



Fratelli tutti

BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL TOGETHER

Just War or Nonviolence?

We can no longer think of war as a solution, because its risks will probably always be greater than its supposed benefits. In view of this, it is very difficult nowadays to invoke the rational criteria elaborated in earlier centuries to speak of the possibility of a “just war”.

Never again war!

Pope Francis, *Fratelli tutti*, paragraph 258

Watch

No to War! What Catholics believe about war (American Media) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugtm959YyII&feature=emb_logo

A short summary of the Church's tradition of rejecting war.

Scripture

If it is within your power, make peace with all people. Again, my loved ones, do not seek revenge; instead, allow God's wrath to make sure justice is served. Turn it over to Him. For the Scriptures say, “Revenge is Mine. I will settle all scores.” But consider this bit of wisdom: “If your enemy is hungry, give him something to eat. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink; because if you treat him kindly, it will be like heaping hot coals on top of his head.” Never let evil get the best of you; instead, overpower evil with the good.

Romans 12:18-21

Questions for discussion

- In an age of weapons of mass destruction can there ever be a ‘just war’?
- “Constructive nonviolence is the building up of unity and social goods, with special attention to the marginalised.” What do we think about this statement? How can we put it into practice?
- What teachings and/or traditions in our church can we draw on when practicing nonviolence?
- What could we change in our church/neighbourhood/society through the practice of constructive nonviolence?

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Other Church Teaching

The Church cannot accept violence, especially the force of arms — which is uncontrollable once it is let loose — and indiscriminate death as the path to liberation, because she knows that violence always provokes violence and irresistibly engenders new forms of oppression and enslavement which are often harder to bear than those from which they claimed to bring freedom.

Pope Saint Paul VI, On Evangelization in the Modern World

The truth is that it is impossible to interpret Jesus as violent. Violence is contrary to the Kingdom of God. It is an instrument of the Antichrist. Violence never serves man, but dehumanizes him.

Pope Benedict XVI, Angelus address, 11 March 2012

Listen

Hymn for the 81% (Daniel Dietrich) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GT-LfLpzzo>

God of the Poor (Graham Kendrick) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPvioAt5fq4>

Prayer

Take our hatreds: make them into handshakes

Take our prejudices: make them into peace-offerings

Take our arguments: make them into alliances

Take our battles: make them into bonds

Take our misunderstandings: make them into music

Take our divisions: make them into dances

Take our schisms: make them into songs.

Amen.

Written by Kate Compton, Mennonite Central Committee Canada

Further Learning

What is a just war? (Breaking the Habit) <https://breakinginthehabit.org/2018/10/16/what-is-a-just-war/>

The Centrality of Nonviolence in Christianity (Fr John Dear) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GT1nCc_lock

The Catholic Nonviolence Initiative <https://nonviolencejustpeace.net/>

Mainstreaming Nonviolence (Ken Butigen) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8s3AjjLsfzk>