us little choice but to try to find work in this country. Our families are further torn apart by an immigration system that is broken and dehumanizing. We are deeply saddened that walls of distrust and fear have been built, even between us and our fellow Catholic brothers and sisters. However, our faith is strong, and we are beginning to build bridges to our brothers and sisters in other communities and to find ways of standing up for our rights and our dignity with people of good will across this country.

Our parish in New Mexico draws heavily from the immediate inner city neighborhood that is primarily Hispanic, along with a significant proportion of Anglos. Adding to this core mix is a significant presence of the Mexican immigrant community. . . . Starting out as strangers, we dared to become a small, blessed community of peacemakers and justice seekers. . . . The need to hear from the people themselves on peace issues is long overdue, especially since. . . . the evil of war is as integral a challenge to the “consistent ethic of life” as the violence and immorality of abortion, the death penalty, euthanasia, etc. . . . It also seemed like an opportune time to explore the relatedness and immediacy of war and peace issues to the daily struggles to find peace in our own hearts, families, neighborhoods, communities, and country.

2. We Are Socialized into Violence but We Seek to Embrace a Different Way
The entertainment industry glorifies the use of violence by portraying it as powerful, manly, and sexually attractive. It promotes the myth of “redemptive violence,” portraying violence as the solution to our problems and as the most direct and satisfactory way to defeat evil.
Our nation’s leaders, as well, too often rush to military solutions to address conflicts and demonstrate national strength. It is no surprise that violence becomes an acceptable way to express frustration, domination, and control—by many young people in our communities and by our political leaders. Communities of color become particularly subject to an “economic draft,” as young people look to enlist in the military, the National Guard, or the reserves in return for promises of job training and education. War takes a tremendous toll on military families, as particularly seen in recent years with “stop-loss” orders extending military service to two and three tours of duty, often resulting in death or physical and mental injuries, permanent disabilities, or suicide.

Sadly, war and war-making have become a central metaphor that shapes our understanding of this nation’s history. When we look at the selection of books about U.S. history in our bookstores, we find the largest number related to war. We are a nation formed by war and characterized by a military mindset. Militaristic language has become standard vocabulary for addressing a whole host of challenges we face. We had the “War on Poverty” followed by the “War on Drugs” and the “War on Terror.”

The use of violence and war is no longer seen as the last resort but as the first response. Often this embrace of violence is lethally combined with racist notions of superiority and inferiority, including the use of racial stereotypes to demonize and dehumanize the “enemy.” The “enemy” is portrayed as evil, distrustful, and immoral in order to justify the violence that is used. Those who would enlist us (and our children) into these mythical battles of good versus evil have very powerful tools available to them in popular culture and virulent forms of nationalism. Video games, movies, and TV shows give the impression that violence always works and that negative consequences are minimal.

*In spite of the overwhelming power of the dominant culture of violence and war, we know that we are “called to something new.”*

*We are exploring and exercising nonviolent ways of using our power to bring about change.*

*We are standing together by organizing marches and neighborhood watch groups to face down the street gangs who would kill our children.*

*We are taking back our neighborhoods through church-based community organizing.*

*We are discovering that when we stand united, we are stronger.*

*We are learning that we need not be victims or perpetrators of violence.*

*We are raising our voices to resist war, and we are working to abolish war through promoting nonviolent means of peacemaking and peace building.*

3. **We Experience Violence in Many Forms, Especially Economic, but We Are Not Defeated**

In addition to physical violence, we also experience the economic violence of poverty in our communities, our nation, and around the world. Poverty is more than just the lack of the basic
material necessities of life. Often those who are poor are silenced, deprived of the freedom and dignity of being considered members of the human family. To the world of commerce and consumption, people who are poor have no names and no existence. They live and breathe but have no being. Even when poverty does not physically kill a person (and thousands do die of poverty-related causes every day), it can stunt a person’s life and compromise self-esteem. Poverty has been a part of human existence from the beginning of recorded history, but the poverty we experience today in our communities and around the world is not simply the result of natural disasters, bad personal choices, or catastrophic economic collapse. Much of our poverty is the direct result of economic decisions made in the name of “free market capitalism” in service of profit maximization.

Over the past three decades, powerful economic actors, in coalition with political leaders in our country and around the world, have championed an economic theory that has resulted in a dramatic shift of wealth from the poor and middle class to the wealthy, commonly referred to as “trickledown economics” or neo-liberalism. Neoliberalism champions the ideal of individual responsibility over the notion of the public good or community and sees the world in terms of market metaphors. Because of how economic globalization has been designed, countless families and communities have been sacrificed “for the good of the economy.” Businesses move to locations that have cheaper labor markets, and schools lose their tax base. Money for affordable housing and health care cannot be found. Bridges, roads, public transportation, and other critical infrastructure fall into ruin. In short, communities are destroyed.

We live in a time of immense economic uncertainty. Our economy has been losing hundreds of thousands of jobs and, as of March 2009, posted an unemployment rate of 8.5 percent, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics – up from 5.1 percent a year earlier. Even in good times when the economy grew and wealth multiplied, most of our communities saw little or nothing “trickle down” to us. For example, in 2005, the total income for our country increased almost 9 percent, but 90 percent of us saw our average income drop slightly. The gains went largely to the top 1 percent, whose average income rose to more than $1.1 million—an increase of more than $139,000 or about 14 percent.

Probably the most frightening form of economic insecurity is the fear that we will not be able to provide food for our families. We have seen the pictures on TV of desperate people caught up in food riots in places such as Haiti and South Asia because of global food shortages. Food shortages are a problem for a growing number of families in our local communities as well. While the cost of food has increased dramatically, food stamp benefits have not kept pace with inflation. Families who depend on food stamps are finding that their monthly allotment runs out much faster than their needs. Many of our food pantries do not have enough food to meet the growing need.
Next to the fear of not having enough food for our families, the fear of losing our homes looms as a terrifying prospect. For those members of our community who were deceptively lured into bad mortgage agreements or who were ill-advised by mortgage brokers and approving bankers to purchase more than they could afford, the bursting of the housing bubble meant more than the loss of home equity: it meant having no home at all.

Finally, at a time in life when our seniors should be able to relax and enjoy their retirement years, they experience a rising level of fear and anxiety. Those of us who are retired or near retirement are fearful that we may not have enough to meet basic needs in our older ages. In the midst of these economic challenges, however, we are learning to lean on each other more and to rebuild our communities on different economic models: models that are designed to put the needs of people before profits. We are forming food co-ops to provide healthy food at reasonable prices. We are pursuing new forms of community housing that make it possible for low-income families to become homeowners. We are finding ways to spur economic development in our communities through micro-loans to local entrepreneurs. We are using our buying power to shape the market according to our own values. Many of us buy fair trade products, insist on sweatshop-free clothing, and want to know if the products we buy are damaging the environment.
### PART 2 - PERSONAL REFLECTION:
Since 9/11 - How We Have Changed

**Think about it: Web Links. Personal Reflections on 9/11 - How have you/we changed?**

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<th>9/11 - How Have We Changed? Some perspectives:</th>
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<td>“Our Voices, Our Choices,” from September Eleventh Families for Peaceful Tomorrows <a href="http://911stories.org">http://911stories.org</a></td>
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### READINGS PART 3 - Just Peacemaking Abroad

As you read, consider these questions:

- How has your thinking about war and peace changed in the years since September 11, 2001?
- Have you, a member of your family or a friend, been touched by war? In what way?
- Do you have an experience of forgiveness and reconciliation that you want to share? How do you practice it?

**Reading 1 - Stories of Just Peacemakers Abroad**

**“What Just Peacemaking Means to Me”**

By Jessica Brown, Law Student, Pax Christi International Youth Forum Coordinator

California, USA

Just Peacemaking means an absolute and total devotion to countercultural pressures and attitudes. It is resisting our natural human tendency to violently react to that which oppresses us. Sometimes the oppressive force is our own internal desire to exact pain – on ourselves, on others, on creation. Thus, peacemaking for me is an internal process of reflection or meditation. It is only when I can achieve a measure of internal mental peace that I can create peace outside of myself.

Anger motivates me – anger at injustice, unfairness, or anger simply directed at a task that I must complete before I move forward with the next task. However, my Catholic faith, especially the Ignatian value of discernment, has allowed me to recognize the exhausting and often
counterproductive force anger can be. There is no reflection in anger; there is only spiritual restlessness. Without reflection and contemplation, the foundation of peace in my own life cannot take shape. Thus, in order to be an effective peacemaker, I must ‘practice’ peacemaking by harnessing the passionate tendencies that create imbalances in my own mind, and thus in my own life. Learning to harness passion and anger, and learning to strive for balance and harmony in my lifestyle and in my work, is how I am the most effective peacemaker.

Reading 2 – “The Road to Nonviolence: Moving Peace Work to the Center of Christian Life”

Hansuli John Gerber, Executive Secretary for the Swiss Fellowship of Reconciliation, was coordinator of the Decade to Overcome Violence at the World Council of Churches from 2002 to 2009. This article appeared in America Magazine, October 18, 2010. Visit http://www.overcomingviolence.org/

Two special designations were proclaimed for this millennium’s first decade, which comes to an end this year: the Decade to Overcome Violence, sponsored by the World Council of Churches; and the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World, sponsored by the United Nations. The core objective of the World Council of Churches’ decade was to move the concern for peace from the periphery of the churches to their very center. And while that goal has not been reached, some progress has been made. What is important at this point is to determine how the urgent tasks of preventing and overcoming violence and of building a just peace may be continued, even if they are still somewhat marginal to the churches whose raison d’être is the ministry of reconciliation.

In spite of the fact that neither the United Nations nor the World Council of Churches was really equipped or determined to carry out their full-blown, decade-long campaigns, their attempts have left indications that the movement is going in the right direction. The discourse on peace and violence, for example, has undergone lasting change. The debate about just war has given over some space to the debate on just peace. Serious work on the meaning and implementation of just peace has begun and cannot be escaped. Some taboos have been broken and new issues have come up, like suicide, genital mutilation and domestic violence. Violence, in its many types and forms, is more fully understood and more clearly analyzed. The positions of the churches and of religions in regard to violence and peace are more clearly explained, their potential for peacemaking more challenged. Churches see themselves obliged to come out of their isolation on issues related to war, peace and justice.

Making a Path for Peace

Since the year 2000, the context itself, which includes violence, war and peace, has also changed. Violence as a subject has found its way into the daily headlines; terrorism has gone global; and violence has been diffused. War is beyond the control of single states or the international
community. It is decentralized and outsourced to private actors. Today the idea of a just war seems more fiction than reality.

One of the most remarkable and sustainable impulses of the past decade has come from the World Health Organization. Who in church circles would have expected that an evidence-based public health approach to the prevention of violence could reduce violence significantly in many places, across many cultures? The organization’s approach maps violence in its context and documents the direct impact of prevention measures. This has led to surprising results—for example, a reduction of violence through coaching parents about parenting even before their children are born.

It takes time for the churches to catch on to such good news. Meanwhile, peace building and conflict transformation have become academic and practical disciplines around the world. Domestic violence is also better documented and addressed in interdisciplinary ways. These developments are quite recent and must be continued, broadened and deepened in the next decade. No single party or branch of society can do that by itself, nor can any significant part of civil society exempt itself from such a responsibility, least of all the churches.

Today’s context for violence prevention and promotion of peace is at once difficult and encouraging. Elements like the following give reason for concern. The peace movement, insofar as it exists, is very dispersed and lacks or refuses coordination. The institutional churches, primarily in Europe and North America, have lost much of their historic leverage and are preoccupied with internal issues and a struggle for survival. Political leaders lack efficiency and credibility while being increasingly subject to celebrity media. The world economy suffers from uncertainty and is built to a high degree on a historic injustice: that industrialization tends to widen the wealth gap. Democracy as we know it is increasingly questioned as a value and is undergoing profound changes that feel threatening to many. Direct democracy, for example, is threatened by populist politics and by globalization.

At the same time, several encouraging developments can be observed. Civil society no longer accepts violence as an unavoidable given. Violence prevention, peace education and peace building have become international, interdisciplinary programs. Interreligious interest, encounter and action are becoming mainstream. Direct access to information and interaction is possible for large parts of society anywhere. While abolition of nuclear weapons may still be far away, it is being sought with increased energy. More encouraging signs could be listed.

The context seems ripe as never before for the implementation of ideas as old as humanity—peace and justice.
Are the Churches Changing?
In 2006 the Assembly of the World Council of Churches asked for a consultative process toward an ecumenical declaration on just peace and an International Ecumenical Peace Convocation, known as I.E.P.C. The consultative process began in 2008 and the convocation will take place in 2011. The Decade to Overcome Violence, deliberately launched with an emphasis on joint ecumenical efforts and processes among church hierarchies and also at the grass-roots level, tried to challenge the churches to “relinquish any theological justification of violence.” If the Decade to Overcome Violence has not brought churches to that point, it has at least helped to determine what it implies, which turns out to be nothing short of a paradigm shift. Historically, churches have resisted change, especially when that change involved questioning common practices handed down over time. From that perspective, the current consultative process, limited as it may be, is a test.

Will Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s 1934 appeal for a clear stance on peace and against war finally be heard? Will the peace theology that has existed over centuries but was often excluded from serious debate or relegated to a small cadre of idealists come to enjoy greater support? There is no shortage of appeals to peace, calls to stop violence and reprimands against injustice or acts of terrorism from leaders of various church traditions. But in Christian tradition the justification of war, now more neutrally called “military intervention,” has been a majority position. Is that about to change? Given the state of the world in 2010, one would certainly hope so.

What further evidence is needed to document that armed intervention is neither stopping violence nor preventing injustice, much less creating a just peace? Only in the 20th century has war been justified by the claim that it is necessary for bringing peace. Historically, war was used to build, expand or secure nationhood, and churches did not usually object to such wars. The just war teaching was intended to make sure war was declared and carried out in self-defense, preserving the safety of citizens. (That is a far cry from any war our generations have seen.) Will the churches now find it possible or, even better, necessary to no longer justify war that pretends to make peace?

Today, the amount of money spent on the military in wartime and in peacetime is a gross violation of human rights, sustainability, justice and peace. Why, for instance, is military spending not linked to the U.N. Millennium Development Goals? Why don’t the churches speak up in that regard? To be antimilitary was an early Christian virtue, at least until Constantine. For a long time now that position has been considered politically incorrect or economically impossible at best and antipatriotic at worst. The issue of human security is genuine, but there is ample proof that militarism increases insecurity, not security, for the earth and its people. It is true that for most of its history, more precisely since the fourth century, Christianity has not been strictly pacifist. But is that reason enough to maintain that violence is compatible with the way of Jesus? In many people’s view, God condones violence. Love and violence are not seen as mutually exclusive. As the Decade to Overcome Violence reaches its end and violence remains a
major threat to human life and to the earth, what is at stake is that image or understanding of God and with it the fate of humanity.

**Justice, Essential for Peace**

Violence on the macro level, capable of killing humanity and making the world uninhabitable, is very real. Not unrelated is violence on the micro level: domestic violence and street violence, which many lament as a sign of uncivilized behavior that should be kept in check through repression. Both recent research and experience show that microviolence is preventable. Whereas nuclear weapons can and must be abolished, violent behavior on the street or at home cannot be abolished in the same way, but it can be significantly reduced. Major steps in prevention are education, training, coaching, practical measures, coherent legal frameworks and the building of trust and respect. Those measures are in opposition to popular electoral promises to “get tough,” which generally give priority to repression, apprehension and exclusion.

Churches do much compassionate, constructive work in the area of interpersonal violence. The Decade to Overcome Violence is a witness to such work. Full violence-prevention, however, has to overcome not only the violence of individuals, but the structural violence of an unjust world order and the double standards that condemn violence by others while accepting violence on one’s own behalf. Peace and justice are related not simply because there is no peace without justice. There is essential injustice in the way violence is being judged by political, economic or religious authorities.

All of this points to a necessary paradigm shift within the Christian churches, which the Decade to Overcome Violence has not accomplished but has helped to promote, making the imperative for nonviolence more evident.

Let me suggest five priorities for churches, movements and people who are committed to peace work beyond this decade. 1) Seek cooperation: commit to coordination in preference to self-protection and use synergies. 2) Promote civil rights and civic action: act in favor of kindness and justice, intervene against violence, be prepared to engage in self-giving acts for justice. 3) Resist confusion: Reduce fear, accept the fact that conflict is inevitable and refuse violence of any kind. 4) Practice violence-prevention by taking a public health perspective, which is recommended by the World Health Organization. This means understanding violence not exclusively in criminal or political terms, but as a phenomenon within the agenda of public health. This approach should be used as part of an interdisciplinary approach. Go by the evidence instead of relying on assumptions. 5) Learn and teach nonviolence as a way of life; reflect it in attitude, speech and action.

Peace work has a future. That future is in diversification. Peace work must be practical, competent, networked and holistic. It includes spirituality, by which I mean faith, hope and love. There is little doubt that peace work will be controversial and will sometimes meet with violent response. That has been true since the time of the biblical prophets. Yet a violent response will
not keep the peacemakers from moving ahead, toward a future lived in a just peace. Peace work is a gift and a responsibility. Everything else is temporary and misleading.

Reading 3 – “No Peace without Justice, No Justice without Forgiveness”


Coming from Jerusalem, I wish all of you the peace of Christ. Jerusalem is still in quest of justice and peace. Jerusalem is still in search of the reconciliation that Christ won there and that went from Jerusalem to the world. Living in a situation of injustice, oppression and violence, as I do, I want to address my message to you this evening, about reconciliation and peacemaking.

Pax Christi International came into being when a group of Catholics in France and Germany came together and prayed for forgiveness for the terrible slaughter during World War II, an immense tragedy for which all sides in the conflict bore deep responsibility. The first head of Pax Christi was a French Bishop Pierre Theas, who was imprisoned by the Germans in 1944 after protesting the deportation of Jews. Pax Christi was born out of a commitment to work for peaceful methods of resolving the world’s most intractable problems, encouraging people to hunger and thirst for justice by witnessing to the call of Christian nonviolence. By its very title, Pax Christi pledged to proclaim that the Peace of Christ has been victorious over division and hatred through his death and resurrection.

Pax Christi is a movement within the Church which pledges itself to working for peace not as an option but as an essential feature of the Gospel message, because it bears witness to the effects of the Gospel in renewing lives and building up the Kingdom of God on earth. Its membership is open to all men and women who are committed to peace. Pope John Paul II greeted Pax Christi International in May 1995 with these words: “Movements like yours are precious… they help to develop conscience so that justice can prevail."

However, we are not naïve idealists; we realize that God’s peace is broken in our world today. During the first half of the last century, millions of lives were lost in the World Wars. Moreover, in local conflicts all over the world in the 1990s alone, two million children have been killed in armed conflict; 300,000 children are still fighting wars that adults have created; six million people remain disabled; and 12 million people are left homeless.

These facts and more are a challenge to all of us who profess to live the Christian faith. We must stop viewing media reports of these conflicts as simply another item for the evening news. We must begin to acknowledge the fact that behind the reporting there are real people involved, that serious issues of justice are at stake, matters which cannot, which must not, be ignored. We live in a world that has been shattered by hatred, violence and fear. And our shattered existence cannot be fully restored except by a response that unites justice and forgiveness. The pillars of
true peace are justice and that form of love that is forgiveness. Our call today is clear: No peace without justice – no justice without forgiveness. Blessed Pope John XXIII in his encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), 40 years ago, underlined more pillars for a true peace: truth, justice, love and freedom. Paul VI added, in his encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, that the other name of peace is development.

**Reconciliation**

The notion of reconciliation lies at the heart of Pax Christi’s peace work. Conflict resolution can only be successful if it also involves a healing process for victims as well as perpetrators of violence, and if it takes steps together toward truth and justice. Members of the same family, who have fought one another in times of war, must eventually be reunited at the family table. This does not mean that the past is forgotten or ignored. In the movement toward reconciliation, whether in South Africa, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Mozambique, Haiti, El Salvador, Northern Ireland, in Israel and Palestine, or the former Yugoslavia, the call is always for truth, justice and forgiveness and not for amnesia. What are needed in all these situations are sincere acts of justice, repentance and mutual forgiveness, both on the personal level and the community level. In the end, we each are required to face God, to face one another and indeed the whole of humankind.

This process, however, is not an easy one. It may be easy to dream and to talk about a world without weapons, but what is needed today are people who are prepared to commit themselves in very practical ways to achieving that goal. The industry of war has grown to enormous proportions. Now it is the task for all of us to dismantle that industry.

Pax Christi International will continue to promote dialogue and harmony both at the ecumenical and interfaith level, recognizing and respecting the search for truth and wisdom that goes on outside our own religious tradition. We will also continue to listen to the cries of the oppressed and, in the spirit of *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth), work with all people of good will in creating a more just and harmonious world. We know that the foundation for all our work must be based on mutual tolerance and respect for religious freedom everywhere.

All forms of discrimination, colonialism, exclusion, exploitation and domination have to be overcome. A sense of shared responsibility and the opportunity for full participation should be a leading principle of institutions at every level. We cannot hope to build a more peaceful world if the rights of minorities and religious and civil freedoms continue to be ignored, as they are still in many countries.

**We Remember**

All the world remembers September 11, 2001. On that day, a terrible crime was committed: in a few brief hours, the lives of thousands of innocent people of many nationalities and ethnic
backgrounds were destroyed. From that day on, many people throughout the world have felt a profound sense of personal vulnerability and fear for the future.

In the same way, the world has lived the 12 years of embargo imposed upon Iraq and the thousands of dead innocent people, children, women and men. They were the victims of quarrels among world political leaders. The thousands of victims among Palestinians and Israelis, resulting from the non-application of the United Nations resolutions, and the millions of victims in African or other countries in the world are also cases of contempt of human life. In these failures, the international community shows its incapacity to stop such inhumanity.

Terrorism not only commits intolerable crimes, but because it resorts to terror as a political and military means to achieve its end, it is itself a crime against humanity.

Terrorism sometimes claims that it derives from religious attitudes. We consider these to be wrong religious attitudes; even more, they are opposite to the essence of any religion. Sometimes it claims to be fighting injustice and oppression imposed upon people. Whatever the reason, terrorism is an evil to be condemned and to be opposed.

But at the same time, oppressions and injustices that provoke terrorism or give birth to it have to be fought, whatever the form of injustice and oppression, whether a military occupation or the spirit of domination over others.

Pax Christi in its one-day consultation has proposed the concept of Preemptive Peace: Beyond Terrorism and Justified War. As terrorism pretends to have roots in religion, in poverty, in injustice and oppression, this means that we have the need for a new type of human education – in religious life and in political life. The goal of this education is to find new ways to claim peoples’ rights and new ways of acting against injustice and oppression. Finally, this new education will prepare people for a serious action in the domain of development. Beyond a “justified war” means also a new spirit and a new way of initiating a new world order based on equality between people and respect of persons and nations. A new education means that in the name of God one cannot kill their brother or sister. To kill one’s brother or sister is the biggest evil in the human life of an individual or of a nation; to kill one’s brother or sister cannot build peace.

Against this backdrop, Pax Christi testifies to its hope, a hope that is based on the conviction that evil does not have the final word in human affairs. Pax Christi hopes that the great nations of this world have enough goodness to change the present world order that sacrifices so many innocent victims through supposed justified wars. Pax Christi hopes that the present world leaders will succeed in replacing preemptive war by preemptive peace. Pax Christi hopes as well that those who recourse to terrorism, for whatever reason and in whatever context, will one day recognize
their own humanity and the dignity of others, along with their capacity for goodness which God, their Creator and Redeemer, has put in them.

Therefore we proclaim once more the message of hope which comes from Christ: God the Creator loves all men and women and gives them the hope of a new era, an age where peace and justice prevail. This love is fully revealed in Jesus Christ and is the foundation for universal peace. Peace is possible. It must be sought from God as a gift, but it also needs to be built day by day with the help only God can give.

Closing Prayer

Extinguish the candle and return it to the circular platter.

As we end this session, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.

Closing reflection (choose two readers, divide group into two sides)

Reader 1: Loving God, You call us to act, to live out a vision of nonviolence as shown to us through Jesus and the prophets. We remember the covenant you made with your holy people and the witness and sacrifice of your Son Jesus. Your words remind us of these promises.

“Thus says God,
Who created the heavens
And stretched them out,
Who spread out the earth
And what comes from it,
Who gives breath
To the people upon it
And spirit to those who walk in it:
I am God, I have called you in righteousness,
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
A light to the nations,
To open the eyes of the blind,
To bring out prisoners from the dungeon,
From the prison those who sit in darkness…
See, the former things have come to pass,  
And new things I now declare…”

- Isaiah 42:5-7,9a

Reader 2:  May we learn to recognize and put into practice this vision of your creation, God.

Side 1:  Teach us always to act and live in your love and justice.

Side 2:  Teach us to act each moment with respect for people and all of creation.

All:  Give us your spirit, O God; make us a light to the nations.

Side 1:  Help us to see the truth and to proclaim it to others.

Side 2:  Help us to be open to the truth that others may teach us.

All:  Give us your spirit, O God; make us a light to the nations.

Side 1:  Remind us to respect all life at all times.

Side 2:  Remind us to seek not only peace, but peace with justice.

All:  Give us your spirit, O God; make us a light to the nations.

Side 1:  Guide us with hope through easy times and difficult times.

Side 2:  Guide us with every step on the way of your peace.

All:  Give us your spirit, O God; make us a light to the nations. Take us by the hand and transform our hearts and minds, making all things news.


Scripture reading: (Read slowly three times, three readers)

“To do justice and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8).”

Amen
Session One – Attachment A

JustFaith Ministries Group Guidelines

Please read the following statements carefully and bring this with you to the next session. It is important for each participant to individually consider which of these guidelines will be easiest and which will be most difficult for you to abide by.

God has created each of us uniquely, and I recognize that everyone comes to this experience with very different backgrounds, experiences and views. I commit to honoring differences, knowing they add to the richness of the group’s experience.

God frequently speaks through the unfamiliar and different. I will listen intently in order to fully understand different points of view, realizing these other views will help with my own evolving journey.

Listening is an act of love and care. I will always listen respectfully and constructively (i.e., no side conversations, no interruptions).

How I treat another person is much more important than my opinions and perspectives. I recognize that we are looking for truthful insights within potentially different views. I will respectfully seek clarification of other perspectives to add to my understanding. If I choose to disagree with a perspective that is different from mine, I will do this respectfully and lovingly.

Because God made us, all persons are of equal importance and value, and all voices are important. I commit to assuring that everyone has an opportunity to speak, and I will encourage others to speak before I speak again.

God has given each of us gifts that are given in the hope and expectation that these gifts will be shared. I will participate fully and share in the responsibility for the group’s process and experience.

Trust and respect must be offered as the terms of being together in this journey of faith. I will honor that everything that is shared within this group is to stay within this group.
SESSION TWO
FILM: Joyeux Noel: Christmas Eve Truce, 1914

OPENING PRAYER

Scripture reading: Three readers to repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God (Matthew 5:9).”

Light two candles, and place on the map: the group’s location and Europe, noting the focus in the film.

Reflection: Prayerful Litany for Just Peacemaking and Nonviolence

Leader: “True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice” (Martin Luther King, Jr.).

All: Blessed are the peacemakers.

Leader: “Whatever ‘violates’ another, in the sense of infringing upon or disregarding or abusing or denying that other, whether physical harm is involved or not, can be understood as an act of violence” (Robert McAfee Brown).

All: Blessed are the peacemakers.

Leader: “It is my deepest belief that only by giving our lives do we find life. I am convinced that the truest act of courage, the strongest act of [humaneness,] is to sacrifice ourselves for others in a totally nonviolent struggle for justice” (Cesar Chavez).
All: Blessed are the peacemakers.

From Just Peacemaking Study Guide – by Barbara Battin and Thomas Mockaitis. Presbyterian Peacemaking Program.

Light two candles, and place on the map: the group’s location and Europe, noting the focus in the film

Readings for Session 2
Catholic Social Teaching on War and Peace

The condemnation of violence and war in Catholic Social Teaching should not be surprising, given the millions who were slaughtered by war during the past century. The preamble to the Charter to the United Nations, which was signed on June 26, 1945, begins on a note of sorrow: “We the people of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind…” And so it continues today to wreak havoc throughout the world.

More often than not, wars have been fueled by racial, ethnic, and religious violence, including genocide, as well as the greed of nations and corporations to control vital natural resources. For that reason, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke of the need to resist the “giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism.”

Traditionally, the Catholic Church has taught that war might be justified if certain conditions were met: just cause, legitimate authority, just intention, probability of success, last resort, and proportionality, which states that the overall destruction expected from the use of force must be outweighed by the good to be achieved.

The massive destructiveness of the Second World War, however, as well as the development and use of nuclear weapons, raised questions as to whether any war fought in the 20th century could meet the necessary conditions of a “just war.” The potential for a nuclear holocaust brought about a major shift in Catholic social teaching on war and peace during the Second Vatican Council.

In 1965, on the feast of St. Francis, Pope Paul VI made a passionate plea to the United Nations General Assembly and called for war to be abolished once and forever:

“If you want to be brothers [and sisters], let the weapons fall from your hands. You cannot love with weapons in your hands... It suffices to remember that the blood of millions of men and women, numberless and unheard of sufferings, useless slaughter and frightful ruin... unite you

19 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence,” delivered in Riverside Church in New York, April 4, 1967, exactly one year to the day before his assassination.
An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace

In their 2011 Ecumenical Call to Just Peace, the World Council of Churches builds on the experiences and insights gained from the “Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001 – 2010,” and invites Christians to commit themselves to the Way of Just Peace.

1. Justice embracing peace. Without peace, can there be justice? Without justice, can there be peace? Too often, we pursue justice at the expense of peace, and peace at the expense of justice. To conceive peace apart from justice is to compromise the hope that “justice and peace shall embrace” (Psalm 85:10). When justice and peace are lacking, or set in opposition, we need to reform our ways. Let us rise, therefore, and work together for peace and justice.

2. Let the peoples speak: There are many stories to tell – stories soaked with violence, the violation of human dignity and the destruction of creation. If all ears would hear the cries, no place would be truly silent. Many continue to reel from the impact of war; ethnic and religious animosity, discrimination based on race and caste mar the façade of nations and leave ugly scars. Thousands are dead, displaced, homeless, refugees within their own homeland. Women and children often bear the brunt of conflicts: many women are abused, trafficked, killed; children are separated from their parents, orphaned, recruited as soldiers, abused. Citizens in some countries face violence by occupation, paramilitaries, guerrillas, criminal cartels or government forces. Citizens of many nations suffer governments obsessed with national security and armed might; yet these fail to bring real security, year after year. Thousands of children die each day from inadequate nutrition while those in power continue to make economic and political decisions that favor a relative few.

FILM: Joyeux Noel

Joyeux Noel (Merry Christmas) tells the true-life story of the spontaneous Christmas Eve truce declared by Scottish, French and German troops in the trenches of World War I. Enemies leave their weapons behind for one night as they band together in brotherhood and forget about the brutalities of war.

Optional musical interlude: John McCutcheon, Christmas in the Trenches. YouTube version performed by Darryl Purpose [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xz3Oe5a8zF4]

Closing Prayer

Extinguish the candles and return them to the circular platter.
As we end this session, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.

Together: Prayer of St. Francis. This prayer first appeared in France, prior to the First World War, on a prayer card with a devotional image of Saint Francis on it, intended for Third Order Franciscans. Later the prayer appeared in English prayer books and was broadcast daily by the BBC prior to the Second World War. Finally, the prayer appeared in German prayer books in the postwar period, brought to Germany from England by German prisoners of war. Today, the Saint Francis prayer is shared by people across borders as a prayer for peace, a prayer to emulate in our lives the deep commitment that Francis had to God’s justice and to Christ’s peace:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let us sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon,
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is darkness, light,
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, Grant that we may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console,
To be understood, as to understand,
To be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born
To eternal life.

Scripture phrase from beginning repeated by three different voices:

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God (Matthew 5:9).”
Amen
SESSION THREE
Called to Be Just Peacemakers at Home and Abroad

Goals of the Session:

- To strengthen our commitment to developing the virtues of a peacemaker and a clear vision of a peaceful world.
- To deepen our understanding of Catholic Social Teaching on peace in light of the challenges of a world torn by violence and war.
- To respond to the call to strengthen peacemaking as an essential dimension of our faith, reminding us that Jesus called us to be peacemakers.

Readings for this session:

Part One: Just Peacemaking at Home

- An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace
- Called to Be Peacemakers: The Challenge and Promise of Peace in the Twenty-First Century: I. Reading the Signs of the Times – A. Raising Our Voices: Our Lived Experience, Our Longings (4-6).

Part Three: Just Peacemaking Abroad

- “Respecting Life in a Violent Society” – by Mary Evelyn Jegen, S.N.D., first National Coordinator of Pax Christi USA and Ambassador of Peace.
- “Following the Most Radical Teachings of Jesus” – by Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, former Bishop President of Pax Christi USA and Ambassador of Peace.

OPENING PRAYER

Scripture reading: three readers to repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between:
“He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near (Ephesians 2:17).”

Light three candles and place on the map: in the group’s location, Europe, and the former Yugoslavia.

Leader: The following reading is from The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, a Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the 10th Anniversary of bishops’ pastoral, The Challenge of Peace.

Leader: Peace does not consist merely in the absence of war, but rather in sharing the goodness of life together. We’ll read excerpts from The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace: Theology, Spirituality and Ethics for Peacemaking

Reader 1: Changes of mind and heart and of word and action are essential to those who would work for peace (Rom 12:2). This conversion to the God of peace has two dimensions. On the one hand, in imitation of Christ we must be humble, gentle and patient. On the other, we are called to be strong and active in peacemaking, loving our enemies and doing good generously as God does (Luke 6:35-36, 38), filled with eagerness to spread the gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15).

Reader 2: Peace does not consist merely in the absence of war, but rather in sharing the goodness of life together. In keeping with Pope John XXIII’s teaching, the Church’s positive vision of a peaceful world includes: 1) the primacy of the global common good for political life, 2) the role of social and economic development in securing the conditions for a just and lasting peace, and 3) the moral imperative of solidarity between affluent, industrial nations and poor, developing ones.

Litany of Nonviolence
Alternate readers around the circle:

Provident God, aware of our own brokenness,
We ask the gift of courage to identify how and where
We are in need of conversion in order to live in
Solidarity with Earth and all creation.

Deliver us from the violence of superiority and disdain.
Grant us the desire, and the humility, to listen
With special care to those whose experiences
And attitudes are different from our own.
Deliver us from the violence of greed and privilege.
Grant us the desire, and the will, to live simply
So others may have their just share of Earth’s resources.

Deliver us from the silence that gives consent
To abuse, war and evil.
Grant us the desire, and the courage, to risk speaking
And acting for the common good.

Deliver us from the violence of irreverence,
Exploitation and control.
Grant us the desire, and the strength, to act
Responsibly within the cycle of creation.

God of love, mercy and justice,
Acknowledging our complicity in those attitudes,
Actions and words which perpetrate violence,
We beg the grace of a non-violent heart.
All: Amen.

Sisters of Providence, www.SistersofProvidence.org

READINGS PART 1 - Just Peacemaking at Home

As you read, consider these questions.
- Are you more afraid since 9/11? What can we do to help each other dispel that fear?
- The Gospel says: “Be not afraid.” Does your faith give you strength to overcome fear?
- What is true security? What can we do to make the world a more secure place for all?

Reading 1 - An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace

In their 2011 Ecumenical Call to Just Peace, the World Council of Churches builds on the experiences and insights gained from the “Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001 – 2010,” and invites Christians to commit themselves to the Way of Just Peace.

3. Let the Scriptures speak. The Bible makes justice the inseparable companion of peace (Isaiah 32:17; James 3:18). Both point to right and sustainable relationships in human society, the vitality of our connections with the earth, the “well-being” and integrity of creation. Peace is God’s gift to a broken but beloved world, today as in the lifetime of Jesus Christ: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you” (John 14:27). Through the life and teachings, the death and
resurrection of Jesus Christ, we perceive peace as both promise and present – a hope for the future and a gift here and now.

4. Jesus told us to love our enemies, pray for our persecutors, and not to use deadly weapons. His peace is expressed by the spirit of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-11). Despite persecution, he remains steadfast in his active nonviolence, even to death. His life of commitment to justice ends on a cross, an instrument of torture and execution. With the resurrection of Jesus, God confirms that such steadfast love, such obedience, such trust, leads to life. This is true also for us.

5. Wherever there is forgiveness, respect for human dignity, generosity, and care for the weak in the common life of humanity, we catch a glimpse – no matter how dim – of the gift of peace. It follows therefore that peace is lost when injustice, poverty and disease – as well as armed conflict, violence, and war – inflict wounds on the bodies and souls of human beings, on society and on the earth.

7. Let the church speak. As the Body of Christ, the church is called to be a place of peacemaking. In manifold ways, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, our liturgical traditions illustrate how God’s peace calls us to share peace with each other and with the world. Yet, more often than not, churches fail to live out their call. Christian disunity, which in many ways undermines the churches’ credibility in terms of peacemaking, invites us to a continuous conversion of hearts and minds. Only when grounded in God’s peace can communities of faith be “agents of reconciliation and peace with justice in homes, churches and societies as well as in political, social and economic structures at the global level” (WCC Assembly, 1998). The church that lives the peace it proclaims is what Jesus called a city set on a hill for all to see (Matthew 5:14). Believers exercising the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to them by God in Christ point beyond the churches to what God is doing in the world. (2 Corinthians 5:18).

Reading 2 - Stories of Just Peacemakers at Home - Blessed Franz Jägerstätter: 1907 – 1943, by Fr. Louie Vitale, OFM

Veterans Day, November 11, 2007, Imperial County Jail, California

The following reflection was written from prison by Fr. Louie Vitale on the recent Beatification of “Blessed Franz” Jägerstätter, S.F.O., Martyred August 9, 1943

As I sit in a solitary cell as a federal prisoner serving – along with Stephen Kelly, S.J., [who is serving his time in Arizona] – five month sentences for saying no to torture at Ft. Huachuca, AZ, one year ago, I reflect on the very recent act of beatification by Pope Benedict XVI of Franz Jägerstätter of Austria. Franz bears the name of Francis of Assisi and was a member of the lay order founded by that Saint which spread so widely in the 13th century carrying with it the penitent’s mandate “never to bear arms.” A call so successful that they were credited with
bringing to an end – at least for that moment of history – all the wars of that part of the world. (A truly successful peace movement!)

That legacy has passed through many centuries carrying the much earlier mandate of Jesus to Peter to “put down the sword.” As Thomas Merton points out, the response of early Christians to war was martyrdom. Francis in Assisi realized that as he sat in a cell as a P.O.W. His namesake Franz Jägerstätter bore that pledge (a vow of nonviolence) of Francis to a Nazi cell in Austria and, as Christ, freely & lovingly accepted a very violent death.

On October 26, 2007, Franz Jägerstätter’s life – and actions – received the infallible approval of that same church that canonized those early martyrs. Like Francis of Assisi, their decisive witness has merited for them the fullness of life in “the Beloved Community of God.” Franz’s action, in spite of the counter urging of clergy in those momentous times, was in fact the witness of Christ in the midst of demonic darkness. Franz dreamt that the leaders of his nation were on “a train to Hell.” Franz jumped off – and won the crown of heaven.

As I reflect in my stark cell – which I have “consecrated” in his name (with a little salad oil) – I pray before the holy card of Blessed Franz sent to me from the beatification by John Dear, S.J. This Holy card rests on the metal mirror on the cell’s bare wall, together with a card from the Carmel of Reno of many of the great women and men peacemakers of our time. As I pray, I ask to be included in their midst, and for all of us to have the strength to jump off of the train of horrendous violence of our times. This may sound boastful, but it is the boast of Paul & Jesus’ disciples to be passed on to us as a mandate to bear Christ the peacemaker to our world.

As I pray here in the early hours (we are wakened at 2:30 a.m. for breakfast), I feel the deep unity in the heart of Christ of which Franz spoke, and draw in all those imprisoned here (mostly Mexican nationals attempting to reap the crops of survival of their forebears) and dare to unite all torture survivors who share such cells in a far more monstrous way.

I am also aware that Francis’ call not to bear arms was not only for his times – as Franz realized – but a call to all of us. We should respond to the call of Benedict XVI: “No to all wars.” As today we go physically, via TV or in our prayers, to the graves of all who have died in wars (not only soldiers but in these times, increasingly women, children, elderly), we vow to get off that most lucrative, opulent, highly armed – with world destructing nuclear weapons – train to Hell before we blow not just the train but all of creation “to Hell.” Surely the Patron of Ecology – whom the world recognizes as Francis – would urge us all to do – perhaps we can promote the cause of Franz – not only for canonization but as Patron of all who refuse to kill their brothers and sisters in any war or act of violence. Is this not the message Jesus came to bring?

Let the words of Blessed Franz guide our thoughts and actions in the way of peace:
“We need no rifles or pistols for our battles (much less nuclear weapons) but instead spiritual weapons…”

“Let us love our enemies, bless those who curse us, pray for those who persecute us. For love will conquer and will endure for all eternity. And happy are they who live and die in God’s love.”

“If one harbors no thought of vengeance against others and can forgive everyone, he will be at peace in his heart – and what is more lovely than peace? Let us pray to God that a real and lasting peace may soon descend upon this world.”

“The commandments of God teach us, of course, that we must render obedience to secular rulers, but only to the extent that they do not order us to do anything evil, for we must obey God rather than men.”

“There have always been heroes and martyrs who gave their lives for their faith. If we hope to reach our goal someday, then we too must become heroes of the faith.” (Aside: General Taguba, hearing what we were doing at Fort Huachauca, exclaimed, “You are heroes!”)

The Bishop of Linz, Austria, home of Franz Jägerstätter, stated during the beatification that Franz is: “A prophet with a global view and penetrating insight… A shining example in his fidelity to the clarion of conscience… An advocate of nonviolence and peace… A voice of warning against ideologies… A deep-believing person for whom God really was the core and center of life.”

Blessed Franz, Pray for Us – give us your vision, wisdom & courage – make us truly “instruments of peace.” (Although among the living his valiant wife Franziska may be co-patron to show us the way!)

Peace and all good.

**Reading 3 - Called to be Peacemakers**

**4. We Are Being Manipulated by Fear but We Are Learning to Not Be Afraid**

Fear is a powerful emotion. It can focus the mind and help us navigate dangerous situations. However, fear can also paralyze us and make us susceptible to manipulation by those who offer simplistic answers and decisive action in the name of group solidarity.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11th, we in the United States have experienced a new and previously unknown kind of fear: fear that we and our families might be victims of a terrorist attack. The 9-11 attacks were meant to terrorize us so profoundly that we would lose our sense of security and well-being. In that sense, the terrorists succeeded beyond their wildest imaginations.
Many people were so traumatized that they have been willing to give up our nation’s commitment to protect the human rights of all people for a promise of safety.

How the “War on Terror” has been carried out comes with tremendous costs. The war has been used to justify torture, curtail civil liberties, and wage war in Iraq. The costs include the loss of soldiers’ lives both in Iraq and Afghanistan and an alarming number of suicides, as well as many more people who have been permanently disabled, both physically and emotionally. The costs can also be counted in the stress and breakdown of military families and the thousands of children who suffer the unbearable loss of a father or mother. In Iraq, up to one million civilians have been estimated to have been killed and a fifth of the country displaced internally or living as refugees in other countries (4.5 million people). The war has also resulted in massive destruction of infrastructure and served to breed hatred and incite ever-expanding extremist violence.

The costs of this “War on Terror” can be measured in the loss of up to three trillion dollars of our nation’s wealth. Quite unlike the justified and merciful diversion of money that was spent on anointing Jesus in preparation for his death and burial, in the absence of that paschal sacrifice, the diversion of this money cannot be justified. This money could have been spent on schools, affordable housing, health-care, childcare, public transportation, roads, flood control levies, and other infrastructure. The cost can further be measured in terms of investments that could have been used to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels and to address global warming.

In the beginning of this “War on Terror,” many of us were too traumatized and shocked to fully understand what was happening. Now we are beginning to see how we have too easily surrendered our consciences and responsibility to those in power. We are beginning to ask questions; we are beginning to demand accountability. With the threat of another military quagmire in Afghanistan, these questions rise up in us with heightened urgency.

*While many in power or in the public eye seek to call upon our fear, we are learning that we cannot gain safety by curtailing the rights of others or acting in ways that cause physical and emotional harm.*

*We are coming to understand that while fear seeks to divide us, our only true safety comes in community, in relying upon and trusting each other.*

*We remember the promises of our faith tradition, urging us to “be not afraid” and to put our trust in God.*

*We recall also the witness of our ancestors in faith and history, who banded together to find solutions to and ways out of seemingly impossible situations, relying not on false hope or on simple, dichotomous answers, but on each other and on God.*
5. Some Seek to Divide Us but We Are Stronger When We Stand Together
At times, economic insecurity and fear can make us feel that we have little control over the forces that impact our lives. All too often we find groups in our society willing to provide us with scapegoats to blame. We hear their voices of hatred, fear, and distrust on the radio, TV, and internet, insisting that those with the least amount of political and economic power in our society are to blame for our problems. Whether those blamed are immigrants, Muslims, people of color, the impoverished, gays and lesbians, or the homeless, demagogues (both religious and political) seek to keep us divided and suspicious of each other.

Each year since the 9-11 terrorist attacks, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) has found an increase in the number of reported incidents and experiences of anti-Muslim bias, discrimination, harassment, threats, and physical attacks. Anti-immigrant hatred has reached frightening levels, particularly focusing on those who are undocumented. Anti-African American, anti-Asian, anti-Semitic, and anti-Native American sentiment is thriving in these anxious and fearful times, and hate crimes against sexual minorities remain a part of the landscape. The Southern Poverty Law Center counted 888 active hate groups in the United States in 2007.

These powerful forces of fear, distrust, and hatred have already done a tremendous amount of damage in our communities, and have kept us from constructing the bridges of care and compassion that we need to build a new kind of security – a security built on the size and quality of our network of friends, not on the size of our bank accounts or stock portfolios.

Some believe that our country can become stronger and more secure by subtracting certain groups from "We the People." But we understand that our nation is great precisely because of the contributions of people from so many different cultures and lands who add their aspirations, talents, and ways of being to our understanding of "We the People." We remain strong and vibrant as we recognize that our strength comes from our diversity and that rich exchange and innovation springs forth from it.

We are learning that true security is inclusive security, possible only when everyone’s security is assured and everyone’s basic needs are met.
We are learning to stand up for each other more.

We are coming to understand that the security and wellbeing of our children in urban, inner-city neighborhoods is directly related to the security and well-being of our children in the suburbs.

We are coming to realize that the health of our rural communities is vital to our ability to feed ourselves with healthy food.

And we are convinced that we can no longer expect our brothers and sisters in mining communities to bear the burden of our insatiable need for fuel and mineral resources.

We are learning to be more suspicious of attempts to single out others as our enemies.
Instead, we find that much more unites us than divides us.
Finally, we are coming to the realization that true and inclusive security is only possible when our bridges of caring and compassion connect us to communities all over the world.

6. We Are Told that We Need to Fight to Protect Our “Way of Life,” but We Must Redefine What that Means

Shortly after the attacks of 9-11, then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld stated, “What this war is about is our way of life and our way of life is worth losing lives for.” We question, however: what exactly is this “way of life” that requires us to give up the lives of our loved ones and be willing to kill so many people around the world?

We are mindful that much of our lifestyle depends on maintaining control over important resources from all over the globe. The “War on Terror” and most of the wars our country has waged since World War II have been about protecting a way of life that depends on expanding our access to resources and markets that allow us to maintain our insatiable and addictive consumption of goods. However, it is becoming clear to us that this addictive consumerism is not only unhealthy for us and our children; it is also a source of violence and conflict within and between our communities.

Inside our communities, economic resources are scarce and hope for a better life even scarcer. In a society where the definition of the “good life” is increasingly pushed upward, it is hard to instill the values of delayed gratification, hard work, and frugality.

The never-ending chase for the “good life” confuses our children about what is really important. Parents often fall into the trap of thinking that having more is the same as being more. The social pressure to match the lifestyles of those who are significantly richer than we are comes at a great cost. As a result, we are a society drowning in debt. This pressure causes incredible stress in families.

Yet, with the help of parents and other caring adults, our young are striving to overcome incredible odds in order to grow up to be responsible contributing members of our communities. Maintaining and protecting our insatiable desire for more has other costs as well. We had hopes that with the end of the Cold War, our nation’s leaders would shift resources from the military to address human needs. We also had hoped that they would embrace the call issued in the bishops’ 1983 peace pastoral to see nuclear deterrence only as a step toward progressive nuclear disarmament. These hopes wore thin over time, yet on this latter issue, openings now exist, given the new Administration’s expressed intent of working toward nuclear disarmament.

In conclusion, while not an exhaustive list of the signs of our times, this summary offers a glimpse of the many sources of violence and conflict that we see in our communities and in our world, as well as a glimpse of what we see as opportunities for peace. The challenges to building
a genuine peace are clearly rooted in justice, and they are many. Faced with the enormity of what lies before us, we rest in the assurance that our God is the God of history, present and at work in these times. As part of the discipleship community of Catholic Christians, we are called to discern through the lens of Scripture and our faith tradition, particularly Catholic social teachings, what God requires of us in response to these challenges. A tremendous amount of work remains to be done to organize at the base to call for bold and dramatic changes in the direction of our country’s policies, and we must devote ourselves to this work as we live out the “essential vocation of peacemaking.”

PART 2 ACTIVITY - Conscientious Objection to War

FILM – Franz Jägerstätter: A Man of Conscience

The story of an ordinary man who performed an extraordinary act reminds us that with faith we can all do extraordinary things.

In 1938, Hitler’s army occupied Austria. All men were ordered to enlist in the military. Franz Jägerstätter, a farmer and father of four, went into military training but refused to fight in Hitler’s army, knowing that he would face execution.

His neighbors, pastor and even the bishop tried to convince Franz to enlist for the sake of his family. But Franz felt his faith and conscience compelled him to follow the teachings of God and not the decrees of the Third Reich. He was imprisoned, then executed on August 9, 1943 at the age of 36. In 2007, the Vatican declared Franz a true martyr, officially placing him in the process of sainthood. The deep faith and courage of this humble farmer is an inspiration to all, and leads many to say “no” to war and to work for peace.

Actor Martin Sheen has said, “As he (Franz) stood alone against the greatest force of evil in the 20th century, Franz Jägerstätter discovered that conscience is costly, faith is necessary and one man with courage is a majority.”

READINGS PART 3 - Just Peacemaking Abroad

As you read, consider these questions:
- How are the Gospel and nonviolence related for you?
- How has nonviolence succeeded/failed to bring about social transformation in the world?
Do you think the teaching and practice of nonviolence, like justice, ought to be seen as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel?

Reading 1 - Stories of Just Peacemakers Abroad

“What Just Peacemaking Means to Me”
Katarina Kruhonja, Croatia, Pax Christi International Executive Committee

While trying to understand my own engagement related to peace-building, I am assisted by two very simple definitions of peace used by my friends Adam Curle and Mary Evelyn Jegen.

If we understand peace as relationships in which individuals and groups create space for development on the basis of their own possibilities and not to the detriment of others, then we realize that peace may and should be built always, and that building peace is a very simple thing: to improve relationships so that they make more good than evil, whether we are talking about the emotional, psychological, economic or political context. The same path of building better relationships may also be embarked upon by contemplating peace as solidarity – a community in which the inclination towards solidarity happens spontaneously.

I think that inclination towards better solidarity relations stems from our need for connections (love). Responses and activities will be different, depending on the circumstances and the role, but they are equally important: within a family, at the work place, in school, within a community, between nations and countries. However, my experience has taught me that often, although we possess that need for connections and love, our responses are such that we do not contribute to them. In most cases, we talk about maintaining (cyclical repeating) relations of dominance (violence), denying or avoiding the real problem. Some of the more important reasons for this, in my opinion, are the re-activation of traumas caused by suffered or committed violence in the past; the prevailing culture of dominance; and a lack of self-awareness (which includes a lack of knowledge and skills).

At the same time, I am convinced that each one of us possesses “peace potentials” – capacities for love, compassion, wisdom and courage. And I am sure that this “peace potential” of ours can be strengthened.

My peace potential began to surface during a process in which I became aware about myself as a person whose uniqueness has been recognized in the eyes of God. My internal dialogue (prayer) helps me to nurture it and further develop it. I particularly need it when I “push for something,” when I want everything to be according to my own plans, when I complain because I again have to change something about myself in order to recognize “a window of opportunity” (a different, alternative way out), and particularly when I cannot detach a person (or a group) from what that particular person (or group) does that is contrary to my fundamental values.
However, in most cases I receive an impetus during the exchange. Exchange with my dearest ones. And exchanges with those I encounter in my peace work. Krunoslav Sukić, Adam Curle, Vesna Teršelič, Herb Walters, Margareta Ingelstam, Mary Evelyn Jegen, Clive Fowel, Dušanka Ilić, Brankica Kaselj, my daughter, Sonja Kersten, and my son, Hrvoje, contributed to the activation of my capacity for compassion, courage, love and wisdom. They did so by listening to me in order to understand, by asking questions in such a manner as to help me express what I really felt, thought, needed, but also when they stood up for themselves – so that I could listen to them, question them and support them in the same manner.

Studying also helps me – studying to better understand and adopt useful skills (non-violent communication, creative problem solving, transformation of conflicts etc.).

Until the war struck my homeland of Croatia, my city, my community, all my efforts to build better relationships were at the personal level – within family, through friendship, love, marriage.

I started to think seriously about violence only when I faced the war in my own town and when I had to decide how to react to the threatening violence. In that sense, exposure to war actually turned out to have a positive side effect – the war forced me to re-assess my own attitude towards violence within the framework of my personal system of values (Christian). I had to decide, without hesitation, how to respond to violence, and my decision was, literally, a matter of life and death. The most valuable lesson I learned was that there is always a possibility of choice, but that possibility of choice is, in most cases, clouded by our previous experiences, by pressures exerted by the circumstances (violence), and by our own environment and culture.

I did not realize that the war in Croatia took place until the bombs started falling on my town. But, very soon I became aware of how the logic of total war had taken the lead – how, even in my own mind, there was less and less space for recognition of any other possible way to survive besides: either us or them. I became furious at our teachers and parents because they taught us that a war was a normal thing.

At the same time, fortunately, I became aware that my own passivity as a citizen during the previous period made me partly responsible for the war – for such a violent way of dealing with problems and injustice. Also, facing how violence grew around me and inside of me, it brought me to think what love the enemy actually means in our specific situation of violent conflict.

That insight into my own partial responsibility, and searching for the answer to the question what love the enemy means in our specific situation of violent conflict, helped me to set aside logic which suggests that violence is the only possible answer to violence. (Actually, as a first step I have realized what love the enemy is not – killing the enemy!) I got rid of the logic of violence (although it seemed that there was no other choice apart from either us or them). I chose
the other path because I believed there was such a path (for me it is a Christian path, the path of Christ).

From my own experience of war in Croatia/ex-Yugoslavia, I learned that peace building includes the need to deal with the violent past, and the need to search for the alternative response to contemporary violence, as two interconnected points of reference that determine our present and our future. In the same way – after September 11th and after the execution of Bin Laden – the question of how to break an endless cycle of violence causes fear and a feeling of helplessness. At the same time, it requires new answers.

The question that needs to be answered is how an individual, a society and institutions can create opportunities to break the cycle of violence; how to alleviate the consequences of suffered or committed violence; and how to empower the community for nonviolent actions with the objective of diminishing injustices and resolving conflicts – advancing towards a just society that nurtures peace through nonviolent methods.

My most important lessons learned:
- There is always a possibility to choose.
- Our own part of responsibility stems from the peace potential that each one of us possesses (love, compassion, wisdom, courage).
- Peace potential can be strengthened - developed.
- By working on peace we cannot escape unrest – by opening sometimes very disturbing questions at personal and social levels. Actually, peace work requires a conscious agreement to be exposed and vulnerable.
- Croatian peace initiatives (as well as those in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) may and should affirm the right to choose as a permanent value. We have demonstrated that even during the war there is always, and there must be always, space for personal commitment towards alternatives to war – that a war must never be proclaimed the only true response and, thereby, imposed on all of us; that there are alternative responses towards violence which should be given legitimacy. I believe that would be a step forwards towards a culture of active non-violence.
- Peace is also a path, it evolves. I started looking at life as a peace potential, full of encounters that may empower and connect us. Whenever I took that path, I was never alone. My life is full (which includes hardships, as well), joyful and connected.

Reading 2 – “Respecting Life in a Violent Society”

More than half of all people killed in wars throughout history were killed in the past 100 years. The 20th century will be remembered as the most violent in history. This violence is measured
not only in war dead but also in the development of weapons of mass destruction, in the enormous increase in abortions, and in the failure to take the steps necessary to correct the economic injustices that kill more people than do wars. We are horrified when schoolchildren kill other children, and we increasingly fear random killing. In 1996, 4,643 children and teenagers in the U.S. were killed by guns. That averages the equivalent of a Littleton massacre every day.

Violence is power used to injure. Ordinarily we think of violence as physical – a blow, a gunshot, a bombing. But violence can also take the form of destroying a reputation, of a cutting remark or a withering glance. Sometimes violence takes the form of withdrawal of power. Think of refugees, for example, deprived of the power to provide homes and communities for their families.

The Gospel of Life

As Christians, how are we to respond to violence? Jesus calls himself the way, the truth and the life; he says that he has come that we may have life and have it more abundantly. “The Gospel of life is at the heart of Jesus’ message,” writes Pope John Paul II (The Gospel of Life, #1). What does that mean for us who are surrounded by violence?

We can get an idea of how Jesus understood life by reflecting on our personal experience. Our life at its best is always in the context of our love at its finest. Each of us can remember some peak experiences when we were most alive, full of energy and the joy of living. On careful reflection we can identify love in these experiences, a love that drew us out of ourselves.

We also have splendid examples in the lives of others. I think of my friend Katarina Kruhonja, a Catholic Croatian doctor who lives in Osijek, a city near the Serbian border. At the height of the war in the early 1990’s Katarina and a few of her friends decided to sit with neighbors in their apartments to resist ethnic cleansing without using physical force. Today, the Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights which Katarina helped found plays a major role in healing the wounds of war in Croatia. The Center’s members are Serbs and Croats working together, witnessing by their lives and works to the power of love that requires courage and solidarity and is more powerful than violence.

In Belfast I met women, Protestant and Catholic, who lived together in a house close to the dividing wall between Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods, an area terrorized by violence. These women organized activities for their children in a risky public witness to their refusal to be drawn into a culture of violence. They lived the prayer of Francis of Assisi, sowing love where there was hatred, hope where there was despair.
The Call to Conversion

When our United States bishops wrote their landmark pastoral letter, *The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response*, they reminded us how followers of Jesus are to respond to violence. A disciple of Jesus, they wrote, is called “not simply to believe with one’s mind, but also to become a doer of the word... and a witness to Jesus. This means, of course, that we never expect complete success within history and that we must regard as normal even the path of persecution and the possibility of martyrdom” (#276).

Have we, as disciples of Jesus and members of the Church in the United States, risked persecution or martyrdom in our witnessing to Jesus? Have we resisted strongly and persistently enough the culture of violence? Have we, for example, yet repented publicly for the violence of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? The victims of those attacks were for the most part civilians.

*The Challenge of Peace* comes to grips with the moral implications of our country’s use of the atomic bomb. Our bishops recognized a stumbling block to redemption from violence when they wrote: “We must shape the climate of opinion that will make it possible for our country to express profound sorrow over the atomic bombing in 1945” (#302). As a society we are called to conversion. We who are members of Christ’s mystical body have a particular responsibility to contribute to that conversion by expressing sorrow ourselves.

It is not only for the use of atomic weapons that we need the sorrow that makes conversion possible. The failure to repent is related to acceptance of other kinds of legalized killing in the United States: capital punishment, abortion, and wars we have fought since 1945. That these ways are legal does not make them moral; nor does it mean that there are no significant distinctions among them. One thing they do have in common is their brutalizing effect on our society. Massive legalized killing makes it much more difficult for us to hold fast to the values of human dignity and of life and love as these are grounded in our Christian faith.

At the end of our century terrible violence is increasingly inflicted not only on civilians who are the principal victims of wars fought with guns and missiles, but also on the poor people who are victims of the violence of economic sanctions. In the case of Iraq, the most glaring example today [1999], the death toll resulting from the sanctions is as great as if these people had been killed by bombs.

The arms trade is another of the most devastating kinds of international violence in which the U.S. is involved. Pope John Paul writes, “And what of the violence inherent not only in wars as such, but in the scandalous arms trade which spawns the many armed conflicts which stain our world with blood?” (*The Gospel of Life*, #10).
Though we think first of the victims of violence, the harm done to the perpetrator of violence is real and serious because it affects directly the violator’s deepest core, the distinctive powers that make us humans created in the image of God. Widespread violence conditions the conscience, making it “increasingly difficult to distinguish between good and evil in what concerns the basic value of human life” (*The Gospel of Life*, #4).

**Responding in Love**

What then can we do? We can first recognize that there is a societal and cultural dimension to violence for which we bear some responsibility. We are probably not personally guilty of violence, but have we done enough to redeem our culture of violence?

We take our cue from the life of Jesus, as a community of his disciples. While he did not have to contend with our particular forms of violence, he did live in a violent society. His countrymen lived under the heel of an efficient and cruel government that used public execution by torture as a means of keeping people in line. Jesus became a victim of Roman policy, a criminal executed for a capital crime. Viewed from a purely political perspective, his life was a tragic failure.

But it is the perspective of faith that gives us the key to interpreting the story differently. Resisting the conventional wisdom of his day, Jesus refused to fall into the trap of thinking that violence can be overcome by violence. Returning evil for evil simply feeds into a spiral of violence. Jesus met violence by consistently living out another vision that he called the kingdom of God. He said that this kingdom was among us, and showed that it was by his unconditional and all-embracing love. He taught the astonishing new commandment that we are to love even our enemies.

So what does the way of Jesus regarding violence mean? What are some of the actions available to us, actions that meet violence with love?

**Starting with Prayer**

Prayer is surely one way. We are accustomed to praying for the victims of violence. Can we learn to pray for the perpetrators of violence as well? And can we add those who are passive in the presence of violence, who feel helpless before it? That might include ourselves.

We can learn how to listen with care and compassion to those labeled enemies by our society, making the effort to find out what their genuine grievances are and refusing to demonize them. Members of the Center for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights in Osijek teach compassionate listening to students and adults. They call it "giraffe language." They explained to me that the giraffe has a very large heart, needed to pump blood up that long neck to the brain. By listening with large hearts the people of Osijek are coming to new and truer understandings. A minister of
education told me that he was convinced that the war could have been avoided had giraffe language been a part of the school curriculum in the decade before the fighting began.

One way to counteract violence, but a way that may be difficult for some, is to turn off the television when it makes entertainment of violence, conditioning us to want to seek excitement from it. One practical way to deal with media is to fast from television one day a week and to use the time saved to reflect on what was seen the other days, especially the news and its significance. That way, what is happening in the news can become a matter of prayer and citizen action.

We can renew a commitment to join our bishops in their pledge: “As a tangible sign of our need and desire to do penance we, for the cause of peace, commit ourselves to fasting and abstinence on each Friday of the year” (The Challenge of Peace, #298).

Many families make a family pledge of nonviolence, committing themselves to respect themselves and others, to communicate better, to listen carefully, especially when there are disagreements, to forgive and to make amends when they have hurt another and to avoid entertainment that makes violence look exciting, funny or acceptable.

As citizens we can exercise our responsibility to support legislation that respects life and defends it, and we can oppose policies that do the opposite. It is our faith that calls us to such action.

**Transforming Love**

In all our efforts we have the great blessing of knowing that violence is not a problem to be solved by our own strength. It is a mystery of evil to be addressed in union with Jesus who unmasked its claim to power by bringing into the world a far greater power. He labored to bring home to us how closely he wants to share that power with us. He tells us, “I am the vine, you are the branches.... By this is my Father glorified, that you should bear much fruit and become my disciples” (John 15:5,8). “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him” (John 6:56).

There is only one way to bring these words to life, and that is by testing them in action. These actions, simple daily acts of love in our families, schools, parishes, neighborhoods and the larger community, contribute to an environment in which violence has much less chance of expression. As we enter the third millennium by celebrating Jesus’ birth, there is no better way to honor him than to grow in his way of meeting violence with transforming love, a costly but not impossible love because it is a participation in his own.

**Reading 3 – “Following the Most Radical Teachings of Jesus”**

By Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, former bishop President of Pax Christi USA and Ambassador of Peace. (Visit [http://ncronline.org/blogs/the-peace-pulpit](http://ncronline.org/blogs/the-peace-pulpit)).
In May 2003, Pope John Paul II visited Spain. In a meeting with hundreds of thousands of young people, he expressed a profound sadness over the recent war in Iraq – a war he had worked extremely hard to prevent – and he denounced all war and the spirals of violence which afflict our common humanity. He pleaded with these young men and women to become “artisans of peace” – to respond to violence only with “the fascinating power of love.”

In order to develop a nonviolent response to “egregious human rights violations, threats to use weapons of mass destruction and other ‘just causes’ for war,” we must commit ourselves to follow the most radical of the teachings of Jesus, the rejection of violence for any reason whatsoever.

For hundreds of years now we, as individuals and as a Church, have allowed ourselves to accept a very diminished understanding of the Gospel by accepting a justified use of violence and killing.

St. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth: “Here am I preaching a crucified Christ… to the Jews a scandal and to the Greeks madness…” People to whom Paul preached could not easily accept someone who was determined to accept suffering rather than to inflict suffering; someone who accepted to be killed rather than to kill; someone who loved and forgave the very “enemies” who were putting him to death.

Surely the way of Jesus is a “scandal” (stumbling block) and sheer “madness” in ordinary ways of thinking. However, it is God’s way revealed in Jesus and, as Paul concludes, “The foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.” I am persuaded that it will only be on the basis of a deep conviction concerning the necessity always to reject violence that we will begin to understand how to be “artisans of peace.” To be an artisan means to be creative, to be visionary, to imagine what can be, even if it has not been before; to have a dream like Dr. King and then to use all our energy and intellect and will to bring the “fascinating power of love” into every situation of violence, whether it be individual and personal, or between communities, racial or ethnic, or even among nations.

I believe the fundamental reason we have failed to develop strategies at an international level adequate to the task of eliminating war is our failure to eliminate without exception the option of a “justified” use of violence.

Once we have freed ourselves from the constraints of “human wisdom” and begin to act according to the “foolishness of God,” abundant strategies could be developed, both long range and immediate.
Among long range strategies would be a determination to act on the conviction set forth by Pope Paul VI in the encyclical *Progressio Populorum* (Progress of Peoples) that “Development is the new name for peace”; or as John Paul II taught in his peace day statement of January 1, 2002, our response to the horrendous violence of September 11, 2001 must be built on two pillars: “justice” and that “special kind of love we call forgiveness.”

Another long range strategy would be to establish within our government a department of peace. This would be a counterpart to our department of war. If we devoted as much of our resources to training ourselves on how to wage peace as we do on how to wage war, there is no limit to what could be achieved.

In regard to immediate strategies, we must strengthen our commitment to the United Nations and show leadership in drawing all nations to work within this international body in order to develop international law and machinery for enforcement of this law by international tribunals. One of the most important parts of the U.N. Charter is the legal restrictions it puts upon the use of international force. We must insist that our nation adhere to this restriction and lead the way in bringing other nations to abide by this charter.

In instances where there are human rights violators within a nation, or where a nation is threatening war against another nation, or where a nation is illegally developing or maintaining weapons of mass destruction, the international community must act by some kind of intervention. But there must first of all be developed an agreed set of criteria to determine when such intervention is justified and there has to be an agreed procedure for determining if the criteria are present in a specific situation.

Above all, we must insist that the international intervention be done through nonviolent means. As Stephen Zunes (editor of *Nonviolent Social Movements: A Geographical Perspective*) points out: “Scores of repressive governments have been toppled in recent decades. The vast majority of these overthrows came about not from foreign invasion or even armed revolution but through massive nonviolent action.” It is this power of nonviolent action that we must recognize and actively support. In this way we will become genuine “artisans of peace” and bring about an end to the spiral of violence which otherwise threatens

**Closing Prayer**

Extinguish the candles and return them to the circular platter.

*As we end this session, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.*

Closing reflection (two readers, divide group into two sides)
Reader One:  
St. Martin of Tours: Catholic Conscientious Objector  
One of the best known conscientious objectors to become a saint was St. Martin of Tours. Martin was born in what is now Hungary in 316 A.D. He was the son of a military tribune, but he tried to avoid military service. He was in chains when he finally took the military oath. When he turned 22, he became a Christian. He applied for a discharge, telling his commander, "I am a soldier of Christ. It is not lawful for me to fight." Fortunately, Martin was not executed and he eventually became bishop of Tours. It is interesting to note that the feast day of this military conscientious objector falls on November 11 – Veteran's Day in the United States. (Taken from The Catholic Peace Tradition by Ronald G. Musto and Conscientious Objection: Catholic Perspectives by Gordon Zahn.)

Reader Two:  
Blessed Martin of Tours, as a soldier in the Roman army you opened your heart to the nonviolent message of Jesus and refused to bear arms.

Comfort and strengthen young people of the militaries of the world who, for reason of conscience, cannot participate in war. May we imitate your example and always follow the law written on our hearts. Give us the courage to obey the dictates of conscience in all circumstances, even when the voice within conflicts with the law of the land.

Enable all who refuse to bear arms to feel our love and support. Inspire government leaders to grant amnesty to all conscientious objectors.  
Pax Christi USA resource Our Prayers Rise Like Incense: Liturgies for Peace.

Scripture Reading: three times, three readers.

“He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near (Ephesians 2:17).”
Amen.
SECTION II

Just Peacemaking and Economic and Interracial Justice

As people of faith, we join the struggle against economic injustice, militarism and environmental destruction which are particularly harmful to those who are poor; minorities, children, and women. We work toward eliminating racist structures in the church and in the country, working toward equality of all people.
NOTE TO PARTICIPANT – Sessions 4-6

We hope by now that the last three sessions have provided you with both a good understanding of the Spirituality of Nonviolence and Just Peacemaking, as well as an opportunity to share your faith journey with each other. The next three sessions will focus on Just Peacemaking and Economic and Interracial Justice. These sessions deal in depth with what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. referred to as “the giant triplets of poverty, racism, and militarism.”

Throughout this section we will continue to highlight the three things mentioned in the previous section:

(1) Just Peacemaking. The readings from our faith traditions trace the development of church teaching on war and peace, beginning with the U.S. Catholic Bishops’ pastoral letter, “The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace” (1993) and concluding with the more recent statement of the World Council of Churches, An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace (2011). What is significant about this development is the call to bring the divine gift of peace into contemporary contexts of violence, and the centrality of nonviolent resistance to the Way of Just Peace. As the bishops affirm, “The millions and millions of people killed just in this century in war or by repressive regimes are ample proof that we must chart a new path to peace and justice.”

(2) The War at Home / The War Abroad. The readings for these three sessions make clear the connections between poverty, racism, and militarism, and the interconnectedness of the diverse struggles for economic and interracial justice and peace. The readings for Just Peacemaking at Home survey the challenges and promise highlighted by “The People’s Peace Initiative”: (1) The Challenge of War and Terrorism, (2) The Challenge of Poverty and Economic Globalization, (3) The Challenge of Institutional Racism, and (4) The Promise of the Beloved Community. The readings for Just Peacemaking Abroad address these challenges, but focus on the connections between the war at home and the war abroad, and make a plea for the conversion of military expenditures to domestic and global needs.

(3) Bearing Witness. The overarching goal of these sessions is to prepare ourselves, through a process of Prayer – Study – Action, to bear witness to our Gospel faith in ways that help diminish and end violence and war, and lay the foundation for economic and interracial justice and peace. We are on a journey of conversion, and part of the conversion process is to see the world through the eyes of the poor, and to respond to the world with a heart of compassion. To that end, we offer stories of just peacemakers that reflect the reality of the poor and people of color. The readings call for systemic changes to policies and institutions that create, maintain, and perpetuate poverty, racism, violence, and war. Increasingly, we pray that our hearts of stone may become hearts of flesh that respond with God’s mercy and compassion to the pain and suffering in the world.
SESSION FOUR
Making the Connections:
Just Peacemaking at Home and Abroad

Goals of the Session:

- To deepen our understanding of the Catholic tradition on nonviolence and just war, the strong presumption against the use of force that underlies both.
- To strengthen our commitment to envisioning a new international order and structures of peace.
- To deepen our understanding of the interconnections between militarism, racism, and poverty, and how justice and peace abroad is related to justice and peace at home.

Readings for this session:

Note to Participants for Section II, Sessions 4-6

**Part One: Just Peacemaking at Home**

- *An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace.*
- Stories of Just Peacemakers at Home “Poverty and Racism: Overlapping Threats to the Common Good” – Catholic Charities USA.

**Part Three: Just Peacemaking Abroad**

- “Know Justice, Know Peace: Ending War at Home and Abroad” – by Rev. Bryan Massingale, STD, Associate Professor of Moral Theology at Saint Francis Seminary in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Scripture reading: (Three readers to repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between.)

*Scripture Reading: “Justice, justice alone shall you pursue. (Deuteronomy 16:20).”*

Light four candles and place on the map: (In the group’s location, France, Croatia and the Great Lakes region of East Africa.)
Leader: The following reading is from The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, a Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the 10th Anniversary of bishops’ pastoral, The Challenge of Peace.

Leader: **Overall, the wars fought in the last fifty years show a dramatic rise in the proportion of noncombatant casualties. This fact points to the need for clear moral restraints both in avoiding war and in limiting its consequences.** We’ll read excerpts from The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace: Theology, Two Traditions – Nonviolence and Just War

**Reader 1:** An essential component of a spirituality for peacemaking is an ethic for dealing with conflict in a sinful world. The Christian tradition possesses two ways to address conflict: nonviolence and just war. They both share the common goal: to diminish violence in this world. For as we wrote in The Challenge of Peace, “The Christian has no choice but to defend peace… This is an inalienable obligation. It is the how of defending peace which offers moral options.”5 We take up this dual tradition again, recognizing, on the one hand, the success of nonviolent methods in recent history, and, on the other, the increasing disorder of the post-Cold War world with its pressures for limited military engagement and humanitarian intervention.

**Reader 2:** Throughout history there has been a shifting relation between the two streams of the tradition which always remain in tension. Like Christians before us who have sought to read the signs of the times in light of this dual tradition, we today struggle to assess the lessons of the nonviolent revolutions in Eastern Europe in 1989 and the former Soviet Union in 1991, on the one hand, and of the conflicts in Central America, the Persian Gulf, Bosnia, Somalia, Lebanon, Cambodia and Northern Ireland on the other.

**Reader 3:** The devastation wrought by these recent wars reinforces and strengthens for us the strong presumption against the use of force, which is shared by both traditions. Overall, the wars fought in the last fifty years show a dramatic rise in the proportion of noncombatant casualties. This fact points to the need for clear moral restraints both in avoiding war and in limiting its consequences. The high level of civilian deaths raises serious moral questions about the political choices and military doctrines which have had such tragic results over the last half century. The presumption against the use of force has also been strengthened by the examples of the effectiveness of nonviolence in some places in Eastern Europe and elsewhere.
Prayer for Dismantling Racism
Alternate readers:

Dear God, in our efforts to dismantle racism, we understand
That we struggle not merely against
Flesh and blood but against powers and principalities –
Those institutions and systems that
Keep racism alive by
Perpetuating the lie that some
Members of the family are
Inferior and others superior.

Create in us a new mind and heart
That will enable us to see
Brothers and sisters in the faces of
Those divided by racial categories.

Give us the grace and strength to rid ourselves of racial
Stereotypes that oppress some of us while providing
Entitlements to others.

Help us to create a Church and a nation that embraces
The hopes and fears of oppressed People of Color where
We live, as well as those around the world.

Heal your family, God, and make us one with you,
In union with our brother Jesus,
And empowered by your Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Pax Christi USA, Anti-Racism Team

As you read, consider these questions:

- How have you, your parents and your family been affected by violence and/or war?
- How can our deepest longings for peace bring us together as one human family?
- What can we do to restrain or end violence and/or war in our community and in the world today?
- What has happened and what has changed in our world since the bishops’ pastoral was published nearly 30 years ago?
Reading 1 - An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace.

In their 2011 *Ecumenical Call to Just Peace*, World Council of Churches builds on the experiences and insights gained from the “Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001 – 2010,” and invites Christians to commit themselves to the Way of Just Peace.

8. **The Way of Just Peace.** There are many ways of responding to violence; many ways of practicing peace. As members of the community that proclaims Christ the embodiment of peace, we respond to the call to bring the divine gift of peace into contemporary contexts of violence and conflict. So we join the Way of Just Peace, which requires both movement towards the goal and commitment to the journey. We invite people of all worldviews and religious traditions to consider the goal and to share their journeys. Just Peace invites all of us to testify with our lives. To pursue peace we must prevent and eliminate personal, structural and media violence, including violence against people because of race, caste, gender, sexual orientation, culture or religion. We must be responsible to those who have gone before us, living in ways that honor the wisdom of our ancestors and the witness of the saints in Christ. We also have a responsibility to those who are the future: our children, ‘tomorrow people.’ Our children deserve to inherit a more just and peaceful world.

9. **Nonviolent resistance is central to the Way of Just Peace.** Well-organized and peaceful resistance is active, tenacious and effective – whether in the face of governmental oppression and abuse or business practices which exploit vulnerable communities and creation. Recognizing that the strength of the powerful depends on the obedience and compliance of citizens, of soldiers and, increasingly, of consumers, nonviolent strategies may include acts of civil disobedience and non-compliance.

10. **On the Way of Just Peace.** The justifications of armed conflict and war become increasingly implausible and unacceptable. The churches have struggled with their disagreement on this matter for decades; however, the Way of Just Peace now compels us to move forward. Yet, to condemn war is not enough; we must do everything in our power to promote justice and peaceful cooperation among peoples and nations. The Way of Just Peace is fundamentally different from the concept of ‘just war’ and much more than criteria for protecting people from the unjust use of force; in addition to silencing weapons it embraces social justice, the rule of law, respect for human rights and shared human security.
Reading 2 - Stories of Just Peacemakers at Home

“Poverty and Racism in America – Overlapping Threats to the Common Good” – Catholic Charities USA, 2008

In “Poverty in America: A Threat to the Common Good,” we called for public policy proposals, creative initiatives, and collective changes of heart that would cut poverty in half by 2020. We undertook this initiative out of the conviction that poverty is a scandalous affront to the Christian conscience and endangers the social peace and future prosperity of this nation.

It is our strong belief that any strategy to reduce poverty in America must also confront the deep connection between racism and poverty... We are convinced that poverty and racism “are so intertwined that it is impossible to fully separate them. Racism, in both its individual and institutional forms, is a cause of poverty and at the same time an additional barrier for people of color to escape poverty.” We are convinced that without a conscious and proactive struggle against racism, our efforts to reduce the plague of poverty will be in vain. Any effective campaign to reduce poverty must also confront the “unresolved racism” which still permeates our national life. In order to uproot the scandal of poverty, we must also be agents of racial justice.”

- Catholic Charities USA
  “Poverty and Racism: Overlapping Threats to the Common Good,” 2008

“Faces and Stories of Immigrants”
http://www.facesofimmigrants.org/

Just as the word "immigrant" has different meanings in today's political climate, so too does the issue of "immigration reform."

Immigrants are our neighbors, co-workers, students, and friends—and they contribute greatly to our nation and to our communities.

Instead of being side-tracked by heated rhetoric and political posturing, all of us should take the time to open our minds and hearts to hear the actual stories of the immigrants themselves. Who are they? Why are they here? How is our current immigration system failing them? How do their experiences impact our local communities and our nation?

I have begun a series of personal conversations with our immigrant brothers and sisters in and around Southern California. I have asked them to share their stories about how their lives have been impacted by having to live in the shadows of society because of an antiquated and broken immigration system.
Please listen carefully to their stories, look into their faces. The more we come to know immigrants as individual people like ourselves with the same longings and yearnings for themselves, their families, and our countries, the more we will understand the need to reform federal immigration laws to help bring these people along a path to legal recognition.

These stories are representative of the experiences of some 12 million undocumented immigrants living in our country today. We will be adding more stories in the coming weeks so that all of us can put a human face on these brothers and sisters—rather than reprimand them with judgmental rhetoric.

Cardinal Roger M. Mahoney
Roman Catholic Archbishop of Los Angeles

Reading 3 - Called to be Peacemakers
B. The Challenges and Promise of Peace Today20

The world that now exists in the twenty-first century is dramatically different from the world of the original Peace Pastoral or the tenth anniversary statement. From our reflections, we found that the current challenges to peace are closely akin to what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. named the “giant triplets of racism, poverty, and war” more than forty years ago. Today we might include a fourth, environmental degradation, that threatens the planet and the existence of future generations and which is closely linked to and sometimes stems from war, poverty, and racism.

1. The Challenge of War and Terrorism

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, ushered in the “War on Terror,” a new framework for looking at and dealing with national and international events that has had devastating consequences. The militarized response to 9-11 included the launch of wars on two fronts, in Afghanistan and Iraq, with the attack on Iraq being justified as a “preventive” war. While terrorism is a serious concern, an alternative response could have been more in line with an international police action, with emphasis on multilateral cooperation for a range of non-military interventions. Instead, the wars ignited a spiral of violence in the region and aggravated anti-U.S. sentiment abroad.

According to a report of international jurists in early 2009, “Many States . . . ignoring lessons from the past, have allowed themselves to be rushed into hasty responses [to terrorism], introducing an array of measures which undermine cherished values as well as the international legal framework carefully developed since the Second World War. These measures have resulted in human rights violations, including torture, enforced disappearances, secret and arbitrary detentions, and unfair trials. There has been little accountability for these abuses or justice for

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20 Excerpted from Pax Christi USA’s 2008 document, “Called to Be Peacemakers.”
their victims. The “War on Terror” has itself become a cause of concern and eroded the basis of international law and human rights.”

The war in Iraq represents a clear example of how “violence begets violence.” With the United States deepening its military engagement in Afghanistan and with threats to Iran and Pakistan, it becomes increasingly urgent to examine alternatives to military strategies for addressing conflicts.

Moreover, war adversely affects the most vulnerable populations—women, children, and the elderly; it destroys infrastructure and creates refugees. War polarizes ethnic and racial differences, often leading to ethnic cleansing and inter-religious conflict. War destroys the environment and diverts precious resources toward destructive military ends.

Pope John Paul II, who knew first-hand the devastating consequences of war, was relentless in his harsh judgment on war:

I myself, on the occasion of the recent tragic war in the Persian Gulf, repeated my cry: “Never again war! No, never again war,” which destroys the lives of innocent people, teaches how to kill, throws into upheaval even the lives of those who do the killing and leaves behind a trail of resentment and hatred, thus making it all the more difficult to find a solution of the very problems which provoked the war.

It must never be forgotten that at the root of war there are usually real and serious grievances: injustices suffered, legitimate aspirations frustrated, poverty and the exploitation of multitudes of desperate people who see no real possibility of improving their lot by peaceful means.

War and violence are always desperate measures. While it may feel daunting to imagine a world without war, we cannot deny that our deepest longings and aspirations move us toward this goal for peace. In fact, the abolition of war forms the opening of the United Nations Charter: “We, the people of the United Nations, [are] determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war . . . and to live in peace with one another as good neighbors. . . .”

As was true of that great struggle to end slavery, the struggle to abolish war will require great imagination and great courage, and it will require robust attention to promote alternative, non-violent means to resolve conflicts, to achieve justice, and to defend the innocent.

2. The Challenge of Poverty and Economic Globalization

A second great challenge is the rise in the power and scope of economic globalization and poverty. While globalization has expanded connections between people and places around the
world in ways not earlier known to humanity, the current forms of economic and cultural globalization have caused painful dislocation in communities across the planet as people see their jobs reassigned to nations where labor is cheaper while, at the same time, others are forced to migrate from their homelands seeking work in order to survive.

Our group was a variety of folks struggling with many issues that make it difficult to feel inner peace. Everyone unanimously decided that peace had to be found within in order to project and promote it to the outside world.

Our group had young people, displaced immigrants, people suffering from cancer, and people struggling with addiction. The biggest challenge to peace they found is the disintegration of families.

Most of us were forced to flee our homes because of economic disparity. Now we live here in fear, unwelcome yet unable to return home with our hands empty. Once we came to the United States we were distanced from our families.

Here our young folks are more occupied with the consumer culture than with their traditions. . . . The media encourages violence, pornography, and a lack of faith.

The consumer culture of the United States not only is making people leave their homes and traditions behind, but it is killing the family and community.

The principle goal of the architects of globalization is higher profits, but the strategies for pursuing higher profits come at the expense of those people who are supposed to benefit from globalization. In addition to massive forced global migration, the results have included the destruction of entire communities and the environment—results that can be just as violent and deadly as those caused by war. This violence is true for communities in many countries around the world, as well as in the United States.

Culturally, the open markets advocated by the architects of globalization have made it possible for Western consumer values to spread throughout the world. Embedded in this advocacy is the assumption of the superiority of Western culture—a culture rooted in whiteness, patriarchy, and colonialism. It is a culture of massive consumption that has had a dramatic impact on worldwide
cultural aspirations, especially among the young. However, because of the growing gap between rich and poor, often-unattainable aspirations result in frustration and social disintegration in poor communities.

As a result of these forces of globalization, many of the economic, cultural, and political challenges the bishops identified in their 1993 anniversary statement can no longer be considered strictly as international issues in contrast to domestic issues. One of the salient features of globalization is the melding of these two formally distinct realities. The same economic, political, and cultural forces sowing the seeds of conflict and violence around the world are sowing the seeds of conflict here at home.

PART 2 - ACTIVITY

Background Reading for Activity: A Seat at the Table*

Any concern with racial justice today must take into account the changing demographics of American society and the seismic shift in the composition of our population. We are becoming more racially and culturally diverse than ever before. At least one out of three Americans is now “Latino or nonwhite.” Many of our nation’s urban centers are now so-called “majority-minority,” meaning not only that people of color are the majority of the population, but also that no single racial or ethnic group constitutes a numerical majority. Because of immigration patterns and differing birthrates among the various racial groups, it appears likely that by the middle of this century, whites will no longer be the majority race in the United States. Indeed, it is probable that our country will have no single racial majority group.

If we are going to create a more just America for the new majority of our citizens, we must address some of the current challenges facing our nation. While the majority of poor people in our country currently are white, a disproportionate number of poor people are persons of color.

Consider the following facts cited in our 2006 statement:

- The highest rates of poverty are among children, especially children of color. The poverty rate for white children is 10 percent, while it is 28 percent for Latino children, 27 percent for Native-American children, and 33 percent for African-American children.
- African Americans, Latino Americans, and Native Americans are about three times as likely to live in poverty as are whites. While the poverty rate for non-Hispanic whites is 8 percent, the rate for African Americans is 24.1 percent, for Hispanics, 21.8 percent, and for Native Americans, 23.2 percent.
- The most extreme poverty in the United States is concentrated in specific geographical areas such as the urban cores of major cities and Native American reservations. These
areas of concentrated poverty are the result of decades of policies that confined the impoverished to these economically isolated areas.

Thus the major demographic shifts of the present and near future force us to confront the unfinished business of our nation’s struggles for racial justice and inclusion. As one authoritative study notes, “The color question is pervasive in our lives, and it is an explicit tension or at least subtext in countless policy debates.” The ghosts of our legacy of racial inequality continue to haunt us. Incidents of racial violence and protests against alleged brutalities; the racial inequities in the nation’s criminal justice system; the racial disparities present in health care delivery and access; the continuing controversies over affirmative action; the flood of complaints to government agencies over racial discrimination in employment and promotion; the popularity of “English only” initiatives; the presence of “gated communities” in our residential neighborhoods; the acrimonious debates over immigration policy; and the hate crimes perpetrated against those deemed different provide ample evidence that managing our demographic transition and forging a new American identity will not be easy. We undertake this task burdened by a history of racial injustice, social intolerance, and cultural privilege.
**Median Net Worth of Households, 2005 and 2009**
in 2009 dollars

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<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>$113,149</td>
<td>$134,992</td>
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<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>$6,325</td>
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<td>Blacks</td>
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<td>$12,124</td>
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Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of Survey of Income and Program Participation data

**Percentage Change in Median Net Worth of Households, 2005 to 2009**

- Whites: -16%
- Hispanics: -66%
- Blacks: -53%

Source: Pew Research Center tabulations of Survey of Income and Program Participation data

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
If there were just 100 Americans, and America’s total wealth equaled $100, that $100 would be distributed like this:

**Richest Americans**
The single richest American would have $33.80.
And since there is just one of them, they would have all of it.

**The next 9 Americans**
They would each have $3.85.

**The next 40 poorest Americans**
Would have $26.00.

**The poorest 50 Americans**
Would have $2.50.

Out of the total $100, each of these 50 Americans would have a nickel each.

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Graphics by John Shirley Consulting
Source: Business Insider

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*Adapted from “The Challenge of the Changing Face of America.” Catholic Charities USA Poverty in America Issue Brief and excerpts from “U.S. Economic Inequality is Rising. What Can We do About It?” By Julie Weiss. Used by permission of Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 550, New York, NY 10115 / 212.870 –3318 www.morningsidecenter.org The full article can be found at www.teachablemoment.org, Morningside Center’s teacher resource website.

Think about it:
Has your neighborhood, work place, and worshipping community changed in terms of its racial makeup? Are some people more vulnerable to poverty than others? What do poverty and violence have in common? What do poverty and racism have in common? What does racism have to do with white privilege? Who has a seat at the table in your neighborhood, work place, and worshipping community?

**READINGS PART 3 - Just Peacemaking Abroad**

As you read, consider these questions:

 “One of the most glaring omissions in our national security strategy is the continued practice of prioritizing the pursuit of war over the welfare of human beings, especially the poor who are disproportionately persons of color.” Comment.

 “If we really want to end war abroad, we have to attend to racial, economic, and gender justice at home. For they are seamlessly interconnected and mutually implicated.” Comment.

 “Shalom is nothing less than God’s intended vision of the world, ‘a dream of God’ that resists our tendencies to division, hostility, fear, drivenness, and misery.” Comment.

**Reading 1 – “A Women’s Peace Making Experience in the Republic of Congo”**
Claudette Werleigh, Haiti, Pax Christi International Peace Envoy

During a visit to Brazzaville in the year 2000 or 2001, I was introduced to a group of women who met regularly and who presented themselves as being interested and involved in peace building. As we made a tour de table to present ourselves, I realized it was a very diverse group of women. Some were middle class civil servants and university teachers; others were from more humble origin and earned their living by selling goods in the market place.
I was curious about how the two groups had come to form their women’s organization. The answer was that “the civil war had brought them together.” The war had sent a lot of women in the country running for their lives. Some had no place to go and knocked at the door of others. All had feared for their families. They had gathered to comfort and support each other. When they realized that other women had gone through similar experiences, they decided to form an organization together.

During the war, many women continued to meet, although the group was not very structured. They had only decided “to form a women’s organization working for peace.” But, as time passed and the women could venture into the streets with less fear, the wish to return to their own place (even if it had been looted or destroyed); the desire to send their children back to school; and finally the need to resume a normal life again took over. With more obligations, fewer women were able to meet.

When I was with the group, the women present were reflecting on how to set up a project that would bind them more closely together. They decided to prepare bottled fruit juices that they would sell in the market. The two chemistry teachers were in charge of ensuring that the product would remain stable. I found the idea interesting and also very useful. It had already caught my attention that, because of the hot climate, a lot of money was being spent on sodas that had no nutritional value while the country produced a lot of delicious tropical fruit very rich in vitamins.

But there were other issues to consider. For example, experience had taught the group that one member would be cautious not to get involved in a business unless deep trust was built among the members of the group. Fortunately, in this particular case, the women had already given ample proof that they were ready to protect each other in extremely difficult circumstances. It was also clear that the project needed different skills and that it could bring substantial gains to all the parties involved. While the women market vendors committed themselves to selling the fruit juice, other members of the group promised to promote the product in their different areas of influence and to invite their friends not only to buy from the women street vendors the bottled juices, but also other goods that they were selling, such as nuts, dried fish, bread and milk.

It has been a long time and I do not know if the project has brought all the financial and the social benefits expected. I can only attest that it had a good beginning. What remains true is that the Congolese women had found out during the civil war that they could best protect themselves and their families by sticking together. It is also important to point out the fact that these women did not opt for retaliation; even though several of them had lost close family members and/or properties. Instead, they had first devised – wisely – how to put an end to the civil war; and later, how to run a financial project to boost their economy.
Reading 3 – “Know Justice, Know Peace: Ending War at Home and Abroad”
Rev. Bryan N. Massingale, S.T.D., Marquette University
Keynote Address, Pax Christi USA Convention, July 16, 2010, Rosemont, Illinois

It is always a joy to be with you. This is not my first time with you at your annual convention. I was here in 2003 just at the beginning of the outbreak of the Iraq War. And I have met many of you at various Summer Social Action Institutes or National Roundtable gatherings. You are the ones on the front lines of the church’s mission of peace-building, peace-making, and peace-seeking. You are among the faith-filled activists who make the ideas that I write and teach come alive in the life of our church and society. So it is a pleasure to be with you this evening.

We gather this year to do something a bit unusual, or perhaps better said, to do something more intentional. Pax Christi is justly known for its intrepid witness for peace. Yet, the deep connections between peace-making abroad – most obviously in the witness against resorting to war – and the pursuit of justice here at home are not so often averted to. In part, perhaps, this lack of connection may be attributed to a division of labor. Not everyone can do everything, or so the reasoning goes. Thus Pax Christi keeps a focus on peace, primarily on the use of force abroad, and leaves to others a concern for justice issues such as education, health care, immigration, and criminal justice. For some, even Pax Christi’s antiracism initiative seems a bit far afield from its primary focus, and perhaps even a misplaced emphasis. This may not be due to any opposition or ill-will, but out of a concern that taking on too much dilutes a necessary focus and dissipates limited energies . . . and funds!

This year’s theme, “Know Justice, Know Peace: Ending War at Home and Abroad,” challenges such thinking, and thus intends to be deliberately provocative, and even unsettling. It seeks to recover the intention and commitment raised by Martin Luther King, Jr., who realized that forthright opposition to the Vietnam War was required by his commitment to end racial injustice and the alleviation of crushing poverty. For him, the “triplets of evil” – imperialistic militarism, materialism, and racism – were so interconnected and intertwined that any effective struggle against one demanded engaging the others as well. For reasons both strategic and religious, he refused to segment his moral concerns. He refused to either confine or isolate himself into the narrow category of a “civil rights leader” vis-à-vis a “seeker of peace.” To quote one of his signature phrases, he embodied his belief that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Or, more pointedly for this group, he realized that he could not advocate the pursuit of nonviolent social change at home while remaining silent about the carnage taking place in his name abroad.

The challenge for Pax Christi is to understand and honor the corollary of King’s insight. Namely, we must name and challenge the incongruity of pursuing peace in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq while remaining silent – even oblivious – to the violence and injustice in our own neighborhoods. And the South Side of Chicago is our neighborhood. East St. Louis is our neighborhood. The Lower 9th Ward of New Orleans is our neighborhood. Because two Sundays ago, Jesus settled that issue when he answered the question: “And who is my neighbor?”
It falls to me to make that case more forcefully, to connect the dots, to make more “real” a commitment that many may espouse intellectually, yet resist emotionally and practically. I will make this case in three different moves. First, I will examine the changes in U.S. National Security policy since 2002, highlighting several significant shifts. I will then point out a glaring omission or weakness in this strategy, despite its recognition that security/development at home is important for “national” security. I will then examine what the prophets intend when they speak of a “holistic” peace, one secured through the pursuit of justice, to give our concerns a more faith-filled basis. Finally, I will conclude with the challenges this deep connection between peace-building and justice-seeking raises for us as we live in a church that is in seemingly rapid retreat from its own justice vision.

“National Security” 2002/2010

In May, the Obama Administration released its official “National Security Strategy” for the United States. It lists the strategic philosophy and priorities of this nation as it pursues its interests around the world. The differences between it and its predecessor, adopted by the Bush Administration in 2002 during the run-up to the Iraq war, are not only significant, but even striking. I will highlight four of these.

First, unlike the Bush document, which stressed that heightened dangers to the U.S. would require the “infringement of individual liberty” and recourse to so-called “nontraditional” law enforcement tactics (what was later defended as “aggressive interrogation techniques”), the current statement proscribes the use of torture. It rejects it “without exception or equivocation” as inconsistent with American values. The statement reiterates the goal of closing the Guantanamo prison and pursuing antiterrorism strategies “through durable legal approaches” that are consistent with the best and highest values of the American people.

Second, the strategy takes a significant move away from the doctrine of “unilateral” military pursuits enunciated in 2002. While reserving the “right to act unilaterally when necessary,” the current document repeatedly emphasizes the “interconnection” that marks the modern world, rejects the mentality of “isolation,” focuses upon diplomatic engagement as a core security strategy, and stresses that the responsibility for international order and meeting global challenges cannot rest upon the United States alone. This is a major move away from – if not a rejection of – the previous commitment to a “Pax Americana” or a “New World Order” predicated upon the promotion of U.S. interests to the exclusion of all others.

Third, the Obama Administration has articulated a commitment to reduce the stockpile of the nation’s nuclear arsenal and to “pursue the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.” We must, however, recognize the limits of this commitment. It is not a commitment to unilateral disarmament, nor is there an explicit renunciation of a “first strike” nuclear policy. However, in both tone and substance, this is a major change from the previous strategic doctrines, one that emphasizes the need to “substantially limit” our nuclear arsenal and the need for more proactive engagement with nuclear nonproliferation efforts.
Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the current “National Security Strategy” has a broader and more comprehensive understanding of what constitutes American “interests.” Every security strategy articulates the goal of promoting and defending American interests. So, how they define these interests is critically important.

The previous statement defined these interests very narrowly in terms of economic advancement and unfettered access to trade markets. The fundamental “American interest” that was key to “our way of life” is economic prosperity: free trade, free markets, free enterprise. Bush’s “National Security” made this crystal clear: “Free markets and free trade are key priorities of our national security strategy.” The United States went so far as to elevate free trade into a central and defining “moral principle”:

The concept of “free trade” arose as a moral principle even before it became a pillar of economics. If you can make something that others value, you should be able to sell it to them. If others make something that you value, you should be able to buy it. This is real freedom, the freedom for a person—or a nation—to make a living.

Thus our core American value, the freedom we sought to defend, was the freedom to buy and sell, the freedom to acquire and consume, the freedom to shop. (Recall that this was our patriotic duty after the 9-11 attacks). The current security strategy articulates a four-fold vision of our vital interests:

- The security of the “United States, its citizens, and U.S. allies and partners.”
- Economic prosperity achieved by a “strong, innovative, and growing U.S. economy” in an open economic system.
- The promotion and respect for universal values – such as freedom of expression, assembly, and worship, “the fair and equitable administration of justice,” as well as “dignity, tolerance, and equality among all people” both at home and abroad. (Hence, human rights considerations have a higher priority and prominence than in the previous articulation. The 2002 document downplayed human rights as an essential national security pursuit).
- The pursuit of an international order, led by the U.S., but achieved through international organizations and consensus to meet global challenges.

Absent is the pursuit of economic well-being as a primary goal of military engagement. While this strategy recognizes that domestic economic development and prosperity is vital to the nation’s interests, it articulates this alongside of the realization that these goals cannot be pursued in isolation from the rest of the world’s interests nor advanced through unilateral military action.

Thus the Obama Administration’s national security posture is a welcome departure from that of his predecessor. In both tone and substance, it is a major shift away from the unilateral posture of his predecessor and sets the trajectory for a more ethically sound American engagement with the world. Many of us still find it morally problematic, and for good reason. (I will discuss one
major shortcoming shortly). However, not to acknowledge this dramatic shift would also be irresponsible and unsound.

The Glaring Weakness: The Impact of Uncritical Military Spending

One of the significant features of Obama’s national security strategy is its recognition that domestic development is essential to protecting U.S. interests:

. . . Our strength and influence abroad begins with the steps we take at home. We must grow our economy and reduce our deficit. We must educate our children to compete in an age where knowledge is capital, and the marketplace is global. We must develop clean energy . . . . We must pursue science and research that enables discovery . . . . Simply put, we must see American innovation as the foundation of American power.

This is a laudable realization, one that was conspicuously absent from his predecessor’s policies, which focused on economic enrichment for the few. Yet there is a glaring omission in Obama’s security strategy, namely, no recognition of how the pursuit of wars in Iraq, Pakistan, and Afghanistan impacts, undermines and compromises his goals of educational and health care access, especially for those who have none. There is no connection drawn between the size of our deficit and the pursuit of war. There is no realization (at least, none articulated) that economic innovation, access to educational opportunity, and the availability of quality health care are strangled by unchecked and unbridled military spending. In fact, these sectors of American life – so-called “nonsecurity discretionary spending” (that is, everything but Social Security, Medicare, and Defense [broadly defined]) – is subject to a proposed 3-year freeze. This freeze is rationalized under the guise of “making the best use of taxpayer money,” using those “dollars wisely,” and “fiscal responsibility.”

Yet, though the document admits that “hundreds of billions of dollars” have been spent on fighting our two wars, there is no questioning of these funds to see if they are “the best use of taxpayer money.” Nor is there a stated need to draw down military spending for the sake of domestic development and investment for the poor. Nor is there any call for reduced – or even more responsible – military spending for the sake of “fiscal responsibility” or deficit reduction. To put it bluntly, if unfairly: for all of this Administration’s advances, military spending and the pursuit of war are given a blank check.

But at what cost, and to whom? At the cost of us all, but most particularly, those who most need and benefit from our public services. At a time when our nation’s infrastructure and bridges are literally crumbling (as in my city of Milwaukee); when one of every eight Americans are on food stamps and record numbers live in so-called “food insecure” households (for the word “hunger” has been banished from official discourse); when urban school systems are laying off teachers striving to educate those who are already the most undereducated and ill-served by public education: at this same time, “America [is] pumping billions into Afghanistan, and much of that money [is] being diverted to the Afghan elite. . . . [T]oo much [is] being shunted to Karzai’s family and friends.” (This report comes from that bastion of far-out liberal thought, Newsweek).
In other words, we are making some elites multimillionaires – in the name of national security – while allowing many here at home to languish.

Another example: there is an effort underway to launch a $100 million effort to revolutionize the delivery of social resources to the poor which, if successful, could reduce the nation’s poverty population by one-half. However, that effort is endangered because of a reluctance to add to the current deficit or to raise taxes to fund it (despite the fact that this sum is a mere rounding error in a $3.55 trillion budget, namely 0.00028% of the total).

Contrast this to the nearly $12 billion in “shrink-wrapped $100 bills” flown into Iraq at the height of the war, and dispersed with no accountability or control over who received what and how it was being spent by the U.S. Provisional Authority. Incredibly, 363 tons of cash, on wooden pallets, was dispersed in a war zone with little oversight and still less accountability . . . and no questions were raised about deficits, impacts upon a budget, or fiscal responsibility. Again, the pursuit of war is given a blank check, to the detriment of care for the poor.

Hence, one of the most glaring omissions in our national security strategy is the lack of connection between uncritical military spending and its impact upon domestic priorities for the poor . . . and, more pointedly, the continued practice of prioritizing the pursuit of war over the welfare of human beings, especially the poor who are disproportionately persons of color.

**Violence Abroad = Violence at Home**

This lack of critical correlation between war financing and its negative impact on the poor would be damning enough. But the enormity of this evil is compounded when one realizes that financing war is implicated in increased violence in our nation (a connection that even some in Pax Christi fail to draw). The cost of underdevelopment, in any place, is violence. Violence is the inevitable result whenever a community believes it is unheard, ignored, neglected, or deemed insignificant. As Martin Luther King observed, violence is the language of the unheard. And I would add: violence is the means of keeping the unheard silenced. Let us consider a few examples:

1) **Racism.** While all of us are potential victims of violence, we are not all equally potential victims (e.g., the average American has a 1-133 chance of being murdered; for black males, the odds are 1-20). While all human lives are devalued by a militaristic ethos, not all are equally devalued. And while violence can and does happen anywhere, it is not randomly distributed. Racism – the collective, deeply-rooted cultural conviction that people with darker skin are less important and more expendable than people with lighter skin – is a major reason why we as a society tolerate a less than random distribution of violence in our society. Violence is deemed acceptable as long as it happens “over there, to them.” This is not my insight, but that of a rare front page editorial in the “conservative” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, which avowed that the force responsible for epidemic urban violence is widespread indifference abetted by racism:
“The gunfire that barks down the streets and alleys of Milwaukee's central city is our song of death. And we are all the composers . . . Make no mistake, we have allowed it to happen, and our passivity is not just evidence of longstanding indifference, but of the worst manifestation of racism.

“Can anyone honestly believe that our hands would remain tied for long if this symphony of slaughter was conducted on the streets of Bay View? No, we would not tolerate it, not another day. Suppose the targets of all these senseless bullets were whites. The mayor would be recalled, the police chief would be fired and the aldermen [sic] would be pilloried if they continued to pretend that NOTHING can be done.”

The tragedy is that this editorial could have been written in Chicago, Houston, Miami, Sacramento, and Portland. The tragedy is compounded by the fact that this editorial was written neither yesterday nor this year, but over eighteen years ago in 1992!

And it is no accident that the most violent areas of our cities are also those where employment practices are directly impacted by our society’s racism. Recent studies continue to document pervasive and persistent racial discrimination in hiring, such that white ex-offenders with prison records are more likely to be hired for entry level jobs than black applicants with no criminal record – what one author calls “race trumps criminal records.”

And it is no accident that the most violent areas of our society are also the ones where a 10% unemployment rate would be a cause for celebration (as opposed to national lament) and where street corners are gathering places for “young men and women without hope, without miracles and without a sense of destiny other than life on the edge – the edge of the law, the edge of the economy, the edge of family structures and communities.”

Racism is a major contributor to the violence of our culture . . . yet the word never appears in our national security strategy . . . or in the concerns of many who call themselves “seekers of peace.”

2) Consumerism. Violence and contempt for human life are a reflection and consequence of a culture of consumerism. Consumerism, simply defined, is a worldview which measures one's personal worth by what one has, how much one has, and one's ability to get more. In a consumer culture you are defined by what you own; the consumer culture's credo (with apologies to Descartes) is: "I have; therefore, I am." One's “being” is defined and measured in terms of shopping, buying, having, getting, and owning. (cf. John Paul II, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis #28 and Centesimus Annus #36).

As a result, in a consumer society the poor are “worthless.” Why? Because they don't have much. What they have isn't worth much. And they lack the resources to get more. Hence, the poor are unwanted, irrelevant, nonessential, and expendable.

What does this have to do with violence? In a consumer culture, the poor are not only a burden – “irksome intruders” – they are a danger, a threat, to my “stuff” – and therefore, to me! Who, after
all, would not be envious and resentful at seeing others living the good life, while they have little
food, medicine, or hope? How can impoverished people – the majority of the world's population –
not be resentful of us when 5% of the world's population consumes up to 50% of the world's
goods? For the “underside” of consumerism is the belief that having a disproportion of “goods”
is appropriate, and that using force or violence to get or maintain these goods is necessary for
human happiness.

Why would we not, then, militarize our “borders” (we speak in the plural though only one border
is really meant); send in the National Guard; secure the border with concrete walls topped with
razor wire; institute draconian and racist “pass laws” to identify legitimate residents; inhumanely
divide parents from their children; deport pregnant women; and dismiss as inconsequential the
hundreds who die each year in the Arizona desert as “collateral damage” in the war against
illegal aliens (I use that phrase deliberately) – all in a spurious attempt to protect our security, our
entitlements, and our “stuff?”

I cannot fail to mention as well the hundreds of violent hate crimes committed each year against
those who are suspected of “looking like an immigrant” (which is simply another form of “racial
profiling”). A couple of examples:

Santa Rosa, CA (Aug. 2, 2009) David Michael Summers, 19, was charged with assault with a
deadly weapon, assault with serious bodily injury and possession of a weapon for allegedly
yelling “Go back to Mexico” to two men and then punching one in the face.

New York City (July 16, 2009) Joseph Sweeney, 23, was charged with assault as a hate crime in
connection with the June baseball bat beating of a Nicaraguan man allegedly by a group of men
who yelled anti-Mexican profanities.

As a further example of the connection between consumerism and violence, note the statement of
an American woman who had just purchased a low mileage SUV after the Afghan conflict: “She
believes that Americans have a right ‘to do what we want and buy what we want. [She asks:]
Isn't that why we are fighting?’” A consumer society depends upon violence, or the threat of
violence, to maintain itself. Hence, consumerism is a major reason for the violence in our world.
Again, note the connection between violence abroad and violence at home.

3) Sexism. The belief that women, or so-called "feminine" qualities, are somehow less valuable
and important. Sexism supports contemporary violence in several ways. For one, it is a major
explanation for why the home is the most violent place in America. The Pontifical Council for
Justice and Peace teaches, "The root cause of violence against women lies in the diffuse and
largely unarticulated belief that women are inferior to men, and therefore are subject to their
dominance and control." This ideology of women's inferiority is a major reason why many think
it acceptable for women to be the objects of violence, rape, and abuse. Violence against women
is one of the most common – if not the most common – forms of violence present in the world.
Violence abroad supports gender-based violence at home, not the least of which through
dramatic decreases in funding for women’s resources such as shelters, counseling, and grants for
short term needs. Cuts in funding for public assistance greatly increase the likelihood that a
woman will stay in an abusive situation rather than endanger her material well-being and that of
her children.

Sexism supports a culture of violence in another way. It conditions how boys and men are raised,
and how we view ourselves. How often we have been told, literally and subtly, "Don't be a punk.
Don't be a wimp. Don't be a sissy. You throw like a girl. Act like a man.” Essential to being a
man is a willingness to fight and the ability to project an aura that, if necessary, you could take
the other guy down. And women collude in and support this socialization.

Thus men solve problems, or prove their manhood, violently. This is one of the major streams
contributing to a culture of violence, at home and abroad. (Recall Bush’s aphorism: “I’m going
to kick Saddam’s ass!”)

The point of all of the above is simple and direct: If we really want to end war abroad, we have
to attend to racial, economic, and gender justice at home. For they are seamlessly interconnected
and mutually implicated.

The Horizon of Faith: Peace through the Pursuit of Justice

The Scriptural antidote to the culture of violence is to cultivate a culture of shalom. We
commonly translate this word as “peace,” which it is . . . but much, much more. It is a vision of
social wholeness, a state of well-being for all, where all have access to the goods of creation
intended to meet the needs of all. In the words of Scripture scholar, Walter Brueggemann,
“Shalom is the substance of the biblical vision of one community embracing all creation, [where
all enjoy the] resources that make communal harmony joyous and effective.” Shalom, then, is
nothing less than God's intended vision of the world, “a dream of God that resists our tendencies
to division, hostility, fear, drivenness, and misery.” The scriptures insist that “if there is to be
well-being, it will not be just for isolated, insulated individuals; it is, rather, security and
prosperity granted to the whole community. . . . Together we stand before God's blessings and
together we receive the gift of life, if we receive it at all. Shalom comes only to the inclusive,
embracing community that excludes none.”

Shalom is concerned about expanding the circle of those who matter. We see this in the prophetic
insistence that no community can enjoy shalom unless the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the
stranger, the tax-collector and sinner, and the despised and insignificant also share in its
blessings.

But shalom is indispensable from the pursuit of mispat, that is, justice. Justice is the biblical path
to peace, security, and well-being for all. When shalom is established through the pursuit of
justice, then true security is found. In a key passage, the prophet Isaiah declares: “The effect of
justice will be shalom, and the effect of righteousness, quiet and trust forever. [Then] My people
will abide in peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places” (Isaiah 32: 17-18). Note again that peace and security, through the promotion of justice, are shared by all, or they are enjoyed by none. The realism of the Bible insists that without the pursuit of justice, social peace and true security are impossible.

Peace and justice are not vague, well-intended hopes and wishes. For biblical mispat, that is, biblical justice, is not a blind goddess who treats unequals the same. Biblical justice demands a proactive and preferential care for the least of society, for those who are “permissible victims” or “collateral damage” in the heedless pursuit of comfort and wealth.

Our Catholic heritage of social teaching builds upon and expands this vision of shalom and its essential connection with mispat. It insists that peace is not the mere absence of war, but the positive presence of justice. This is why the popes, from Leo XIII to Benedict XVI, have insisted that true security is impossible in a world of severe economic disparity. This is why Paul VI insisted, “If you want peace, work for justice.”

And yet, biblical shalom through the pursuit of mispat is costly, very costly . . . which is why it is so resisted. On this point, Brueggemann’s insights are haunting:

> The world wants shalom; but we know that the world cannot have shalom, cannot possibly have it, on the present terms. The emergence of shalom – wholeness for church, people, and earth – requires some radical changes in values, presuppositions, and perceptions. . . . The world hates and resists those who speak of the dismantling required for shalom. The dismantling is required by the recognition that we cannot receive what we crave on the present terms.

It is little wonder, then, that the security of shalom is so deeply longed for and yet so strongly resisted. This is why peace is always a work in progress, and justice is never completely realized, for God's vision far outstrips the capacities of our frail imaginations, feeble hopes, and lame courage.

That is why we pray to God to make us instruments of peace. Because left to ourselves, the challenge is difficult and almost insurmountable.

**The Challenge for Pax Christi USA**

I have attempted to show the inseparable connection between ending wars in our world and the pursuit of justice at home. Shalom, like justice, is indivisible. And the pursuit of peace demands proactive, prophetic voice and action. This is why Pax Christi USA must be a prophetic witness on behalf of the least, the marginalized, and insignificant – whom Martin Luther King called the “Father’s outcast and despised children” – who always bear the brunt of our nation’s military follies.

And yet we do so in the midst of a church in profound crisis, precisely because of its abandonment of its prophetic vocation. In the words of Cornel West:
“The crisis in contemporary American religious life is profound and pervasive. . . . To put it bluntly, American religious life is losing its prophetic fervor. There is an undeniable decline in the clarity of vision, complexity of understanding and quality of moral action among religious Americans. The rich prophetic legacies of Sojourner Truth, Dorothy Day, and MLK, Jr., now lay nearly dormant – often forgotten – and the possession of a marginal few. Political and religious conservatism seems to have silenced most of the prophetic religious voices and tamed the vast majority of churches, temples, synagogues and mosques. Prophetic religion is indeed at the crossroads in present-day America.”

This diminishment of prophetic leadership in our Church is evidenced by its noticeable withdrawal from committed activism in the social sphere. Our bishops (with few exceptions) and the Episcopal conference are less active and present in the nation’s policy debates . . . with the exception of abortion or same-sex marriage. Commenting on the “multiple dimensions” of this reality, noted theologian and scholar J. Bryan Hehir remarked, “It is hard to have a national voice if you are not sufficiently staffed and if you don’t have a sense this is part of what you ought to be.”

One also notes the bishops’ appalling silence on the racism present during the presidential campaign and the health care debates. They were “missing in action” in the midst of the worst economic crisis caused by massive corporate greed and recklessness. They were absent and mute in the debates over torture. This shift is so much so that the great social documents of the 1980s – *The Challenge of Peace* and *Economic Justice for All* – not only would not be passed today but would be actively opposed by a significant number of bishops (witness their refusal to defend the Catholic Campaign for Human Development . . . and some have even suspended their own antipoverty collection).

The summons for Pax Christi is to deepen its commitment to a comprehensive prophetic witness, both to the world and – now more than ever – to the Church itself. The summons is to abandon an “ethical myopia” that segregates concern for peace from that for violence at home. . . . or isolates opposition to war from a struggle against white supremacy. The challenge to the Catholic peace movement is to become retooled for a new age by realizing the deep connections between militarism, white supremacy, gender oppression, and poverty.

The summons for Pax Christi is to be a prophetic voice for the poor and the least, as were Gandhi and King. For without a comprehensive commitment and witness to justice at home, peacemaking and peace-seeking will be ineffective and piecemeal at best; and at worst, an instance of hypocrisy and collusion with the forces of entrenched social privilege. The summons is to appropriate King’s insight that “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” The summons is to speak uncomfortable yet life-giving truths for the sake of the Church and even to the Church . . . to help the Church become a church that is a less and less imperfect witness to the Reign of God.
The summons is to embrace a comprehensive vision of peace, one inspired by that great vision of eschatological completeness narrated by the unknown seer in the Bible’s final book:

> Then I saw new heavens and a new earth. The former heavens and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no longer. I also saw a New Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God, beautiful as a bride prepared to meet her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne cry out: “This is God’s dwelling among mortals. God shall dwell with them and they shall be his people and he shall be their God who is always with them. God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, crying out or pain, for the former world has passed away.” The One who sat on the throne said to me, “See, I make all things new!” Then he said, “Write these matters down, for the words are trustworthy and true!” (Revelation 21:1-5).

This, ultimately, is why we are here. We continue to seek justice, make peace, and speak truth because deep down we are compelled by the vision of a new world; we have been caught by the Divine One who even now is making all things new; and with knowledge beyond words, we know that this seemingly crazy vision is worthy of trust.

I ended my book on racial justice by reflecting on King’s words concerning the challenge and the hope of a comprehensive vision of just peace:

> “There is no easy way to create a world where men and women can live together, where each has his own job and house and where all children receive as much education as their minds can absorb. But if such a world is created in our lifetime . . . [i]t will be done by rejecting the racism, the materialism and violence that has characterized Western civilization and especially by working toward a world of brotherhood, cooperation, and peace.”

In other words, social life is made by human beings. The society we live in is the outcome of human choices and decisions. What humans break, divide, and separate, we can – with God’s help – also heal, unite, and restore.

What is now does not have to be. Therein lies the hope. . . and the challenge.

Will Pax Christi rise to that challenge?

### Closing Prayer

Extinguish the candles and return them to the circular platter.

> As we end this session, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.
Together: Prayer of St. Francis:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let us sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon,
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is darkness, light,
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, Grant that we may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console,
To be understood, as to understand,
To be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born
To eternal life.

Scripture phrase from beginning repeated by three different voices:

“Justice, justice alone shall you pursue. (Deuteronomy 16:20).”
Amen
SESSION FIVE
FILM: Why We Fight

OPENING PRAYER

Scripture reading: three readers to repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between.

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks (Isaiah 2:4).”

Light five candles and place on the map: in the group’s location, Europe, the former Yugoslavia, the Great Lakes region of East Africa, and Southeast Asia.

Readings for Session Five
Catholic Social Teaching on War and Peace

Pope John Paul II, whose native Poland was victim to aggression both by German fascism and Soviet communism, was unequivocal in his condemnation of war after the 1991 Persian Gulf War:

“No, never again, war, which destroys the lives of innocent people, teaches how to kill, throws into upheaval even the lives of those who do the killing and leaves behind a trail of resentment and hatred, thus making it all the more difficult to find a just solution to the very problems which provoked the war.”

This condemnation of war reached its strongest expression on January 1, 2000, the first day of the new century, when John Paul II spoke eloquently of the challenge of peace in his World Day of Peace message:

“In the century we are leaving behind, humanity has been sorely tried by an endless and horrifying sequence of wars, conflicts, genocides and ‘ethnic cleansings’ which have caused

21 Centesimus Annus, A Hundred Years of Catholic social teaching, 52.
unspeakable suffering; millions and millions of victims, families and countries destroyed, an ocean of refugees, misery, hunger, disease, underdevelopment and the loss of immense resources. . . . The twentieth century bequeaths to us above all else a warning: wars are often the cause of further wars because they fuel deep hatreds, create situations of injustice and trample upon people’s dignity and rights. . . . War is a defeat for humanity. Only in peace and through peace can respect for human dignity and its inalienable rights be guaranteed.”22

An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace

21. Just Peace and the transformation of conflict. Transforming conflicts is an essential part of peacemaking. The process of transformation begins with unmasking violence and uncovering hidden conflict in order to make their consequences visible to victims and communities. Conflict transformation aims at challenging adversaries to redirect their conflicting interests towards the common good. It may have to disturb an artificial peace, expose structural violence or find ways to restore relationships without retribution. The vocation of churches and religious communities is to accompany the victims of violence and be their advocates. It also includes strengthening civic mechanisms for managing conflicts and holding public authorities and other perpetrators accountable – even perpetrators from within church communities. The ‘rule of law’ is a critical framework for all such efforts.

22. Just Peace and the use of armed force. Yet there are bound to be times when our commitment to Just Peace is put to a test, since peace is pursued in the midst of violence and under the threat of violent conflict. There are extreme circumstances where, as the last resort and the lesser evil, the lawful use of armed force may become necessary in order to protect vulnerable groups of people exposed to imminent lethal threats. Yet, even then we recognize the use of armed force in situations of conflict as both a sign of serious failure and a new obstacle on the Way of Just Peace.

23. While we acknowledge the authority of the United Nations under international law to respond to threats to world peace in the spirit and the letter of the UN Charter, including the use of military power within the constraints of international law, we feel obliged as Christians to go further – to challenge any theological or other justifications of the use of military power and to consider reliance on the concept of a ‘just war’ and its customary use to be obsolete.

5 ACTIVITY

FILM: Why We Fight

Why We Fight is a documentary from acclaimed filmmaker Eugene Jarecki, winner of the Grand Jury Prize at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival.

Named after the series of short films by legendary director Frank Capra that explored America’s reasons for entering World War II, Why We Fight surveys a half-century of military conflicts, asking how – and answering why – a nation of, by and for the people has become the savings-and-loan of a government system whose survival depends on an Orwellian state of constant war.

Why We Fight features interviews and observations by military and Washington insiders. Beginning with President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s prescient 1961 speech warning of the rise of the "military industrial complex," Why We Fight moves beyond the headlines of various American military operations to the deeper questions of why America seemingly is always at war, especially in the last 50 years. The film asks, what are the forces – political, economic, and ideological – that drive us to clash against an ever-changing enemy? Just why does America fight?

Discussion Questions for the Film:

- What touched you most about this film? What completely surprised you, something you had never heard or considered?
- Do you think President Eisenhower was correct in his assessment of the “military-industrial complex”?
- What happened to the “peace dividend” that many hoped for at the end of the Cold War? Can we afford to cut the military budget and transfer those resources for civilian use? Can we not afford to?

5 Closing Prayer

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To be understood, as to understand,
To be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born
To eternal life.

Scripture phrase from beginning repeated by three different voices

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks
(Isaiah 2:4).”
Amen
SESSION SIX
Economic Conversion: Turning Swords into Plowshares

**Goals of the Session**

- To renew our commitment to strengthening global institutions, securing human rights, and assuring sustainable and equitable development.
- To deepen our understanding of the arms race and the arms trade as a “scandal” and “theft from the poor,” and the need to redirect resources from military to human development.
- To heighten our commitment to work for a peaceful conversion of military expenditures to domestic and global development.

**Readings for this session:**

**Part One: Just Peacemaking at Home**

- *An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace*
- *Called to Be Peacemakers: The Challenge and Promise of Peace in the Twenty-First Century: I. Reading the Signs of the Times B. The Challenges and Promise of Peace Today (3-4).*

**Part Two: Activity**

- Participants were to review the document: *The Federal Budget, March 2011*, Prepared by WAND (Women’s Action for New Directions). Copies were ordered with other materials.
  - Optional web links:
    - *Budget Puzzle: You fix the budget!*
Part Three: Just Peacemaking Abroad

- “Fifty Years after the ‘Military-Industrial Complex,’ What Eisenhower Really Meant” – by Susan Eisenhower, the former president’s granddaughter.
- “Cow Most Sacred: Why Military Spending Remains Untouchable” – by Andrew J. Bacevich, Professor of History and International Relations at Boston University.

For activity: Read and study the resources to follow.

OPENING PRAYER

Scripture reading: (Select three readers to repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between.)

Scripture Reading: “You will be my witnesses, in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).”

Light six candles and place on the map: in the group’s location, Europe, the former Yugoslavia, the Great Lakes region of East Africa, Southeast Asia, and the location of a nearby military base or weapons site.

Leader: The following reading is from The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, a Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the 10th Anniversary of bishops’ pastoral, The Challenge of Peace.

Leader: The millions and millions of people killed just in this century in war or by repressive regimes are ample proof that we must chart a new path to peace and justice. We’ll read excerpts from The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace: The Challenge of Peace in a New World.

Reader 1: The Cold War subjected the world to “structures of sin.” It divided the world into blocs sustained by rigid ideologies. Its hallmarks included a massive denial of human rights by dictatorial regimes, an insane arms race, and proxy wars fought mainly in the developing world. The challenge today is to build a new international order that will be just and more peaceful than the one it replaces. The
millions and millions of people killed just in this century in war or by repressive regimes are ample proof that we must chart a new path to peace and justice.

Reader 2: One of the disturbing signs of the times is a reduced priority given and growing indifference to the world’s poor. From the perspective of faith, the modern world is more and more illustrative of the story of the rich man and Lazarus, with an ever-widening gap between the world's haves and have-nots. “When the West gives the impression of abandoning itself to forms of growing and selfish isolation,” Pope John Paul II warns, “then we are up against not only a betrayal of humanity’s legitimate expectations – a betrayal that is a harbinger of unforeseeable consequences – but also a real desertion of a moral obligation.

Reflection: Prayerful Litany for Just Peacemaking and Nonviolence

Leader: “Nonviolence will not become national policy until it is first the personal policy of millions of us.” (Gerard VanderHaar).

All: Blessed are the peacemakers.

Leader: “We have a choice. We can go through life in one of two ways. We can go booted and stomping, kicking things out of the way as we go, or we can go softly, moccasined, gently all the way. The trip will be the same. The only difference between one approach and the other will be what happens to the things along the way. We can choose to uproot the thorns and bushes in one grand show of brawn, or we can decide to nourish what is so that other things can happen as a result. The one way takes might; the other way takes strength.” (Joan Chittister).

All: Blessed are the peacemakers.

Leader: “There is only one possible prayer: Give me the will to do everything in the day with a sense of the sacredness of life.” (May Sarton).

All: Blessed are the peacemakers.

From Just Peacemaking Study Guide – by Barbara Battin and Thomas Mockaitis. Presbyterian Peacemaking Program
As you read, consider these questions:

- How have you experienced/not experienced poverty? Who are the faces of the poor in your community?
- How have you experienced/not experienced racism? Who are the faces of people of color in your community?
- How can we help build the Beloved Community so that no one is excluded?

Reading 1 - An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace

*In their 2011 Ecumenical Call to Just Peace, the World Council of Churches builds on the experiences and insights gained from the “Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001 – 2010,” and invites Christians to commit themselves to the Way of Just Peace.*

25. **Just Peace and human dignity.** Our scriptures teach us that humanity is created in the likeness of God and is graced with dignity and rights. The recognition of this dignity and these rights is central to our understanding of Just Peace. We affirm that universal human rights are the indispensable international legal instrument for protecting human dignity. To that end we hold states responsible for ensuring the rule of law and guaranteeing civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural rights. However, we observe that the abuse of human rights is rampant in many societies, in war and in peace, and that those who should be held accountable benefit from impunity. In response we must reach out in friendship and cooperation to all partners in civil society, including people of other religions, who seek to defend human rights and strengthen the international rule of law.”

26. **Just Peace and caring for creation.** God made all things good and has entrusted humankind with the responsibility to care for creation (Genesis 2:4b-9). The exploitation of the natural world and the misuse of its finite resources disclose a pattern of violence that often benefits some people at the expense of many. We know that all creation groans to be set free, not least from the abusive actions of humans (Romans 8:22). As people of faith, we acknowledge our guilt for the damage we have done to creation and all living things, through action and our inaction. The vision of Just Peace is much more than the restoration of right relationships in community; it also compels human beings to care for the earth as our home. We must trust in God’s promise and strive for an equitable and just sharing of the earth’s resources.”
Reading 2 - Stories of Just Peacemakers at Home

Foreword to “Held Captive: Child Poverty in America, 2010”
Marian Wright Edelman, President, Children’s Defense Fund

Back in the 1960s, as a civil rights lawyer working in Mississippi, I learned that civil rights without economic rights did not add up to justice. After two civil rights bills had passed and three years into President Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty, the condition for poor Black Americans in Mississippi was not improving beyond a snail’s pace. When U.S. Senators Joseph Clark and Robert F. Kennedy and other lawmakers came to the Delta of Mississippi to see how the War on Poverty was going with their own eyes, the swollen bellies and empty cupboards shocked them into action and led them to reform and expand the child and family nutrition programs we know today, including food stamps, WIC and school lunches…

The greatest threat to America’s national security comes from no enemy without but from our own failure to protect, invest in, and educate all of our children who make up all of our futures in this global economy.

We need to invest now in child health, early childhood development and education. For today is tomorrow. Children have only one childhood and it is right now. God has blessed America with great material wealth. America can and must step forward to correct the gross imbalance of government subsidization of the wealthiest and most powerful among us and provide a future for all children free from hunger, hopelessness and despair. If America cannot stand up for its children it does not stand for anything at all. And it will not stand strong in our competitive, global world.

Faces and Stories of Immigrants
Visit http://justiceforimmigrants.org/index.shtml

Excerpts from the U.S. and Mexican Catholic Bishops pastoral letter, Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope

- We recognize the phenomenon of migration as an authentic sign of the times. We see it in both our countries through the suffering of those who have been forced to become migrants for many reasons. To such a sign we must respond in common and creative ways so that we may strengthen the faith, hope, and charity of migrants and all the people of God. (Page 47, # 102)

- We ask our presidents to continue negotiations on migration issues to achieve a system of migration between the two countries that is more generous, just, and humane. We call for legislatures of our two countries to effect a conscientious revision of the immigration laws and to establish a binational system that accepts migration flows, guaranteeing the dignity and human rights of the migrant. (Page 48, # 104)
- We stand in solidarity with you, our migrant brothers and sisters, and we will continue to advocate on your behalf for just and fair migration policies. We commit ourselves to animate communities of Christ's disciples on both sides of the border to accompany you and your journey so that yours will truly be a journey of hope, not of despair, and so that, at the point of arrival, you will experience that you are strangers no longer and instead members of God's household. (Page 49, # 106)

**Reading 3 - Called to be Peacemakers**

3. The Challenge of Institutional Racism

A third great challenge [after war and poverty] is racism, including institutional racism and racial oppression. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, overt racism has been on the rise in the United States, as Muslims, Arabs, and South Asians have been targeted as suspected terrorists. African Americans have continued to be profiled and subject to police brutality and extremely high rates of incarceration. Latino immigrants have become increasingly subject to raids on their homes and workplaces, abused by hate groups, separated from their families, crowded into federal detention centers, and eventually deported.

And yet, while God created humanity to be one family, the sin of racism has divided God’s family. As the bishops stated in their 1979 pastoral letter, *Brothers and Sisters to Us*, “racism is not just one sin among many, it is a radical evil which divides the human family.”

* Racism continues to undermine our nation’s most basic promise of liberty and justice for all, and it is closely linked to poverty.
* African Americans, Latino Americans, and Native Americans are about three times as likely to live in poverty as are whites, and the highest rates of poverty are among children, especially children of color.
* Even more serious is the stark racial disparity in the distribution of wealth in the United States.
* White families have on average ten [now twenty] times the net worth of families of color, and that disparity is growing, not declining.

Racism was evident in the institutional neglect and irresponsibility demonstrated by the federal government to the suffering of Gulf Coast communities after Hurricane Katrina, communities that are disproportionately African American and poor, as well as in the decision of the federal government, supported by much of the population, to build a wall on the U.S.–Mexican border to keep Latino immigrants and migrant workers out of our country. Native Americans, the most forgotten and excluded community in the United States, continue to be oppressed and their lands and resources exploited by the government and wealthy corporations.

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23 Excerpted from Pax Christi USA’s 2008 document, “Called to Be Peacemakers.”
However, our commitment to an antiracist identity is a call to heal God’s family. We have the power to restore that biblical relationship by opposing racial oppression and working for antiracist transformation at both individual and institutional levels.

Pope John Paul, who knew intimately the devastating consequences of racism leading to the destruction of European Jews in the Nazi Holocaust, spoke directly to this challenge while on a visit to the United States:

“As the new millennium approaches, there remains another great challenge facing this community . . . [and] the whole country: to put an end to every form of racism, a plague which [is] one of the most persistent and destructive evils of the nation.”

4. The Promise of the Beloved Community

In the effort to examine the challenges to peace and respond to the call to become peacemakers, it is no coincidence that we have found common ground as Catholic organizations and communities working to abolish war and promote a just peace, eradicate poverty and promote a just and ecologically sustainable global economy, and dismantle racism and promote racial equality and diversity.

To meet the challenges and promise of peace, we look to the example of Jesus and our Catholic tradition for the wisdom and courage to embrace the vocation to become peacemakers. We have found that we are not alone, but can draw on our faith communities for strength. We know, too, that we are surrounded by “a cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1-4), those modern-day peacemakers who have faced the challenges head-on and generously given their lives in justice, service, and love.

We think of Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton, Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks, César Chávez and Archbishop Oscar Romero, Thea Bowman and Katherine Drexel—as well as the many unnamed and courageous peacemakers who have sustained our communities and our families over many generations through generous self-sacrifice and faithful witness to God’s Kingdom. To them we owe a debt of gratitude and a commitment to keeping alive their legacy of hope.

Martin Luther King Jr. captured well the promise of peace when he shared his dream of the “beloved community” and called for a “true revolution of values” in order to overcome the “giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism”:

“A true revolution of values will lay hands on the world order and say of war: ‘This way of settling differences is not just’ . . .

“War is not the answer . . . our greatest defense against communism [and terrorism] is to take offensive action in behalf of justice . . .

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“Our only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism, and militarism. . .

“This call for a world-wide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one’s tribe, race, class, and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love for all people...

“We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation.”
PART 2 - ACTIVITY:
The U.S. Budget as a Moral Document


Online: Budget Puzzle: You fix the budget!


“The True Cost of the Iraq War: $3 Trillion and Beyond”
By Joseph E. Stiglitz and Linda J. Bilmes
Sunday, September 5, 2010, Washington Post

Writing in [The Washington Post] in early 2008, we put the total cost to the United States of the Iraq war at $3 trillion. This price tag dwarfed previous estimates, including the Bush administration's 2003 projections of a $50 billion to $60 billion war.

But today, as the United States ends combat in Iraq, it appears that our $3 trillion estimate (which accounted for both government expenses and the war's broader impact on the U.S. economy) was, if anything, too low. For example, the cost of diagnosing, treating and compensating disabled veterans has proved higher than we expected.

Moreover, two years on, it has become clear to us that our estimate did not capture what may have been the conflict's most sobering expenses: those in the category of “might have beens,” or what economists call opportunity costs. For instance, many have
wondered aloud whether, absent the Iraq invasion, we would still be stuck in Afghanistan. And this is not the only "what if" worth contemplating. We might also ask: If not for the war in Iraq, would oil prices have risen so rapidly? Would the federal debt be so high? Would the economic crisis have been so severe?

**Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Budget**

Economy has its roots in the Greek oikonomia. “...In early Christian history, oikonomia collectively referred to the way in which God’s household is ordered or administered, and in that sense economized. God’s household, God’s grand economy, is one in which holiness and truth, justice and love, and above all, peace prevail. In my view, what makes for a good economy is the full flourishing of everyone who is part of God’s economy....”


The U.S. budget is a document that reflects the values and spending priorities of the nation. As such, it is a moral document expressing moral values through the funding priorities it lays out. Our tax dollars contribute a significant portion of the funds used for the budget. So we have special reason to give it close attention and evaluation.

One question we should ask ourselves is whether the budget priorities that are being proposed are consistent with our faith values and with the needs and priorities of real people, especially those who are poor or vulnerable in society.

Through the years, the Catholic bishops have voiced their hopes and concerns about the federal budget, frequently reminding Congresspersons to provide for basic human needs and the common good of all in society.

Most recently, Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York, President of the U.S. Bishops, wrote in a January 14, 2011 letter to all members of Congress:

Our nation faces continuing economic challenges with serious human consequences and significant moral dimensions. We will work with the Administration and Congress for budget, tax and entitlement policies that reflect the moral imperative to protect poor and vulnerable people.

We advocate a clear priority for poor families and vulnerable workers in the development and implementation of economic recovery measures, including appropriate new investments, finding ways to offer opportunity and strengthening the national safety net. Poor families and low-income and jobless workers have been hurt most of all in the economic crisis. The difficult choices ahead on how to balance needs and resources, and how to proportionately allocate the burdens and sacrifices need to take into account the vulnerability and capacity of all, especially those most affected by poverty, joblessness and economic injustice. We urge the Administration and Congress to seek the common
good of our nation and people above partisan politics and the demands of powerful or narrow interests….”

We can ask ourselves the following questions.
How is the budget being used to educate the young? How is the budget being used to care for the sick and the elderly? How is the budget being used to ensure that none of our citizens goes to bed hungry or poor?

As citizens and people of faith, the more we understand the budget process the more we can interact with our congresspersons and our President at the appropriate time and attempt to influence their decisions.

“According to a 2010 WorldPublicOpinion.org/ Knowledge Networks poll, only 20 percent of respondents thought that the amount budgeted for international assistance should be as low as 1 percent of the U.S. budget.”


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READINGS PART 3 - Just Peacemaking Abroad

As you read, consider these questions:

• Have we as a nation become more addicted to violence and war as a means to security?
• Are you concerned about the cost of wars and fewer resources for human need?
• What can we do as people of faith to reverse the increasing violence and wars in our world today?

Reading 1 – “What Does Peacemaking Mean to Me?”
Jef Felix, Belgium, Pax Christi International Executive Committee

All through my life solidarity has played an important role, inspiring me to act with loving kindness and to be involved in effective action for justice with deprived people and communities - at home and in the global South.

When I had the chance to engage with Pax Christi International (2003), I discovered a new dimension of working for solidarity. In the words of Pope John Paul II: “Opus solidaritatis pax” (Encyclical Sollicitudo rei Socialis, 38 – 1988). Peacemaking is a fruit of solidarity. However, gradually I have experienced peace not only as a fruit but also as the deepest source for genuine commitment to justice, peace and care for the creation. I have experienced inner peace as a God-given well for peacemaking. Contemplation and action became One.
With caution I would say that peacemaking requires a plunge into the depths of life - where oneness ‘reigns.’ I have experienced vividly that if we penetrate deep peace, nothing fundamentally separates one human being from another, or any human being from other living creatures. Oneness is the driving force of compassion, reconciliation and healing. The experience of the One is also what inspires and unites many religions and ancestral traditions. I learned that worldwide interreligious cooperation for peace is possible on this deep ground.

Furthermore, is deep peace not also the love that united Jesus Christ with God, his Father? Is it not the love of God that is flowing from the Father through the Son in the Spirit who is dwelling in me? Peacemaking is Trinitarian! The peace of Christ - Pax Christi – deeply enriched my life, even more that I can grasp.

Pax Christi: Spirituality in action! Thank you, Pax Christi International!

**Reading 2 – “Fifty Years after the ‘Military-Industrial Complex’: What Eisenhower Really Meant”**

By Susan Eisenhower. She is the granddaughter of Dwight D. Eisenhower, is an energy and international affairs expert and chairman emeritus of the Eisenhower Institute. This article appeared in *The Washington Post*, January 14, 2011.

I've always found it rather haunting to watch old footage of my grandfather, Dwight Eisenhower, giving his televised farewell address to the nation on January 17, 1961. The 50-year-old film all but crackles with age as the president makes his earnest, uncoached speech. I was 9 years old at the time, and it wasn't until years later that I understood the importance of his words or the lasting impact of his message.

Of course, the speech will forever be remembered for Eisenhower's concerns about a rising "military-industrial complex," which he described as "a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions" with the potential to acquire - whether sought or unsought - "unwarranted influence" in the halls of government.

The notion captured the imagination of scholars, politicians and veterans; the military-industrial complex has been studied, investigated and revisited countless times, including now, at its 50th anniversary. Looking back, it is easy to see the parallels to our era, especially *how the complex has expanded* since September 11, 2001. In less than 10 years, our military and security expenditures have increased by 119 percent. Even after subtracting the costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the budget has grown by 68 percent since 2001. In 2010, the United States is projected to spend at least $700 billion on its defense and security, the most, in real terms, that we've spent in any year since World War II.

However, at this time of increased concerns over our fiscal deficit and the national debt, Eisenhower's farewell words and legacy take on added significance.
Throughout his presidency, Eisenhower continually connected the country's security to its economic strength, underscoring that our fiscal health and our military might are equal pillars of our national defense. This meant that a responsible government would have to make hard choices. The question Eisenhower continued to pose about defense spending was clear and practical: How much is enough?

Early on, he realized that if the United States were to prevail in its existential standoff with the Soviet Union, we would have to prepare for a long game. Unlike our experience in World War II, which lasted less than four years, the Cold War would last many decades. Eisenhower understood that we were facing a marathon, not a sprint.

Moreover, the logic of nuclear deterrence made the conventional wars Ike had commanded in the 1940s obsolete. Now, there could be no margin for error; the Cold War brought with it different calculations, which were very costly by nature. These new realities meant that the United States would not only need to project power and resolve, but also had to ensure national solvency - no easy task for a country that had to modernize while assuming, for the first time, the mantle of global leadership.

The pressures Eisenhower faced during his presidency were enormous. Over the years, as the Soviet Union appeared to reach military parity with the United States, political forces in Washington cried out for greater defense spending and a more aggressive approach to Moscow. In response, the administration publicly asserted that there was no such thing as absolute security. "The problem in defense is how far you can go without destroying from within what you are trying to defend from without," Eisenhower said. And he followed through, balancing the budget three times during his tenure, a record unmatched during the Cold War.

This theme was introduced at the start of Eisenhower's first term. On April 16, 1953, the new president spoke to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, just weeks after Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin's death. In this "Chance for Peace" speech - one as important as the farewell address but often overlooked by historians - he seized the moment to outline the cost of continued tensions with the U.S.S.R. In addition to the military dangers such a rivalry imposed, he said, the confrontation would exact an enormous domestic price on both societies:

"This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities. It is two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population. . . . We pay for a single fighter with a half-million bushels of wheat. We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people. . . . This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron."

Contrary to many historians' suggestions, Ike's farewell speech was not an afterthought - it was the bookend to "Chance for Peace." As early as 1959, he began working with his brother Milton and his speechwriters to craft exactly what he would say as he left public life. The speech would
become a solemn moment in a decidedly unsolemn time, offering sober warnings for a nation giddy with newfound prosperity, infatuated with youth and glamour, and aiming increasingly for the easy life.

"There is a reoccurring temptation to feel that some spectacular and costly action could become the miraculous solution to all current difficulties," he warned in his final speech as president. ". . . But each proposal must be weighed in light of a broader consideration: the need to maintain balance in and among national programs . . . balance between actions of the moment and the national welfare of the future."

While the farewell address may be remembered primarily for the passages about the military-industrial complex, Ike was rising above the issues of the day to appeal to his countrymen to put the nation and its future first. "We . . . must avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering for our own ease and convenience the precious resources of tomorrow. We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren without risking the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage. We want democracy to survive for all generations to come, not to become the insolvent phantom of tomorrow."

As I see my grandfather's black-and-white image deliver these words, a simple thought lingers in my mind: This man was speaking for me, for us. We are those grandchildren. We are the great beneficiaries of his generation's prudence and sacrifice.

Until today, perhaps, we have taken American leadership, dominance and prosperity for granted. In those intervening years, we rarely asked if our policies were sustainable over the long haul. Indeed, it has only been since the catastrophic financial meltdown in 2008 that we've begun to think about the generational responsibilities we have for our grandchildren's prosperity and welfare.

Eisenhower's words, from the beginning of his presidency to the end, come back to us from the mists of another era. They remind us, sadly, that sometimes we must revisit our past to learn what we have always known.

Reading 3 – “Cow Most Sacred: Why Military Spending Remains Untouchable”
by Andrew J. Bacevich | TomDispatch | News Analysis, January 27, 2011.

In defense circles, “cutting” the Pentagon budget has once again become a topic of conversation. Americans should not confuse that talk with reality. Any cuts exacted will at most reduce the rate of growth. The essential facts remain: U.S. military outlays today equal that of every other nation on the planet combined, a situation without precedent in modern history.

The Pentagon presently spends more in constant dollars than it did at any time during the Cold War – this despite the absence of anything remotely approximating what national security experts like to call a “peer competitor.” Evil Empire? It exists only in the fevered imaginations of those who quiver at the prospect of China adding a rust-bucket Russian aircraft carrier to its fleet.
or who take seriously the ravings of radical Islamists promising from deep inside their caves to unite the Umma in a new caliphate.

What are Americans getting for their money? Sadly, not much. Despite extraordinary expenditures (not to mention exertions and sacrifices by U.S. forces), the return on investment is, to be generous, unimpressive. The chief lesson to emerge from the battlefields of the post-9/11 era is this: the Pentagon possesses next to no ability to translate “military supremacy” into meaningful victory.

Washington knows how to start wars and how to prolong them, but is clueless when it comes to ending them. Iraq, the latest addition to the roster of America’s forgotten wars, stands as exhibit A. Each bomb that blows up in Baghdad or some other Iraqi city, splattering blood all over the streets, testifies to the manifest absurdity of judging “the surge” as the epic feat of arms celebrated by the Petraeus lobby.

The problems are strategic as well as operational. Old Cold War-era expectations that projecting U.S. power will enhance American clout and standing no longer apply, especially in the Islamic world. There, American military activities are instead fostering instability and inciting anti-Americanism. For Exhibit B, see the deepening morass that Washington refers to as AfPak or the Afghanistan-Pakistan theater of operations.

Add to that the mountain of evidence showing that Pentagon, Inc. is a miserably managed enterprise: hide-bound, bloated, slow-moving, and prone to wasting resources on a prodigious scale – nowhere more so than in weapons procurement and the outsourcing of previously military functions to “contractors.” When it comes to national security, effectiveness (what works) should rightly take precedence over efficiency (at what cost?) as the overriding measure of merit. Yet beyond a certain level, inefficiency undermines effectiveness, with the Pentagon stubbornly and habitually exceeding that level. By comparison, Detroit’s much-maligned Big Three offer models of well-run enterprises.

Impregnable Defenses

All of this takes place against the backdrop of mounting problems at home: stubbornly high unemployment, trillion-dollar federal deficits, massive and mounting debt, and domestic needs like education, infrastructure, and employment crying out for attention.

Yet the defense budget – a misnomer since for Pentagon, Inc. defense per se figures as an afterthought – remains a sacred cow. Why is that?

The answer lies first in understanding the defenses arrayed around that cow to ensure that it remains untouched and untouchable. Exemplifying what the military likes to call a “defense in depth,” that protective shield consists of four distinct but mutually supporting layers.

Institutional Self-Interest: Victory in World War II produced not peace, but an atmosphere of permanent national security crisis. As never before in U.S. history, threats to the nation’s
existence seemed omnipresent, an attitude first born in the late 1940s that still persists today. In Washington, fear – partly genuine, partly contrived – triggered a powerful response.

One result was the emergence of the national security state, an array of institutions that depended on (and therefore strove to perpetuate) this atmosphere of crisis to justify their existence, status, prerogatives, and budgetary claims. In addition, a permanent arms industry arose, which soon became a major source of jobs and corporate profits. Politicians of both parties were quick to identify the advantages of aligning with this “military-industrial complex,” as President Eisenhower described it.

Allied with (and feeding off of) this vast apparatus that transformed tax dollars into appropriations, corporate profits, campaign contributions, and votes was an intellectual axis of sorts – government-supported laboratories, university research institutes, publications, think tanks, and lobbying firms (many staffed by former or would-be senior officials) – devoted to identifying (or conjuring up) ostensible national security challenges and alarms, always assumed to be serious and getting worse, and then devising responses to them.

The upshot: within Washington, the voices carrying weight in any national security “debate” all share a predisposition for sustaining very high levels of military spending for reasons having increasingly little to do with the well-being of the country.

**Strategic Inertia:** In a 1948 State Department document, diplomat George F. Kennan offered this observation: “We have about 50 percent of the world's wealth, but only 6.3 percent of its population.” The challenge facing American policymakers, he continued, was “to devise a pattern of relationships that will permit us to maintain this disparity.” Here we have a description of American purposes that is far more candid than all of the rhetoric about promoting freedom and democracy, seeking world peace, or exercising global leadership.

The end of World War II found the United States in a spectacularly privileged position. Not for nothing do Americans remember the immediate postwar era as a Golden Age of middle-class prosperity. Policymakers since Kennan’s time have sought to preserve that globally privileged position. The effort has been a largely futile one.

By 1950 at the latest, those policymakers (with Kennan by then a notable dissenter) had concluded that the possession and deployment of military power held the key to preserving America’s exalted status. The presence of U.S. forces abroad and a demonstrated willingness to intervene, whether overtly or covertly, just about anywhere on the planet would promote stability, ensure U.S. access to markets and resources, and generally serve to enhance the country’s influence in the eyes of friend and foe alike – this was the idea, at least.

In postwar Europe and postwar Japan, this formula achieved considerable success. Elsewhere – notably in Korea, Vietnam, Latin America, and (especially after 1980) in the so-called Greater Middle East – it either produced mixed results or failed catastrophically. Certainly, the events of the post-9/11 era provide little reason to believe that this presence/power-projection paradigm
will provide an antidote to the threat posed by violent anti-Western jihadism. If anything, adherence to it is exacerbating the problem by creating ever greater anti-American animus.

One might think that the manifest shortcomings of the presence/power-projection approach – trillions expended in Iraq for what? – might stimulate present-day Washington to pose some first-order questions about basic U.S. national security strategy. A certain amount of introspection would seem to be called for. Could, for example, the effort to sustain what remains of America’s privileged status benefit from another approach?

Yet there are few indications that our political leaders, the senior-most echelons of the officer corps, or those who shape opinion outside of government are capable of seriously entertaining any such debate. Whether through ignorance, arrogance, or a lack of imagination, the pre-existing strategic paradigm stubbornly persists; so, too, as if by default do the high levels of military spending that the strategy entails.

**Cultural Dissonance:** The rise of the Tea Party movement should disabuse any American of the thought that the cleavages produced by the “culture wars” have healed. The cultural upheaval touched off by the 1960s and centered on Vietnam remains unfinished business in this country.

Among other things, the sixties destroyed an American consensus, forged during World War II, about the meaning of patriotism. During the so-called Good War, love of country implied, even required, deference to the state, shown most clearly in the willingness of individuals to accept the government’s authority to mandate military service. GI’s, the vast majority of them draftees, were the embodiment of American patriotism, risking life and limb to defend the country.

The GI of World War II had been an American Everyman. Those soldiers both represented and reflected the values of the nation from which they came (a perception affirmed by the ironic fact that the military adhered to prevailing standards of racial segregation). It was “our army” because that army was “us.”

With Vietnam, things became more complicated. The war’s supporters argued that the World War II tradition still applied: patriotism required deference to the commands of the state. Opponents of the war, especially those facing the prospect of conscription, insisted otherwise. They revived the distinction, formulated a generation earlier by the radical journalist Randolph Bourne that distinguished between the country and the state. Real patriots, the ones who most truly loved their country, were those who opposed state policies they regarded as misguided, illegal, or immoral.

In many respects, the soldiers who fought the Vietnam War found themselves caught uncomfortably in the center of this dispute. Was the soldier who died in Vietnam a martyr, a tragic figure, or a sap? Who deserved greater admiration: the soldier who fought bravely and uncomplainingly or the one who served and then turned against the war? Or was the war resister – the one who never served at all – the real hero?
War’s end left these matters disconcertingly unresolved. President Richard Nixon’s 1971 decision to kill the draft in favor of an All-Volunteer Force, predicated on the notion that the country might be better served with a military that was no longer “us,” only complicated things further. So, too, did the trends in American politics where bona fide war heroes (George H.W. Bush, Bob Dole, John Kerry, and John McCain) routinely lost to opponents whose military credentials were non-existent or exceedingly slight (Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama), yet who demonstrated once in office a remarkable propensity for expending American blood (none belonging to members of their own families) in places like Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan. It was all more than a little unseemly.

Patriotism, once a simple concept, had become both confusing and contentious. What obligations, if any, did patriotism impose? And if the answer was none – the option Americans seemed increasingly to prefer – then was patriotism itself still a viable proposition?

Wanting to answer that question in the affirmative – to distract attention from the fact that patriotism had become little more than an excuse for fireworks displays and taking the occasional day off from work – people and politicians alike found a way to do so by exalting those Americans actually choosing to serve in uniform. The thinking went this way: soldiers offer living proof that America is a place still worth dying for, that patriotism (at least in some quarters) remains alive and well; by common consent, therefore, soldiers are the nation’s “best,” committed to “something bigger than self” in a land otherwise increasingly absorbed in pursuing a material and narcissistic definition of self-fulfillment.

In effect, soldiers offer much-needed assurance that old-fashioned values still survive, even if confined to a small and unrepresentative segment of American society. Rather than Everyman, today’s warrior has ascended to the status of icon, deemed morally superior to the nation for which he or she fights, the repository of virtues that prop up, however precariously, the nation’s increasingly sketchy claim to singularity.

Politically, therefore, “supporting the troops” has become a categorical imperative across the political spectrum. In theory, such support might find expression in a determination to protect those troops from abuse, and so translate into wariness about committing soldiers to unnecessary or unnecessarily costly wars. In practice, however, “supporting the troops” has found expression in an insistence upon providing the Pentagon with open-ended drawing rights on the nation’s treasury, thereby creating massive barriers to any proposal to affect more than symbolic reductions in military spending.

**Misremembered History:** The duopoly of American politics no longer allows for a principled anti-interventionist position. Both parties are war parties. They differ mainly in the rationale they devise to argue for interventionism. The Republicans tout liberty; the Democrats emphasize human rights. The results tend to be the same: a penchant for activism that sustains a never-ending demand for high levels of military outlays.
American politics once nourished a lively anti-interventionist tradition. Leading proponents included luminaries such as George Washington and John Quincy Adams. That tradition found its basis not in principled pacifism, a position that has never attracted widespread support in this country, but in pragmatic realism. What happened to that realist tradition? Simply put, World War II killed it – or at least discredited it. In the intense and divisive debate that occurred in 1939-1941, the anti-interventionists lost, their cause thereafter tarred with the label “isolationism.”

The passage of time has transformed World War II from a massive tragedy into a morality tale, one that casts opponents of intervention as blackguards. Whether explicitly or implicitly, the debate over how the United States should respond to some ostensible threat – Iraq in 2003, Iran today – replays the debate finally ended by the events of December 7, 1941. To express skepticism about the necessity and prudence of using military power is to invite the charge of being an appeaser or an isolationist. Few politicians or individuals aspiring to power will risk the consequences of being tagged with that label.

In this sense, American politics remains stuck in the 1930s – always discovering a new Hitler, always privileging Churchillian rhetoric – even though the circumstances in which we live today bear scant resemblance to that earlier time. There was only one Hitler and he’s long dead. As for Churchill, his achievements and legacy are far more mixed than his battalions of defenders are willing to acknowledge. And if any one figure deserves particular credit for demolishing Hitler’s Reich and winning World War II, it’s Josef Stalin, a dictator as vile and murderous as Hitler himself.

Until Americans accept these facts, until they come to a more nuanced view of World War II that takes fully into account the political and moral implications of the U.S. alliance with the Soviet Union and the U.S. campaign of obliteration bombing directed against Germany and Japan, the mythic version of “the Good War” will continue to provide glib justifications for continuing to dodge that perennial question: How much is enough?

Like concentric security barriers arrayed around the Pentagon, these four factors – an institutional self-interest, strategic inertia, cultural dissonance, and misremembered history – insulate the military budget from serious scrutiny. For advocates of a militarized approach to policy, they provide invaluable assets, to be defended at all costs.

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CLOSING PRAYER

Extinguish the candles and return them to the circular platter.

As we end this session, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.

Together: Prayer of St. Francis:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let us sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon,
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is darkness, light,
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, Grant that we may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console,
To be understood, as to understand,
To be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born
To eternal life.

Scripture phrase from beginning repeated by three different voices

“You will be my witnesses, in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).”

Amen
SECTION III

*Just Peacemaking, Disarmament and Reconciliation with Justice*

As people of faith, we promote nuclear, conventional and domestic disarmament, an end to the international arms trade, economic conversion to a nonmilitary economy, conscientious objection, and nonviolent alternatives to war. We promote the just reconciliation of enemies through the United Nations and other channels.
NOTE TO PARTICIPANT – Sessions 7-9

We are now half way through our journey. We have studied the Spirituality of Nonviolence and Just Peacemaking, and we have looked at Just Peacemaking as it relates to Economic and Interracial Justice. The next three sessions focus on Just Peacemaking, Disarmament, and Reconciliation with Justice. These sessions deal in depth with the violence of war, and make an urgent plea for disarmament, the abolition of nuclear weapons, and the abolition of war itself.

As before, in this section we will continue to highlight three things:

(1) **Just Peacemaking.** The readings from our faith traditions focus on “Building Cooperative Security.” In the words reminiscent of Paul VI, “If you want peace, work for justice.” The *Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace* is especially critical of the arms trade and its negative impact on the poor, calling it “one of the greatest curses on the human race.” In addition, the U.S. bishops’ pastoral letter makes a passionate plea “to work for a world without war.” In similar fashion, the *Ecumenical Call to Just Peace* calls for deep cuts in military spending “in order to advance the goals of sufficient food, shelter, education and health for all people.” In particular, the World Council of Churches calls our attention to two threats of great magnitude – “nuclear holocaust and climate change,” and the potential they have “to destroy much life and all prospects for a Just Peace.”

(2) **The War at Home / The War Abroad.** The readings for Just Peacemaking at Home shine the light of the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching on all forms of systemic violence, rejecting in particular the myth of “redemptive violence.” They affirm that “Violence in all of its forms is sinful, because it destroys human dignity and the common good,” and when it becomes institutionalized, as poverty, war, or racism, “it becomes a form of idolatry.” In similar fashion, the readings for Just Peacemaking Abroad share in a vivid way the immense destructiveness of modern warfare – from the deadly impact of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to the silent and deadly violence against civilians caused by the drones in the war on terror – and make a powerful plea to end the violence of war.

(3) **Bearing Witness.** The overarching goal of these sessions is to prepare ourselves, through a process of Prayer – Study – Action, to bear witness to our Gospel faith in ways that help diminish and end violence and war. The challenge is not only to call for an end to specific wars, like Iraq and Afghanistan, or to call for nuclear disarmament, but to understand the systemic nature of war itself as an institution that in practice causes immense violence and destruction, far in excess to the stated goals it pursues. The challenge for us is also to discern God’s activity in history, in the courageous actions of ordinary men and women for peace, and to respond in like fashion to the Gospel invitation to bear witness to God’s gift of peace in a violent and war-torn world.
SESSION SEVEN
The Challenge of Just Peacemaking for Our Time

Goals of the Session:

- To strengthen our commitment to envision a new international order and structures of peace, based on strengthening global institutions, securing human rights, and assuring sustainable and equitable development.
- To challenge the global war on terror as a framework that expands the U.S. capacity for war and its reliance on military force to assert U.S. global domination rather than lay the foundation for peace.
- To look at the justification of war and its impact from the perspective of those who suffer from its consequences.

Readings for this session:

Part One: Just Peacemaking at Home
- An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace.
- Stories of Just Peacemaking at Home.
- Called to Be Peacemakers: The Challenge and Promise of Peace in the Twenty-First Century: II. Theological Reflection – A. We Proclaim Our Catholic Heritage – B. We Reject the Idolatry of Violence (1).

Part Two: Just Peacemaking Abroad
- “Revisiting the Global War on Terror: Iraq and Afghanistan” – by Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International and Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace.
- “War Without End: After 13 Years Committed to War, It Is Time to Be Alarmed” – by Robert W. McElroy, Auxiliary Bishop of San Francisco.
OPENING PRAYER

Scripture reading: (Select three readers to repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between.)

“They shall not harm or destroy on all my holy mountain (Isaiah 11:9).”

Light seven candles and place on the map: in the group’s location, Europe, the former Yugoslavia, the Great Lakes region of East Africa, Southeast Asia, the location of a nearby military base or weapons site, and the Middle East.

Leader: The following reading is from *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace*, a Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the 10th Anniversary of bishops’ pastoral, *The Challenge of Peace*.

Leader: Diverting scarce resources from military to human development is not only a just and compassionate policy, but it is also a wise long-term investment in global peace and national security. We’ll read excerpts from *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace: Building Cooperative Security*.

Reader 1: According to the Holy Father, the moral judgment about the arms trade ‘is even more severe.’ At present there are more than forty regional conflicts, almost all of these fueled by a seemingly limitless arms trade. Recent wars. . . . provide ample evidence that weapons not only exacerbate conflicts and fuel regional arms races, but, as with Iraq, are often turned against those who supply them. Moreover, the recipients are often irresponsible or repressive regimes whose military ambitions rob their people of their right to human development and sentence them to increasing misery. Our experience over the past decade reinforces the judgment of the Second Vatican Council: ‘. . . [T]he arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race and the harm it inflicts on the poor is more than can be endured.’

Reader 2: What is especially discouraging is that our country, as well as other permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, each of which have accepted a special responsibility for international peace, are the major participants – some would say profiteers – in this lethal trade. We are faced with a paradoxical situation in which modest defense reductions at home seem to encourage the export of militarism abroad. Defense spending is cut while weapons continue to be supplied to others without effective restraints. It is a matter of concern when the desire to protect jobs in the defense industry overshadows the interests of international peace and stability.
Reader 3: As the world's largest supplier of weapons, the United States bears great responsibility for curbing the arms trade by taking concrete actions to reduce its own predominant role in this trade. The human consequences of unemployment and economic disruption caused by defense cuts must be addressed concretely through economic development and conversion programs, a stronger nonmilitary economy and other programs to assist those who lose their jobs. Jobs at home cannot justify exporting the means of war abroad.

Reader 4: Neither jobs nor profits justify military spending beyond the minimum necessary for legitimate national security and international peacekeeping obligations. The end of the Cold War still provides an opportunity to reduce substantially military spending. Prudence requires that this reduction take into account emerging threats to world peace. Prudence also dictates that we use the unparalleled opportunities at hand to find alternative ways to respond to new dangers as we redirect resources to meet nonmilitary threats to international security. Diverting scarce resources from military to human development is not only a just and compassionate policy, but it is also a wise long-term investment in global peace and national security.

Prayer for a New Society
Alternate Readers

All-nourishing God, your children cry for help
Against the violence of our world:
Where children starve for bread and feed on weapons;
Starve for vision and feed on drugs;
Starve for love and feed on videos;
Starve for peace and die murdered in our streets.

Creator God, timeless preserver of resources,
Forgive us for the gifts that we have wasted.
Renew for us what seems beyond redemption;
Call order and beauty to emerge again from chaos.
Convert our destructive power into creative service;
Help us to heal the woundedness of our world.

Liberating God, release us from the demons of violence.
Free us today from the disguised demon of deterrence
That puts guns by our pillows and missiles in our skies.
Free us from all demons that blind and blunt our spirits;
Cleanse us from all justifications for violence and war;
Open our narrowed hearts to the suffering and the poor.

Abiding God, loving renewer of the human spirit,
Unfold our violent fists into peaceful hands:
Stretch our sense of family to include our neighbors;
Stretch our sense of neighbor to include our enemies
Until our response to you finally respects and embraces
All creation as precious sacraments of your presence.

All: Hear the prayer of all your starving children.
    Amen.
    Pax Christi USA

READINGS PART 1 - Just Peacemaking at Home

As you read, consider these questions:

- What does it mean to live as risen people in the midst of the world’s crosses?
- How does the Sermon on the Mount inform our faith? How does the Gospel help us to see the world from the perspective of the poor, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted?
- How does your faith give you the courage to hope and to love?

Reading 1 - An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace

In their 2011 Ecumenical Call to Just Peace, the World Council of Churches builds on the experiences and insights gained from the “Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001 – 2010,” and invites Christians to commit themselves to the Way of Just Peace.

36. For peace in the marketplace. Even as tiny global elites accumulate unimaginable wealth, more than 1.4 billion humans subsist in extreme poverty. There is something profoundly wrong when the wealth of the world’s three richest individuals is greater than the gross domestic product of the world’s 48 poorest countries. Ineffective regulation, innovative but immoral financial instruments, distorted reward structures and other systemic factors exacerbated by greed trigger global financial crises that wipe out millions of jobs and impoverish tens of millions of people. The widening socio-economic chasms within and between nations raise
serious questions about the effectiveness of market-oriented economic liberalization policies in eradicating poverty and challenge the pursuit of growth as an overriding objective for any society. Over-consumption and deprivation are forms of violence. Global military expenditures, now higher than during the Cold War, do little to enhance international peace and security and much to endanger it; weapons do not address the main threats to humanity but use vast resources that could be rededicated to that end. Such disparities pose fundamental challenges to justice, social cohesion and the public good within what has become a global human community.

37. Peace in the marketplace is nurtured by creating ‘economies of life.’ Their essential foundations are equitable socio-economic relationships, respect for workers’ rights, the just sharing and sustainable use of resources, healthy and affordable food for all, and broad participation in economic decision-making.

38. Churches and their partners in society must advocate for the full implementation of economic, social and cultural rights. Churches must promote alternative economic policies for sustainable production and consumption, redistributive growth, fair taxes, fair trade, and the universal provisioning of clean water, clean air, and other common goods. Regulatory structures and policies must reconnect finance not only to economic production but also to human need and ecological sustainability. Deep cuts in military spending should be made in order to fund programs that advance the goals of sufficient food, shelter, education and health for all people and that provide remedies for climate change. Human and ecological security must become a greater economic priority than national security.

Reading 2 - Stories of Just Peacemakers at Home

“End Drone Attacks Now!”
Published in the June-July 2011 Catholic Worker

In April 2011, a drone attack killed forty-four people in Pakistan’s tribal region. CNN reported that its Islamabad bureau had counted four drone strikes over that last month and a half. This suspected strike was the 21st of the year. There were 111 strikes in 2010. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan estimated that 957 innocent civilians were killed in 2010…

In October and again in December 2010 I met with a large family living in a wretched refugee camp. They had fled their homes in the San Gin district of the Helmand province after a drone attack killed a mother there and her five children. The woman’s husband showed us photos of his children’s bloodied corpses. His niece, Juma Gul, age nine, had survived the attack. She and I huddled next to each other inside a hut made of mud on a chilly December morning. Juma Gul’s father stopped in front of us and gently unzipped her jacket, showing me that his daughter’s arm had been amputated by shrapnel when the US missile hit their home in San Gin. Next to Juma
Gul was her brother, whose leg had been mangled in the attack. He apparently has no access to adequate medical care and experiences constant pain.

Forty-nine companies make over 150 drone aircraft. Drone merchants expect that drone sales will earn $20.2 billion over the next ten years for aerospace war manufacturers, with $20.6 billion spent on research and development. Who knows? One day drone missiles may be aimed at us. It is worth noting that drones make it politically convenient for any country to order military actions without risking their soldiers’ lives, thereby making it easier, and more tempting, to start wars that may eventually escalate and result in massive loss of life, both military and civilian.

Online: The Forgotten Wages of War

Both articles are by John Tirman, executive director of the Center for International Studies at M.I.T. Mr. Tirman is the author of The Deaths of Others: The Fate of Civilians in America’s Wars.

The Forgotten Wages of War
By JOHN TIRMAN, New York Times Op-Ed Contributor

The end of the Iraq war occasioned few reflections on the scale of destruction we have wrought there. As is our habit, the discussion focused on the costs to America in blood and treasure, the false premises of the war and the continuing challenges of instability in the region. What happened to Iraqis was largely ignored. And in Libya, the recent investigation of civilian casualties during NATO’s bombing campaign was the first such accounting of what many believed was a largely victimless war.

We rarely question that wars cause extensive damage, but our view of America’s wars has been blind to one specific aspect of destruction: the human toll of those who live in war zones.

We tune out the voices of the victims and belittle their complaints about the midnight raids, the house-to-house searches, the checkpoints, the drone attacks, the bombs that fall on weddings instead of Al Qaeda.

Gen. Tommy R. Franks famously said during the early days of the war in Afghanistan, “We don’t do body counts.” But someone should. What we learn from body counts tells us much about war and those who wage it.
More than 10 years after the war in Afghanistan began, we have only the sketchiest notion of how many people have died as a consequence of the conflict. The United Nations office in Kabul assembles some figures from morgues and other sources, but they are incomplete. The same has been true for Iraq, although a number of independent efforts have been made there to account for the dead.

But such numbers, which run into the hundreds of thousands, gain scant attention. American political and military leaders, like the public, show little interest in non-American casualties.

Denial, after all, is politically convenient. Failing to consider the mortality figures, the refugees, the impoverished, the demolished hospitals and clean water systems and schools is to deny, in effect, that the war ever happened…

Reading 3 - *Called to be Peacemakers*

II. Theological Reflection
A. We Proclaim Our Catholic Heritage

1. We Proclaim: Jesus the Risen Christ and Prince of Peace

Our theological reflection on the challenges of peace begins with our own encounter with the Crucified and Risen Christ. This encounter is described by the author of the First Letter of John in declaring “what we have heard, what we have seen with our own eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life” (1 John 1:1). We have come to believe that this Word of Life, Jesus the Christ, is the Anointed One and our Prince of Peace. We testify also that we are being transformed by the Holy Spirit and are being made into a new people.

WE HAVE HEARD of the wonders of our God. From our families, we first heard the words of faith that brought us into the community of believers. Our parish families gave us a language to talk about God and to talk about the healing acts of Jesus. Teachers and loved ones preached the Good News to us through the witness of their lives and through their words of challenge and solace. They called us to serve the poor, protect the vulnerable, and work for peace with justice.

WE HAVE SEEN the Word of Life in our parishes and in the cultures of our people. We have experienced Jesus through rich traditions of signs and symbols from our Catholic faith: our veneration of saints and the Blessed Mother, our pilgrimages, festivals, and devotional practices. We have seen Jesus in the many social services in which our faith communities are engaged: feeding the hungry, providing homes for the homeless, visiting the prisoners, clothing the naked, and healing the sick.
WE HAVE LOOKED AT AND TOUCHED WITH OUR HANDS the Word of Life in the Eucharist. When we gather at Mass we experience the Body of Christ in three ways: first, in the assembly of believers, second, in reading and reflecting upon the sacred scriptures, and third, in the breaking of the bread and in the sharing of the cup of salvation. Around the Eucharistic table we are reminded also that we are one in mind and heart, one body, rich in the diversity of our many cultures, languages, genders, and races.

It is our encounter with Jesus that shapes our understanding of peace. It is our experiences of the Risen Christ in our families and communities that gives expression to that understanding and our faith as Catholics. It is this intimate encounter with Jesus that informs our response to the challenges of peace identified in our reading of the signs of the times, deeply rooted in the wisdom of our tradition and in the sacred scriptures. As Christians, we begin with the earliest tradition of Jesus’ encounter with those who would become his future disciples. Discipleship begins with this transformative encounter and understanding of the “Good News” that Jesus proclaimed, that all are called to follow him and so to enter into peace now and in heaven. Empowered by this Good News received through our families, our communities, and the sacramental life of the Church, we find both our home and our identity as disciples of Jesus.

What do we really know about the historical Jesus? Our theologians and scholars tell us there is very little that we can know except the fact that he was a Jew living in Israel; his people were under Roman occupation; he was born into poverty and raised in a small village; and he became the center of a charismatic religious movement, which eventually led to his crucifixion by the Romans.

When we reflect upon the kind of people whom Jesus gathered to himself, we recognize them in our own time as those who are poor, who have few opportunities for a decent life, and whose very survival is always tenuous. In our identity as disciples of Jesus, we are called to define ourselves in relationship to him and in relationship to those with whom he identified: people who were poor, oppressed, marginalized, or otherwise disenfranchised.

The inclusiveness of Jesus’ community defines our understanding of what Martin Luther King Jr. described for our times as “the beloved community.” Our discipleship is a call to communal activity and solidarity in action. We know from the scriptures, our tradition, and the witness of the martyrs and saints before us that upon encountering the passion, love, and teachings of Jesus, a person is never quite the same.

In spite of all the violence and suffering we experience in our communities, in spite of the efforts of those who would lead us deeper into fear, and in spite of all those who would turn us against one another, we are a hopeful people. Our hope is not based on optimism—the belief that in time things will get better. Our hope is grounded in the belief that God is compassion for the world. Our hope is grounded in the conviction that God’s grace is sufficient for today—and tomorrow.
And it is this hope that gives us the courage to love where others hate, to give without the desire for repayment, and to forgive when others seek retribution. In short, in spite of all the violence and suffering, we stand steadfast in solidarity and action on behalf of justice and God’s peace in the world.

2. We Proclaim God’s Kingdom of Peace With Justice

Jesus continually invites us to become his disciples, to be what we were born to be: children of God, brothers, sisters, and heirs of the kingdom. It is in the Sermon on the Mount that we find the principles of the kingdom described by Jesus.

As faith communities, we must live differently, practicing what we preach, living the Church’s social teachings every day in the workplace, in our communities, and in our own homes.

The Church must recognize and support diversity in our communities.

Calling together other church communities is an essential vocation of peacemaking.

For example, after shooting incidents in several Cleveland neighborhoods, faith communities came together for prayer services which drew people into a sense of healing and supported the grieving process.

It is a kingdom of great reversals: where the hungry are filled but those who are full go without and where the poor are blessed but the rich find no consolation (Luke 6:20, 24). It is a kingdom where the call to love does not stop at the boundary of tribe, nation, race, or class but extends unconditionally to even embrace our enemies (Matthew 5:43-48). It is a kingdom whose citizens are content praying for their daily bread and trusting in God’s providence to provide for their future needs. It is a kingdom where forgiveness of debt and offenses becomes easy because of the gratitude experienced at being forgiven by God (Matthew 6:11-15).

Even though Jesus had no knowledge of our cultural addictions to violence, consumerism, and exclusion, he did have a clear understanding of the human compulsions that drive this culture of death. In his Sermon on the Mount Jesus describes those who live by kingdom principles as birds of the air who do not sow or reap but are cared for by God (Matthew 6:26). They know that their identity and self-worth do not come from the clothes they wear or the consumer products they buy (Matthew 6:27-32). Rather, their identity comes from being created in the image of and loved by God.

Jesus did more than talk about the kingdom; he gave witness to it by the way he went about his mission of healing and teaching. No practice better exemplified the principles of the kingdom than Jesus’ custom of table fellowship. In the time of Jesus, much as in parts of the world today, table fellowship followed strict protocols and taboos.
In a society where taboos on social mixing were maintained as a way of reinforcing social status, the practice of Jesus sharing meals with tax collectors, prostitutes, and other social sinners caused a great deal of scandal. Jesus went out of his way to mix socially with beggars and other groups of people who were considered unclean (c.f., Luke 15:2, Mark 2:15, and Matthew 11:19).

This extraordinary practice of table fellowship punctuated Jesus’ entire public ministry, and it became the basis of the memorial meal his disciples celebrated after his death and resurrection. This is how he wished to be remembered, “Do this in memory of me” (1 Corinthians 11:24, 25).

Every time we celebrate the Eucharist we recreate the table fellowship practiced by Jesus as a sign of the kingdom where all are invited and welcomed into the community of the beloved. We are invited and called to model and live out the ministry of Jesus and his disciples for our time as we contribute to and await the fullness of the kingdom of God. The model is inclusion; the ministry is service.

B. We Reject the Idolatry of Violence in All of Its Forms
1. We Reject the Myth of Redemptive Violence

As noted in our reading of the signs of the times, our society has increasingly come to believe that violence can be redemptive. Violence is thought to have the power to conquer or save us from evil and to establish justice. The power of violence seems more seductive each day as it becomes the preferred way to resolve conflict instead of the last resort.

Our theological reflection on violence begins with the Catholic Catechism’s teaching that idolatry “not only refers to false pagan worship. It remains a constant temptation to faith. Idolatry consists in divinizing what is not God.”

Violence is idolatry of power. Moreover, violence in all of its forms is sinful because it destroys human dignity and the common good. When violence becomes institutionalized—as poverty, war, or racism—it becomes a form of idolatry because it denies the sovereignty of God and the redeeming power of the love of Jesus Christ and instead affirms that violence itself has the power to redeem. As we are reminded in the Gospel of John, instead of truth, we get lies; instead of light, darkness; instead of freedom, slavery; instead of life, death.

*Throughout history and especially evident since the dawn of nuclear arms, war is the greatest destroyer of human dignity and the common good.\nWar makes development impossible and destroys the hopes of future generations.\nWe look for another way of redemption, the way of the nonviolent Jesus, who came into this world of political and religious conflict to preach a new way.*

At the same time, he did not flee the cities or their poverty to escape religious impurity nor did he believe that strictly observing the law would bring about true liberation (Matthew 12:1-21).

Instead Jesus showed us a different way: the way of nonviolent resistance to evil.

This way of nonviolent resistance is described in Jesus’ counsel to people who were poor and powerless who gathered around him to hear him teach about a way of resisting the violence and oppression they experienced that turned the oppression upside down.

Often we are faced with institutional and systemic violence. In the late 1960s and early 70s, our brothers and sisters in the Latin American Church first identified the challenges we face today as institutional forms of violence. The Latin American Episcopal Conference, held at Medellín, Colombia, in 1968, made insightful and fundamental criticisms of a society that perpetuated misery through the oppression of the many for the benefit of the few and also called for a strong commitment to those who are poor.

The documents of the Medellin conference also stated the need for structures that promoted liberation from oppression and for salvation in the form of participation: participation in political reform, participation in individual and communal conscientization, and participation for an end to violence. The doctrinal basis of Medellín reminds us that God created us and gave us the power to transform this world from sin and violence and to follow in the footsteps of a loving Jesus.

These words of mercy and change promote an authentic liberation that requires both personal and structural transformation and can put an end to sin, hunger, oppression, and misery. Key to this participation is the necessity for a more just economic system and an end to violence in all its forms.
As you read, consider these questions:

- How has war today become a war on children, on women, on the earth, on the poor?
- Go back to the end of Marie Dennis’ article and read aloud what Pax Christi is doing throughout the world. Knowing this, do you feel more hopeful?
- Isaiah proclaimed: “They will beat their swords into ploughshares, their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither will they study for war anymore.” What can we do to make God’s gift of peace a reality?

Reading 1 - Just Peacemakers Abroad

Jan Peters, SJ, The Netherlands, Pax Christi International Executive Committee

My very first memories as a young child are marked by fear. I lived for four years in an occupied country (the Netherlands), and, after the liberation by the Canadian army, half a year in a city on the frontlines of war. I experienced the bombing of my home city and the joys of the liberation. But it was during my stay in Lebanon, where I lived through the six day war of 1967, that I really experienced the impact of war on the mentality of people. There was no great material damage in the country, but the war and its aftermath strongly influenced the way people perceived other religious and cultural groups, particularly Palestinians. When I returned to the Netherlands and saw how people there were still enthusiastically applauding the “victory of Israel over its aggressors” without understanding the dangerous political and military reality in the Middle East, I joined a commission of Pax Christi to raise public awareness in Holland about the situation in the Middle East. It was not easy. Public opinion believed Israeli propaganda without question and some churches used biblical texts to support this attitude. I realized then how theology can be manipulated to sustain an unjust political situation.

A few years later I saw the civil war in Lebanon start and escalate: the loss of human life, the destruction of a country, the grievances and the hatred of people, a new generation born and raised in the terrible context of civil war. What struck me more than anything else was the way in which faith was used by all parties in the conflict to set people against each other: “God is on our side.” But at the same time, I was happy to meet many people from different factions and religions (among them my fellow Jesuits) who were trying to bridge the gaps and to bring people together, focusing on the shared belief that faith and religion should not divide people but bring them together in common action for peace, justice and reconciliation.

More recently (from 2000-2006), as president of the International Federation of Catholic Universities, I visited many universities around the world and realized even more than before the importance of peace education – on the university level, but especially for children in primary
and secondary schools. I greatly admire staff and students of many universities in conflict areas who, by their work of education, are making a very important contribution to peace and justice in their region.

As a specialist in Islamic Studies, since my retirement I have concentrated on interfaith and ecumenical dialogue and collaboration. Pax Christi Netherlands collaborates with Islamic organizations and persons in the various Islamic communities to oppose all forms of discrimination and exclusion and to promote a just and peaceful society in the Netherlands and in Europe.

Reading 2 – “Revisiting the Global War on Terror: Iraq and Afghanistan”
By Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International and Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace. Address delivered at the Pax Christi USA National Assembly in Philadelphia, 2008

He’s leaning against a tree
The wood has been sold
The land leased
The water poisoned
The rain kills the birds
Somebody takes aim at him
He raises his arms against the black wood
It is not finished
    - Dorothy Soelle

For many hours I sat trying to get my head around what I might say to you about the “war abroad” – to you, who know the facts, the statistics, the costs of war, especially of the war in Iraq. Dorothy Soelle’s brief poem, “Peace: He’s leaning against a tree,” finally helped me focus. Its quiet truth bellows into a world engulfed in multiple wars - and positions in the crosshairs of war’s insanely destructive violence the One we follow who raised his arms on the Cross to overcome all evil. It is not finished. It is clearly not finished.

He’s leaning against a tree
The wood has been sold – the rainforests depleted, no holds have been barred in pursuit of global markets
The land leased – the oil and coal and gold and diamonds and coltan beneath it exploited
The water poisoned – or stolen and bottled
The rain kills the birds – and the humans, very old and very young included – the rain of bombs and bomblets and bullets and shrapnel from IED’s
Somebody takes aim at him
He raises his arms against the black wood
It is not finished
I was asked to focus our attention tonight on the “war abroad.”

One part of this “war abroad” that we know too well is being waged in Afghanistan and in Iraq, but it extends way, way beyond the wars, the occupation in those dignified, devastated countries. Under the guise of the Global War on Terror (GWOT), it is built upon the mighty and expanding U.S. capacity for war and, while U.S. economic power and political influence are declining, those committed, as Phyllis Bennis says, to maintaining Washington’s superpower status are more likely not less, to choose military force to assert U.S. global reach.

The consequences in every direction are appalling.

The war in Afghanistan, the so-called “just war” evokes for me painful memories of 8 year old Amena who lost 18 members of her family when a US bomb hit the wrong target - and of cluster bomb fragments scattered like toys among the landmines in the Shamali Valley where Dave Robinson and I watched deminers crawl under lush and untouchable grape arbors trying to make the land safe for returning refugees.

According to Joseph Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes, the war in Iraq will cost 3 trillion dollars. In reality, its costs are incalculable – no dollar value can be assigned to the human lives lost on both sides; to the loss of human dignity; to the loss of bodily integrity; to the mental and psychological damage; to the environmental damage; to the rise in oil prices and its contribution to the food crisis.

Andrew Greeley calls it a “stupid, unjust and criminal war.” I know you all agree – this stupid, unjust, criminal and massively destructive war for oil and power and profits.

The land leased – for permanent US bases
The water poisoned
The rain killing the birds ...

You have seen the situation of Iraqis for yourselves – or you’ve heard from people like Cathy Breen and Kathy Kelly and Simone Campbell and Ann Curtis, story after painful story of refugees at the end of their rope. Our friends in Christian Peacemaker teams describe the frustrations of life in the Kurdish North of Iraq.

Pax Christi Italy delegations visiting Iraq throughout the war have seen the hope and the horror that is often hidden from us.
Pax Christi Netherlands staff member, an amazing Muslim woman from Sudan, Naglaa Elhajj, accompanies Christian Iraqis displaced and trapped on the plains of Nineveh between Mosul and Erbil.

The Institute for Policy Studies’ recently published book, *Lessons from Iraq: Avoiding the Next War*, describes the Iraq War as bleeding conceptually into the limitless “Global War on Terror” (GWOT), another dimension of the “war abroad,” with this Administration relentlessly attempting to conflate the two.

The terrorist threat now occupies the chair of “primary evil in the world” that was occupied by the “communist threat” not so many decades ago.

Jim Douglas’ amazing book, *JFK and The Unimaginable* makes a compelling case about the depths to which the powerful enemies of peace went in the past to keep our “enemy” in the line of fire.

According to Jim, John Kennedy set his sights on peace, on ending the cold war. He communicated with Khrushchev. He communicated with Castro. He moved to pull US troops out of Vietnam. He took courageous and concrete steps with the then-enemy to ensure a future for his children and grandchildren – and for theirs. He gave his life for it. The GWOT is precisely what he was trying to avoid.

Andrew Bacevich in the *Boston Globe* on July 1st described the Bush Administration’s “considerable legacy” in this regard. He wrote that:

- The administration has defined the contemporary era as an "age of terror" with an open-ended "global war" as the necessary, indeed the only logical, response;
- It has promulgated and implemented a doctrine of preventive (not just preemptive) war, thereby creating a far more permissive rationale for employing armed force;
- It has affirmed – despite the catastrophe of 9/11 – that the primary role of the Department of Defense is not defense, but power projection;
- It has removed constraints on military spending so that once more, as Ronald Reagan used to declare, "defense is not a budget item" (the administration’s 2009 budget request for defense is over $700 billion);
- The administration has enhanced the prerogatives of the imperial presidency on all matters pertaining to national security;
- It has preserved and even expanded the national security state;
- It has preempted any inclination to question the wisdom of the post-Cold War foreign policy consensus, founded on expectations of a sole superpower exercising "global leadership";
• It has completed the shift of US strategic priorities away from Europe and toward the Greater Middle East, with presidents and would-be presidents now forced to declare their commitment to the defense of Israel.

Out of this framework came AbuGhraib, Guantanamo, “black sites,” the CIA’s own secret prisons and extraordinary renditions to places like Egypt and Syria and Morocco – where torture is almost certainly assured, while U.S. authorities “look the other way.”

Out of this framework may yet come war with Iran. I urge you to read Seymour Hersh’s article in the July 7th issue of The New Yorker magazine. Hersh describes a major escalation in covert operations against Iran. It looks like the administration has again disguised military operations as intelligence operations in order to avoid telling Congress what is really going on. Everything is justified in terms of fighting the GWOT.

Also out of this framework the U.S. has dramatically increased military activity in Africa. U.S. military sales, financing and training have gone up from about $40 million over the five years between 1997 and 2001 to $130 million between 2002 and 2006 to $1.3 billion in 2009, plus another $100 million in commercial arms sales. The continent will be more volatile and insecure thanks to the pursuit of US national security over against the well-being of the people of Africa. Gerald LeMelle, Executive Director of Africa Action, uses the example of Sudan. While the Bush administration has publicly denounced the Sudanese government for abusing human rights, Sudan is a strong U.S. ally in the GWOT (also an exporter of oil). In November 2001 the CIA reopened a station in Khartoum and both the CIA and the FBI began active collaboration with the Sudanese National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS).

Sudanese intelligence was crucial to U.S. missile attacks in Somalia in January 2007 and March 2008. Many Somali civilians were killed or injured in those attacks. U.S. collaboration with Sudan and with Ethiopia’s dictatorship fuels anti-U.S. sentiment and helped destabilize further an already unstable Somalia, creating even more fertile ground for extremist recruiting activities. Recently, more than 900 people, including children, were captured as they fled fighting in Somalia. The prisoners were rendered on a plane chartered by the Kenyan government into secret detention in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where they were questioned by the FBI and the CIA. Elsewhere in Africa, the U.S. plans to greatly expand the base it has used in Djibouti since 2002 from 97 acres to over 500 acres. Major new arms deliveries and increased military training have been promised to a dozen African countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a country engulfed in unrelenting war and violent conflict.

In Asia, the Bush administration has tightened relations with the government of Japan, pressing for the repeal of Article 9, the peace clause in Japan’s Constitution, which “renounced war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat to use force as a means of settling international
disputes” and gave hope to people around the world who work for the non-violent resolution of conflicts.

That the United States, having dropped atomic bombs on two of Japan’s most beautiful cities, is trying to undercut the foundation of policies that prohibit the production or deployment of such weapons on Japanese territory is breathtakingly audacious!

At the same time, in support of the U.S. GWOT, Philippine President Arroyo has increased her government’s pressure on the Philippine left, reviving memories of the Marcos dictatorship and its dirty war against the opposition. Politically motivated killings there have soared since 9/11. According to Karapatan, an umbrella group for various Philippine human rights organizations, over 900 men and women, including pastors, labor leaders, student activists, farmers, workers and journalists, have been summarily executed since 2001.

Despite the fact that the Philippine Constitution forbids the basing of foreign troops on Philippine soil, the US military has kept between 100 and 500 personnel in the Philippines for the past five years. Among other things, they are accompanying Philippine troops in their hunt for the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), alleged to have ties with the Southeast Asian terrorist organization Jemaah Islamiyah.

So, the “war abroad” takes the form of “hot wars,” disastrous wars, in Iraq and Afghanistan. The “war abroad” is also the Global War on Terror – with its misguided assumption that military action can adequately address the deep grievances that spawn terrorism.

But the “war abroad” is also promoted by deep, deep U.S. involvement in every facet of the development and global marketing of deadly weapons.

Recently, a few of us from the U.S. participated in a Pax Christi International consultation on disarmament and demilitarization. It was not intended for this meeting to focus on U.S. militarism, but to give member organizations from around the world an opportunity to share their concerns about weapons proliferation and to develop some common strategies in support of global disarmament.

Sitting around the table were representatives of Pax Christi member organizations in Thailand, Pakistan, Peru, Belgium, Canada, the US, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Ireland, New Zealand, Germany, Japan, Russia and Poland.

The concerns they brought to the table were many, including missile defense, nuclear disarmament, landmines and cluster munitions, trafficking in small arms and light weapons, Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, depleted uranium, etc.
No matter what the topic, all eyes turned toward those of us from the U.S. sitting at the table. In every instance our country was playing a key – and negative - role. That the United States…

- refuses to support (in fact, tries to undercut) efforts to ban landmines and cluster munitions despite their deadly impact on civilian communities.
- failed to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban treaty
- is debating the Administration’s Complex Transformation proposal, which would enable the mass production of nuclear weapons for the first time in two decades
- refuses to live up to its disarmament obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation treaty
- exported $66.7 billion in arms for the past five years
- refuses to support effective enforcement capability to the Chemical and Biological Weapons Convention – and on and on

… should be a matter of intense concern to all of us as we evaluate candidates for the presidency of the United States.

The question is not whether a candidate will support this or that treaty or reduce this or that expenditure on weapons of mass destruction or slow the production and traffic in arms – though each of these is important - but whether the next president of the United States will have the courage to move our country to seek an entirely new vision of security - one that is rooted in right relationships around the world and with the earth herself.

Yes, “the war abroad” is being fought in Iraq and Afghanistan; it’s being fought around the world as the Global War on Terror; and it’s being fought through a global market in weapons of every conceivable description – from handguns to bunker busters. It’s

- a war on children
- a war on women
- a war on the earth
- a war on the poor.

But it is also a war that is being energetically, prophetically denounced by all of you – and around the world by other Pax Christi member organizations.

- In the Czech Republic and Poland Pax Christi members are organizing and fasting in resistance to the US missile shield proposal.
- In the Philippines Pax Christi members support peace communities in zones of conflict between Christians and Muslims and armed forces.
- In Haiti Pax Christi members are organizing gangs into soccer teams.
- In the DRC they are countering the influx of arms with peace weeks -- concerts, theater, sporting events, educational forums, peace marches, prayer services, radio programs.
- In the UK Pax Christi members are leading the resistance to Trident.
• In the Sudan Pax Christi is linking civil society organizations to each other to promote peace and development -- and supporting community security programs.

• In Flanders Pax Christi youth are building friendships with youth from war torn countries in the Middle East and Africa – and listening carefully to their stories.

• In Palestine Pax Christi members are teaching children how to manage conflict nonviolently; they are creating opportunities for dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians; they are nonviolently resisting the occupation.

• Pax Christi members from the Netherlands played a major role in bringing together the government of Uganda and the Lord’s Resistance Army to begin a process of negotiations toward peace.

• Pax Christi Ireland helped lead the International Campaign to Ban Cluster Munitions that has concluded negotiations on a landmine-like treaty.

• In Colombia, Pax Christi members are deeply involved in major efforts for peace after decades of war.

• In Pakistan, Pax Christi members are opposing blasphemy laws and promoting basic human rights for women and minorities.

• Pax Christi is at the United Nations working for disarmament -- for a global end to trafficking in small arms, production of nuclear weapons, stockpiling of cluster bombs and deployment missile shields -- and for human rights, most recently of Islamic activists in Egypt and Morocco and Lebanon; of voters in Zimbabwe; of children everywhere.

• Pax Christi Italy friends, in a recent statement on the war in Iraq, wrote: We would like to see fewer national security strategies and more strategies for justice and the common good. In many ways, that’s what we are all about – justice and the common good.

Reading 3 – “War Without End: After 13 Years Committed to War, It Is Time to Be Alarmed”

By Bishop Robert W. McElroy, auxiliary bishop of San Francisco. This article appeared in America Magazine, February 21, 2011.

The conflict in Afghanistan now stands as the longest war in American history. For this reason alone, as the United States approaches a decade of major warfare in a conflict that has shown little lasting progress, there should be a public debate that does not proceed from a blind commitment to “stay the course.” On an even deeper level, a sustained national dialogue about the war in Afghanistan is vital to the future of the United States because it touches upon a chilling prospect: the danger that major warfare has become not an exceptional necessity but an ongoing way of life.

The United States has now achieved the capacity to wage major warfare over many years without greatly burdening its economy or its general citizenry. Three factors have made this possible: 1) the sheer immensity of the American economy and its ability to float credit, which has made the costs of major wars like Afghanistan and Iraq a relatively small blip in overall
government expenditures; 2) the creation of instruments of war through modern technology that minimize American casualties in warfare and greatly enhance American tactical superiority; and 3) the existence of a professional army, which limits the layers of American society that absorb the terrible trauma of casualties in war, in contrast to a general draft like that utilized in prior wars.

The result has been, as the historian David Kennedy of Stanford University notes, a situation in which “the army is at war but the country is not. We have managed to create and field an armed force that is very lethal without the society in whose name it fights breaking a sweat.” On a more ominous level, Kennedy warns, this achievement of a sustainable war-fighting capacity by the United States has created “a moral hazard for the political leadership to resort to force in the knowledge that civil society will not be deeply disturbed.” This moral hazard has become realized in a decade-long conflagration in Afghanistan and in an independent, elective major war in Iraq that lasted six years. Because the fractious commonwealth we have attempted to forge is fragile, the war in Iraq could re-erupt at any moment.

**Invasion as Transformation**

The moral hazard posed by America’s vast capacity to wage war is compounded by its idealistic tendency to cast war aims in transformational terms. The United States seeks to establish as the goal of war, for example, a stable democracy no matter how inhospitable to democracy the history, institutions and culture of the country in which it intervenes. In Afghanistan the original goal of intervention was clear and circumscribed: Al Qaeda was to be rooted out from its safe havens and destroyed, and the repressive Taliban government that had given protection to Al Qaeda was to be punished and removed. In Iraq, by contrast, the goals of war were from the outset extensive and ill-defined: the removal of Saddam Hussein, the destruction of Iraq’s capacity to use phantom weapons of mass destruction, the eradication of the hold that Saddam’s Baath Party had on Iraqi society, the erection of a functioning democracy in the Middle East, the elimination of a serious threat to Israel.

In both wars the goal of societal transformation and democratization came to dominate American aims and strategy, and that goal has limited the flexibility of the United States to withdraw early in the conflicts or to accept compromise outcomes.

The fear of failure deepens the moral hazard posed by U.S. power in the world today. Once committed to war, having cast the goals of war in transformational terms, the United States feels compelled to keep fighting in order to maintain its reputation for success on the battlefield and on the global stage. As a result, the United States suffers from a paralyzing inability to bring wars to a close.

In his recent book, *How Wars End*, the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, Gideon Rose, delineates the great human and material costs that have accompanied America’s inability to end war. Mr. Rose
proposes that much of this cost can be attributed to a failure of U.S. policymakers to be realistic when going into a war about what can actually be achieved. Vague or highly optimistic notions of victory have crippled war planning at the beginning, middle and end of every major American conflict since World War II.

Today, the United States is again paralyzed by an inability to bring war to a close. Afghanistan is no longer the central location for the fight against terrorism in general or Al Qaeda in particular. There are no clear grounds for believing that the corruption-riddled government that the United States points to as the incarnation of democracy in Afghanistan will ever attain national legitimacy and long-term stability. Afghanistan’s deeply ingrained suspicions against foreign invaders are increasingly being directed toward the United States and its allies. Yet America fights on.

When the administration and Congressional supporters of the war recently pre-empted the promised debate on troop withdrawals scheduled for 2011 and instead focused on a long-term commitment lasting until 2014, the reaction was deafening silence. This can be explained only by the fact that the United States has entered into a new and radically different relationship with major warfare: even 13 years of ongoing major conflict do not constitute a cause for alarm or soul-searching. This indeed is a moral hazard, for the world and for the identity of the United States.

When does a nation have a moral obligation to end its participation in a decade-old war that has no clear prospect of success? How has continuation of warfare become the moral default position for cases in which the United States is fundamentally uncertain how to proceed? Has the United States allowed its wealth and technological achievement to combine with its idealism to create a society in which major warfare is a permanent part of its national life?

**Catholic Teaching on War and Peace**

For the Catholic community, these questions cannot be addressed without reference to the church’s teaching on war and peace in the modern age. It should be a sobering reality for every believer in the United States that at the same time that America has come to a new acceptance of war as an ongoing part of its national life and identity, the universal church has grown increasingly skeptical of the legitimacy of warfare. The Second Vatican Council declared that “it is hardly possible to imagine that in an atomic era, war could be used as an instrument of justice.” Pope John Paul II declared that war is never an appropriate way to resolve problems and never will be, precisely because war creates new wounds and new, ever more complicated conflicts.

The United States has found in the cutting-edge technologies of war the foundation for its ability to wage long-term war without generating massive American casualties; the church sees in these same technologies and their massive destructive capacities a clarion call to limit radically any
resort to war. In an interview as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger said that “given the new weapons that make possible destruction that goes beyond the combatant groups, today we should be asking ourselves if it is still licit to admit the very existence of a ‘just war.”’

While still recognizing a delimited right to defensive warfare in extreme cases of aggression, the church’s teaching directly challenges the embrace of warfare as a regular element of state action. This is not a challenge that occurs at the level of contingent prudential application of doctrinal principles to a particular war. It is a disagreement on the level of doctrinal principle about the legitimacy of the use of warfare as a regular tool of national policy.

Catholic doctrine does not permit war (or force of arms) to democratize other countries. There is no more pressing moral lesson for the United States to draw from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan than that it is morally illegitimate to use the weapons of war, with all their lethal and dehumanizing consequences, to remake foreign societies in our own image. Only major aggression counts in Catholic moral teaching as a just cause for war.

Catholic doctrine does not permit the continuation of warfare in order to avoid the damage that will come to one’s reputation from defeat. The church’s teaching on right intention in war absolutely precludes starting or continuing a war out of this or any other political motivation. Catholic doctrine does not permit the use of weapons and tactics that eviscerate the distinction between combatants and civilians. The use of drone aircraft for strikes that have generated increasing civilian casualties in Afghanistan and Pakistan represents just the type of “advanced” technology that lay at the heart of Pope Benedict’s skepticism about the moral legitimacy of warfare in the present day.

Catholic doctrine does not permit continuation of war based on a mere wisp of hope. If the principle of proportionality in Catholic doctrine is to have any meaning, it must require that, in the absence of any clear probability of success after 10 years of major fighting, war must end.

The Central Question
This year should be a time of intense national debate on Afghanistan and America’s approach to war. But almost certainly it will not be. In part this is a result of the nation’s preoccupation with the current economic crisis that has created so much suffering here and around the world. On a deeper level, there will be no searing debate about Afghanistan despite almost 10 years of warfare precisely because the moral hazard that David Kennedy has identified is real. America’s economy is too vast, its war-fighting skills too advanced, its ability to limit the number and social location of American casualties too successful for even 10 years of major warfare to burden the nation seriously. The country has truly learned to wage war “without breaking a sweat.”
This is a frightening reality. It raises the possibility that a decade that has not known a single day without major warfare involving the United States may be succeeded by yet another decade of continuing American warfare overseas. The countries involved may change, but the themes will be the same. The world will always be a dangerous place, and dictatorships will always be in need of reform and “regime change.”

The people of the United States need to engage in a deep and piercing national dialogue on the role of war in their national identity. U.S. citizens need to understand that this nation cannot transform the world by force of arms. They must recognize that war inevitably brings horrendous unintended consequences, like the persecution and destruction of the ancient Christian community in Iraq that is currently underway. The American people need to comprehend the human devastation caused by instruments of war that skillfully limit U.S. casualties but devastate cities and families and the lives of strangers. We the people need to recognize that good intentions do not constitute a just cause for war. If we do not, we may raise a whole generation of children who have never known an America at peace. And we may create a world that turns to war as easily as we do.

CLOSING PRAYER

Extinguish the candles and return them to the circular platter.

As we end this session, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.

Let us pray.

All: God, Creator of all life, we gather before you now in awe. You have created a world filled with blessings. We ask that you help us to treat that world and its people with respect. Remind us continually of the beauty that surrounds us. Walk with us as we learn about and follow the paths of peace. Help us to reach out to each other in love.

Reader: “Because of our faith in Christ and in humankind, we must apply our humble efforts to the construction of a more just and humane world. And I want to declare emphatically: Such a world is possible. To create this new society, we must present outstretched, friendly hands, without hatred, without rancor – even as we show great determination, never wavering in the defense of truth and justice. Because we know that seeds are not sown with clenched fists. To sow we must open our hands.” – Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Nobel Peace Prize recipient, 1980.
Moment of Silence
Response by all: Help us to sow the seeds of justice and peace and to care for all creation.

Side 1: In a world crying out for love but still filled with too much hatred, violence, and war,
Response: Help us to sow the seeds of justice and peace and to care for all creation.

Side 2: In a country that speaks of equality but often fails to live up to that promise,
Response: Help us to sow the seeds of justice and peace and to care for all creation.

Side 1: In our communities where some people are considered to have less worth than others,
Response: Help us to sow the seeds of justice and peace and to care for all creation.

Side 2: In our churches where we often neglect Jesus’ teaching of compassion,
Response: Help us to sow the seeds of justice and peace and to care for all creation.

Side 1: In our families when we hurt each other with words or deeds,
Response: Help us to sow the seeds of justice and peace and to care for all creation.

Side 2: In ourselves, when we are tempted to want more and neglect what really matters,
Response: Help us to sow the seeds of justice and peace and to care for all creation.

Reader: Jesus, we gather with you, hoping and dreaming, with hands held open to each other as we journey. We pray that you help us to follow in your footsteps and in the footsteps of those who have gone before us, determined to create a new world based on your justice. Walk with us each step of the way, opening our hands to sow seeds for a more peaceful tomorrow. In your name, we pray,

All: Amen.


Scripture phrase from beginning repeated by three different voices:

“They shall not harm or destroy on all my holy mountain (Isaiah 11:9).”
Amen
SESSION EIGHT
FILM: The Forgotten Bomb

OPENING PRAYER

Scripture Reading: (three times, three readers) “Do not conform yourselves to this age, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind (Romans 12:2)”

Light eight candles and place on the map: in the group’s location, Europe, the former Yugoslavia, the Great Lakes region of East Africa, Southeast Asia, the location of a nearby military base or weapons site, the Middle East, and Japan.

Readings for this session:

Catholic Social Teaching on War and Peace

Pope John XXIII, in his 1961 encyclical letter Pacem in Terris, offered an impassionate plea for an end to the arms race and a ban on nuclear weapons:

“We are deeply distressed to see the enormous stocks of armaments that have been, and continue to be, manufactured in the economically more developed countries… The people of these countries are saddled with a great burden, while other countries lack the help they need for their economic and social development… Justice, right reason, and the recognition of man’s dignity cry out insistently for a cessation to the arms race… Nuclear weapons must be banned.”

Four years later, the Second Vatican Council, in its Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World, called for “an evaluation of war with an entirely new attitude.”

The Council condemned, in no uncertain terms, “those actions designed for the methodical extermination of an entire people, nation or ethnic minority,” as well as “any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or extensive areas along with their population,” calling such actions “a crime against God and humanity, meriting unequivocal and unhesitating

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24 John XXIII, Pacem in terris, Peace on Earth, 109-112.
condemnation.” Both the Holocaust, and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, fall under this judgment.

**An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace**

In their 2011 *Ecumenical Call to Just Peace*, the World Council of Churches builds on the experiences and insights gained from the “Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001 – 2010,” and invites Christians to commit themselves to the Way of Just Peace.

**27. Building cultures of peace.** We are committed to building cultures of peace in cooperation with people of other religious traditions, convictions and worldviews. In this commitment we seek to respond to the gospel imperatives of loving our neighbors, rejecting violence and seeking justice for the poor, the disinherited and the oppressed (Matthew 5:1-12; Luke 4:18). The collective effort relies on the gifts of men and women, the young and the old, leaders and workers. We acknowledge and value women’s gifts for building peace. We recognize the unique role of religious leaders, their influence in societies and the potentially liberating power of religious wisdom and insight in promoting peace and human dignity. At the same time we lament the cases where religious leaders have abused their power for selfish ends or where cultural and religious patterns have contributed to violence and oppression. We are especially concerned about aggressive rhetoric and teaching propagated under the guise of religion and amplified by the power of media. While we acknowledge with deep humility Christian complicity – past and present – in the manifestation of prejudice and other attitudes that fuel hate, we commit ourselves to build communities of reconciliation, acceptance and love.

**28. Education for peace.** Education inspired by the vision of peace is more than instruction in the strategies of peace work. It is a profoundly spiritual formation of character that involves family, church and society. Peace education teaches us to nurture the spirit of peace, instill respect for human rights, and imagine and adopt alternatives to violence. Peace education promotes active nonviolence as an unequalled power for change that is practiced and valued in different traditions and cultures. Education of character and conscience equips people to seek peace and pursue it.

**PART 2 – ACTIVITY**

**FILM: The Forgotten Bomb**

*The Forgotten Bomb: Everything Depends on Remembering*  
When the Cold War ended, worry about nuclear weapons also receded. But has the nuclear threat really receded as well? If the U.S. and Russia are no longer in an arms race, why are there nuclear weapons in both countries that are still on high alert?

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27 *Gaudium et Spes, The Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World, 80.3.*
Filmmaker Bud Ryan sets out to discover what possible explanations there could be as to why the posture of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) still exists, and how the nuclear powers might free the world from this threat once and for all.

The Forgotten Bomb examines the political and legal implications of nuclear weapons, but also digs deeper, into the cultural and psychological reasons behind the arsenal’s existence. Bud Ryan’s quest takes us from the homes of hibakusha (A-bomb survivors) in Japan, to an abandoned uranium mine in New Mexico, to an underground Titan missile silo in Arizona. From these places, and many others, Ryan puts together the pieces of the puzzle that explain why we have the bomb, and how we might finally do away with it.

Through interviews with atomic scientists, politicians, authors, statesmen, and atomic bomb survivors, The Forgotten Bomb examines what The Bomb means to us all, and why we need to think about it again, now, even though the Cold War is long over.

Discussion Questions for the Film:

- What touched you most about this film?
- What is the message of the survivors (the hibakusha) of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to us and to future generations?
- In The Challenge of Peace, the U.S. bishops come to grips with the moral implications of our country’s use of the atomic bomb. They recognized a stumbling block to redemption from violence when they wrote: “We must shape the climate of opinion that will make it possible for our country to express profound sorrow over the atomic bombing in 1945” (#302). Do you think reconciliation is possible? Do we as a church or as a nation need to ask forgiveness for the suffering caused by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

8 CLOSING PRAYER

Extinguish the candles and return them to the circular platter.

As we end this session, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.
Together: Prayer of St. Francis.

    Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,  
    Where there is hatred, let us sow love,  
    Where there is injury, pardon,  
    Where there is doubt, faith,  
    Where there is despair, hope,  
    Where there is darkness, light,  
    And where there is sadness, joy.  

    O Divine Master, Grant that we may not so much seek  
        To be consoled, as to console,  
        To be understood, as to understand,  
        To be loved, as to love.  

    For it is in giving that we receive,  
        It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
        And it is in dying that we are born  
            To eternal life.  

Scripture phrase from beginning repeated by three different voices

    “Do not conform yourselves to this age, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind (Romans 12:2).”  
    Amen
SESSION NINE
Human Security: Disarming Our Communities at Home and Abroad

Goals of the Session:

- To deepen our commitment to nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and global demilitarization as essential elements to building an international framework for cooperative security.
- To respond to the new moment and deepen our understanding of Catholic Social Teaching regarding the incompatibility of nuclear weapons and the arms race to world peace and global development.
- To deepen our appreciation for the special legacy of the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and their urgent message to humankind to abolish nuclear weapons forever.

Readings for this session:

Part One: Just Peacemaking at Home

- An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace.
- Stories of Just Peacemaking at Home.
- Called to Be Peacemakers: The Challenge and Promise of Peace in the Twenty-First Century: II. Theological Reflection – B. We Reject the Idolatry of Violence (2) – C. We Embrace Our Catholic Social Teaching.

Part Two: Just Peacemaking Abroad

OPENING PRAYER

Three readers repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between:

_Scripture Reading:_ “The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace (James 3:18).”

Light nine candles and place on the map: in the group’s location, Europe, the former Yugoslavia, the Great Lakes region of East Africa, Southeast Asia, the location of a nearby military base or weapons site, the Middle East, Japan, Russia and China.

_Leader:_ The following reading is from _The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace_, a Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the 10th Anniversary of bishops’ pastoral, _The Challenge of Peace_.

_Leader:_ Ultimately, we must work for a world without war, and take to heart the powerful and haunting words of Pope Paul VI to the United Nations, repeated often by Pope John Paul II: ‘No more war, war never again!’ We will read excerpts from _The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace: Building Cooperative Security – Nuclear Disarmament and Proliferation_.

_Reader 1:_ We cannot address questions of war and peace today without acknowledging that the nuclear question remains of vital political and moral importance. The end of the Cold War has changed the nuclear question in three ways. First, nuclear weapons are still an integral component of U.S. security politics, but they are no longer at the center of these policies or of international relations…

_Reader 2:_ Second, we have new opportunities to take steps toward progressive nuclear disarmament. In 1983, the first task was to stop the growth of already bloated nuclear arsenals; today, the moral task is to proceed with deep cuts and ultimately to abolish these weapons entirely.

_Reader 3:_ Third, the threat of global nuclear war has been replaced by a threat of global nuclear proliferation. In addition to the declared nuclear powers, a number of other countries have or could very quickly deploy nuclear weapons, and still other nations, or even terrorist groups, might seek to obtain or develop nuclear weapons.
Prayer for World Peace

Reader:

Great God, who has told us
“vengeance is mine,”
Save us from ourselves,
Save us from the vengeance in our hearts
And the acid in our souls.

Save us from our desire to hurt as we have been hurt,
To punish as we have been punished,
To terrorize as we have been terrorized.

Give us the strength it takes
To listen rather than to judge,
To trust rather than to fear,
To try again and again
To make peace even when peace eludes us.

We ask, O God, for the grace
To be our best selves.
We ask for the vision
To be builders of the human community
Rather than its destroyers.
We ask for the humility as a people
To understand the fears and hopes of other peoples.
We ask for the love it takes
To bequeath to the children of the world to come
More than the failures of our own making.
We ask for the heart it takes
To care for all the peoples
Of Afghanistan and Iraq, of Palestine and Israel
As well as for ourselves.

Give us the depth of soul, O God,
To constrain our might,
To resist the temptations of power,
To refuse to attack the attackable,
To understand
That vengeance begets violence,
And to bring peace – not war – wherever we go.
All: For You, O God, have been merciful to us.
For You, O God, have been patient with us.
For You, O God, have been gracious to us.

And so may we be merciful
And patient
And gracious
And trusting
With these others whom you also love.

This we ask through Jesus,
The one without vengeance in his heart,
This we ask forever and ever.
Amen.

Prayer by Joan D. Chittister, OSB, Pax Christi USA

READINGS PART 1 – Just Peacemaking at Home

As you read consider these questions:

- More often than not, the roots of war can be found in conflict caused by economic exploitation and oppression. Those who suffer from the violence of poverty rise up to resist their circumstances, only to have those in power crush their aspirations. This struggle over resources and economic self-determination lies at the root of most wars. Comment.

- Racism, too, often becomes a tool of war as racist stereotypes are used to demonize the “enemy.” This same racism also stigmatizes members of our own communities who share the same race, religious, or ethnic background as the identified enemy. Equally disturbing, in times of war we see an increase in the level of violence against women both at home and on the battlefield, with rape a nearly expected and standard instrument of war. Comment.

- Because the fate of humanity is forever tied to the fate of earth, we cannot hope to build a world of peace with justice without recognizing the duty to protect and repair the web of life that ties all of creation together. Comment.
Reading 1 - *An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace*

In their 2011 *Ecumenical Call to Just Peace*, the World Council of Churches builds on the experiences and insights gained from the “Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001 – 2010,” and invites Christians to commit themselves to the Way of Just Peace.

39. **For peace among the peoples.** Human history is illuminated by courageous pursuits of peace and the transformation of conflict, advances in the rule of law, new norms and treaties that govern the use of force, and now judicial recourse against abuses of power that involve even heads of state. History is stained, however, by the moral and political opposites of these – including xenophobia, inter-communal violence, hate crimes, war crimes, slavery, genocide, and more. Although the spirit and the logic of violence is deeply rooted in human history, the consequences of such sins have increased exponentially in recent times, amplified by violent applications of science, technology and wealth.

40. A new ecumenical agenda for peace today is even more urgent because of the nature and the scope of such dangers now. We are witnesses to prodigious increases in the human capacity to destroy life and its foundations. The scale of the threat, the collective human responsibility behind it, and the need for a concerted global response are without precedent. Two threats of this magnitude – nuclear holocaust and climate change – could destroy much life and all prospects for Just Peace. Both are violent misuses of the energy inherent in Creation. One catastrophe stems from the proliferation of weapons, especially *weapons of mass destruction*; the other threat may be understood as the proliferation of *lifestyles of mass extinction*. The international community struggles to gain control of both threats with little success.

41. To respect the sanctity of life and build peace among peoples, churches must work to strengthen international human rights law as well as treaties and instruments of mutual accountability and conflict resolution. To prevent deadly conflicts and mass killings, the proliferation of small arms and weapons of war must be stopped and reversed. Churches must build trust and collaborate with other communities of faith and people of different worldviews to reduce national capacities for waging war, eliminate weapons that put humanity and the planet at unprecedented risk, and generally delegitimize the institution of war.

Reading 2 - *Stories of Just Peacemakers at Home*

**Priest's Apology Hailed in Japan**


Fr. Bob Cushing left Georgia amid a storm of controversy over his decision to make a pilgrimage for reconciliation to Japan.
But there he found affirmation as he delivered an apology to the Japanese people for the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.

Cushing, a priest of the Savannah diocese, returned Aug. 12. He plans to begin a process of healing in Augusta, the heavily pro-military community in which many people saw his mission to apologize as misguided or worse…

Cushing said he was invited to read his letter of apology in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the two cities leveled by atomic bombs 60 years ago. His letter was translated into Japanese, and his visit was embraced by two Japanese bishops, other bishops and scores of Japanese Catholics.

In Hiroshima, "everybody in the church stood up and gave me a standing ovation," Cushing said. "People came up to me in tears, embracing me, crying. I was just stunned. I was totally knocked off my feet."

Cushing presented Bishop Joseph Atsumi Misue with 1,000 paper peace cranes "as an act of prayerful solidarity with the people of Hiroshima." Many of the cranes were folded by St. Teresa parishioners. Nagasaki Archbishop Joseph Mitsuaki Takami invited Cushing to read the letter of apology three times.

Letters to the editor, most of them critical of Cushing, poured into The Augusta Chronicle after the newspaper published a story about the pilgrimage…

**Reading 3 - Called to be Peacemakers**

2. **We Reject All Forms of Systemic Violence as Sinful**
   (1) ECONOMIC VIOLENCE operates under a system of oppression, greed, indifference, and ignorance. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ statement, Economic Justice for All, calls Catholics in the United States to work for greater economic justice. The bishops remind us that the economy exists for the person and not the person for the economy. All economic policies should be based on sound moral principles to ensure that all people have the basic necessities of food, clothing, shelter, education, healthcare, and a safe environment.

   The economic forces that cause so much poverty in our world also have a dramatic impact on our environment. Pope John Paul II recognized the link between the consumption habits of the rich and the devastating effects on the planet. In 2005, he said, since the good of peace is closely linked to the development of all peoples, the ethical requirements for the use of the earth’s goods must always be taken into account. The Second Vatican Council rightly recalled that “God intended the earth and all it contains for the use of everyone and of all peoples; so that the good things of creation should be available equally to all, with justice as guide and charity in attendance”.
(2) ENVIRONMENTAL VIOLENCE operates under a system of exploitation and anthropocentrism. As our own bishops remind us, at its core, like the global economic crisis, the environmental crisis is a moral crisis. “It calls us to examine how we use and share the goods of the earth, what we pass on to future generations, and how we live in harmony with God’s creation.” The bishops continue, “The whole human race suffers as a result of environmental blight . . . But in most countries today, including our own, it is the poor and the powerless who most directly bear the burden.”

(3) RACIST VIOLENCE operates under a system of oppression, exploitation, and dehumanization. Racism is often thought of in terms of personal attitudes and behaviors, but racism is more than just race prejudices expressed in individual attitudes and behaviors. Race prejudice becomes racism, a grievous sin, when the prejudices of the dominant group become institutionalized for the purpose of enforcing and protecting the dominant group’s power and privilege.

In addition to the U.S. Bishops’ pastoral Brothers and Sisters to Us, local bishops have written on racism. The Catholic bishops of Illinois have reminded us, “Racism is a personal sin and social disorder rooted in the belief that one race is superior to another. It involves not only prejudice but also the use of religious, social, political and economic and historical power to keep one race privileged. . . . Institutional racism allows racist attitudes or practices to shape the structures of organizations. . . . Cultural racism is the extension of this sinful attitude in the mores, standards, customs, language, and group life of a whole society.”

When we look at the struggles of the early Christian community in the Book of Acts we find that, while they had no experience of our modern notions of race, they did struggle with issues of prejudice and exclusion. At that time, the divide was between Jewish believers and Gentile converts to the Way. These early, mixed Christian communities were challenged to embrace new identities that allowed them to transcend their old divisions and create new understandings of family. As Paul wrote to the people of Galatia, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is not male or female; for you are all one in Christ” (Galatians 3:28).

*We are all members of the same human family and any effort to divide us by race, immigration status, ethnic background, or other false divisions must always be rejected. More than this, as Catholic Christians we are called to speak out against racism and stand in solidarity with those who are attacked.*

“If anyone says ‘I love God,’ but hates his brother or sister, they are a liar; for whoever does not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. This is the commandment we have from him; whoever loves God, must also love their brother and sister” (1 John 4:20-21).
(4) THE VIOLENCE OF SEXISM operates under a system of hierarchies and purposive gender power imbalances. Like racism, sexism is more than sexist attitudes and behaviors. It is the institutionalization of male superiority in economic, political, religious, and social systems that maintain male privilege. In addition, many social institutions treat women (our sisters, daughters, mothers, and friends) as sex objects in order to sell products and services. “God created humanity in God’s own image; in the divine image God created them; male and female God created them” (Genesis 1:27). We know that Jesus lived in a world where women could be treated like property, that is, held under the full control of men. But in spite of all of the social taboos and prohibitions in the law, Jesus mixed freely with women and they were among his followers. The Good News of his incarnation was announced to Mary and then affirmed by Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-45); women were counted among his company (Luke 8:1-3); and when he rose from the dead he first appeared to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary and gave them instructions to proclaim the Resurrection to the men (Matthew 28:1-10).

While we take inspiration from Scripture and Catholic traditions of nonviolence and peacemaking, other voices also inspire us . . . . Christian peacemaking addresses racism and other forms of oppression nonviolently, giving special emphasis to overcoming the culture of death, as seen in the sins of the wars we wage and the incidence of so many homicides in our cities. We find in the reconciliation process that has taken place in some countries a model for allowing shalom to replace the troubles and strife our world knows too much of. We seek to extend the presence of shalom to all of creation by addressing global warming and other critical environmental issues. We seek concern for the well-being of persons over concern for “the economy,” the primacy of services to persons over the manufacture of objects.

(5) THE VIOLENCE OF WAR, looking at cases like ancient Rome, Adolf Hitler’s Germany, and twentieth and twenty-first century United States, among others, operates within a system of superpower myths, global ambitions, and idolatry. The ultimate form of institutionalized violence is war. If violence is a form of idolatry, then war is its temple. War is the most exalted form of violence and the most deadly. War requires the total submission of all social, economic, political, and religious systems, requiring them to work together for the purpose of justified killing. It is the totality of war that makes it so dangerous to the community of believers. “War makes the world understandable, a black and white tableau of them and us. It suspends thought, especially self-critical thought. All bow before the supreme effort. We are one. Most of us accept war as long as we can fold it into a belief system that paints the ensuing [required] suffering as necessary for a higher good.”

The language of war is couched in absolutes: you are “either with us or against us.” Moral precepts that are held in the highest regard during peacetime are tossed aside. In times of war, all voices of dissent must be silenced. Those who would question the dominant narrative of war must be condemned as heretics if the myth of redemptive violence is to hold.
In this way the “War on Terror” has become a mirror image of the terrorism it combats—a kind of “state terrorism”—justifying violence in the name of “national security” and institutionalizing war by means of a permanent war economy. This permanent state of war is what President Dwight D. Eisenhower warned against when he criticized the “military-industrial complex” in a speech upon retiring from the presidency.

More often than not, the roots of war can be found in conflict caused by economic exploitation and oppression. Those who suffer from the violence of poverty rise up to resist their circumstances, only to have those in power crush their aspirations. This struggle over resources and economic self-determination lies at the root of most wars. Racism, too, often becomes a tool of war as racist stereotypes are used to demonize the “enemy.” This same racism also stigmatizes members of our own communities who share the same race, religious, or ethnic background as the identified enemy. Equally disturbing, in times of war we see an increase in the level of violence against women both at home and on the battlefield, with rape a nearly expected and standard instrument of war.

From our Catholic social teaching we see that throughout the course of history, and particularly in the last hundred years, the Church has never failed to teach that: “War is a scourge and is never an appropriate way to resolve problems that arise between nations. It has never been and it will never be because it creates new and still more complicated conflicts. . . . War is an adventure without return that compromises humanity’s present and threatens its future. Nothing is lost by peace; everything may be lost by war. . . . War is always a defeat for humanity.”

In the past two decades, the social teaching of the Catholic Church has become increasingly pointed in its condemnation of war as a means of resolving conflict. Wars of aggression are understood as intrinsically immoral. Preventive wars, waged in anticipation of some future threat, are also regarded as immoral.

In an address commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the bishops’ peace pastoral, Pax Christi USA’s Bishop President Gabino Zavala spoke on our nation’s over-reliance on war as a means of addressing international conflict and applied this reliance on the myth of redemptive violence to the war and occupation of Iraq:

“While nothing can restore the precious lives which have been lost and damaged on all sides in this war nor quickly repair the social fabric of an ancient nation that has been ripped apart, a change in U.S. policy to replace reliance on military measures with support for a multilateral and
diplomatic peace process would seem to offer the best hope for beginning to heal the divisions created by six years of war and occupation.

“It would also help repair the damaged U.S. reputation abroad and demonstrate our willingness to rejoin the community of nations.”

The Vatican has spoken repeatedly about diplomacy and the importance of multilateral institutions in addressing conflicts, particularly urging recourse to the United Nations. The Church teaches that “international law [is] the guarantor of the international order; that is, of coexistence among political communities that seek individually to promote the common good of their citizens, aware that the common good of a nation cannot be separated from the good of the entire human family.”

C. We Embrace Our Catholic Social Teaching
As we come together to meet the challenges of peace in this new century, we have as a resource and guide our rich tradition of Catholic social teaching. Our peacemaking work begins with the insight that, in Catholic social thought, peace is understood in positive terms. Peace is more than the mere absence of violence or war; it is the fruit of justice. As the Psalmist reminds us, “Justice shall march before you, and peace shall follow in your steps” (Psalm 85:13).

The Church’s vision of peace is grounded in the understanding of peace as both a gift of God and a human work. It is constructed on the central human values of truth, justice, freedom, and love. Pope Paul VI laid out a marker by which all notions of this positive view of peace are measured. Speaking to the UN General Assembly in 1972, he made this passionate plea: “Why do we waste time in giving peace any other foundation than Justice? . . . Peace resounds as an invitation to practice Justice: “Justice will bring about Peace” (Is. 32:17). We repeat this today in a more incisive and dynamic formula: “If you want Peace, work for Justice.”

In Catholic thought, a peace based on justice is grounded in the following principles of Catholic social teaching:

1. THE LIFE AND DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON
The foundation of our social teaching is the conviction that all human life is sacred and a reflection of the divine. The human rights of all people should be protected from womb to tomb. Every person is of intrinsic value. Every person should be afforded the basic necessities of life, including housing, food, clothing, education, and health-care. In our efforts to build peace this principle needs to be the starting point of all our efforts to work for justice.

2. THE CALL TO FAMILY AND COMMUNITY
We are social beings. We develop our identities and realize our fullest human potentials in the context of family and community. Every government policy and every economic decision should
be evaluated in terms of its impact on families’ ability to nurture their children and in terms of the larger community’s ability to support family structures. Our strategies for building peace must take care to protect vulnerable communities.

3. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Life and dignity, family and communities, will thrive only when each person and every community can exercise their rights responsibly and advocate for those whose rights are jeopardized by the violence of poverty, racism, and/or militarism. Everyone has a right to determine, without force, how to realize her or his potential. And everyone has the responsibility to realize that potential for the sake of that peace which comes from the three-fold love of God, neighbor, and self.

4. THE DIGNITY OF WORK AND THE PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR
Work is more than a way to make a living. Our economic life should be structured in a way that allows each member to contribute to the good of the community through work. That work should provide workers with a living wage. A basic moral test of any society is how the most vulnerable and poor members are doing. Those who cannot work or who do not earn enough to support their families should hold a preferential place in the political and economic policies of a nation to insure that their basic needs are met. Peace will only become possible when each member of the human family has the opportunity to fully participate in the economic, social, and political life of the community. When we work for economic justice in our communities, our nation, and the world, we are doing the work of peace.

5. THE COMMON GOOD AND UNIVERSAL DESTINATION OF THE EARTH’S GOODS
The common good can be understood as “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as a group or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.” This good is based on the conviction that every person is important to the whole and that no person should be left behind or abandoned.

While the Church upholds and defends the right to private property, it also teaches that we should regard goods that we own “not merely as exclusive to ourselves but common to others.” Further, the Church teaches that “goods of production – material or immaterial – such as land, factories, practical or artistic skills, oblige their possessors to employ them in ways that will benefit the greatest number. Political authority has the right and duty to regulate the legitimate exercise of the right to ownership for the sake of the common good.” Building peace means recognizing that the needs of the many outweigh the wants of the few. The crisis of the common good that we now face in this age of globalization is realizing that the common good of any particular nation cannot be realized apart from the needs of the entire human family.
6. SOLIDARITY AND SUBSIDIARITY
The principle of solidarity is based upon recognizing that we are all members of the same human family and that in an age of globalization, our fates are tied together. Solidarity calls those with privilege to stand with those who are poor or vulnerable in their struggles for dignity, respect, and fundamental human rights. The principle of subsidiarity reminds us of the importance of putting checks on the power of political and economic institutions by insisting that social, political, and economic needs be addressed at the level that is closest to the communities most affected.

Both solidarity and subsidiarity require that any efforts to build peace must follow the lead of those who are poor and struggling for justice. For those with privilege (economic, social, political, or other), solidarity means going to those places where there is suffering, exclusion, and oppression and committing to building relationships of mutuality and trust. A genuine peace built upon justice by way of the principle of subsidiarity can only come about when those who are poor and marginalized directly participate and control the social, political, and economic institutions that affect their lives.

7. CARE FOR CREATION
Because the fate of humanity is forever tied to the fate of the earth, we cannot hope to build a world of peace with justice without recognizing the duty to protect and repair the web of life that ties all of creation together.
As our bishops remind us, “Guided by the Spirit of God, the future of the earth lies in human hands. . . .
“Even as humanity’s mistakes are at the root of the earth’s travail today, human talents and invention can and must assist its rebirth and contribute to human development.” We cannot build peace among people while waging war on the planet. The ecological crisis we face is intimately connected to multiple forms of injustice imposed upon those who are poor.

As you read, consider these questions:
- What touched you most about Archbishop Takami’s story as a survivor in utero of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki?
In a major address in 2009 entitled “Nuclear Weapons and Moral Questions: The Path to Zero,” Archbishop Edward O’Brien made these remarks before the Strategic Air Command in Omaha:

“In his 2006 World Day of Peace Message, Pope Benedict XVI wrote: ‘In a nuclear war, there would be no victors, only victims…’ In Catholic teaching, the task is not to make the world safer through the threat of nuclear weapons, but rather to make the world safer from nuclear weapons through mutual and verifiable nuclear disarmament… The moral end is clear: a world free of the threat of nuclear weapons. This goal should guide our efforts. Every nuclear weapons system and every nuclear weapons policy should be judged by the ultimate goal of protecting human life and dignity and the related goal of ridding the world of these weapons in mutually verifiable ways.”

Comment.

In his address delivered in Prague, President Barack Obama called for the abolition of nuclear weapons:

“To contain the nuclear danger of our time is itself an awesome undertaking. To reshape the political fabric of an increasingly interdependent world is an even larger and more complicated challenge… We must be engaged in the difficult task of envisioning a future rooted in peace, with new institutions for resolving differences between nations, new global structures of mediation and conflict-resolution, and a world order that has moved beyond nuclear weapons once and for all. We are committed to join this struggle, to bring the gospel message of justice and peace to this vital work.”

Comment.

Reading 1 - Voices of Just Peacemakers Abroad
Sister Filo Hirota, Mercedarian Missionary, Japan, Pax Christi International Executive Committee.

Peacwork is deeply rooted in the reality of who and what we are. The first chapter of the book of Genesis tells us that we are created in God’s image. This fundamental truth about ourselves indicates that I become what I am in my relationships – relationships with myself, with others and with the universe. That I am created in God’s image means that I become myself in Love, in Dialogue and in Interconnectedness. My deepest identify comes from this divine call (vocation) to be and to live in relationships of love.

The Gospel according to John tells us in the first chapter that “All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be.” John is telling us that there is nothing in the universe that does not have to do with God – that everything speaks of God. As a believer, I contemplate the reality of the world to read and to listen to what the God of Jesus tells me.

We are witnessing a critical moment full of dramatic changes in our globalized world, with different forms of violence at all levels of human relationships and in the environment.
Relationships are broken by exclusion, marginalization, segregation, denial and destruction. We have an invitation to restore and re-member who and what we are as and in God’s image.

In a world characterized by the globalization of exclusion, we are called to restore broken humanity and the planet. As we try to respond to this call, it is very important that our presence be a visible and audible sign of inclusion that respects the dignity of every individual. While the culture of the globalization that does not prioritize LIFE is omnipresent and its powerful influence operates at all levels of life, we hope to be a presence that proposes another way – that enables justice, peace and solidarity in all relations.

The Catholic Council for Justice and Peace of the Bishops Conference of Japan began consolidating a partnership with Pax Christi U.S.A. in 2007. Our bishops and the secretariat staff traveled on different occasions to the U.S. and personally met members of Pax Christi U.S.A. One key issue that required a working relationship was that of the U.S. military presence in Japan. The experience proved to be deeply meaningful; we were able to have very personal encounters with many U.S. American sisters and brothers who are radically committed to peacemaking. It was the first time any of us from Japan had met U.S. Americans who apologized for bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We learned that some of them had been arrested and imprisoned because of their nonviolent actions of civil disobedience. We were deeply moved and impressed by their commitment that was based on their faith and conviction in Jesus. They are people who are profoundly spiritual and human, really beautiful. The encounter helped us to experience justice, peace, solidarity, compassion and freedom with concrete human faces…

Since then we have been talking about the need and importance of connecting with sisters and brothers who shared the same commitment and dream in other countries. Meeting with like-minded people always reminds us of Jesus’ first community of equal discipleship. We need to enable this kind of globalization from below that is life-giving and Spirit-filled.


Delivered at the 2009 Deterrence Symposium, Sponsored by the U.S. Strategic Command, Omaha, Nebraska, July 29, 2009

…My task tonight is to reflect on the moral questions that face our nation and world as we seek to build lasting peace in the shadow of nuclear weapons with all their massive destructive potential. I have been asked to offer more challenge than comfort. This is not an easy role for me. Within our Bishops’ Conference I am often a defender of the proper role of military action and a skeptic of easy and naïve hopes. I know our world remains a dangerous place. I have been on battlefields. I know the moral struggles that come with battlefield decisions. But I also have
great respect for military institutions and for the men and women who serve in them. In this talk I will offer hard questions and directions, not easy answers. I bring the voice of a pastor and teacher, not an expert analyst or policy maker.

My reflections come out of the Catholic moral tradition, but many of the values and concerns that grow out of our faith tradition are shared by people of many religions and no religion at all. As the late Pope John Paul II stated when he addressed the United Nations on nuclear weapons over twenty-five years ago, the Catholic Church strives to echo the “moral conscience of humanity, a conscience illumined and guided by Christian faith, …but which is … nonetheless profoundly human” and “shared by all men and women of sincerity and good will.”

Basic Principles

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the fifth commandment could not be more clear: “You shall not kill.” In Catholic teaching, human life is sacred because every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. For this reason, our Church works consistently and persistently to defend the life and dignity of all: the unborn, the poor at home and abroad, the immigrant, and persons in every age and condition of life. Our Catechism teaches: “God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being.”

In order to protect human life and dignity and to set moral limits on the use of force, a tradition of teaching on what is a “just war” has developed and continues to evolve in the Catholic Church. It is a teaching whose principles are widely discussed, debated and employed and which reverberates in other religious and moral traditions.

It must be said at the outset that our Church supports building international agreements and structures that will make war ever less likely as a means of resolving disputes between nations and peoples. Ultimately we must work for a world without war. In the powerful and haunting words of Pope Paul VI to the United Nations that were repeated often by Pope John Paul II, "No more war, war never again!" The international community must seek ways to make war a relic of humanity’s past if humanity is to have a future worthy of human dignity. As Pope Benedict XVI has taught: “War always represents a failure for the international community and a grave loss for humanity.”

But in this fallen and often dangerous world, at this point in human history, the traditional principles that guide the just use of force can, and should, inform moral assessments of all aspects of war, especially policies on nuclear weapons and deterrence. Of the principles that apply to war of any kind, some that are most directly applicable to questions of nuclear policy are:

• The use of force must be a last resort. We have a prior obligation to avoid war if at all possible.
• The use of force must be discriminate. Civilians and civilian facilities may not be the object of direct, intentional attack and care must be taken to avoid and minimize indirect harm to civilians.

• The use of force must be proportionate. The overall destruction must not outweigh the good to be achieved.

• And there must be a probability of success.

Popes of the modern era have applied this moral tradition to nuclear weapons and deterrence policy for decades in formal teaching and in papal addresses to the United Nations. The Holy See, in its capacity as a Permanent Observer to the United Nations, has addressed these questions in a particular way through ratification of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and active participation in the Treaty’s review conferences over the past four decades.

For our part, the Catholic bishops of the United States have examined U.S. nuclear policy in light of our moral tradition, most notably in our pastoral letters of 1983, *The Challenge of Peace*, and 1993, *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace*, as well as in numerous public statements and ongoing dialogue with public officials to this very day.

Nuclear war-fighting is rejected in Church teaching because it cannot ensure noncombatant immunity and the likely destruction and lingering radiation would violate the principle of proportionality. Even the limited use of so-called “mini-nukes” would likely lower the barrier to future uses and could lead to indiscriminate and disproportionate harm. And there is the danger of escalation to nuclear exchanges of cataclysmic proportions.

The real risks inherent in nuclear war make the probability of success elusive. In his 2006 World Day of Peace Message, Pope Benedict XVI wrote: “What can be said … about those governments which count on nuclear arms as a means of ensuring the security of their countries? Along with countless persons of good will, one can state that this point of view is not only baneful but also completely fallacious. In a nuclear war there would be no victors, only victims.”

Both the Holy See and our Bishops’ Conference have spoken about the strategy of nuclear deterrence as an interim measure. As the U.S. bishops wrote in 1983: “Deterrence is not an adequate strategy as a long-term basis for peace; it is a transitional strategy justifiable only in conjunction with resolute determination to pursue arms control and disarmament.”

In Catholic teaching, the task is not to make the world safer through the threat of nuclear weapons, but rather to make the world safer from nuclear weapons through mutual and verifiable nuclear disarmament. This will require both bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

From a moral perspective it is important to judge actions from the perspective of the end. The Greek word for end is *telos*. In the words of Pope John Paul II: “[T]he moral life has an essential ‘teleological’ character, since it consists in the deliberate ordering of human acts to God, the supreme good and ultimate end (telos) of man.”
In Catholic moral teaching, the end does not justify the means, but the end can and should inform the means. The moral end we seek ought to shape the means we use. When it comes to issues of war and peace, and nuclear weapons and deterrence, the end is the protection of the life and dignity of the human person through defending the tranquility of order. *Tranquillitas ordinis* is peace built on justice and charity.

So in this moral analysis of nuclear weapons and deterrence, let us start with the end and work backwards. The moral end is clear: a world free of the threat of nuclear weapons. This goal should guide our efforts. Every nuclear weapons system and every nuclear weapons policy should be judged by the ultimate goal of protecting human life and dignity and the related goal of ridding the world of these weapons in mutually verifiable ways.

It will not be easy. Nuclear weapons can be dismantled, but both the human knowledge and the technical capability to build weapons cannot be undone. A world with zero nuclear weapons will need robust measures to monitor, enforce and verify compliance. The path to zero will be long and treacherous. But humanity must walk this path with both care and courage in order to build a future free of the nuclear threat.

The goal is not new. For many decades the Catholic Church and numerous other leaders and institutions of goodwill have supported a nuclear-weapons-free world. In 1968 many nations of the world committed themselves to a vision of a world without nuclear weapons and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty came into being. Today only four sovereign states are not parties to the Treaty – India, Israel, Pakistan and North Korea.

More than two decades ago, President Ronald Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev called for abolishing all nuclear weapons. In the past two years Secretaries George Shultz, William Perry and Henry Kissinger and Senator Sam Nunn have promoted a nuclear-free world. Abolishing nuclear weapons is not a narrowly partisan or nationalistic issue; it is an issue of fundamental moral values that should unite people across national and ideological boundaries.

It is worth noting that earlier this year President Barack Obama and President Dmitry Medvedev committed “our two countries to achieving a nuclear free world.” And just this month they signed a Joint Understanding to guide negotiations on reducing strategic warheads and delivery vehicles and extending effective verification measures before the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) expires late this year. This is an important step down the road to nuclear disarmament.

Unlike the four servicemen hiking up the mountain, the nations of the world cannot afford to allow themselves to get caught up in deadly competitions and struggles. Our world and its leaders must stay focused on the destination of a nuclear-weapons-free world and on the concrete steps that lead there. Especially in a world with weapons of mass destruction, and at a time when some nations, including regimes like North Korea and Iran, are reportedly seeking to build such weapons, we must pursue a world in which fewer nuclear states have fewer nuclear weapons. We
should carefully assess every nuclear policy proposal in light of its potential to help bring us closer to a world without nuclear weapons.

**Seeking a Moral Path to Zero**

As we look down a moral path to zero we can see some signposts along the way. But before we do, it is essential to note the limits of the Church’s responsibility and competence. Bishops and other moral teachers are on much firmer ground when they articulate moral principles drawn from faith and reason and less so when applying these principles to particular policy choices. These more concrete judgments involve both political and technical realities that people of goodwill may evaluate differently. It is especially important to recognize the expertise, experience and judgment of leaders like those gathered in this room tonight when moral principles are applied to concrete situations fraught with competing and complex choices.

As the bishops wrote in *The Challenge of Peace*: “When making applications of these principles ... prudential judgments are involved based on specific circumstances which can change or which can be interpreted differently by people of good will.... However, the moral judgments that we make in specific cases, while not binding in conscience, are to be given serious attention and consideration by Catholics as they determine whether their moral judgments are consistent with the Gospel.”

The first signpost along the path to zero is the nature and direction of the policy of deterrence itself. The Second Vatican Council addressed the limits of deterrence in 1965. The Council argued that deterrence is only able to produce “peace of a sort.” Peace is more than the absence of war; it is built painstakingly on the foundation of justice and human rights. Tragically the vast resources devoted to acquiring “ever new weapons” can rob nations of the resources needed to address the causes of human suffering and conflict. In the words of the Council Fathers, “The arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity, and one which ensnares the poor to an intolerable degree.”

Pope John Paul II spoke about nuclear deterrence at the United Nations in 1982. He said: “In current conditions ‘deterrence’ based on balance, certainly not as an end in itself but as a step on the way to progressive disarmament, may still be judged morally acceptable.” In other words, deterrence only has moral meaning in light of the goal of deterring the use of nuclear weapons as we work for a world without nuclear weapons.

This moral assessment was applied by the Catholic bishops of our nation to U.S. nuclear policy in 1983. They reiterated that deterrence is not “an end in itself” and must lead to progressive disarmament. Over twenty-five years ago they wrote: “What previously had been defined as a safe and stable system of deterrence is today viewed with political and moral skepticism.” In 2009, it is even clearer that nuclear deterrence cannot be “the long-term basis for peace.”

The weakening of the non-proliferation regime, which has contributed to the spread of nuclear weapons and technology to other nations, and the threat of nuclear terrorism, which cannot be
deterred with nuclear weapons, point to the need to move beyond nuclear deterrence as rapidly as possible.

In Catholic moral teaching the only morally legitimate purpose of nuclear deterrence is to deter the use of nuclear weapons by others. This means that “not all forms of deterrence are morally acceptable.” It is not morally acceptable to aim for nuclear superiority instead of sufficiency. It is not morally legitimate to develop new nuclear weapons for new missions such as to counter non-nuclear threats or to make them smaller and more “usable” as “bunker busters.” Why? Because these policies and actions lead us further away from the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. They lead us toward a world more likely to rely on nuclear weapons for security.

In identifying other signposts along the road ahead let me draw from the Holy See’s May 2009 statement to the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. There are a number of morally significant signposts for our nation as it walks with the international community along the path to zero.

The Holy See argues that entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty would demonstrate that nations are serious about their commitment to a nuclear-weapons-free world. For us in the United States, this means that public opinion makers, including religious leaders, should help build public dialogue and support for ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. And leaders of both political parties should build a strong bipartisan consensus to support the Treaty as an important step on the road to zero.

The Holy See supports negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty to prohibit the further production of weapons-grade uranium and plutonium. The United States should provide robust leadership for negotiations on this Treaty. A world moving to rid itself of nuclear weapons is a world that stops producing weapons-grade materials and secures those stockpiles that exist.

The Vatican also advocated for the revision of the military doctrines of nuclear weapon states. The Congressionally mandated Nuclear Posture Review provides an opportunity for the United States to move toward reducing its reliance on nuclear weapons. To build international confidence in our nation’s commitment to working for a world without nuclear weapons, our nation should renounce the first use of nuclear weapons, declare that they will not be used against non-nuclear threats, and confine our nation’s nuclear doctrine to deterring the use of nuclear weapons by others. These actions will strengthen the moral credibility of our nation as we seek to persuade other nations to forego development of weapons of mass destruction.

The Holy See supports placing the peaceful use of nuclear energy under the “strict control of the International Atomic Energy Agency” (IAEA) and strengthening the capacity of the Agency to monitor non-proliferation and develop “common solutions and international structures for the production of nuclear fuel” to ensure safety, security and fair access for all nations.

Our nation could exercise its global leadership, in partnership with other leading nations, to strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency, both to enhance adherence to
nonproliferation and to ensure a safe, reliable and available source of fuel for peaceful nuclear power in nations throughout the world. It is critically important that the United States work with the international community to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear states and to prevent the transfer of weapons and nuclear materials to terrorists and other non-state actors.

The Holy See affirmed both national policies and bilateral agreements to reduce nuclear weapons. With the expiration of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) looming in December of this year, our nation should negotiate a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty that includes deeper, irreversible cuts in nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles, and extends and strengthens verification procedures. The recent discussions between President Obama and President Medvedev are encouraging in this regard.

The United States and the Russian Federation can also use this opportunity to work toward taking weapons off immediately available alert status. Any morally justifiable form of deterrence can be achieved at dramatically lower levels of risk by transforming operational practices as some other nuclear powers have done.

Finally, the United States, responding to the prompting of the Holy See and others, could use its important role in many regions of the world to encourage creation of nuclear-weapons-free zones to build “trust and confidence” as interim steps on the path to a world without nuclear weapons.

**A Difficult, but Hopeful Path**

A difficult road lies ahead. It is essential to translate the goal of a world without nuclear weapons from an idealistic dream or pious hope, to a genuine policy objective to be achieved carefully over time, but not postponed indefinitely. The horizon for a nuclear-free world should not recede too far into the future. If it does, the goal risks losing moral urgency and relevance.

Now some will argue that a world without nuclear weapons is a dangerous, utopian dream. They will assert that it can never be. They raise valid questions about the new risks that might arise as the world moves toward zero. Will moving toward zero increase the strategic value of even a small number of nuclear weapons and make it harder to stop proliferation? Will there be an incentive to move to counter-population deterrence, despite moral objections, because there are insufficient numbers for counterforce deterrence? These questions deserve creative and concrete solutions—solutions that can only be crafted by committed policy makers, experts and scientists.

Religious leaders, prominent officials, and other people of goodwill who support a nuclear weapons-free world are not naïve about the task ahead. They know the path will be difficult and will require determined political leadership, strong public support, and the dedicated skills of many capable leaders and technical experts. But difficult is not impossible.

We take up this task mindful of the fears of nuclear war, but ultimately we are driven by hope for a better future for humanity. Pope Benedict dedicated his second encyclical to hope. He wrote:
“All serious and upright human conduct is hope in action. ... Only the great certitude of hope that my own life and history in general, despite all failures, are held firm by the indestructible power of Love, and that this gives them their meaning and importance, only this kind of hope can then give the courage to act and to persevere.” And when the stakes are so high and the consequences of failure so great, persevere we must.

And so when we get to the telos of our lives, the ultimate end and purpose of our lives, symbolized in my opening story at the “pearly gates of heaven,” we will not ask Saint Peter: “Was our branch of service the best? Was our nation the greatest?” But rather Saint Peter will ask us, “Did you do all you could to protect the lives and dignity of all of God’s children?” With the help of God and the hard work of those in this room tonight, my hope is that on the question of the threat of nuclear weapons, we will be able to answer, “Yes.”

Reading 3 – “Abolition of Nuclear Weapons: An Absolute and Urgent Need for World Peace”
2010 address by the Archbishop Joseph Takami of Nagasaki, Japan in New York at the United Nations Non-Proliferation Treaty Conference.

The Use of an Atomic Bomb is an Inhuman Act
On August 9, 1945, at 11:02, a plutonium atomic bomb, more powerful than the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, was dropped over the city of Nagasaki. 70,000 citizens were instantly murdered. At the Urakami Parish alone, 8,000 parishioners out of 12,000 were killed. My mother lost her own mother, two sisters and one brother-in-law. One cousin died after 14 years. I was also affected by the atomic bomb in uterus as a three-months-old fetus.

It is true that there are other victims of nuclear weapons by testing such as the survivors of the Bikini Atoll test by the U.S., of the Algerian Sahara test by France, and of the Semipalatinsk test in Kazakhstan by the U.S.S.R. A number of people were victimized by the explosion of the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl. Hiroshima and Nagasaki, however, are the only case in which an atomic bomb was used in a war. The number of victims who died between August and December 1945 was from 90,000 to 120,000 in Hiroshima and 60,000 to 70,000 in Nagasaki. Since then, thousands have lost their lives every year.

The cruelty of an atomic bomb is in its capability of mass destruction and murder. An atomic bomb means a total denial of the dignity of the human person. The survivors continue suffering physically, morally and socially. Humankind does not need such an inhuman weapon nor should we need it. Besides, the existing nuclear weapons’ destructive capability cannot even be compared to that of the atomic bombs used in Japan 65 years ago. I dare say that the existence of nuclear weapons is intrinsically evil and there is no reason whatsoever to justify this deadly weapon. Even one nuclear weapon should not be tolerated.
The Arms Race Does Not Deter Violence but Aggravates It
There is no guarantee that the reduction and abolition of nuclear weapons worldwide will necessarily bring about peace instantly. Still the existence of nuclear weapons in the world is a grave threat to peace and we need to abolish them. We humans produce weapons and we humans can and must do away with them.

For the Catholic Church in Japan, the message of His Holiness, John Paul II, when he visited Hiroshima in 1981 continues to be a meaningful source of inspiration for our commitment to a world without nuclear weapons:

“To remember the past is to commit oneself to the future. Since that fateful day, nuclear stockpiles have grown in quantity and in destructive power. Nuclear weaponry continues to be built, tested and deployed. The continual preparations for war demonstrated by the production of ever more numerous, powerful and sophisticated weapons in various countries show that there is a desire to be ready for war, and being ready means being able to start it; it also means taking the risk that sometime, somewhere, someone can set in motion the terrible mechanism of general destruction.”

The Catholic Church has been making a strong appeal for genuine nuclear disarmament. In this respect, I would like to insist that the time has come to take concrete and definite steps towards total nuclear disarmament. The definite shift away from deterrence expressed by the Holy See indicates the direction. As Archbishop Migliore has said:

“The Holy See has never countenanced nuclear deterrence as a permanent measure, nor does it today when it is evident that nuclear deterrence drives the development of ever newer nuclear arms, thus preventing genuine nuclear disarmament.”

I would like also to support a letter sent to President Obama in March 2010 from the Catholic leaders of the United States, which included Bishop Gabino Zavala, Bishop President of Pax Christi USA, among others. The Catholic leaders asked President Obama “to move beyond indefinite deterrence and embrace elimination as the fundamental posture of U.S. nuclear weapons policy.”

Also in March this year, Bishop Misue of Hiroshima and myself as Archbishop of Nagasaki wrote to President Obama, Prime Minister Hatoyama of Japan, and world leaders asking them to take a “courageous step” toward the total abolition of nuclear weapons. We asked Prime Minister Hatoyama to take a more proactive and independent attitude towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. A signature campaign was organized to present the letter to the government. I delivered the letter to the Prime Minister’s office on April 19 with over 10,000 signatures.
**Efforts to Avoid and Abolish War**

I sincerely hope that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference this year takes a concrete and effective step toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. It is absolutely necessary that we should be actively present in every effort towards this goal.

I would like to mention some of the initiatives which I consider relevant, important and necessary to be supported:

The Nuclear Weapons Convention was submitted by Costa Rica and Malaysia in 2007 to the United Nations General Assembly. The model Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibits the use, threat of use, possession, development, testing, deployment and transfer of nuclear weapons and provides a phased program for their elimination under effective international control. A Nuclear Weapons Convention would not only define the path towards a world without nuclear weapons conceptually, but legally, as well, binding us all into the coherent community necessary to hold up the good faith of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and face the difficult challenge of ridding the world of the evil of nuclear weapons. It was also supported by the Holy See.

Mayors for Peace was initiated by Mayor Araki of Hiroshima in 1982 to promote the solidarity of cities towards the total abolition of nuclear weapons. The network today consists of 3,793 cities in 143 countries, as of April 2010. One of the programs promoted by the member cities is to establish Hiroshima-Nagasaki courses in colleges around the world.

Another project of the Mayors for Peace is the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol called Vision 2020. This Protocol would supplement the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to be adopted by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference this year, hopefully targeting 2020 for the total abolition of nuclear weapons.

I also support the Nuclear-Free-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty to be ratified worldwide. As expressed by Archbishop Mamberti at the Security Council in September 2009, “Nuclear weapons-free zones are the best example of trust, confidence and affirmation that peace and security is possible without possessing nuclear weapons.”

Not only should we _not_ use or produce nuclear weapons, it is absolutely important that nations and human communities should make the utmost effort to avoid and abolish war. Article 9 of Japan’s Peace Constitution states: “The Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes.” I do believe that “the constitutional non-violence” of Japan’s Peace Constitution is the only effective way to enable genuine peace building in today’s world. This is true deterrence. The Catholic Church in Japan has been working with other religious denominations and citizens’ organizations to promote the spirit and practice of Article 9 in every aspect and level of human existence in society.
As followers of Jesus, we are to constantly ask ourselves: how to enable the politics, economics, culture, and environment that nurture peace. *Shalom* in Hebrew means “prosperity, success, welfare, health, friendship, liberation, salvation, personal and public greetings.”

**How to Follow Christ and to Be a Peacemaker**

A serious challenge for us who are committed peacemakers is always to really be what we say we are. Do we know how to deal with violence within ourselves? Do our deeds and words truly communicate peace and joy? How do people who come to us experience life and hope as they relate to us? How can we translate life-giving and hope-filled relationships to other levels of society and states? We know that prejudice, lack of trust, or threatening actions should be avoided. Any information not based on facts, but on supposition, should not be used to provoke fear and a sense of insecurity. And yet, we know that these measures are often taken as official policies to protect the so-called national interests.

I would like to share my personal experience of having welcomed “September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows” in our Archdiocese of Nagasaki several years ago. September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows is, as you know, a group of families who lost their loved ones on September 11th, 2001, in New York. They are convinced of the need for forgiveness and not revenge. They do not want others to experience the same suffering since violence only hurts and makes one suffer. They are the people who truly live the peace of Christ.

I heard, however, that they were accused of being unpatriotic Americans by their fellow Americans. Many people believe that those guilty of violence should be punished by violence. People of Peaceful Tomorrows believe in the power of love, for loves does not seek revenge but forgiveness, and this is what we Christians should embrace as our fundamental attitude in the face of conflict and violence.

I would like to conclude my presentation with some words of Dr. Takashi Nagai. Dr. Nagai was a Catholic medical doctor in Nagasaki who was a *Hibakusha* (survivor). He wrote a number of books in his sickness, before his death in 1951:

- “We should not hate the people who seem bent upon breaking the calm of peace. If hate arises in our hearts, we will also lose the right to wish for peace.
- “Nuclear war is not at all beautiful or interesting. It is the most disappointing, most brutal and most complete form of destruction. Only ashes and bones remain: nothing touches the heart.
- “War is such folly! Nobody can win or lose in a war. There is only destruction. Humans were not born to fight! Peace! Peace forever!
- “Let us forgive each other… because no one is perfect. Let us love each other… because we are all lonely. Whether it be a fight, a struggle or a war, all that remains afterward is regret.
“It is a cowardly man who starts struggles and wars. The person of love is a person of ‘bravery’ who does not bear arms. The person who does not bear arms, does not fight. In other words, he or she is a person of ‘peace.’

“Nuclear war ended in Nagasaki! Nagasaki is the period! Peace starts from Nagasaki!”

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**CLOSING PRAYER**

Extinguish the candles and return them to the circular platter.

**As we end this session, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.**

Reflection:

**We Remember the Past**

“Gathered at the River,” by Denise Levertov (from *A Dream Unfolding*)

As if the trees were indifferent…
A breeze flutters the candles, but the trees
Give off a sense of listening, of hush.

The dust of August on their leaves
But it grows dark, green is something
Known about, not seen.

But summer twilight takes away only color,
Not form. The tree-forms, massive trunks
And the great domed heads, leaning in
Towards us, are visible,
A half-circle of attention.

They listen because the war we speak of,
The human war with ourselves,
The war against earth, against nature,
Is a war against them.

The words are spoken of those who survived awhile,
Living shadowgraphs, eyes fixed forever
On witnessed horror,
Who survived to give testimony,
That no one may plead ignorance.
“Contra naturam” The trees,
The trees are not indifferent.

We intone together, NEVER AGAIN,
We stand in a circle, singing, speaking,
Making vows, NEVER AGAIN,
Remembering the dead of Hiroshima, Nagasaki…

Amen.

Scripture Reading (three times, three readers):

*Scripture Reading: (Three times, three readers) “The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace (James 3:18).”

Amen*
SECTION IV

Just Peacemaking, Human Rights, and Global Restoration
As people of faith, we promote universal human rights through solidarity with oppressed and marginalized people struggling for dignity, at home and abroad. We reject every form of political and economic domination over others and foster a reverence for all creation.
NOTE TO PARTICIPANT – Sessions 10-12

We are approaching the end of our journey together. We have studied (1) The Spirituality of Nonviolence and Just Peacemaking, (2) Just Peacemaking and Economic and Interracial Justice, and (3) Just Peacemaking, Disarmament and Reconciliation with Justice. The next three sessions focus on (4) Just Peacemaking, Human Rights and Global Restoration. These sessions broaden our understanding of the global dimension of war and violence against creation itself, as well as offering new and inspiring examples of just peacemaking and alternatives to violence.

As before, in this section we will continue to highlight three things:

(1) Just Peacemaking. The readings from our faith traditions focus on the global dimensions of violence and war, and the call “to take up the vocation of peacemaking with new urgency and commitment.” *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace*, while recognizing the need for “humanitarian intervention” when “the survival of populations and entire ethnic groups” are at stake, concludes with a call to “proceed resolutely toward outlawing war completely” and “cultivating peace as a supreme good.” In similar fashion, the *Ecumenical Call to Just Peace* while drawing attention to the violence at home and the violence abroad, calls us in a special way to work for peace with the earth: “The cries of the poor and vulnerable echo in the groans of the earth,” and for that reason, “to care for God’s precious gift of creation and to strive for ecological justice are key principles of just peace.”

(2) The War at Home / The War Abroad. The readings for these last three sessions broaden our understanding of violence to include the violence within nations caused by terrorism and the War on Terror, as well as the violence against creation caused by excessive consumption and destructive lifestyles. The readings for Just Peacemaking at Home address these challenges by lifting up signs of resistance and hope, and calling for (1) Abolishing War and Promoting a Just Peace, (2) Eradicating Poverty and Promoting a Just and Sustainable Global Economy, (3) Dismantling Racism and Promoting Racial Equality and Diversity, and (4) Building the Beloved Community and Promoting the Global Common Good. In a similar fashion, the readings for Just Peacemaking Abroad introduce us to the relatively new world of peace building, with concrete examples of alternatives to violence in Egypt, Colombia, the Great Lakes region of Africa, and the Philippines. The final readings also address the challenges of global climate change and nuclear disasters.

(3) Bearing Witness. In this final section, we are invited to bring what we have learned and what we have discerned into focus, by writing a Covenant of Just Peace together. Throughout our 12 sessions together, we have had opportunities to identify four areas that we want to remember, and which will form the framework for our covenant of Just Peace. These are: (1) Lamentations – the violence in our world and our complicity in the violence for which we are truly sorry, (2)
Signs of Hope – those concrete signs in history that inspire us and give us hope, (3) Questions and Petitions – those things for which we do not have a clear answer, and for which we ask God for wisdom, and (4) Bearing Witness – those actions to which we commit ourselves in the future as a witness to the Gospel call to nonviolence and just peace.

Our hope is that at the end of these twelve sessions, you will be inspired by examples of moral courage and your own understanding of the Christian tradition and of the Gospel to respond as a community to the difficult and troubling reality of violence and war in our time. With that in mind, we ask you and your group to consider organizing a just peacemaking session in your own community, inviting local community groups and faith-based organizations to a conversation about working together to create alternatives to war, violence, racism and poverty.

We hope, too, that such efforts will bring JustFaith participants and Pax Christi USA members into a closer relationship, enabling us to more effectively and more prayerfully respond to the problems of violence in our communities, and to make the connections between the war at home and the war abroad. In the end, it’s about building relationships of trust and seeking common ground across the racial, class, and national barriers that often divide us in our desire to help build the beloved community and bear witness to justice and peace in our world.
SESSION TEN
Just Peacemaking and Peace Building
at Home and Abroad

Goals of the Session:

- To deepen our understanding of regional conflicts in North Africa and the Middle East, and the challenges they present to peace and nonviolence.
- To deepen our appreciation for the contribution of Catholic Peace Building efforts to prevent war and provide alternatives to violence in Colombia, the Great Lakes region of Africa, and the Philippines.
- To strengthen our commitment to nonviolent means of peacemaking and peace building as a contribution to eradicating the root causes of war and violence, and seeking alternative means of resolving conflicts.

Readings for this session:
Note to Participant for Section IV, Sessions 10-12

Part One: Just Peacemaking at Home

- An Ecumenical Call to Peacemaking
- Called to Be Peacemakers: The Challenge and Promise of Peace in the Twenty-First Century: III. We Celebrate Signs of Hope and Resistance.

Part Two: Just Peacemaking Abroad

- “What Just Peacemaking Means to Me” – by Martha Inés Romero M., Colombia, Pax Christi International Latin America Coordinator.
- “The Path of Just Peace” – by Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Secretary General, African Council of Religious Leaders, Africa Reprehensive of Religions for Peace International, Executive Committee Member, Pax Christi International
OPENING PRAYER

Select three readers to repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between.

Scripture Reading: “Let justice surge like waters, and righteousness like an unfailing stream (Amos 5:24).”

Light ten candles and place on the map: in the group’s location, Europe, the former Yugoslavia, the Great Lakes region of East Africa, Southeast Asia, the location of a nearby military base or weapons site, the Middle East, Japan, Russia and China, and Latin America.

Leader: The following reading is from The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, a Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the 10th Anniversary of the bishops’ pastoral, The Challenge of Peace.

Leader: Building peace, combating poverty and despair, and protecting freedom and human rights are not only moral imperatives, but also wise national priorities. We will read excerpts from The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace: “Building Cooperative Security – U.S. Leadership in the World.”

Reader 1: Pope John Paul II, citing the “conscience of humanity and international humanitarian law,” has been outspoken in urging that “humanitarian intervention be obligatory where the survival of populations and entire ethnic groups is seriously compromised. This is a duty for nations and the international community…” The principles of sovereignty and nonintervention may be overridden by forceful means in exceptional circumstances, notably in the cases of genocide or when whole populations are threatened by aggression or anarchy.

Reader 2: Building peace, combating poverty and despair, and protecting freedom and human rights are not only moral imperatives, but also wise national priorities. They can shape a world that will be a safer, more secure, and more just home for all of us… For these reasons, the leaders and people of the United States are called to take up the vocation to peacemaking with new urgency and commitment. Accepting, though not exaggerating, the lessons of recent history, acknowledging the limits of U.S. influence, and confessing humbly past excesses and failures, we are called to commit ourselves firmly to joining with other nations in building a new kind of world, one that is more peaceful, just, and respectful of the life and dignity of the human person.
Just for Today
Alternate Readers

Today… I will live in peace with God, my neighbor and myself. I will bring peace to my patch of this earth.

Today… I will believe that world peace is possible. I will remember that hope is the most important gift I can give my world.

Today… I will not be a party to pessimism nor join the indifferent.

Today… I will be happy. I will remember that my joy is up to me. I will carry my confidence to all I touch this day.

Today… I will love my enemies. I will pray for them. I will try to see our differences from their point of view.

Today… I will disarm myself of rage by extending my hand in help and forgiveness.

Today… I will know that peace is the child of justice – that peace is more than the absence of war.

Today… I will plant a seed of justice in this global village, in my city, in my neighborhood, in my family, and in my heart.

Today… I will pray for peace for all those with whom I come into contact.

Today… I will test my love of peace by doing one act for peace.

Today… I will stand with Christ the Peacemaker.

Prayer by John Dear, SJ, Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace
Reading 1 - An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace

In their 2011 Ecumenical Call to Just Peace, the World Council of Churches builds on the experiences and insights gained from the “Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001 – 2010,” and invites Christians to commit themselves to the Way of Just Peace.

30. For peace in the community. All too many communities are divided by economic class, by race, color and caste, by religion and gender. Homes and schools are plagued by violence and abuse. Women and children are violated physically, psychologically and by cultural practice. Drug and alcohol abuse and suicide are forms of self-destruction on a large scale. Workplaces and houses of worship are scarred by conflicts within the community. Prejudice and racism deny human dignity. Workers are exploited and industries pollute the environment. Health care is inaccessible for many and affordable for only a few. There is a widening gap between the rich and the poor. Traditions that bind communities together are weakened by commercial influences and imported lifestyles. Media, games and entertainment that promote violence, war and pornography distort community values and invite destructive behaviors. When violence occurs, young males will generally be perpetrators as well as victims and women and children will find themselves at greatest risk.

31. Churches become builders of a culture of peace as they engage, cooperate and learn from one another. Members, families, parishes and communities will be involved. The tasks include learning to prevent conflicts and transform them; to protect and empower those who are marginalized; to affirm the role of women in resolving conflict and building peace and include them in all such initiatives; to support and participate in nonviolence movements for justice and human rights; and to give peace education its rightful place in churches and schools. A culture of peace requires churches and other faith and community groups to challenge violence wherever it happens: this concerns structural and habitual violence as well as the violence that pervades media entertainment, games and music. Cultures of peace are realized when all, especially women and children, are safe from sexual violence and protected from armed conflict, when deadly weapons are banned and removed from communities, and domestic violence is addressed and stopped.

32. If the churches are to be peacemakers, Christians must first strive for unity in action for peace. Congregations must unite to break the culture of silence about the violence within church life and unite to overcome habitual disunity in the face of the violence within our communities.
Reading 2 - *Stories of Just Peacemaking at Home*

“Embracing Our Principles Instead of Our Fears: What a Mosque at Ground Zero Really Proclaims”
By Ronaldo Cruz, Director for Institutional Advancement at Pax Christi USA.

Pax Christi USA, the national Catholic peace movement, joins the citizens of New York City and local and national organizations in support of the Cordoba Center, an Islamic community center proposed for lower Manhattan, near the Ground Zero site.

As the national Catholic peace movement, Pax Christi USA believes in the freedom of religion and in countering systematic and perpetual deep spiritual and social brokenness. Catholic Social Teaching tells us that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. However, attacks on Muslims—and on dark-skinned people mistaken for Muslims—started almost immediately after the events of 9/11. This behavior is contrary to our Christian values.

Pax Christi USA refuses to play into the fear cultivated by individuals and organizations that promote the xenophobic attitudes and behaviors that have become commonplace throughout the country. We believe it is contrary to the honor of the victims who died on September 11, 2001, and to the American principles we have been taught to respect all of our lives.

U.S. Muslims did not kill anyone. It was religious and political extremists, claiming to represent one of the great religions of the world, who committed these heinous criminal attacks. As we all know—or should know—Muslims were among the victims on that horrific day, along with Jews, Christians, people of other faith traditions or no tradition, as well as citizens of other countries. Despite the fact that these acts were not carried out by U.S. Muslims and that Muslims working in the Pentagon and the World Trade Center were among those who died that day, what we witness today are unconscionable anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiments from many of our citizens—not only in New York, but throughout the country.

Pax Christi USA stands in solidarity with interfaith organizations committed to constitutional and civil rights for all people, no matter what faith tradition they claim. We congratulate President Obama’s affirmation of the right of the Cordoba Initiative of New York City to establish a community center and mosque in lower Manhattan.

The Cordoba Initiative has consistently been an advocate of positive and progressive relations between Muslim and Christian communities in the United States and throughout the world. Pax Christi USA is concerned that a great deal of the opposition to the proposed project comes from individuals and organizations that are identified as hostile to the legitimate rights and aspirations of the U.S. Muslim community.
We appeal to the opponents of this project to desist from the kind of slander and intolerance that are anathema to our nation’s democratic ideals and the assertion of the basic human rights of all. We would like to point out that not all families of the victims of 9/11 are opposed to the construction of an Islamic center near Ground Zero. These brave and committed people, who have known the tragedy of 9/11 in their bones, have witnessed to all of us what it means to seek justice and promote healing, rather than to give in to fear or bias. In reference to the Cordoba Initiative, September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, a nationwide group founded by family members of those killed on 9/11, stated:

“We lost our family members on 9/11/2001, but will not lose our nation, too. America, the concept and the people and the land thrive when we choose to trust in our principles rather than cave to our basest fears.

“What better place for healing, reconciliation and understanding than Ground Zero? We honor our family members by practicing American principles and moving forward from Ground Zero to a future of peaceful coexistence.”

Pax Christi USA agrees with September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows’ statement. We affirm that the Catholic and Muslim communities of New York and all of the United States can build positive bridges of mutual understanding, that we can collaborate for making our society stronger and more just for all people.

**Reading 3 - Called to be Peacemakers**

This section from Called to be Peacemakers, “We Celebrate Signs of Resistance and Hope,” contains ten "affirmations of faith" that originated with one of the communities that participated in the process of creating the final document. Read these affirmations, choose one that resonates with you, and during our discussion we will share our reflections with the group on the point each of us has chosen.

(Note, especially for ecumenical or interfaith groups": substitute “Christian” or “faith community” for “Catholic” in these phrases.

**III. “We Celebrate Signs of Resistance and Hope”** Excerpted from Pax Christi USA’s 2008 document, Called to Be Peacemakers.

“The authentic conversion of hearts represents the right way, the only way that can lead each one of us and all humanity to the peace that we hope for . . . It is the way indicated by Jesus: He – the King of the universe – did not come to bring peace to the world with an army, but through refusing violence.” - Pope Benedict XVI, Call to Volunteer Peace Workers, March 29, 2009.
We conclude with affirmations of faith and suggestions for shaping an agenda for Catholic peacemaking for the twenty-first century.

One of the religious communities that participated in the People’s Peace Initiative, the Marianist Social Justice Collaborative, engaged many of its members in the discernment process. The following affirmations of faith, submitted by the Trinity Marianist Community in Dayton, Ohio, summarize well the input we received from other groups in response to the reflection question: “What is essential to our Church’s understanding and cultivation of peace in the twenty-first century?”

1. We Christians live under the sign of the cross: we commit ourselves to entering the Paschal Mystery with Jesus Christ. We understand our journey of faith to include self-sacrifice and self-transcendence. We must remember this commitment and apply it to decisions about economic and political systems as we pursue peace.

2. Similarly, we must emphasize that what we long for is a peace the world cannot give, but which only God can give. We must center our efforts for peacemaking with prayer and openness to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

3. Catholics ought to promote the vision of security “as lying in the effort of assuring that the blessings of creation are enjoyed by all.” Yet we must also admit that we have to overcome fear in order to live this way, in order to live under the sign of the cross. A strengthening of faith in God whose perfect love casts out all fear will be necessary for us to do this.

4. We must make it clear that the Church must be counter-cultural in its witness to peace. The Catholic Church must be a global Catholic Church, not a national church. It must hold up concern for everyone, not just for U.S. citizens. Furthermore, our real call is to love fundamentalists, communists, terrorists, whomever our enemies may be.

5. Our Catholic faith must be active, not passive. We must put our faith in action. Matthew 25:1-45 emphasizes the practical, hands-on nature of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, caring for the sick and imprisoned, etc. We are called to recognize that we are in relationship with those who are poorest around us. John Paul II drew upon this to explain that God has made us responsible for our neighbors, especially those “who are poorest, most alone and most in need.” Our eternal salvation depends on our active response to those in need.

6. In the pursuit of peace, the Catholic Church must insist that we cannot find excuses for who we are not going to help, including, for example, undocumented immigrants. Isaiah says, “Come, without money, and receive food. . .” (55:1). Someone in need has a right to food, even if that
person is a criminal or terrorist. Our temptation is to believe that we deserve what we have, but it isn’t true.

7. The Catholic Church leadership needs to voice these truths, not just the grassroots. When the Pope, the Vatican, or the U.S. bishops have spoken out strongly and clearly on behalf of peace, justice in the economy, against war, violence, and all taking of human life, this has been very helpful. We need to hear more clear and powerful teaching and preaching on these issues from the Church hierarchy.

8. We are convinced of the transformative power of education in converting hearts and cultures and in building communities of faith. A key dimension to a “People’s Peace Initiative” must be a strong educational plan for educating about Catholic social teaching, especially on peace, the true costs and horrors of war, and about options beside war for dealing with criminals, terrorists, rogue nations, etc.

9. Christ gives himself as peace to his people. The Church today must give witness to peace by being witnesses of peace in our world. Leaders in the Church need to present Christ as peace to the Church and the Church as peace to the world.

10. We must engage Catholics from other nations and other people of good will from other nations in this quest for peace. We can’t afford to go it alone. John Paul II’s writing about the culture of death and the call of the Church to develop a Culture of Life has potential as a useful tool in this process. Part of the Culture of Life is that we not kill or harm each other.

PART 2 – ACTIVITY: Reports and Projects

READINGS PART 3 – Just Peacemaking Abroad

As you read, consider these questions:

- Reflect on the statement from Pax Christi International about the peaceful protests in North Africa and the Middle East. How best might we respond as Christians and as a nation to these protests?
- What can we do as Christians to support peace building and peacemaking efforts as nonviolent alternatives to war?
- How do the examples of ordinary people contribute to the development of peacemaking and peace-building efforts?
Reading 1 - Stories of Just Peacemakers Abroad
“What Just Peacemaking Means to Me”
Martha Inés Romero M., Colombia, Pax Christi International Latin America Coordinator.

I think peacemaking must be included in all relief, development and advocacy work. Specifically, to understand peacemaking it is necessary to refer to the interconnections with development. Development, in this sense, is related to the impact of policies on human well-being, and the need for democratic conditions and alternative policies for reducing injustice and poverty. Peacemaking refers to the ability of governments and citizens to implement conditions for a lasting peace—that implies working for conflict transformation, peace accords, post-conflict transition programs, restorative justice, etc.

In a conflictive environment like Colombia’s, international cooperation is crucial to peacemaking. Aid can facilitate peace-building or make it worse if it doesn’t reflect communities’ needs and interests. A conflict environment is an obstacle to development; it destroys limited resources, infrastructure and governance, and undermines fragile social cohesion.

I consider one of the main challenges Colombians face is to work for peace and reconciliation in a polarized context and in the midst of a complex and long-standing conflict. Some important initiatives build capacity by providing tools, methods and skills in conflict transformation and mediation. Others create forums for interaction and the sharing of experiences among civil society organizations and grassroots communities; disseminate peace-building practitioners’ work; provide psycho-social trauma healing programs; or promote truth and reparation processes.

For solidarity organizations/networks and international agencies, one challenge is to support a long-term vision of peace as well as short term needs. Peace, like conflict, emerges over decades.

And the active participation of women, who are vulnerable to gender-based violence in zones of armed conflict, in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security is crucial. Women can participate in peace negotiations, peace building and peace keeping in post conflict environments. From conflict to post conflict, women have played a key role in promoting on-the-ground resources to shape communities’ attitudes, plans and life programs and making it possible to imagine healed communities, working side-by-side, building a lasting peace.
Reading 2
“The Path of Just Peace”
Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Secretary General, African Council of Religious Leaders
Africa Representative of Religions for Peace International
Executive Committee Member, Pax Christi International

When I was asked to reflect on what peace means to me, it took me a while to figure out what and how to answer the question: Why do I do what I do? Coming from a community that has a rich tapestry of intercultural, interethnic and interreligious relationships, and from the Horn of Africa – a region now considered by the UN and others as one of the most fragile and difficult places on earth – the challenges, related to religion and peace as presented in the context of the Global War on Terror, and now touted as the biggest threat to world peace, have never really been an issue for us. What has challenged us, quite frankly, are the daily struggles that mean life or death for so many children and young people in Africa and in this region. Many, many more adults who have been disinherted and dispossessed face similar or tougher challenges, taking peace out of their lives.

Two events in November 2011 reinforced my view of what we need to do to achieve just peace. A few days ago, in Durban, South Africa, I sat with Archbishop Desmond Tutu and other religious leaders at the back-stage of the Kings Park Stadium, waiting for our turn to address the gathered crowd on the We Have Faith Campaign for Climate Change. We all wondered about the ‘madness’ of state parties in their reckless delay to deliver a binding convention that will protect the earth. At his advanced age, Archbishop Desmond Tutu dashed to the stage and stated very simply “climate change is a huge, huge problem”. He added, “but we can face it’ if political leaders have the political will. There is no other earth except this one.”

My turn came and I posed: “If rich nations could, within months, raise trillions of US Dollars to bail out banks brought down by corporate greed; if nations could spend 1.5 trillion US Dollars on defense budgets and in the manufacture of destructive arms, why is it so difficult to find a fraction of this amount to bail out the earth – our home for today’s and for future generations – which is getting ‘sicker’ by the day due to excessive per capita emissions from the richer countries?”

I realized how strong people from around the world felt from their thunderous applause, people who travelled all the way to South Africa, mostly young people, to advocate for a quicker solution to the global warming. Mingling with the crowd after the speech, I noticed that for these young people, increased emissions causing the globe to heat faster were the single largest cause for their feeling ‘unpeaceful’. The more frequent hunger and extreme weather patterns we are facing now, resulting in massive suffering for the most vulnerable, are the issues that we must address as peace workers. There is enough on and in this earth for everybody’s need. Unfortunately because of greed, there is only too little for too many of us in the world, and a lot for very few. The good news is that there are many, many citizens of this earth who are willing to take action to prevent ourselves from destroying this earth.
A week earlier in Marrakech, Morocco, Religions for Peace hosted religious leaders from the Middle East and North Africa for discussions and strategizing on how we can help build a more peaceful Middle East and North Africa in the wake of the unfolding political transformations. A few months earlier, in June, I was in Tripoli, Libya, at the height of the NATO bombing campaign and a vicious civil war. I saw death and destruction first-hand, came close to getting killed by the bombings and the despair and hopelessness in the eyes of the many children I met. I concluded that war could never be just, nor could there be a just war. Those who wage wars must find another description to describe war – for it can never be just.

During the Marrakech meeting, religious leaders from all faiths in the Middle East and North Africa proposed what we now call ‘Contracts of Mutual Care’ in which Abrahamic faiths would develop contracts to care for one another. Muslims in the Mid-East were particularly concerned that the population of Christians in places such as Jerusalem, Baghdad, Amman, Damascus and many other cities and towns in the Mid-East were dwindling, and that we needed to reverse this trend. It is the same concerns that I have witnessed within Pax Christi International meetings, reiterating that we must care for one another.

From these encounters, the confirmation that human beings are inherently good, and the choices we must make are elemental, came to the fore. The timeless tradition that we have in Africa – that of Ubuntu – came to life. That we are all related and are all responsible for one another; that your well-being is mine, and mine is yours; that we are all vulnerable, and that this is our human state – kept us going. We pondered whether we will reach out in care for one another? Or will we turn on one another? Will we build relationships between our peoples that are mutual and just? Or will we live by ruthless power and domination?

For me, rediscovering and living Ubuntu beyond the geographical African realm as colleagues and I engaged in these discussions, made the difference. It is this difference that matters so much in times of so many challenges to peace. And it is with great pleasure that I am happy to join people like Marie Dennis and others in Pax Christi International, to inspire the younger generation to make this earth more peaceful and a joyous place for everybody.

Reading 3 – “Pax Christi International Supports the Peaceful Protests in Egypt”
Statement by Pax Christi USA, February 6, 2011

This week, the world witnessed events unfold in Egypt, with millions of people peacefully taking to the streets to demand the justice, basic freedom and human rights they have so long been denied.

Ordinary men and women are at long last seeking to assert their identity and retrieve their dignity after decades of corruption, deprivation, and subjugation. People gathered to protest against social, cultural, and economic injustice.
They demanded the immediate resignation of the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak.

The peaceful protests were countered on February 2, by a significant number of regime loyalists, who engaged in organized attacks on peaceful protests.

Divide and rule is used as a classic concept of keeping power. The Egyptian army, which had not stopped the peaceful protests earlier, failed to intervene. Many were injured, including journalists; some died.

Despite these attacks, opponents of the status quo continued to demonstrate publicly and in large numbers for Mubarak’s immediate resignation.

Pax Christi International condemns violent attacks on peaceful protesters. The people have spoken clearly by their courageous and nonviolent presence on the streets of Cairo and other major Egyptian cities.

We call on to the present Egyptian regime of President Hozni Mubarak to:

- End violence and repression against peaceful protestors and the press; ensure the safety of Egyptian citizens publicly and peacefully expressing their will.
- Explicitly cease the use of detention and torture in all forms and release without charge all detained pro-democracy demonstrators, human rights workers, journalists, and others who have been deemed a threat to the regime.
- Participate in negotiations concerning the legitimate demands of the civilian protest. This means negotiations between the authorities and a broad group of Egyptian opposition forces and independent figures.
- Negotiations should lead to the formation of a government committed to respecting the will and the basic rights of the Egyptian people.

The peaceful protests of the Egyptian people, who are demanding justice, freedom, and democracy, deserve the unconditional support of democratic forces and governments throughout the world.

Pax Christi International calls on the international community to support the people of Egypt and the transition they seek without manipulating the outcome and to condemn all acts of violence against peaceful protest.

We honor the courage on display in Egypt these days and the resistance to violence of those calling for change. We hope and pray that the challenges of today could be converted into the opportunities of tomorrow for all Egyptians.
Reading 3 - *The Many Dimensions of Catholic Peace Building*
Scott Appleby, 2008 meeting of the Catholic Peace Building Network at Notre Dame.

Columbia. The war-torn nation of Colombia is, paradoxically, both an ideal laboratory of peace-building, and a virtually unique case. An “ideal laboratory” because Colombia is a perfect storm, a “comprehensive” internal conflict. Comprehensive, in that it stretches across time (spanning at least half a century), takes numerous forms (from drug trade-related assassinations and governmental corruption, to leftist guerrilla kidnapping and terror, to paramilitary, right-wing murders and human rights abuses; from civil war to common crime) and envelops all sectors of Colombian society in its deadly violence while also entangling numerous transnational actors, hostile and friendly states, and the international community.

When the Catholic Peace-building Network held its annual conference in Bogotá last summer, I was overwhelmed, inspired and, oddly, reassured by our brief immersion in the setting: overwhelmed by the complexity of the conflict; inspired by the sophistication, energy and remarkable persistence of the Church and its peace-building partners at all levels; and, reassured that, yes, this is what things can be like in the toughest cases, and, yes, “peace-building” is the appropriate response. It is odd to be “reassured” by a perfect storm of a conflict, I admit, but we were reassured more by the palpable sensation that “building peace” does not mean “solving” or resolving a deep-seated, multi-layered, long term conflict in some final or definitive way, nor does it mean bringing justice and reconciliation to an entire society. Certain tasks must be left to the merciful Lord of history.

Rather, to build peace in this sin-stained world means joining energetically in the work of coping, striving and hoping: coping with the endemic violence and injustice by identifying and supporting local and global actors who are already sustaining pockets of stability and nonviolence amidst the chaos, and by recruiting and enabling others to join this web of relationships; striving, through the network of relationships and through its myriad practices, from education to mediation to advocacy, to effect incremental as well as systemic change; and, doing all this under the canopy of the theological virtue of hope, according to which one does what is good and right because it is good and right, not depending on some specific outcome, but trusting that it all somehow matters because the One who was most innocent and good among us was crucified for his efforts and was risen to new life by the Father.

While the tragic elements of Colombia’s “internal conflict” render it close to the ideal case for students of protracted conflict and comprehensive peace-building, other characteristics make some of the lessons learned less applicable to other settings. Certainly the distinctive and influential role of the Catholic Church is not unique to Colombia; Catholic peacemakers have left their mark on dozens of conflict landscapes around the world. But the pervasiveness of Catholic actors in the society and the hegemonic cultural role of the Church, at least until recently, are remarkably pronounced. The majority of members of army, the guerrillas, the paramilitaries, the
victims and the government hails from a Catholic background; the Church plays a central role in conflict transformation and mediation; the symbols and rituals of the masses are suffused with the Catholic sacramental and incarnational imagination. The Catholic role in Colombia is truly “a ubiquitous presence.”

**Great Lakes region of Africa.** The situation of the Church in the Great Lakes region of Africa is similar, and could not be more different. The similarities begin with the central role the Church plays, both in terms of shaping culture and mediating conflict. Shaping culture means, in particular, the striving to create a culture of nonviolence, peace and justice, a society for which human dignity and human rights are sacrosanct, written both into law and in human hearts. As in Colombia, the Church in Burundi, in Rwanda, and in eastern Congo promotes justice and peace through an impressive array of local and regional institutional initiatives, and services, led by women and men, laity, religious and clergy.

As elsewhere, the Church is an alternative to the state, a guarantor – at times, the sole guarantor – of the delivery of whatever social-material relief that is available to the people, and of a presence to the people, a compassionate and disinterested presence, marked by integrity and devotion to the common good. The Catholic hierarchy, while striving to remain apolitical and operating through civil society, apart from the government in most respects, cannot and must not escape politics, questions of governance, and especially the responsibility of shaping a political culture that is at least not inimical to the culture of peace and justice that Catholics and their allies are seeking to build at the grassroots.

Breathtaking poverty, governmental corruption, eruptions of deadly violence, the anticipated tensions within the Church itself – all of these features of the Great Lakes region are familiar from Colombia and elsewhere. But the differences are more striking perhaps than the similarities. The European colonial legacy continues to haunt relations among peoples. Transnational actors play a different role, occupy a different niche. Compared to Colombia, the relative absence of the United States and other international forces changes the configuration of state and church. Most obviously: In a region bloodied in recent decades by genocide and virtual genocide, in which inter-tribal warfare has infected the Church itself, or at least those Catholics who chose tribal loyalty over Gospel values, hope is “hope for reconciliation.” These years the Church of Hutus and Tutsis and of minority tribes and other indigenous peoples asks itself: “How do we build trust, solidarity and compassion among our peoples, across national boundaries? How do we account for —how do we fathom and begin to interpret—the violence we have done to one another? How does the crucified One in any meaningful way atone for this holocaust? How do we teach in this climate? How do we reconcile our separate churches, not to mention our traumatized peoples and parishioners?”

**Mindanao, Philippines.** In Burundi/Congo/Rwanda, as in Colombia *inter-religious conflict* may not be entirely absent, but it is muted. By striking contrast Mindanao is one of the world’s
capitals of Christian-Muslim tension, and also a potential site of a world-captivating breakthrough in Christian-Muslim relationships. The familiar enemies of peace also reside in the southern region of the Philippines: inequality and racial discrimination; grinding poverty amid tiny but powerful islands of affluence; contests over the direction of regional, national, civic, even religious identity; an indifferent or obstructionist national government; anti-terrorist policies that boomerang; extremist and separatist movements seeking to effect change through the barrel of a gun.

In this setting, as Myla Leguro and Archbishop Ledesma and others with us this week will testify, Catholics select some familiar tools from the peacebuilders toolkit, but they have had to forge or sharpen others. Muslim, Christian, Indigenous is only the beginning of the formula for building relationships and alliances; each of those clunky warehouse terms contains nuance upon nuance. Maddening! Look at Myla: you must ask yourselves: why does she seem so composed? What is her secret?

Over the next few days, and in the pages of the book we are writing to memorialize our learning over these years, you will hear and read much more about the specific characteristics of the conflicts and societies of Colombia, central Africa and Mindanao, and even more about the peace-building practices shared by all three and the ones that are distinctive to each setting.

Catholic Peace-building Network. In my remaining time, my assignment is to offer some generalizations about Catholic peace-building in its many dimensions: my colleagues on this panel will begin the process of challenging, nuancing, and otherwise refining these generalizations, a process that will unfold today and tomorrow, in more sessions than you can shake a stick at.

The three conflicts we have chosen to prioritize—not to the exclusion of others, but in the hope of making a few comparative statements that do not immediately melt under the heat of complexity—share fundamental features that are also present elsewhere in the world of war.

First, they are all trans-boundary conflicts, whatever the boundaries may be. That is, these conflicts are simultaneously local, regional, national and global – to different degrees, and with varying consequences, depending upon the mix of levels. They also involve multiple cultural actors: indigenous, post-colonial, racial, ethnic, religious. Choose a date: 1914 (the First World War). 1948 (the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). 1950 (air travel begins to becomes accessible). 1989. 2001. Etc. The point is: the deeper the world plunges into modernity and the globalization of modernity, can we really think of any conflict as contained within stable, set national or geographic or cultural or racial boundaries? We are all one another’s neighbors now, for better and often for worse.
Second, these conflicts last a long time, often running in waves and/or cycles, but not easily put to rest once and for all. To say that “peace-building” begins after the shooting ends is often to beg the question: to which round of shooting do you refer, sir? Why do these conflicts go on and on? … Perhaps the trans-boundary nature of our conflicts and their long-running nature are both tied to our awareness of the grievances, the injustices, and also the ways in which media and techno-scientific modernity can be used repeatedly by all sides, the dictator no less than Human Rights Watch.

In any case, not only do the conflicts endure, but, third, the people are involved at all levels, both in the fighting and in protest against injustice and violence. The actors in conflict have expanded, but so has the range of actors in transforming conflict. Media has had a democratizing effect in social practices and political networking, from the World Social Forum to the possibility that your next indiscreet act will be emblazoned on YouTube this afternoon, with all the world to see. NGOs have been around for ages but only the last generation of them have exercised mammoth influence in conflict settings. Conflicts are longer but they are also horizontal as well as vertical, with interested and influential parties as close as the next village and as far away as, well, China. As the world has evolved, and along with it the nature of war and civil wars, so, too, has Catholic peace-building. Peace-building is precisely that mode of conflict transformation that strives to comprehend the long duration of a conflict—its full temporal, trans-generational range—and forge strategies commensurate to the deep historical rootedness of the inhumane personal, social, and political relationships fueling the deadly violence.

Peace-building is comprehensive in a second sense, in that it strives to address all phases of these protracted conflicts, within which pre-violence, violence, and post-violence periods are difficult to differentiate. Accordingly, violence prevention, early warning, conflict resolution, negotiated settlements, redress of grievances, human rights protection, restorative justice and the deployment of other instruments found in the peacebuilder’s tool kit may occur simultaneously, or in overlapping phases. “Peace-building” occurs not after the shooting has stopped and the latest peace talks are rumored or underway, but in between and during systematic and recurrent episodes of deadly violence.

Moreover, the peace-building community, like conflict itself, has become catholic in the sense of all-inclusive, permeating the whole of society and societies, incorporating an astonishing broad range of actors located in diverse settings. The various peace-building “tools,” methods, and dynamics to be discussed at this conference are deployed and practiced by people living in the local communities, those most directly victimized by the violence; by national elites in the churches, government, business, education and other sectors; and, by diplomats, policymakers, scholars, international lawyers, religious leaders, and other professionals operating at a geographical remove from the grassroots.
Peace-building, if it is to comprehend all sectors of society and engage all the relevant partners, must make use of all viable means of transforming relationships toward a sustainable peace. Msgr. Héctor Fabio underscores the comprehensive nature of the Conference of Bishops’ platform for a ‘National Permanent Peace Policy’ for Colombia:

The basic concept is the participation of all sectors in the development and implementation of a peace policy. Building peace after decades of confrontation and millions of victims requires a participatory process and pedagogy in all spheres of society. Both the participatory process and the pedagogy that must accompany it have gradually been defined through thousands of encounters and community experiences.

In its efforts to promote citizen participation and a peace pedagogy, the Church recognizes that there are various scenarios for peace building; these are not separate compartments, however, but are closely related. There is the scenario of negotiation of the armed conflict, in which government sectors, organizations outside the law, other institutions and facilitators participate. Another scenario involves the formation and strengthening of organized civil society with a capacity for dialogue in the face of the multiple conflicts affecting society. And at least a third scenario involves building structures that guarantee social justice and peaceful coexistence from the grassroots. People involved in ministry face the challenge of establishing dialogue to transform the way in which the deepest aspects of relationships of coexistence are expressed and symbolized.

The focus of peace-building, is not just on the public policies that are a major concern of Catholic social ethics, but also on a range of other actors, relationships, and practices at all levels of society that are integral to healing broken societies and building and sustaining a just peace.”

At the heart of peace-building is the intentional building of relationships at every level of society dedicated to nonviolent transformation of conflict, the pursuit of social justice and the creation of cultures of sustainable peace.

The Catholic Contribution to Peace-building. If peace-building is small-c catholic, how is it big-C Catholic? My colleagues have warned me against over-emphasizing the theological unity or summarability (ability to summarize) of what Rosemary Haughton called “the Catholic thing”—the distinctive theological-anthropological worldview inculcated by the Catholic Church in its members. And of course this is an important caution regarding a 2,000 year old tradition with Augustinian and Thomistic schools, prophets and mystics, Jesuits and Sisters of Mercy, etc., all of which have relevance for peacemaking. Our task indeed is to tease out various strands in the great Christian tradition that have contributed and could contribute to or even shape the Church’s peace-building mission.

My fellow authors have also warned me against underemphasizing the distinctive, even unique gifts other Christians and non-Christians bring to the task of building peace. This, too, is a wise
caution, and to respond to it substantively would require a full study of the impressive range of religious and spiritual traditions and communities that welcome Catholics as their partners in the work.

More realistically, we are obliged to set about the task of rethinking Catholic self-descriptions such as “we prize an anthropological and sacramental worldview” and Christian narratives of creation-fall-redemption in such a way as to make them accessible and “useful” to the practices of peace-building and, thereby, to our partners in peace-building.

All that being said, we did decide five years ago to call ourselves the Catholic Peace-building Network, and to justify that decision not only in purely practical terms—how could we possibly include anyone else, given this crowd?—but in substantive ones as well.

The claim, then, is not that “only Catholics” have, say, a sacramental imagination, or a commitment to good governance based on an ethics of personal responsibility and moral accountability, or a fierce dedication to protecting inalienable human dignity, the sanctity of human life, and the human rights flowing from same. Such a claim, in addition to being false, would also violate the principle of catholicity, by which the Church acknowledges the presence of the Spirit in all people who live according to God’s will and who therefore defend human dignity (Lumen Gentium).

Rather, the three-fold task is (1) to lift up and consider the distinctive ways in which Catholics theologize about and reflect ethically upon goods and desired ends held in common by other Christians, other believers and nonbelievers; (2) to identify and name those theological and ethical convictions, principles and priorities that are themselves of Catholic provenance, or embraced and incarnated in a recognizable and distinctive manner by Catholics seeing the world through Catholic lenses, that is, through the sacramental, analogical, and incarnational imagination; and (3) to explore the ways in which these Catholic convictions, principles and priorities find expression in Catholic peace-building.

What do we gain from this exercise in unearthing and analyzing Catholicity in peace-building? Let me reveal one secret right away, day one, talk one—one not-so-hidden agenda item: the Catholic Peace-building Network… hopes to help others nudge forward the rich body of teaching known collectively as the Catholic Social Tradition to develop doctrines that clarify and bring into harmony with other doctrines, the lessons we are learning from the actual practice of faithful Catholics seeking justice and peace in Jesus’ name on the ground, in conflict settings… Isn’t it about time for a papal encyclical on Reconciliation?

What, then, are some basic elements of Catholic and Christian theological and ethical reflection that seem appropriate to the task of interpreting and reinforcing the agency of peacebuilders—
and that may also challenge the Church to revisit, retrieve, and update its own articulation of the
great themes of the Christian tradition?

From Great Lakes Africa, we hear the cry of alienation, of families and tribes and churches set in
internal conflict, the social fabric frayed beyond recognition by violence and betrayal. At the
heart of peace-building, we say first, is relatio. Christians confess that God as God is in
relationship, three in one, bound together by love and self-gift. In order to succeed in the
practice, peacebuilders must build sustainable human relationships at every level of society –
between local ethnic and religious groups, between political parties and governments, between
faith-based groups and nongovernmental organizations, between local and international offices
or agencies dedicated to conflict transformation, and so on. What does Christian theological
reflection on shared life grounded in God have to offer us as we theorize and practice peace-
building?

Likewise, the view from Mindanao is rich with implications for our theologians and ethicists.
The meaning, status and order of priority of inter-religious dialogue and collaboration in that
setting both reflects and challenges the Catholic Christian worldview – based as it is on the
conviction that because God became human every person is a child of God made in God’s
image. Is the Church today living up to its incarnational humanism and mystical body theology?
Mindanao also poses the thorny but pressing question of the status of political theologies and
theologies of liberation within Catholic orthodoxy as currently presented.

In a setting as complex and seemingly hopeless as Colombia, what does a Christian theology of
hope have to offer – and how is such a theology refined in the crucible of the Colombian
experience? To say that Catholic peace-building is sacramental means, for us, that grace – God’s
own life, shared by us – informs and shapes our encounter with our neighbors in need in every
concrete situation, so that the work of justice and peacemaking contains a depth dimension
beyond – and undergirding – the visible and material. Through the created world we encounter
the invisible realm of spirit in a transformative way. Catholics seek, and celebrate, tangible signs,
symbols and rituals well beyond the core seven sacraments and the intangibles of grace and the
realm of the spirit. A sacramental imagination, that is, sees the created world as the arena of
God’s saving action; Catholic anthropology, by giving human freedom a decisive role in
responding to the divine offer of redemption, calls Catholics to collaborate with God, so to
speak, in healing hearts, establishing justice, making peace – and thereby ushering in the
kingdom of God.

But these are textbook expressions, unrefined by reflection on praxis. Does this type of
“deductive catechesis” – theology from “on high” – find resonance on the ground, in the daily
interactions of Colombian Catholics? How must it be re-cast? How does a “theology of hope”
respond to the concrete situation in Colombia?
In short, the question is this: Can a Catholic religious imagination shape the attitudes, goals, and judgments of peacebuilders – in each of these three settings, and in many others – who are enjoined by the tradition to approach their work with utter confidence that the building of the just and peaceable kingdom is God’s work – and that God has prevailed and will prevail? To what extent do Catholic peacebuilders fit the heady profile sketched above? I would suggest that the answer is: “to a considerable extent.” But I conclude with the following thesis:

Part One: Catholics working for peace in local communities and regions of the world – particularly in the regions of central Africa, southern Philippines and Colombia – have become quite expert in local peace-building, that is, in awakening local partners to, and empowering them with, the concepts, tools and practices of nonviolent conflict transformation and relationship-building that leads to the creation and continuing viability of zones of cultures of peace. What they are less successful in achieving is peace-building that engages players and societal levels beyond the local and regional.

Part two of the thesis: Catholic peacebuilders in Asia, Africa and Latin America do “less well” in making their peace-building truly strategic—global as well as local— for two reasons. First, potential partners in the church, in government and among the fuller range of NGOs are largely unaware of or indifferent to the efforts of the therefore relatively isolated local peacebuilders. Second, this weakness in the transnational network of peace-building owes in part to the lack of integration of Catholic peace-building concepts in Catholic as well as secular education (including theology) and in transnational civil society.

CLOSING PRAYER

Extinguish the candles and return them to the circular platter.

As we end this session, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.

Together: Prayer of St. Francis:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let us sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon,
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is darkness, light,
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, Grant that we may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console,
To be understood, as to understand,
To be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born
To eternal life.

Scripture phrase from beginning repeated by three different voices

“Let justice surge like waters, and righteousness like an unfailing stream (Amos5:24).”
Amen.
SESSION ELEVEN
A Force More Powerful: The Power of Nonviolent Action

OPENING PRAYER

Select three readers to repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between.

Scripture Reading: “God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good (Genesis 1:31).”

Light eleven candles and place on the map: in the group’s location, Europe, the former Yugoslavia, the Great Lakes region of East Africa, Southeast Asia, the location of a nearby military base or weapons site, the Middle East, Japan, Russia and China, Latin America, and South Asia.

Readings for this Session:

Catholic Social Teaching on War and Peace

When the people of Eastern Europe tore down the Berlin Wall in 1989, they not only challenged a system of oppression through their nonviolent witness, they inspired a major development in the teachings of the Church and brought nonviolence into the public square as a legitimate and effective witness for justice and peace – just as the civil rights and farmworker movements in the U.S. did a generation ago, and people across the Middle East and North Africa are doing today as part of the “Arab Spring.”

Our firm conviction is that by bearing witness to the Gospel call to Just Peacemaking for Our Time, we may truly put into practice these inspiring words of John Paul II:

“It is by uniting our own suffering for the sake of truth and freedom to the sufferings of Christ on the cross that we are able to accomplish the miracle of peace and are thus in a position to discern the often narrow path between the cowardice which gives in to evil and the violence which, under the illusion of fighting evil, only makes it worse.”

28 Centesimus Annus, A Hundred Years of Catholic Social Teaching, 25.
Reading 2 - An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace

12. **Living the journey.** Just Peace is a journey into God’s purpose for humanity and all creation, trusting that God will ‘guide our feet into the way of peace’ (Luke 1:79).

13. **The journey is difficult.** We recognize that we must face up to truth along the way. We come to realize how often we deceive ourselves and are complicit with violence. We learn to give up looking for justifications of what we have done, and train ourselves in the practice of justice. This means confessing our wrong-doings, giving and receiving forgiveness and learning to reconcile with each other.

14. **The sins of violence and war divide communities deeply.** Those who have stereotyped and demonized their adversaries will need long-term support and accompaniment in order to work through their condition and be healed. To reconcile with enemies and to restore broken relationships is a lengthy process as well as a necessary goal. In a process of reconciliation there are no longer powerful and powerless, superior and inferior, mighty and lowly. Both victims and victimizers are transformed.

15. **Peace agreements are often fragile, temporary, and inadequate.** Places where peace is declared may still be filled with hatred. Repairing the damage of war and violence may take longer than the conflict that caused it. But what exists of peace along the way, though imperfect, is a promise of greater things to come.

16. **We journey together.** The church divided about peace, and churches torn by conflict, have little credibility as witnesses or workers for peace. The churches’ power to work for and witness to peace depends on finding a common purpose in the service of peace despite differences in ethnic and national identity, and even in doctrine and church order.

17. **We travel as a community,** sharing an ethic and practice of peace that includes forgiveness and love of enemies, active nonviolence and respect for others, gentleness and mercy. We strive to give of our lives in solidarity with others and for the common good. We pursue peace in prayer, asking God for discernment as we go and for the fruits of the Spirit along the way.

18. **In loving communities of faith that journey together, there are many hands to unburden the weary.** One may have a witness of hope in the face of despair; another, a generous love for the needy. People who have suffered much find the courage to keep on living despite tragedy and loss. The power of the gospel enables them to leave behind even the unimaginable burdens of personal and collective sin, of anger, bitterness and hatred, which are the legacy of violence and war. Forgiveness does not erase the past; but when we look back we may well see that memories were healed, burdens were set aside, and traumas were shared with others and with God. We are able to travel on.
19. **The journey is inviting.** With time and dedication to the cause, more and more people hear the call to become peacemakers. They come from wide circles within the church, from other communities of faith, and from society at large. They work to overcome divisions of race and religion, nation and class; learn to stand with the impoverished; or take up the difficult ministry of reconciliation. Many discover that peace cannot be sustained without caring for creation and cherishing God’s miraculous handiwork.

20. **Sharing the road with our neighbors, we learn to move from defending what is ours towards living generous, open lives. We find our feet as peacemakers.** We discover people from different walks of life. We gain strength in working with them, acknowledging our mutual vulnerability and affirming our common humanity. The other is no longer a stranger or an adversary but a fellow human being with whom we share both the road and the journey.

**PART 2 - ACTIVITY**

**FILM: A Force More Powerful**

Note: Depending on your interests and experiences, participants may choose up to three episodes from two the two discs in this DVD (87 minutes each). Disc One looks at Gandhi’s nonviolent struggle for Indian independence, the U.S. civil rights movement in the 1960s, and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. Disc Two looks at Danish resistance to the German occupation in World War II, the Solidarity movement in Poland, and nonviolent resistance to military dictatorship in Chile.

*A Force More Powerful* looks at how nonviolent resistance overcame oppression and authoritarian rule. It documents how millions of people during the last century, which was the most violent in history, chose to oppose the forces of brutality with nonviolent means and how they won. In South Africa in 1907, Mohandas Gandhi led Indian immigrants in a nonviolent fight for rights denied them by white rulers. The power that Gandhi pioneered has been used by underdogs on every continent and in every decade of the 20th century, to fight for their rights and freedom. “When people decide they want to be free… there is nothing that can stop them.” – Desmond Tutu

Discussion Questions for the Film:

- What touched you most about this film?
- What kind of perspective do these classic nonviolent struggles of the 20th century offer us today? Do you see the “Arab Spring” and “Occupy” movements in the U.S. as a continuation of this tradition?
- If nations can spend trillions of dollars on armaments and wars, why is it so difficult to invest this amount on development and peace?
CLOSING PRAYER

Extinguish the candles and return them to the circular platter.

As we end this session, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.

Leader: Prayer of a People Born to Longing

Our home is not what it might and will be. While life in God’s hands is irrepressible, peace does not yet reign. The principalities and powers, though not sovereign, still enjoy their victories, and we will be restless and broken until peace prevails. Thus our peace building will of necessity criticize, denounce, advocate, and resist as well as proclaim, empower, console, reconcile, and heal. Peacemakers will speak against and speak for, tear down and build up, lament and celebrate, grieve and rejoice. Until our longing joins our belonging in the consummation of all things in God, the work of peace will continue as the flickering of sure grace.

From An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace (42).

Scripture phrase from beginning repeated by three different voices

“God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good (Genesis 1:31).”
SESSION TWELVE
Building the Beloved Community and
Renewing Creation

Goals of the Session:

• To renew our commitment to peacemaking as “a call to conversion, to change our
hearts, to reject violence, and to love our enemies.”
• To deepen our understanding of peacemaking with respect to the renewal of God’s
creation.
• To deepen our appreciation for the history and witness of JustFaith Ministries and Pax
Christi USA as important contributors to the Church’s witness to justice and peace.
• To "commission," bless, and send forth the participants as peacemakers.

Readings for this session:

First Half: Just Peacemaking at Home
• An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace.
• Called to Be Peacemakers: The Challenge and Promise of Peace in the Twenty-First
Century: “Conclusions: Invitation and Call to Become Peacemakers.”

Second Half: Just Peacemaking Abroad
• “My Role as Peacemaker” – by Kevin McBride, Aotearoa, New Zealand, Pax Christi
International Executive Committee.
• “People of Faith Speak Out on Global Climate Change” – Pax Christi USA statement.
• “Nuclear Power and the Common Good: Survivors and Bishops Speak Out” – by Kerry
Danner-McDonald, educationforjustice.org, Center of Concern, September 2011.

Other reading:
• Engaging the World Together. A Discernment Process for Next Steps, from JustFaith
• Session 12 - Attachment A: Thinking About a Covenant.
OPENING PRAYER

Three readers repeat slowly, with a few seconds pause between.

*Scripture Reading:* “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you (John 14:27).”

Light twelve candles and place on the map: in the group’s location, Europe, the former Yugoslavia, the Great Lakes region of East Africa, Southeast Asia, the location of a nearby military base or weapons site, the Middle East, Japan, Russia and China, Latin America, South Asia, and our planet.

*Leader:* The following reading is from *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace,* a Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the 10th Anniversary of bishops’ pastoral, *The Challenge of Peace.*

*Leader:* We must “proceed resolutely toward outlawing war completely and come to cultivate peace as a supreme good to which all programs and all strategies must be subordinated.” We’ll read excerpts from *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace:* “Concluding Commitments – Blessed Are the Peacemakers.”

*Reader 1:* As we reaffirm the Church’s teachings on war and peace, we insist that the world community must urgently search for effective ways to move beyond the violence of war and terrorism to settle scores or to defend what is precious. We need new policies, new structures, and new attitudes to resolve disputes and address injustice... Some will find this goal a pious hope or utopian dream. No doubt, finding ways to move the world beyond war will be a complex, demanding, and difficult struggle. But it is a task that must be pursued by all who take faith seriously and who honestly assess the human, social, and moral costs of continuing conflict and bloodshed. As history’s bloodiest century ends, there should be no question that, in the words of Pope John Paul II, we must “proceed resolutely toward outlawing war completely and come to cultivate peace as a supreme good to which all programs and all strategies must be subordinated.”

*Reader 2:* At its heart, today’s call to peacemaking is a call to conversion, to change our hearts, to reject violence, to love our enemies. We will not fashion new policies until we repudiate old thinking... Changes we could barely imagine ten years ago have taken place before our eyes. Without violence, the hope, courage, and power of ordinary people
have brought down walls, restored freedoms, toppled governments, and changed the world. For believers, hope is not a matter of optimism but a resource for action, a source of strength in demanding causes. For peacemakers, hope is the indispensable virtue. This hope, together with our response to the call to conversion, must be rooted in God’s promises and nourished by prayer and penance.

Leader: A Prayer for Global Restoration

All: Good and Gracious God,
Source of all life
All creation is charged with your Divine Energy.

Reader 1: Ignite your Spark within us,
That we may know ourselves
As truly human and holy,
Irrevocably part of the Web of life.

All creation
Each star and every flower,
Each drop of water and every person,
Each and every atom, down to its very electrons,
Explodes with the revelation of your Sacred Mystery.

Our minds alone cannot fathom such splendor.
Our hearts can only respond in awe, praise and gratitude.

Reader 2: Forgive us, we pray, our ignorance
And insecurities which
Blind us to your Thumbprint writ large,
Deafen us to the sacred space between two heartbeats,
Prompt us in arrogance to demand and dominate,
Numb us to the destruction we’ve caused,
Hold us hostage to “either-or” thinking and living.

Reader 3: May we always walk gently upon this earth,
In right relationship,
Nurtured by your Love,
Taking only what we need,
Giving back to the earth in gratitude,
Sharing what we have,
Honoring all with reverence,  
Reconciling and healing,  
Mindful of those who will come after,  
Recognizing our proper place as part of,  
Not apart from, your creation.

_All:_  
Grant us the strength and courage, we pray,  
For such radical transformation into your Kin-dom.  
Then we, too, with the very stones will shout,  
“HOSANNA”

Prayer by Michelle Balek, OSF, Pax Christi USA

**READINGS PART 1 – Just Peacemaking at Home**

As you read, consider this:  
- Share your vision of the Beloved Community. How does it look in your community, in our nation, in the world?

**Reading 1 - An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace**

In their 2011 Ecumenical Call to Just Peace, the World Council of Churches builds on the experiences and insights gained from the “Decade to Overcome Violence, 2001 – 2010,” and invites Christians to commit themselves to the Way of Just Peace.

33. **For peace with the earth.** Human beings are to respect and protect creation. But greed at many levels, self-centeredness and a belief in unlimited growth have brought exploitation and destruction on the earth and its creatures. The cries of the poor and vulnerable echo in the groans of the earth. Excessive consumption of fossil fuels and other limited resources is doing violence to people and the planet. Climate change as a consequence of human lifestyles poses a global threat to just peace. Global warming, the rise of sea levels and the increasing frequency and intensity of droughts and floods affect especially the most vulnerable populations in the world. Indigenous people are exemplary in sustainable living and, along with inhabitants of coral atolls and impoverished coastal communities, they are among those who contribute the least to global warming. Yet they are the ones who will suffer the most.

34. 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.

35. Church members and parishes around the world must self-critically assess their environmental impact. Individually and in communities, Christians need to learn to live in ways that allow the entire earth to thrive. Many more “eco-congregations” and “green” churches are needed locally. Much ecumenical advocacy is needed globally for the implementation of international agreements and protocols among governments and businesses in order to ensure a more inhabitable earth not only for us but also for all creatures and for future generations.

Reading 2 - Called to be Peacemakers

Conclusion: Invitation and Call to Become Peacemakers Excerpted from Pax Christi USA’s 2008 document, Called to Be Peacemakers.

Pax Christi USA uses the framework of four priority areas to organize its work: (1) the Spirituality of Nonviolence; (2) Economic and Interracial Justice; (3) Disarmament and Demilitarization; and (4) Human Rights and Global Restoration.

The responses we received during the discernment process of the People’s Peace Initiative reaffirm a commitment to these four priorities. We also found that they adhere closely to the challenges—militarism, poverty, and racism—identified by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as the forms of oppression that must be overcome for the beloved community to truly become a reality. A summary of our conclusions follows, as well as considerations for action.

1. Abolishing War and Promoting a Just Peace
This century began on a note of optimism with the beginning of the Third Millennium, but we soon faced the grave challenge of international terrorism with the attacks of September 11, 2001. While we unequivocally condemn those terrorist attacks, and all forms of terrorism, we believe the “War on Terror” was the wrong framework for a just and effective response. The war on terror served to polarize the world into “friends” and “enemies,” squandered the sympathy of the nations of the world for our country, led our nation to justify a war of option as a “preventive war” and torture as “enhanced interrogation,” and led to military expenditures for two wars that will exceed $3 trillion.

We believe that our peacemaking efforts must address the very roots of war and terrorism: the scandal of poverty, institutional racism, and a permanent war economy. We know that we must resume action on the challenges laid out in the 1983 bishops’ peace pastoral and the ten-year anniversary statement. It seems particularly important to seize this new moment for nuclear disarmament by working for dramatic and fundamental changes in U.S.
nuclear weapons policy and building momentum toward an international treaty to outlaw nuclear weapons once and for all.

We need support from the Church to live out the peacemaking to which we are called.
We must teach nonviolence and social justice in our seminaries as well as in lay settings...
We must speak up for peace in words that are not ambiguous...
We must all live out the words we share in Mass each week: “Peace be with you.”
We must not let them be simply spoken words. We must give them life.
If we truly believe Christ’s words, we will believe peace is possible and we will work for it.
Living the Gospel means working for peace.
And we take heart in Jesus’ words to us—“Do not be afraid.”
The Church has power when it works together. If we collectively decide to act for peace, it will make a difference.

We are aware that it is important to redefine security and promote a vision of inclusive security. We urge our nation’s leaders to seek a new direction in our country’s relations with our global neighbors—one that emphasizes diplomacy, multilateral cooperation, and interreligious dialogue to build greater understanding and acceptance of differing traditions and aspirations.
And we recognize that it is essential for us, as Church, to elevate a clear moral voice to call for an end to all war as a means to resolving conflict. War truly is a defeat for humanity. We must lead a global movement to abolish war, just as those of a previous generation led the movement to abolish slavery, and we must promote peace-making, peace-building, and peacekeeping alternatives to establish justice and the conditions for enduring peace.

2. Eradicating Poverty and Promoting a Just and Sustainable Global Economy
We affirm that justice is the foundation of peace, as our Catholic tradition has taught us. Millions of people around the globe and in our country have been deprived of justice, and for that reason many exist in a state of poverty, often times better characterized as misery. Poverty is “institutionalized violence” and, as such, denies the human dignity of those who are poor while it destroys the global common good.

As Catholics, we believe the Church is called to work for the eradication of poverty, both in the United States and globally. “Poverty in the United States is a moral and social wound in the soul of our country.”
In terms of those who are poor around the globe, “the special place of the poor in this moral perspective means that meeting the basic needs of the millions of deprived and hungry people in the world must be the number one objective of international policy.”

The past thirty years have witnessed the reversal of the federal government’s commitment to the poor and the dismantling of the social contract put in motion by the New Deal and the Great Society. Trickle-down economics and free-market globalization strategies have led to greater economic disparities and decreasing quality of life for those who are poor. Deregulation and corporate greed have led to the collapse of financial markets, putting in jeopardy the global economy, and forcing people across the globe into a state of grave economic insecurity. “All people have a right to life, food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, education, and employment.’ . . . Society as a whole, acting through public and private institutions, has the moral responsibility to enhance human dignity and protect human rights. . . . government has an essential responsibility in this area.”

We appreciate and understand that the Church is in a unique position to lift its moral voice to call for a bold restructuring of an economic system that currently puts profits over people and to challenge scandalous military spending in the face of massive human need. We also believe that given global warming and our nation’s over-reliance on non-renewable energy sources—a dependency that contributes to the degradation of the air, water, and land and creates conflicts over resources—care for creation and global restoration must be essential elements of our work for peace.

3. Dismantling Racism and Promoting Racial Equality and Diversity
We know that to end war and poverty, and to achieve peace and ensure justice, we must work untiringly to end racism in all of its forms, from individual prejudice to institutional racism and systemic racial oppression.

Racism is both a root cause and a consequence of war. It is intimately linked to poverty, as a disproportionate number of people living in poverty, in the United States as well as throughout the world, are people of color. The increasing anti-immigrant sentiment coupled with the post 9-11 attacks on South Asian, Arab, and Muslim communities are particularly alarming faces of racism that have fomented a culture of fear.

From colonial times to the present, racism has been intimately linked to white privilege. White privilege means “there are opportunities which are afforded Whites that People of Color simply do not share.”
White privilege shifts the focus from how people of color are harmed by racism to how white people derive advantages because of it.
“White privilege is the result of social policies, institutions, and procedures that deliberately created a system that advanced the welfare of white Americans and impeded the opportunities of persons of color.”

We acknowledge that we must renew our commitment to racial equality as a national goal and priority.

We must support public policies that directly enhance the quality of life for people of color, such as comprehensive criminal justice reform and comprehensive immigration reform, as well as progressive affirmative action policies in education and employment and equal access to affordable housing and affordable healthcare.

For people who are white, the key to dismantling racism and renouncing white privilege begins with “cultivating a stance of proactive solidarity and strong partnerships with communities of color . . . as a step toward overcoming our blindness to racial privilege and becoming better advocates for racial justice in both our church and society.”

We hope that we, as Church, will courageously stand up to the forces promoting fear, hatred, and division in our communities and stand with those who are being blamed, victimized, or oppressed.

4. Building the Beloved Community and Promoting the Global Common Good

Finally, we are committed to building the foundations of the beloved community. We affirm that we have heard the cries of our people, whose suffering has pierced our hearts and whose aspirations have filled us with hope. With them and with people of faith throughout the world, we seek a world at peace, where the dignity of each person, racial equality, social and economic justice, and the integrity of the whole creation are at the heart of our peacemaking efforts.

We expect to continue to build right relationships within our communities and with all peoples of the world, reaching out to communities of different backgrounds and to the most marginalized sectors of our society, and promoting cross-cultural dialogue and cooperation. The globalization of solidarity, a just and sustainable global economy, and global restoration of the planet must be central to these aims.

We oppose violence in all of its forms, be it the institutionalized violence of poverty and racism or the violence perpetrated by terrorists or by war.

Peace can only be achieved by guaranteeing human security for all peoples.

We lift up the impassioned plea of Pope Paul VI on October 4 – the Feast Day of St. Francis – in 1965 to the General Assembly of the United Nations when he cried out: “War no more, war never again!” And we re-echo the cry of Pope John Paul II that “war is always a defeat for humanity.”

We are people of faith; we believe that another world is possible – a world without war – and we commit ourselves and our Church to helping birth it.
As Pax Christi USA, together with the Catholic organizations that participated in the Peoples’ Peace Initiative and with all people of good will, we affirm our “essential vocation of peacemaking,” a vision for peace and inclusive human security grounded in the Gospel. As individuals, as a Church, as a nation, we are “called to something new,” called to be peacemakers, and called to resolutely face together the challenges and promise of peace in the twenty-first century.

This peace is the foundation of the beloved community to which we are called, as brothers and sisters in Christ. This is the invitation and the call we have received—to be peacemakers. This is the promise of peace with justice, biblical shalom that is God’s gift of peace to all peoples and all nations of the earth.

As you read, consider these questions:

- Many experts say we have no more than ten years to make a difference with regard to global warming—ten years to offer hope for all Earth’s peoples or witness the end of life as we have known it. What can we do in light of the devastating effects of our continued reliance on fossil fuels and the growing crisis of climate change?
- Nuclear energy is often described as a “clean” solution to the problem of carbon emissions affecting climate change. At the same time, its risks of nuclear radiation to human life and the environment are at least comparable to the risks of climate change. What alternative sources of energy ought we to pursue?
- Do you think that the opinions and survivors of those most affected by climate change and environmental disasters should be given special priority in debate concerning the role of nuclear energy?

Reading 1 – “My Role as a Peacemaker”
Kevin McBride, Aotearoa-New Zealand, Pax Christi International Executive Committee.

As a peacemaker I walk in solidarity with all who are in conflict wherever I may meet them – across all the relationships that touch our lives – with Atua/God, with Tangata/People and with Whenua/Land.

This understanding grew out of experiences over recent years with indigenous people, particularly the Maori of Aotearoa-New Zealand. I have found that their spirituality is much more holistic and inclusive than the rather anthropocentric spirituality with which I was raised.

As a peacemaker, my role is to acknowledge, restore and enhance the intrinsic dignity of all that is and to affirm the interdependent relationships among all that is.
A key element in this mahi (work) is what Maori call *Rongo* and Thich Nhat Hanh calls *mindfulness* – a high level of sensitivity to one’s environment or the context of ones being. One Maori friend tells of hearing the screams of the kauri snails when the forest burned; others can smell a storm coming or note the flight of birds indicating weather changes or perceive the presence of fish at sea.

This also relates to an appreciation of *identity*, the unique being of every living person and creature, each having their own *whakapapa* or line of descent, incorporating the handed-down history of families as well as the links with land and other physical contexts.

I have found myself using (coining?) the word *redeemability* in an attempt to verbalise the essential worth and potential of each person and perhaps, of each situation – the openness of each and every person to the fullness of life. Maori use the term *mana* as potential to power, the capacity arising from ones intrinsic human dignity (*tapu*) to achieve the fullness of being which is the goal of life. When the dignity of a person, community, element in nature or ‘law of God’ is violated, the mana and tapu of the violated is weakened or diminished and the harmonic relationships of the universe are thrown out of balance and must be restored.

The role of the peacemaker is to bring about this restoration through the exercise of truth, justice and love. The process involves the principles which underpin the methodology of Pax Christi: prayer, study and action. It requires careful consideration of or meditation on the proper relationships which should exist between God, People and Land (prayer); an investigation of the violation which has occurred (study); and a process to restore the victims and the perpetrators (action) so that the dignity and potential of everyone and everything involved is re-established.

Yesterday, I worked with the teaching staff of an elementary-level Catholic school to renew their participation in the commitment of our diocese to the living out of our covenantal Treaty of Waitangi (New Zealand’s founding document); this morning, I led a group of 10 people in our parish who are participating in the World Council of Churches’ Week of Prayer for Israel/Palestine; later, my wife Barbara and I discussed how we might defuse a spat that has arisen among members of our Parish Council. Tomorrow …

All of these are aspects of my life as a Pax Christi peace-maker; all involve the restoration and enhancement of the *tapu* or human dignity of those who have had or feel they have had that core of their life violated.
Reading 2 – “People of Faith Speak Out on Global Climate Change”

Pax Christi USA official statement from May 2007.

As people of faith, we return to the creation story in the book of Genesis and echo God’s response at the end of each day: “It is very good.” As people of conscience, we are compelled to speak out on the devastating effects of our continued reliance on fossil fuels and the growing crisis of climate change.

There is no time to argue about the reality of climate change. It is here. Average temperatures have already risen, glaciers are melting, and the sea level continues to encroach. Over the past decade alone, over 2.5 billion people have been impacted and economic losses have exceeded $690 billion. Climate change has been responsible for nearly 500,000 deaths—95% of these casualties occurred in poor countries. (1) Rising sea levels, projected to displace over 100 million people, will create a humanitarian crisis of unparalleled proportions. (2) Many experts say we have no more than ten years to make a difference—ten years to offer hope for all Earth’s peoples or witness the end of life as we have known it.

As people of hope, we are confident that with God’s grace we can accomplish the critical goal of reducing our carbon emissions significantly enough to mitigate the effects of global climate change and act as responsible stewards of creation. We accept the challenge that changing our habits and lifestyles will take tremendous will and effort, but our love for the whole community of life on Earth will provide us the courage and strength to act for the universal common good. As people of justice, we assert that Earth is a gift to all. The effects of global climate change are already borne by the most vulnerable through displacement and shortages of land, food, and water, leading to increased poverty and desperation.

As people of peace, we acknowledge that the climate crisis exacerbates violence and war among God’s people. Our reliance on fossil fuels already is fueling conflicts from Iraq to Colombia. While people struggle for diminishing land, food, and water, conflicts will increase and, without a fundamental break from this reliance on fossil fuels, the worst effects of climate change will become accelerated.

Hearing the call to prayer and action, we commit to:

- pray and meet with family, friends, and neighbors in the next several months to learn and incorporate into our daily lives practices to reduce our carbon uses and emissions;
- encourage our neighborhood schools and community institutions to teach and act on cutting carbon emissions;
- support bold action by the international community to drastically alter the global economy’s reliance on fossil fuels and cut our carbon emissions;
- advocate for effective action by the U.S. government to join international community efforts in adopting and pursuing goals for reduction of carbon emissions by as much as 80% by 2050 while simultaneously pursuing a dramatic and sustained increase in funding for the development of alternative energy sources;
- call on the international community to establish a Global Climate Change Fund to assist those communities already bearing the burden of the climate change crisis and prepare for future challenges to communities that will soon begin to bear that burden.

What does Earth ask of us? To fulfill our unique role as humans, as stewards of the common good, and to act as responsible members of the whole Earth community, ensuring that the whole of life flourishes, even as the needs of all are met.

Reading 3 – “Nuclear Energy and the Common Good: Survivors and Bishops Speak Out” by Kerry Danner-McDonald, educationforjustice.org, Center of Concern, September 2011.

It has been roughly six months since the 9.0 magnitude earthquake, one of the largest of the century wracked Japan. Over 15,000 people died, 6,000 people were injured and over 125,000 buildings were severely damaged or destroyed in the disaster. The quake caused malfunctions at four of Japan’s fifty-plus nuclear power plants, compounding human suffering with airborne radiation, requiring limited evacuations, and increasing anxiety.

The quake and resulting problems with the nuclear energy plants have spurred many Japanese, including a Catholic Bishop and survivors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, to question if the benefits of nuclear energy outweigh the risks.

Kyoto Bishop Otsuka Calls for Discernment

Bishop Paul Yoshinao Otsuka, one of ten of Japanese bishops participating in annual commemorations in Hiroshima on August 6, called for greater discernment regarding world reliance on nuclear energy. In an annual letter on peace to Japanese Catholics, Bishop Otsuka reflected on Pope Benedict VI’s message for peace and “the close relationship between building peace and protecting the environment.” Benedict’s words encouraged Otsuka to consider the incident at Fukushima Number One Atomic Power Plant. Otsuka wrote:

“Earthquakes and tsunami are natural disasters, but accidents at nuclear power stations are man-made. Even as science and technology are products of mankind’s God-given creativity, the means to solve all the problems which have been brought about by the development of atomic energy lie within the human heart. We need, then, to discern about whether atomic energy, which threatens mankind and the environment, comes within the acceptable limits of our legitimate use of science and technology. Japan, which is the only country in the world to have been attacked
with atomic weapons, now stands in danger of becoming a country damaged because of atomic electricity generation.”

Otsuka, noting that contemporary consumption-production economic models are unsustainable, urged the people of Japan to limit nuclear energy, research clean air, conserve electricity, and choose a simple life style. Bishop Otsuka’s concerns resonated with others in Japan, notably those who know the dangers of nuclear radiation better than anyone else: survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

**Atomic Bombing Victims, Nagasaki Mayor, Raise Concerns Over Nuclear Power**

While the group of survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki continues to dwindle as they die from old age and radiation-related disease, many travel throughout Japan and the world educating people about the effects of nuclear weapons and promoting peace. Sixty-six years ago, the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima (August 6, 1945) and Nagasaki (August 9, 1945), Japan.

Roughly a quarter million people died from the immediate impact of the bombs or within weeks from the effects of radiation. Those who survived are called the *Hibakusha*. The reactor leaks at the nuclear plant have caused many of the *Hibakusha* to speak out against Japan’s reliance on nuclear power to supply its energy.

The mayor of Hiroshima, Kazumi Matsui, also chose to question the prevalent pro-nuclear energy stance of Japan during an anniversary of the bombing in August. In a consensus-driven country with big energy demands, the public questioning of nuclear energy cannot be underestimated.

**If Back-up Safety Measures Fail**

During an emergency, such as an earthquake, safety mechanisms are supposed to trigger a shut-down of nuclear reactors. However, reactors need time to cool down safely. The Tokai Nuclear Power Plant’s back-up cooling system was working properly for the three days after the quake, but then its diesel generators malfunctioned. Luckily, it had one additional pump that continued to work. The Onagawa Nuclear Power Plant reported a fire and shut down the plant as a precaution.

Two others plants, Fukushima I and Fukushima II in northern Japan, experienced more substantial problems. While the reactors shutdown, the earthquake and Tsunami waves at Fukushima I and II wiped out the diesel back-up cooling system resulting in a radiation leak. Residents were evacuated within a 12- and 6-mile radius respectively. The Japanese Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency measured radiation levels outside the plant at eight times the normal level; inside levels reached 1000 times the normal level.
The high levels of radiation have caused problems with access to safe drinking water and soil contamination. Japanese officials continue to check fruits and vegetables as food products in several areas in Japan have shown evidence of contamination with radioactive material, most likely through wind-born particles. A particular type of fish has been banned in the Ibaraki area and radioactive beef was discovered for sale in Tokyo in July.

**Nuclear Energy Today**

Nuclear energy is already integrated into the lives of those living in highly populated areas. Almost two-thirds of the world population lives in nations where nuclear energy produces taken-for-granted energy. Roughly 20% of American energy comes from nuclear power generated by its 104 commercial power plants. There are an additional 36 research and test reactors in the U.S. Worldwide, there are roughly 432 existing nuclear power plants and an additional 65 under construction.

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**ACTIVITY: Sharing our Covenant of Peace**

**CULMINATING ACTIVITY: Sharing Our Covenant of Just Peace.**

Reread the description in the Introduction about this activity.

The goal of this section will be to craft a simple covenant statement that can be considered "of the group."

The raw materials for it are:

The transcribed documents from the chart papers, (1) Lamentations, (2) Signs of Hope, (3) Questions and Petitions, and (4) Bearing Witness. You should also have looked at the resources in Session Twelve – Attachment A, “Thinking about Covenant.”

**Introduction of the exercise:**

For about an hour, the group will summarize what we feel are the commitments and promises made possible by our work together and the trust we have built. We will conclude with a rite of commissioning and prayer.

So, how do we take the conversations from this room, this group, this small community? How do we include others? How can we facilitate this conversation with others? In what other ways can we put this covenant into action, and, by doing so, strengthen it in our own hearts?
Remember, a covenant includes promises, not rules. Unlike rules, promises are discussed, lived, broken, and renewed. Promises and commitments describe how we wish to live together as a faith community, knowing that if these promises don’t work, a group may choose to rewrite them.

Think about it:

Based on our time together and what we have learned and experienced together:
What do I commit and promise to myself?
What do I commit and promise to the group?
What do I want the group to promise to me?

12 CLOSING PRAYER AND COMMISSIONING

NOTE: The following liturgy and rite of commissioning is presented as a suggested approach. The group facilitator will ask for assistance planning this prayer experience.

Sit in circle, around the map and prayer table. Ask one person to light a taper candle from one of the candles on the map. Ask the person to offer the image, word or brief phrase that emerges when they image our experiences with this process, the promise and the challenge of just peacemaking. Then ask this person to pass the candle to someone else, not necessarily next to them. The candle may cross the room several times. The recipient may opt to pass it on without speaking but the person holding the candle will always choose the next speaker. When the candle has been passed to everyone, place it in the middle of the prayer table and share these words by Muriel Lester:

Your business now is to stop war, to purify the world, to get it saved from poverty and riches, to make people like each other, to comfort the sad, to wake up those who have not yet found God, to create joy and beauty wherever you go, to find God in everything and everyone! (from Ways of Justice, Ways of Prayer – Edited by Anne Broyles)

Extinguish the votive candles (leaving the passed candle lit) and return them to the circular platter.

As we end this last session together and extinguish the candles, we return to our circle and our communities, our work and our families.

Scripture phrase from beginning repeated by three different voices
Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. (John 14:27)
Transition to Rite of Commissioning:

We have before us our symbols of prayer, our collected words, our collected thoughts, our seeds of covenant, and especially each other.

I ask you now to get the card where you answered the question, "What do I commit and promise to myself?” What is written on this card should become even more important than the covenant we craft for the group. I urge you to take this card and turn it into something you will see, wear, or touch. Put these words in your prayer space or somewhere you will see it and be reminded every day, that it is not just good intentions on a card, but it is the commitment and calling to just peacemaking as your identity, who you are in the world. You are a child of God. You are a child of peace.

So in the name of the God of Peace, in the peace of Christ
We cry out
    with our lamentations
    the violence in our world and our complicity in the violence for which we are truly sorry
We ask
    with our questions
    those things for which we do not have a clear answer, and for which we ask God for wisdom
We hold out
    with our hope
    those concrete signs in history that inspire us
We stand
    with our witness
    those actions to which we commit ourselves in the future as a witness to the Gospel call to nonviolence and just peace.

Options for Rite of Commissioning (consider one or both)
You may want to use reflective background music to create a prayerful atmosphere.

1. Ritual of Anointing

You will need: a small bowl or saucer with a small amount of olive oil, a box of Kleenex (for wiping hands). NOTE: If the Catholic character of this ritual does not fit with your group, omit or adapt the anointing.

Gather the group in a circle. Place the bowl of oil in the center. A facilitator picks up the bowl and introduces the ritual:
Anointing with precious oil is an ancient practice, a blessing to mark us as God’s beloved, to strengthen us in sickness, and to seal our commitment.

Turning to face the person on his/her right, the facilitator models the anointing: Place a thumb or finger in the oil and mark the forehead of your neighbor with a sign of the cross. Looking into the eyes of your neighbor, extend this blessing:

_Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God._
_Blessed are you_ (name) _you are a child of God._

Give the bowl to your neighbor who shares this ritual with the person on his/her left. The rite continues until everyone has been anointed.

2. Ritual of Laying On of Hands

The group remains standing in the circle. Everyone will need to have in hand a copy of their personal peace covenant. A facilitator introduces the ritual:

_Since the earliest days of our church,_
_Christians have blessed and empowered one another for ministry with the laying on of hands._

_Now, we call upon the Holy Spirit of Peace to seal our covenants and strengthen us to BE the peace our world so sorely needs._

Starting with a co-facilitator, group members in turn stand in the center of the circle, each one holding their personal peace covenant to their chest.

The rest of the group members extend a hand to touch the head or shoulders of the one in the center. Allow a few moments of silent prayer. Offer this blessing:

_(Name) Take this covenant to heart that you might become an instrument of Christ’s peace._

When everyone has been blessed, invite group members to share an embrace of peace.
Session Twelve – Attachment A

Thinking about Covenant

Note: A covenant includes promises, not rules. Unlike rules, promises are discussed, lived, broken, and renewed. Promises and commitments describe how we wish to live together as a faith community, knowing that if these promises don’t work, a group may choose to rewrite them.

“Nonviolence will not become national policy until it is first the personal policy of millions of us.” (Gerard VanderHaar)

Writing a Covenant of Just Peace

Think about how you might write your own covenant of just peacemaking. Consider the following list of Just Peacemaking activities (from Just Peacemaking: the New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War, by Glenn Stassen, Pilgrim Press, 2008). Think about ways to deepen two or three of these activities in light of what you and others in your group have experienced so far. Give examples. Consider it a way to share where your journey in just peacemaking has taken you.

1. Support nonviolent direct action.
2. Take independent initiatives to reduce threat.
3. Use cooperative conflict resolution.
4. Acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice and seek repentance and forgiveness.
5. Advance democracy, human rights and religious liberty.
6. Foster just and sustainable economic development.
7. Work with emerging cooperative forces in the international system.
9. Reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade.
10. Encourage grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations.

Examples of Covenant Statements

Bread for the World - Covenant Churches

Bread for the World Covenant Churches understand ending hunger to be central to Christian mission.

We Covenant:

1. In our worship and study
   • to seek God’s message for us regarding our hungry brothers and sisters.
• to learn about the causes of—and solutions to—hunger, emphasizing the role of public policy.

2. In our working and giving
   • to help hungry people in our community.
   • to support our church’s hunger relief, development and education programs.
   • to participate corporately in the work of Bread for the World and to encourage individuals to consider Bread membership.

3. In our living
   • to give prominence to the needs of hungry people.
   • to reflect in our lives an awareness of our role as stewards of God’s gift

The New Creation Community Covenant
Hearing with one another the call to nurture an intentional, ecumenical community of faith in Seattle, Washington, in the tradition of the Church of the Saviour, Washington, D.C., acknowledging that we can be faithful only with the help of God, we commit ourselves in gratitude and freedom---

• To spend one hour each day in prayer and reflection on scripture
• To share financial resources with the poor through the covenant community, beginning with 10% of our incomes,
• To meet weekly with the covenant community for worship and deepening of relationships,
• To meet weekly with a mission/accountability group, practicing honesty, accountability and forgiveness, allowing ourselves to be deeply known by and to know deeply those in our group,
• To support through prayer and actions each community member as he or she seeks to discern and be faithful to God’s call on his or her life,
• To nurture an authentic relationship with someone who is excluded by the larger culture,
• To practice nonviolence in all relationships, both personal and public,
• To spend at least one extended period of silence as a community per year,
• To leave the community, not out of anger, frustration or disappointment, but when it is discerned along with the community that I am being called elsewhere.

We travel without a map, trusting that our common covenant and practices will keep us on a common path, trusting that new structures, and new calls and missions will be given to us as we attempt to live faithfully into the promise we have chosen as our expression of the Risen Christ among us: “Anyone in Christ is a new creation. Everything old has passed away. See, everything has become new (2 Cor. 5:17).”

The following are ideas for group or individual projects or research presented during the activities sections of Sessions 7, 9 and 10. There are up to 60-minute blocks of time available for these reports or activities in these sessions. The purpose of these activities is to add additional topics relating to the exploration of just peacemaking as well as different voices and learning activities to the standard reading, writing, watching and discussing. These projects and presentations could be of varying lengths and could include art, music, and movement. Your group may also decide to add extra sessions for these.

**Research and presentation topics:**

**Women and War**
- Role of Women in War. Concentrate on the United States and include both military and civilian roles.
- Effects of War on Women and Children.
- Role of Women in Just Peacemaking.

Starting points:
- Use of the video series *Women War and Peace*, newly released by PBS. Full episodes are available online for streaming with a computer here: [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/women-war-and-peace/](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/women-war-and-peace/)

The series includes the film, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, which chronicles the remarkable story of the courageous Liberian women who came together to end a bloody civil war and bring peace to their shattered country. Three of the women, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee, Tawakkol Karman received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011.

**Is a Just War Impossible?**

Select one of the wars in which the U.S. is presently (or was recently) engaged. Examine the following criteria for "Just War" and state how that war satisfies the criteria or how it does not. Involve the group with a discussion and chart the results on a board or newsprint. How does this analysis fit with the concept of "just peacemaking?"

Starting points:
Rev. J. Bryan Hehir, Parker Gilbert Montgomery Professor of the Practice of Religion and Public Life at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, and former Dean of the Harvard Divinity School, opened the series *Moral Responsibilities for the Legacies of War* with an overview of current ethics and policies related to post-war obligations. Audio and transcript of presentation.
http://academics.holycross.edu/crec/events/series/war/moral_frameworks

NPR's Jacki Lyden talks with theologian J. Bryan Hehir about the concept of a "Just War."  http://www.pbs.org/now/transcript/transcript_hehir.html

“Nonviolence, Not Just War,” from *The God of Peace: Toward a Theology of Nonviolence*, by John Dear, SJ.
http://www.johndear.org/pdfs/Nonviolence_Not_Just_War.pdf

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**Basic Criteria of the Just War Doctrine**

- War must be fought for a *just cause*.
- It must be openly declared by a *legitimate authority* who has *right intentions*.
- War should always be the *last resort* and should only be conducted when there is a *reasonable chance of success*.
- The amount of force employed in the conduct of the war must be *proportional* to the desired outcome.


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**War and the Environment**

Research and report on the effects of war on the environment and ecology of the planet using selected current world armed conflicts.

**Hurricane Katrina and the Violence of Environmental Racism**

Reflect on the violence that we do to creation. Reflect on the violence done to people who suffer as a result of “natural” disasters. Recall the scenes from Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. What more could have been done to avoid this disaster? What more could have been done to respond to those most affected by the disaster? Was this an example of “environmental racism?” What other “natural” disasters can you recall, and how could the damage caused by them have been avoided? How can we work for environmental justice? How can we work for global restoration?
Starting points:


**War in the Popular Culture**
Show ways that popular culture in the United States has absorbed war (e.g., games, clothing, language and entertainment). Participants can use old magazines looking for specific words, phrases and images. Create a presentation or collage that either illustrates violence in our society or highlights attempts to respond to this violence with peacemaking.

**Timeline of War and Peace**
A presentation showing a war and peace timeline for the United States that includes all major military conflicts and locations. On the timeline, note significant contributions to society during times of conflict and times of peace. Note the financial costs and casualties during wartime, including injuries and deaths, if data are available.

**Words from Peacemakers**
Research examples of speeches, poetry or songs from peace activists, abolitionists or conscientious objectors and share with the larger group. Discuss the ways that these examples can relate to the group, here and now.

**More Stories from Peacemakers at Home**
Presentation about empowering and hopeful examples of people and organizations that are promoting just peacemaking/nonviolence. An example is Fr. Greg Boyle and Homeboys, Inc. in East Los Angeles and other community-based organizations working with street gangs. Find out about peacemaking organizations and initiatives in your own community.

**Where is the Palestinian Gandhi?**
In 2003, the Palestinian village of Budrus mounted a 10-month-long nonviolent protest to stop a barrier being built across their olive groves. This effort, like many nonviolent campaigns, was not widely reported. Brazilian filmmaker Julia Bacha asks why we only pay attention to violence in the Israel-Palestine conflict, and not to the nonviolent leaders who may one day bring peace.
Starting points:
- Julia's Technology, Education, Design (TED) talk, recorded in July 2011 (11 minutes)
- Her TED talk on making the film: http://youtu.be/d40Aht_9cxY (24 minutes)
- Julia Bacha's website is http://www.justvision.org/ contains information about the film, Budrus.

What is the Difference between Pacifism and Nonviolence?
In the course of our discussion of just peacemaking, what do we understand to be the difference between pacifism and nonviolence, noting that pacifism and passivity are not the same. Engage a discussion with the group about where they are – not from a theoretical position – but from their hearts.

Starting points:
  http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2007/december/27.44.html?start=1
- "A Short Catechism on Christian Pacifism" – by George Hunsinger was originally titled "A Short Catechism for Peace". It was written in 1985 by George Hunsinger for the United Church of Christ Peace Fellowship, which gave permission to the Fellowship of Reconciliation to reproduce it.
  http://tinyurl.com/meaningofnonviolence

After the War is "Over"
Lead a discussion introducing the important area of transitional justice. How do we contribute to a just peace after violent conflict? What are the trade-offs between peace and justice? What role do truth commissions play? Who seems to retain impunity for human rights abuses after a war is over.

Consider using current event "case studies" to engage in contemporary and difficult issues of war and peace.
- The difference between military and “police” actions in the world (Sudan, Rwanda, Libya, etc.). We rarely differentiate between policing (uses the least violence possible to stop or reduce violence) and military action (uses overwhelming violence to win).
- What role should be played by an International Criminal Court; what power would they have?
- Where lies the responsibility to protect? How have concepts such as security and self-defense been used in contemporary situations.
Guest speakers

- Invite someone from 9/11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows. “Wars are poor chisels for carving out a peaceful tomorrow.” (Martin Luther King, Jr.) The vision for September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows was born when a small group of family members of those killed on 9/11 became connected after reading each other’s pleas for nonviolent and reasoned responses to the terrorist attacks. Several of these individuals met one another when they participated in the “Walk for Healing and Peace” from Washington, D.C. to New York City in late 2001 organized by Kathy Kelly of Voices in the Wilderness (now Voices for Creative Nonviolence).
- Invite someone who can talk about the size and impact of the US military budget.
- Invite someone who is a refugee from wars in Africa, Iraq, Afghanistan or Latin America.
- Invite someone who has been on a delegation to the Middle East or Colombia or someone who has served in Witness for Peace, Christian Peacemaking Teams, etc.
- Invite a conscientious objector or a military resister.
- Invite someone from a local chapter of Veterans for Peace, Iraq Veterans Against the War.

Other Activities

Praying the news (from JustFaith Ministries, JusticeWalking – Step One Overview)

“You know how to read the face of the sky, but you cannot read the signs of the times (Matthew 16:3).”

Consider this as an occasional alternative prayer idea or ritual/reflection. This might be a good choice if something "big" or particularly distressing happens in the world during the weeks that a group is doing the module.

The JustFaith Ministries program for young people, JusticeWalking, ask groups to sift through the news of our world with an eye for those who are excluded and a heart open to the stories of those who suffer, while seeking out signs of hope and the call to renewal. In this case it would be about war, violence and those who suffer, along with the peacemakers and justice workers in the world. The process is a simple ritual that involves praying through a recent story in a local or national newspaper.

Prayerful Preparation

Looking AT God’s World:

- Be aware of media biases about what is considered news and who/what is valued.
- Choose a story that inspires or disturbs.
- Name and identify with the people involved on all sides of the situation.
Looking INTO God’s World:
- Notice the titles and descriptions for people, such as: homeless, poor, black, white, criminal, soldier, insurgent, refugee…
- Rename the main characters in the event as persons-in-relationship: mothers or fathers, sons or daughters, fellow human beings, our neighbors, God’s children…
- Make a personal connection to the story. Whether a news item speaks to hunger, the prison system, poverty, racism, welfare or war, call to mind a person or organization in your community directly linked to that situation.

Looking THROUGH God’s Eyes:
- Briefly summarize the story from the perspective of just peacemaking or restorative justice.
- Choose a direct quote or paraphrase a few lines that capture the situation.
- Name the people involved in the story and define our connection to them.
- Try to identify a scripture image, passage or prayer that speaks to the heart of this reality.

**Beholding the News!**
Another model for praying the news involves standing in the center of the story, to be and to hold together all sides of the dilemma or paradox. This prayer also has three distinct moments:
- Speak a prayerful word for all those who are impacted by one ‘side’ of the reality.
- Call to mind the people who find or place themselves on another ‘side.’
- Pray for ‘us’ (as God see us... ALL of us) aware of how the group is connected to this reality and how we hold this reality together within our own hearts.

**Resource for Praying the News:**
Sojourners has a *Daily News Digest* of stories related to peace and justice. You can find the day’s top ten stories on their website: [http://blog.sojo.net/category/daily-news-digest/](http://blog.sojo.net/category/daily-news-digest/). You can also sign up to receive the digest by e-mail.

**Our Point of View:**
Facilitate a group discussion: Imagine a different group of participants for this Just Peacemaking module that included a majority of individuals (a) who are affected by violence at home, especially low-income and people of color, (b) who are veterans of any age, (c) who are military families, (d) who are health care and social services professionals and (e) who are employees of the defense department or military contractors. How would that groups discussions differ from ours about just peacemaking?
**More Film Nights**

Watch *Bringing Down a Dictator*, which tells the inside story of how Slobodan Milošević was brought down – not by smoke and flames – but by a courageous campaign of political defiance and massive civil disobedience. Winner of a Peabody Award, the film was narrated by Martin Sheen and premiered on PBS in March 2002. It is 56 minutes long. Very inexpensive used copies available from Amazon.

**Extra discussion:** The work of Gene Sharp was very central to the events in Serbia and have been used by many subsequent "people power" nonviolent campaigns, including those recently during the "Arab Spring". Learn more about Gene Sharp and his work through the Albert Einstein Institute here: [http://www.aeinstein.org/](http://www.aeinstein.org/).
APPENDIX II – NEXT STEPS

From Pax Christi USA

We’re excited that your group has completed the Just Peacemaking module, and we’d like to challenge you to think about next steps in order to take what you have prayed about and studied and put it into action. Our discipleship is only as authentic as our willingness to take action on our values and beliefs. Below you will find a list of possibilities for next steps.

1. Join Pax Christi USA. If you are not already a member, add your voice to the voices of thousands of your Catholic brothers and sisters who are acting and advocating for peace with justice in our world. You can join through our website, http://www.paxchristiusa.org, or contact our national office in Washington, D.C. Send an email to info@paxchristiusa.org, call 202-635-2741, or write us at Pax Christi USA, 1225 Otis Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20017.

2. Start or join a local Pax Christi community. Pax Christi USA has 250 local communities, in 105 dioceses and 38 states across the nation. Contact us at the information listed in #1 above to find a community close to you. If there is no community in your area, start one! We have a free organizing toolkit for starting a local group with a dozen resources to get you started. Contact us and we will send one out to you.

3. Continue your exploration of Christian nonviolence through other resources available from Pax Christi USA. A number of free resources, like our Peaceweavings series, is available for download on our website. Resources for sale are available in our online store at the website.

4. Consider taking the Vow of Nonviolence with members of your group or with others in your community who would like to try and live the vow over the course of the coming year. The Vow can be taken anytime. Some parishes have included it within a special liturgy at a significant time during the year (Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday, New Year, etc.). Some groups have taken the Vow as part of a service at which the bishop of their diocese presides and leads them in the taking of the Vow. The Vow is available on the Pax Christi USA website.

5. Identify a local issue related to peace, or a national issue that has a local tie-in. Strategize for how you can organize your community to begin a campaign addressing this issue. You can use a variety of components in your campaign, from letter-writing to leafleting, direct action and prayer vigils, study groups, media promotion, and more. Pax Christi USA’s national office can help you and provide resources for taking action on an issue.
6. Spread the word using particular sessions of this module to reach a larger audience within your church, school or community. Show one of the films highlighted in the module. Offer a retreat experience incorporating sections of the sessions. Print an excerpt from one of the readings in your bulletin. Spread the word to a larger audience!

7. Invite a speaker from Pax Christi USA to speak at your parish, school or community. Contact the national office for a list of speakers.

8. Subscribe to Pax Christi USA’s free email service for regular Pray-Study-Act e-bulletins, special alerts, electronic resources for Advent and Christmas, and more. You can subscribe on the Pax Christi USA website under the tab “E-Network.”

9. Make a donation to Pax Christi USA. From our work in Cite Soleil, the poorest slum in Haiti and the entire Western Hemisphere, to the halls of Congress in Washington, D.C., we need your support to act and advocate for peace and justice. You can make a tax-exempt donation easily through our secure website, by contacting our national office by phone, or by sending a check. Consider becoming a “sustainer” of the work for peace with justice. Sustainers donate a set amount, charged to your credit card or directly from your bank account, every month. It is easy, environmental and it helps us plan for the future knowing we have a dedicated stream of sustaining members. Contact the national office to become a sustainer.

Fill out the evaluation on this module and send it back in to JustFaith. We want to know what effect this module has had and what steps it has led you to once you have completed it. Thanks so much for your participation!
JustFaith Ministries

A Multilayered Ministry of Formation

Congratulations on completing a JustFaith Ministries (JFM) JustMatters module. JFM provides programs that transform people and expand their commitment to social ministry. Through these life-changing opportunities, members of a church can study, explore and experience Christ’s call to care for the poor and vulnerable in a lively, challenging, multifaceted process in the context of a small faith community.

Jack Jezreel, M.Div., the founder and Executive Director of JustFaith Ministries, introduced the original JustFaith program in 1989 while working in a parish in Louisville, Kentucky. It was immediately and dramatically successful. Since then, over 20,000 people have participated in various JustFaith Ministries programs in over 1,200 churches across the country.

JustFaith Ministries, in conjunction with its partners, makes available introductory workshops, curriculum, resources, a website, and support services. While JustFaith Ministries was born from the success of the JustFaith program, the organization now includes the following new layers of opportunity for faith formation.

JustFaith focuses on discipleship and the call to be about God’s dream of justice and compassion in a world scarred by the domestic and global crisis called poverty.

Engaging Spirituality presents a spiritual deepening process that invites small groups to explore the intersection between contemplative presence and social action.

JusticeWalking (J-Walking) is a process that forms small communities of older teens and adults to engage in a spiritual journey and exploration of the radical call of the Gospel.

College JusticeWalking (J-Walking) is a semester-long “Discipleship Journey” that forms small communities of college students as they experiment with living the Gospel message and the social implications of our faith.

JustFaith Ministries is able to offer these programs through the generosity of donors.

JustFaith Ministries also provides an online document, Taking Action Resource Guide (http://www.justfaith.org/graduates/pdf/takeaction_resourceguide.pdf) to help participants learn more and get involved in this and other issue.
APPENDIX III – RESOURCES

JustFaith Ministries:  www.justfaith.org

Pax Christi USA:  www.paxchristiusa.org

Books:
Cordaro, Tom. Be Not Afraid: An Alternative to the War on Terror. (Pax Christi USA, 2008)

- Ceika, Mary Ann and Thomas Bamat. Artisans of Peace: Grassroots Peacemaking Among Christian Communities. (Orbis, 2003).

Online Resources:
- Nuclear weapons:  www.globalzero.org  and  www.globalpriorities.org
- U.S. military spending and costs of war:  www.nationalpriorities.org
Compiled resources and webliographies:

- A select bibliography on conflict transformation and peace:  
  [www.peacemakers.ca/bibliography/bib40christian.html](http://www.peacemakers.ca/bibliography/bib40christian.html)


- Peacemaking in the Catholic Tradition. Created by St. Peter’s College Library, Jersey City, NJ.  
  [http://www.spc.edu/pages/1815.asp](http://www.spc.edu/pages/1815.asp)

- Pace e Bene, Nonviolence Resources:  

**Other:**

**Engaging our Conflicts.** Another module from JustFaith Ministries that was a collaboration with Pace e Bene. The focus of this 8-session module is on the theology and practice of active nonviolence in real issues that a group decides to focus on. See the description here:  
[http://justfaith.org/programs/justmatters-m_engagingyourconflicts.html](http://justfaith.org/programs/justmatters-m_engagingyourconflicts.html)

- Voices for Creative Nonviolence.  

- Pace e Bene, Education Resources and Action for Nonviolent Change.  

- Women's Action for New Directions (WAND), Faith Seeking Peace;  

- The Einstein Institute and the work on direct nonviolence by Gene Sharp  

- Waging Nonviolence, a source for news, analysis, and original reporting about nonviolent activism, as well as for discussion of the theory behind it.  

Research and explore a plethora of possibilities for peacemaking, such as the following:

- Individual ministry to perpetrators or victims, such as restorative justice, prison ministries, work with gangs, reconciliation with youth in post conflict situations, reintegration of former child soldiers, conflict management training in post conflict situations

- Developing or talking about peaceful alternatives (peace communities in Colombia, Israeli-Palestinian collaborative projects, intentional communities in the United States)

- Peace education curriculum being offered in high schools, colleges and elsewhere

- Interreligious and interethnic dialogue and cooperation

- Efforts with mediation, conflict resolution, track II diplomacy, "interposition" such as  
  - Christian Peacemaker Teams ("Getting in the Way")  
- Witness for Peace, [http://witnessforpeace.org](http://witnessforpeace.org)
- Reconciliation work in Rwanda, The Congo such as the African Great Lakes Initiative [http://www.aglifpt.org](http://www.aglifpt.org)

- Corporate social and environmental responsibility, shareholder actions such as the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility [http://www.aglifpt.org](http://www.aglifpt.org)
- Work inside the “system” to make it less violent and militaristic - educators, activists, professionals, government officials, musicians