What Do We Mean by “Peace” Anyway?

JOHN KLEIDERER

"Blessed are the peacemakers." Two thousand years later we still celebrate these words, now with the irony of having Peacemaker missiles. Peace - we hear it often. Popes, poets, presidents and dictators, secular and religious, conservatives and liberals, speak of it. We say “peace be with you” on Sundays. Nixon made the peace sign his signature gesture before boarding a plane. Peace is a word much used, and abused.

What are some ways, then, that we can begin thinking about peace?

Positive and Negative Peace

It might be helpful to distinguish first between negative and positive peace. “Negative” peace? The mere absence of violence constitutes a negative peace. The Cold War is one example, insofar as the United States and the Soviet Union never engaged directly in war. Positive peace moves beyond the mere absence of direct violence to include efforts to work for sustainable peace and the reduction of structural violence. Sociologist Johan Galtung, founder of peace studies as an academic discipline, defines positive peace as a “pattern of cooperation and integration between major groups.”

Structural Violence

While a society may not be beset by overt acts of physical violence, it may still be considered violent. Do we live in a violent society in the United States? How do we define that?

Peace at Any Cost?

What about structural violence, that doesn’t easily command our attention because it’s not focused on a single event? The nightly news cannot lead with a story on structural violence, there is no shooting or other vicious crime, but still it occurs, through social, political or economic structures that cause suffering. The “quiet” violence of racism, poverty and hunger are prime examples of structural violence. Pope Paul VI’s oft-quoted phrase, “If you want peace, work for justice,” illustrates the call to work for positive peace by addressing underlying issues of justice and structural violence.

Building a Culture of Peace

This issue of In All Things focuses on building a culture of peace, with a primary focus on the U.S. Entire books, magazines and academic journals are dedicated solely to this issue.

M r. Kleiderer is a policy analyst for Social and International Ministries at the Jesuit Conference and the associate editor of In All Things.
What Do We Mean by “Peace” Anyway?

continued from page 1

peace, so what might we have to contribute? Though omitting many important aspects of peace work, we have narrowed the focus of this issue primarily to the Jesuit world. How is the Society - its people, institutions and resources - working towards peace? Is it? How might it explore new opportunities to build peace? We are challenged to ask how Jesuits and their lay colleagues can contribute to building such a culture, and where there might be opportunities for growth, exploration and reflection.

Peacebuilding can take place at different levels, some of which are addressed in this issue - the individual, within one’s soul; the societal, within or between groups/communities; and the international, among countries or nations. To lay the groundwork, we turn first to a Jesuit sociologist, Fr. Rick M. Malloy, who explores some dimensions of culture and how it relates to peacemaking.

Individual

We hear from Br. Mike O’Grady and Fr. Bill Creed, who work on the Spiritual Exercises with homeless men in Chicago. Their focus is on cultivating an internal peace, a personal peace with oneself, as the foundation for all else. Fr. John Kavanagh also touches upon the value of peace in our interior lives and the intrinsic value of each person created in the image and likeness of God. Taken together, these two articles invite spiritual reflection and could even form the basis for a retreat.

Societal

The Jesuit presence in the United States is largely institution-based, with 28 Jesuit-affiliated colleges and universities, over 60 primary and secondary schools, nearly 100 parishes, and numerous social works. Given this strength and the tremendous number of lives impacted by the Jesuits, what opportunities exist for the Society to contribute to building a culture of peace? It is a challenge for each Jesuit, each institution, each Jesuit community, and for lay people working in Jesuit-sponsored institutions, to discern their own answer. In a thought provocatively pragmatic, A closer examination reveals nuances in both positions. Many conservatives are as concerned about human rights as liberals, both want peace but may have very different ideas about how to get there, and many liberals are not pacifists and endorse the use of force in certain situations; but too often there is a lack of presumption of good will and a fundamental lack of trust in how each group views the other. Fr. Rick Ryscavage, a veteran of the world of international affairs, politics and global humanitarian issues, argues for a critical examination of how we think about peace, challenging some of the assumptions often associated with it.

Catholic and International

2003 marked the 40th anniversary of the papal encyclical Pacem in Terris and the 20th anniversary of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Letter Challenge of Peace. We honor these documents through articles by Fr. Drew Christiansen and British Robinson that highlight the important role of the Church in peacemaking, both in its prophetic call and through its pragmatic efforts of diplomacy.

Final Thought

This comment from a recent discussion gave me pause: “Jesus said, blessed are the peacemakers; he did not say, blessed are the peace lovers.” Peacemaking involves more than wishing for peace; it involves action. This is the challenge to each of us: how can we be peacemakers beyond mere peacelovers?

Peace Practices, Practicing Peace

REV. RICK MALLOY, S.J.

A solemn prayer service on Ash Wednesday 2003 in front of the White House. The service, attended by about 60 people, was organized by Catholics for a Peaceful End to War and Terrorism.

In the weeks following September 11, 2001, I stood before sociology and anthropology classes at Saint Joseph’s University, discussing with students our response to the tragic events of that day. Their shock, anger and rage were directed at “those people who hate us.” Students angrily declared, “They were dancing in the streets.” “We should go over there and bomb them all to hell” was the predominant sentiment. When I suggested that the only way to stop terrorists is to make them want to live in peace with us rather than blow us up, the students sat in silence, little open to ideas about making peace and seeking forgiveness for wrongs done and suffered.

We all too easily accept violence as a constitutive dimension of our lives and culture. When I was a little boy in the 1960s, we would run around the neighborhood, “shooting” one another, playing Army. That neighborhood was in the Philadelphia area, the “city of brotherly love” (some humorously substitute “shove”). By the time I was an adult, homicide rates in the USA were the highest in any industrialized nation, but consider its roots: Pennsylvania and the rest of the country were taken by force from First Americans who lived here well before the Europeans arrived and announced that they now owned the land. I imagine a shipload of Martians today descending from spaceships and announcing that planet Earth was now “theirs.”

Throughout my life, the quintessential American heroes have been the gunfighter, the detective/cop, and the soldier, all mythic characters who, usually alone, solve the problems of life by beating, shooting or in some manner dominating other persons. Our movies, video games and TV shows are filled with violent images. A decade ago, our bishops noted that on TV “children see 8,000 murders a year and 100,000 other acts of violence before they leave elementary school.” Little has changed in the past 10 years, despite tragedies such as the Columbine High School shooting in Colorado. We accept violence as “normal.” We too little value peace. How did our culture get this way? What can we do to change the way things are? Do we really desire to do so? Do we want to change our culture?

Culture and Meaning

In one of its many facets, cultural anthropology is the study of the relationships that construct cultures and constitute the meaning systems of our lives. Rather than see culture as a static entity, contemporary anthropologists more accurately describe culture dynamically, as a shifting, evolving, fluid reality. I define “culture” as those relationships wherein one and one’s community establish identity (knowledge of self and others), knowledge of the world, and how we are to be in the world, i.e. what the world and various versions of world mean to us. Anthropology is the study of all that forms us as human and makes our world human.

The realities of cultures are revealed in the actual practices of members of a culture. Our practices foster violence, not peace. We wouldn’t allow our 10-year-old to see naked people making love on a TV screen, but we will allow our children to watch endless hours of heads exploding, eyeballs gushing blood, and people being shot to death. We would be appalled at a video game that simulated sexual activity, but it’s OK for our teens to play GTA (Grand Theft Auto) wherein multiple people are killed while scores of cars are stolen, all in the name of fun. Violence in the home and in dating relationships has risen catastrophically in the past quarter century. The Centers for Disease Control reports that in the USA, 1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men suffered domestic violence.

Students who subscribe to this view want to be equipped with well-honed professional and technical skills in order to compete in the market and secure one of the relatively scarce fulfilling and lucrative jobs available. This is the success which many students (and parents!) expect.

All American universities, ours included, are under tremendous pressure to opt entirely for success in this sense. But what our students want – and deserve – includes but transcends this “worldly success” based on marketable skills. The real measure of our Jesuit universities lies in who our students become.”


Fr. M. Malloy (Maryland Province) is a professor in the Sociology Department at Saint Joseph’s University in Philadelphia.

continued on page 4
Peace Practices, Practicing Peace

continued from page 3

“...In this new century, we must start from the understanding that peace belongs not only to States or peoples, but to each and every member of those communities. The sovereignty of States must no longer be used as a shield for gross violations of human rights. Peace must be sought, above all, because it is the condition for every member of the human family to live a life of dignity and security.”


(Continued...)

Seven Peace Practices We Can Enact

To become a peaceful people and culture will necessitate the transformation of our communal imagination. Such transformation follows the actualization of chosen practices. Here are seven practices in which we can engage.

1. Integrate peace studies into the courses we teach at all Jesuit schools and establish peace study groups in our schools and parishes.

2. Have students write their elected representatives in Congress and ask what they are doing to foster peace in our country and world.

3. Study how most conflicts are, in origin, linked to issues of social injustice and the maldistribution of wealth and power. The rich tradition of Catholic Social Teaching has much to offer these first three practices.

4. Study the provocative thought of French writer and anthropologist Rene Girard, who argues that Christianity is the antidote to the cultures of violence that have existed since the foundation of the world.

5. Study those who have given their lives to peaceful non-violence. Read Gandhi and learn how he transformed India. Meditate on the lives of Dorothy Day and the Berrigan brothers and discover how to get radical (i.e., to the roots) in the living of our Catholic faith. Listen to Martin Luther King Jr. Analyze how the Civil Rights Movement in America (1955-1965) achieved what it did, and how the transformative energy dissipated when violence infiltrated the movement. Learn how Bishop Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela transformed South Africa.

6. Get involved with the “Peacechrists” in your area: Pax Christi, The Catholic Worker Movement, etc.

7. Most importantly, pray. Establishing peace in our minds and hearts is the primordial condition for the transformation of our lives and culture.

R.M.


VISIT OUR WEB SITE www.inallthings.org
Peace and War, Death and Life

REV. JOHN KAVANAUGH, SJ.

If the opposite of peace is war, and the purpose of war is to eliminate the enemy—preeminently by death—then a culture of peace is necessarily a culture that affirms life rather than killing it.

The very word “culture” suggests the range of barriers to and opportunities for peacemaking. Think of its cognates: agriculture, cultured, cult, cultural. At its root is the Latin colo, I cultivate. Thus, in agriculture, we cultivate our fields and farms, our vines and trees. And what we cultivate in the land in turn feeds us, nourishes us. Just as we find physical sustenance in agriculture, so also in all human culture, we grow our institutions, our ways of interaction, our languages and our narratives that in turn nourish and sustain us symbolically, spiritually and socially. Cults and cultic practices, likewise, feed us with meaning and purpose.

In its broadest sense, culture is everything that human beings make with their hands and minds. It is human artifact, human art, human production. It is every way we have humanized, colonized the earth.

In this context, if we unpack the phrase “culture of death,” so often used by Pope John Paul II, we will discover the ways that the human production of death sustains and feeds us, not with the bread of life, but with a fatal symbolic food. A culture of death nourishes us, satisfying our hunger for meaning and fulfillment by killing, by devastation, by eliminating and extinguishing and destroying. The culture of death manifests itself daily in a perverse litany of fear, hate, anger – the great and pedestrian diminishments that grind down the soul and crush the spirit, robbing us of our sense of meaning.

The culture of death through war was horrifically embodied in the destruction of the Twin Towers, dissolved in soot and melted steel, mighty concrete turned to sand, lives crushed and vaporized. We saw that Bin Laden, with scores of other co-conspirators, perhaps many tens of thousands of sympathizers and celebrants, could look upon this death, this utter reversal of creation, this act of destruction and say “it is good.” Killing is good, they think, such ugliness so beautiful, so vast a lie worthy of allegiance. This devilish work was thought to be a wound to “the Great Devil.” Win righteousness through killing. Find peace through war.

It is easy to see the culture of death and war, its logic and cancerous growth, when it is so dramatically “out there,” so menacing to us, so threatening to our security and securities. But death wars are not limited to such monstrously dramatic deeds. There are more subtle forms, instances closer to home and to our hearts, happenings more sly and subtle and attractive ... not to a Taliban terrorist, but to us.

What is the culture of death, its mortal myths, its lethal logic? And what are the connections between rightly perceived monstrous events when enemies seek to end our lives and the unperceived realities of our nation and the world where so many lives are ended – unmourned, unattended, uncared for – each day?

Every liturgy in the cult of death, every war on human life, involves two moves: the first, to dehumanize and marginalize the “others,” and the second, to propose some goal that makes the elimination of them both desirable and noble. Nietzsche wrote of the “deep impersonal hatred, the cold-bloodedness of murder with a good conscience and general ardor in destroying the enemy” that marks a great nation at war. We may see as much in the words and acts of Bin Laden, but we can hear it in some of our own, as well. “Nuke them all... what we need is hate... turn them into parking lots... destroy their cities,” for they are moral monsters, the evil ones.

Even the noble warrior has written of the depersonalization required in order to kill intentionally. And we know that the same depersonalization is required to kill the unborn “tissue” and “blobs of protoplasm,” the “animals” who inhabit our death rows, and the “vegetables” who linger in nursing homes.

One tenet is underlying: the problem is solved by making war on it. Death is the answer.

The antidote, of course, is a culture of peace which plants and protects the seeds of personal life. Its cultivation, moreover, must take place in all areas of our lives: in solitude, in relationships, in our personal endowments, ourselves, gifted to us from the moment we were born. These endowments, moreover, are cultivated in our relationships with one another, our covenants of family and marriage, our communities of faith and friends.

Encountering the gift of personhood in ourselves and those we love, we will inevitably be drawn to protect that gift in the world. The peace and personal life we find in interiority and in relationships will be expressed in our labors for peace and justice in the world. All injustice is ultimately a degradation of personal life. And our labors for justice, like all of our efforts for peace, are grounded in the affirmation of personal existence.

Some have questioned the “seamless garment” approach to life. But they fail to recognize that in opposing abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment or war, there is a great unsung coalition of peace. The resistance to killing any person is not politics or liberal-  or conservatism. For Christ himself has identified himself with the very least of us. That means every last one of us counts. When we finally realize this truth, we will not only be people of peace. We will build cultures of life.

“A culture of peace will require a recovery of our own personal meaning and value. In our interior and relational lives, we must learn again what our worth really is. In cultivating our interior lives, especially we who reflect upon the mysteries of Jesus and His redemptive love, we will invariably discover a deeper truth. What make us irreplaceable are our personal endowments themselves, gifted to us from the moment we began.”

Fr. Kavanaugh (Missouri Province) is a professor of philosophy and director of Ethics Across the Curriculum at Saint Louis University.
A Culture of Peace that Includes the Homeless

Rev. Bill Creed, S.J. and Br. Mike O’Grady, S.J.

More than five years ago, Fr. Dick Baumann, the Chicago Provincial, asked Bill to bring the Spiritual Exercises in adapted form to those who were at the economic and social margins of our culture. When Bill asked about giving retreats to those most marginalized—the homeless—Fr. Baumann encouraged that notion. Never was there a thought that such retreats were an act of peacemaking. The realization came only on reflection: this retreat outreach to the alienated in respect for them as human beings is an act of peacemaking.

In the last six years, we have been privileged to be involved in 44 overnight retreats for homeless men who are striving for sobriety and recovery in their lives. We have presented these retreats in Chicago, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, Boston, and Indianapolis. We recruited men for the first retreat through our collaboration with the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless. In each city, we work through agencies that serve the homeless and who know of those homeless who are trying to get out of addiction and off the streets. The homeless men who come on retreat are attempting to get off the streets and have abstained from alcohol and drugs for several weeks before the retreat. The retreat is an adaptation of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola. It evokes “radical honesty” (a phrase used by several retreatants) and deeper trust in God.

We believe that God invites us into the broken places of our world; if we persevere, he invites us into the broken places of our hearts and meets us there with forgiveness, healing and love. Only then can peace take root within our hearts. This understanding has been the core gift of our participation in these retreats.

B.C. and M.O’G.

Mike: Through my experience of assisting in Homeless Men’s Retreats, I believe that a culture of peace is built in the following ways:

■ Touching the deep interior. A key element of building a culture of peace through the work we do is to assist our friends in helping them to touch the deep interior space that remains uncharted territory for most of us. We can’t be peaceful, we can’t model peace, if the inner conflicts andunsettledness of our interior life aren’t being explored, understood, and befriended. It is in this space that we make good decisions, from this space, we see people differently. Operating from this space, we fears, anger, anxieties no longer order or control our choice-making. We help our friends to experience the gifts of peace and freedom.

■ Radically dependent creatures. The culture of peace must involve the concept that we are radically dependent creatures, dependent upon others for our thriving and flourishing, dependent upon our Creator for our very existence and spiritual nourishment. Our retreats reinforce this, from our opening Exercises to our reflections on how God has been modeled to us in our lives.

■ Shared community, vulnerability, honesty, openness. A culture of peace is built at the most fundamental, basic level when we share the gift of community, vulnerability, honesty and openness with men who have by and large never experienced such graces. We simply facilitate and participate, trusting that God is working in the hearts and minds of each of our retreatants, offering gifts; at the end of the day, it is up to them to accept or reject these gifts.

■ Equality. I have to see these men as my equals. They are neither worth less than nor better than I am. By sharing my gifts, talents, abilities and experiences, I open myself up to the same within the fellows we invite to join us. This is the first step in building a culture of peace. If I approach our retreatants as “pitiable creatures upon whom I will bestow my precious time,” then I’m simply acting out of ego and pride disguised as service.

■ Give without expectation of reward. Jesus our Friend asks us to give without expectation of reward. He invites us to seek out the oppressed, forgotten, “surplus” people. In our culture’s perspective, there are few less deserving than criminals and addicts, yet it is precisely these who are our brothers, for whom we are grateful. So by simply modeling the praxis of Christ in our particular 21st century context, we invite our friends, supporters, collaborators and others into reflecting on how they might also do so.

■ Processes that honor everyone. In a world sinfully oriented towards power relationships and the utilitarian calculus of our consumer society, we carry those values directly oppositional to our “market thinking” into our retreats. Group processes in which all voices are heard and respected, recognition of particular needs of individual retreatants, language, listening and personal care for our men retreatants - each of these models a different way of acting, of being male, of being human.

Fr. C. Creed (Chicago Province) is a member of the Loyola University Jesuit Community. He leads the Spiritual Exercises in Daily Life for faculty and graduate students, trains others to be spiritual companions in the Ignatian tradition, and chaplains the Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps.

Br. O’Grady (Chicago Province) is a member of the Claver Jesuit Community ministry of listening and responding to the gift of the African American community in Cincinnati.
Bill: As I reflect on what we do on the retreats for the homeless, I find four aspects that concretely build a culture of peace. These are naming personal fears, confessing our vulnerabilities as men, allowing friendship to develop despite the differences between us, and acting in hope when addiction or physical violence has sabotaged the peace. Let me give some examples of these from actual retreat activities.

- **Fear.** We build a culture of peace in the beginning of the retreat by asking each other to name a fear we have overcome and to face a fear we still struggle with. For men to talk about personal fears is countercultural. It is fear that makes men hate, it is fear which makes men enemies, it is fear which makes men self-absorbed, it is fear which makes nations prepare for war. Admitting a fear initiates the possibility of addressing the fear in a humane, caring and courageous manner. We begin to build trust of God, others and ourselves by talking honestly about our fears with one another. “Fear is useless, what is needed is trust” (Mk 5:37).

- **Confession and Healing.** We build a culture of peace by telling our personal stories, especially confessing those parts of our stories we would normally edit out. We confess in order to detoxify hidden hurts and failures which, when hidden, fuel violence and enmity. Confession by one person elicits a willingness to confess in other retreatants and makes clear the need for repentance and, in some cases, a follow through towards reconciliation or restitution. We rely on God’s mercy as the source of our strength. Together, we experience a guided prayer to heal our memories of violence given and violence received. Retreatants are invited to follow up the healing of memories with quiet reflection and journaling. One retreatant later shared that he had written a letter to his estranged spouse prompted by the experience of healing of memories.

- **Friendship.** For me, the homeless retreats have offered an opportunity to become friends with persons of a very different background and to discover a common bond as fellow humans, a bond much deeper than drug use, violence, incarceration and homelessness. Something unitive has occurred below those realities. Mutual trust has been fostered, and the bridge of trust continues to grow among us. Several of the men have become my colleagues and have joined our team in presenting the retreats. Three of the men have become my trusted friends; they are now fully employed and living ordinary lives and an extraordinary recovery. On Valentine’s Day, my Jesuit community hosted 10 homeless men, former retreatants, for a first-class feast prepared by community members. This is the third year we have welcomed homeless men into our home for dinner and conversation. Last year, during the cleanup, when I returned from the shelter to help with the dishes, I overheard a brother Jesuit commenting: “These guys were real people, not the way I had thought of homeless addicts. I mean we had real conversations.”

- **Hope.** Finally, the homeless men’s retreats build a fragile peace. Many relapse. It takes only one incident of addiction or physical violence to sabotage the peace and spiral downward into the cycle of strife, joblessness, homelessness and hopelessness. Then the recovery process begins again. I have discovered reserves of patience and persistence, of mercy and compassion in so many recovering addicts who reach out to their buddies who have relapsed. Recently, one formerly homeless and addicted man told me that every day he phones his former roommate in recovery, and has done so since his roommate relapsed. He does this as a sign of support and care, but also as a gesture of hope that his roommate, who has now been sober for 11 months since his relapse, will not relapse again. Hope imagines what is possible and then strives for it. Over the five years we have presented these retreats, several men have relapsed and then, to begin anew, have asked to make a second retreat. We welcome them eagerly.

These are some ways that the retreats for the homeless build a culture of peace. These retreat experiences with homeless men have helped me recognize the truth in the words of the late Anwar Sadat, President of Egypt, responding to those Arabs who criticized his travel to Israel in 1977 for peace talks with Menachim Begin, Prime Minister of Israel. He said he was building the possibility of peace because he had learned while imprisoned that underneath religious, social, economic and political realities was a deeper, common and unitive reality — we are all human beings and brothers and sisters of one another and we need to demonstrate that reality by our actions. The lesson: reach out.
Cheating Students out of a (Peace) Full Education

Colman McCarthy

Why isn’t Roman Catholicism a peace church? Why are Jesuit schools so tepid when it comes to peace education? Why is it only in schools run by Quakers, Mennonites and Church of the Brethren—the true peace churches—that peace studies is taken seriously?

It has become commonplace, in my more than 20 years of teaching peace at the university level, to see students amazed at the depth of the literature of peace. They ask the obvious questions: Why am I learning about this only now? Why are there so few courses in peace studies? Why doesn’t my school take peace education seriously?

I supply the obvious answer: you’ve been cheated out of a full education. Would any Jesuit school, including the high schools, graduate students with no requirements in languages, sciences, math, English? Do Jesuit colleges and universities skimp on funding their theology or business departments, as they do their peace and justice non-departments? The schools are like the college student who says, “I’m a virgin but I’m not emphatic about it.” The Jesuits are for peace, they just aren’t emphatic about it.

Many will disagree with that judgment, and pass me off as a crank. If so, I share the crankiness of two peace-driven Jesuits, Frs. Richard McSorely and Daniel Berrigan. During his years at Georgetown, where he was forever scrounging for nickels and dimes to fund his center for peace studies, McSorely asked: “Where in this nuclear age do we find in Christian universities the peace message of the Gospel? ROTC is the war message. That is so loud and clear that the peace message is lost.”

In 1980s essay on “game playing with imperial power,” Fr. Berrigan told of visiting colleges run by Vincentians, Franciscans, Benedictines, Jesuits and the Holy Cross order: “On each campus, theology looms large. On each campus also, ROTC….The military is ensconced, peddles its wares, offers military scholarships. One might conclude, were one not cognizant of the cover-up, that all Catholic universities were conducted, funded, idealized, by a single hard-headed Western male realist, in whose hands guns and butter, Eucharist and uniform, rested easily.”

Graduating Peace Illiterates

These questions about peace first came to mind nearly a half-century ago when I was a student at Spring Hill College. I cherished my Jesuit professors, and have remained in touch with several all these years. But as fine a college as Spring Hill was – my three brothers attended before me – it not only offered no courses in peace studies, but took muscular pride in its ROTC program. In the past 10 years, I’ve been invited to lecture on non-violence at eight Jesuit schools. None offer majors in peace studies; most host the ROTC. Of the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities recently queried about their efforts in peace education, 20 responded. Of those 20, no school offered a major. There were minors, concentrations and certificates, and one school has a “peace and justice floor.” But there were majors in business, accounting, engineering, math, biology, English, languages, theology, philosophy.

The conclusion? As first-rate as Jesuit schools may be in many academic disciplines, they are a flop when it comes to peace education.”

As first-rate as Jesuit schools may be in many academic disciplines, they are a flop when it comes to peace education.”
Bios here accompanied by knowledge about government and corporate deals that keep money flowing to build weapons but not affordable housing.

The many Jesuit priests and brothers around the world who are taking risks to increase peace and decrease violence, far from the comforts and luxuries of Jesuit campuses, should have their work supported through peace education back home in the schools of the 10 U.S. provinces.

The many teachers and professors in those schools who want to begin or expand peace studies courses should not be dismissed as leftovers from the 60s. The many students who wonder if it’s worth trying to be an active pacifist rather than a passive activist should be told yes it is, and taught about those who lived that way.

In higher education, some 70 schools currently offer degrees in peace studies. Thirty-five years ago, it was only one school, Manchester College in Indiana. So there is progress. With peace education still in its infancy, Jesuit schools have a choice: lead forcefully or follow lamely.

Unless we teach our children peace, someone else will teach them violence.

“With peace education still in its infancy, Jesuit schools have a choice: lead forcefully or follow lamely.”


Marchers from Dolores Mission in Los Angeles protest the war in Iraq last summer.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DOLORES MISSION.
"Can We Still Talk?: Two Perspectives"

Deshi Ramadhani, S.J.

It is not an easy task to share my perspective on the situation in our community at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley (JSTB) concerning the war against Iraq. For one reason, the community itself has gone through significant changes in terms of its members. Consequently, this writing may not reflect the current situation. For another, I am fully aware of the risk that my subjective (if not emotional) reaction as a non-U.S. Jesuit may find its way into this writing. I hope I will not step on anyone’s toes.

Two Utterances

I like recording people’s utterances. To begin, these two utterances may describe a significant shift that I believe is shared by various degrees by many non-U.S. Jesuits at JSTB:

Before I came to the U.S., I had believed that everything here was bad. After a while I began to see that there are so many good things here. Later on, I realized that there are so many bad things in my culture and country of origin too.

I was so proud to be sent here for studies, but now I feel embarrassed, or even guilty, that I am working on my degree in a country whose nation is going to war.

I heard the first utterance during my first year, said by another non-U.S. Jesuit; it has since then become a wisdom that is happily shared by many other non-U.S. Jesuits. The second utterance was made when the war in Iraq was at an early stage. I like to see the struggle among the non-U.S. Jesuits as a struggle to put the second statement in its proper place in the big picture of the first. This struggle has played a role in our conversations.

Formal and Informal Conversations

As the possibility of this war was coming closer, there was a strong sense in the air that “we have to do something.” A small task force was formed. Without any intention of promoting anti- or pro-war attitudes, its focus was mainly to look for possible actions (or at least suggestions for actions). To stimulate conversation, the group distributed some reading materials. Small communities were encouraged to have at least one meeting that would allow each member to share his concerns.

I was so proud to be sent here for studies, but now I feel embarrassed, or even guilty, that I am working on my degree in a country whose nation is going to war.

A gathering for the larger community was also held with the same intention—that each one could raise his voice to an assembled group of Jesuits. I believe that for many who participated in that gathering, the experience of listening to the voices that had until then been unheard was enriching, although inevitably there was deep sadness about our helplessness to change the situation.

I wish more of us could apply the advice of St. Ignatius to our conversations that promise to be more powerful as a means of voicing one’s concern for peace.

As simple as it is, such an utterance is so powerful in its capacity to open hearts and minds to deeper conversations. The “wisdom of avoiding tension” is in reality not a first-class wisdom at all. Formal gatherings have been and can still be arranged, but it is the informal conversations that promise to be more powerful as a means of voicing one’s concern for peace.

We may agree or disagree about the war, but by inserting the word “sorry” into our conversations, we can move towards real change and understanding. An exchange that includes “I’m sorry that I can never fully understand your situation as the victim of many U.S. foreign policies” and “I’m sorry that I can’t understand that patriotism can go so deep into your religious conviction,” for example, can be a powerful first step toward a culture of peace.

I have also been wondering whether the advice of St. Ignatius could be applied in our conversations, so that each of us is “more willing to give a good interpretation to the statement of another than to condemn it” (SpEx 22). I don’t know, but I wish more of us could say to each other “I’m sorry that my knowledge is so limited, but we can still talk.”
Two Perspectives

RAY DONALDSON, S.J.

One learns a great deal in a community composed of Jesuits from all over the world. We are blessed to have such a community among the Jesuits at the Weston Jesuit School of Theology. Divided among the 10 geographically scattered houses of the Weston Jesuit Community, 43 of the 90 Jesuits come from provinces outside of the United States.

The first evening after the war in Iraq began, the members of our house held an all-night prayer vigil, each man taking one hour in the chapel to pray for peace. Our rector mentioned the war in his announcements at one of our Masses for the whole community a few days after it started, in effect saying that discourse should remain respectful. A telephone number to call President Bush and register one's feelings about the war circulated among the 10 houses. Some took advantage of this to register their opinion.

War has a way of surfacing tensions in an internationally diverse community that a more prolonged method of inducing suffering, such as economic sanctions, does not. At the house where I live, someone, presumably a U.S. scholastic, installed the American flag in front of our house. This encouraged discussion at a regularly scheduled house meeting. If there ever was an opportunity for strong opinions to receive an airing and a hearing, this was it. We talked about the message we were sending by having the flag up, and the statement we would be making by taking it down. I seemed that no matter what we did, even if it was to do nothing, we would be making a statement. But was it a statement that brothers and friends in the Lord at the service of Christ's mission truly wanted to make?

The solution was to purchase a peace flag - a white dove and the word "peace" written in many different languages on a blue background - to fly with the American flag. I found the discussion reasonable and respectful of different viewpoints. It was only much later that I wondered how typical it was that the solution involved buying something.

I have certainly learned many things from my international brothers. Those of us from the U.S. appropriate the word "American" to describe ourselves, though any person from this hemisphere has an equal claim. We have such confidence in our economic and political systems that we imagine that those nations with different systems are impoverished and would be better off if they were like us. We enter an international situation with a certainty that we can quickly identify what is wrong with it and know how to fix it, no matter how foreign to our own experience the situation may be. We seem to have little appreciation for what is in place and little respect for what has gone before. We do not value the wisdom gained with increasing age, but fear the accompanying diminishing. As one of my international Jesuit brothers said, it is not specific things that Americans do that may be annoying, but how they do them. We are perceived as resolving problems with military force.

Religiously plural from its beginning, the United States has developed a significant tolerance of religious differences. As commentator David Brooks wrote in a recent editorial column: "Americans do not seem to care that their neighbors do not have the true faith." In many other nations, when it is not explicit, religious difference is just below the surface of almost any discussion. Not so in the U.S. This contributes to peace by not raising all disputes to the level of the truths of religion, which are notoriously difficult to resolve.

Why no serious rifts in the Weston Jesuit Community over the Iraq war? I believe it comes down to the shared experience of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and of trying to faithfully live our way of proceeding. These are aspects of Jesuit culture that help us to pray, live, play and work together. The diverse group of Jesuits that gathers each week to play indoor soccer keeps right on playing. We probably have more in common with our Jesuit brethren from other nations than we do with most of our fellow countrymen. After all, our first allegiance is to Jesus Christ, not to our respective nations.

There is very little discussion in our house of the current situation in Iraq. As the explosions and gunfire accompanying the conquest gave way to the explosions and gunfire accompanying the occupation, we look up from our newspaper reports and shake our heads. Some remark on the futility, others wonder about God’s presence and activity, and still others compare the number of casualties each day to the number of people killed in American cities that same day.

The displaying of the American flag in front of our house at the beginning of the war in Iraq effectively served as a lightning rod for the multiplicity of feelings and reactions concerning this war. That we were able to give voice to these feelings and reactions, at least to some extent, in the discussion of what to do about the flag, was a significant blessing. Today, only the peace flag remains in place.


“Can We Still Talk??: A Response

REV. JOHN LIBENS, S.J.

Ignatius counseled his sons not to talk about politics because of the divisions that existed among nations and the strong feelings they evoked among his companions, who were, after all, “Friends in the Lord.” So the situations which Ray Donaldson and Deshi Ramadani describe are not new to the Society.

What is new is both the culture of fear and violence in which we live as well as the inequality in power relationships between the powers at war. Jesuits think, Jesuits talk. And we hope that the process works in the proper order! But sometimes we do not speak because we are afraid of offending others. We seek to compromise, as when Ray points out: “But was it a statement that brothers and friends in the Lord at the service of Christ’s mission truly wanted to make?”

Avoidance leads us to ignore the presupposition of Annotation 22 in the Exercises in which we attempt to find what is good and right in what the other is saying. By avoiding the differences, we also avoid opening ourselves up to one another as “Friends in the Lord,” resulting in the posture which Deshi ends with: “I’m sorry that my knowledge is so limited, but can we still talk?”

Unless we risk the tension of speaking, listening, and accepting differing viewpoints, we will not truly accept our brothers as “Friends in the Lord,” nor will we be able to be true to what binds us together: the mission of the Society, the service of God’s People, the Church. Respect means truth among us. Let us speak the truth to one another in the spirit of Annotation 22 that we might be better servants of Christ’s mission.

Mr. Donaldson (Maryland Province) is a Jesuit scholastic studying at Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, Mass.

Fr. Libens (Detroit Province) is the superior of the Jesuit First Studies Program at Loyola University Chicago and the former provincial of the Detroit Province.
Catholic Peacemaking as Diplomacy

REV. DREW CHRISTIANSEN, SJ.

“It is by uniting their own sufferings for the sake of truth and freedom to the sufferings of Christ on the cross,” Pope John Paul II wrote after the collapse of communism in eastern Europe, “that people are able to accomplish the miracle of peace and are 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.”

The Holy Father was a prime mover in bringing down the communist governments in Poland and neighboring countries in 1989. A mentor for Solidarity, the Polish labor movement, Pope John Paul II himself became the emblem of Polish nationalism in the 1980s; but in Centesimus annus, he critiqued violence, i.e., war, as a tool of political change. War, in his view, is a destructive illusion, blinding people to the consequences of war, corrupting conscience and making it still more difficult to achieve the goals for which combat is undertaken.

Too often American Catholics assume the Church is unqualifiedly a just-war church in the sense of espousing just war as the sole, legitimate response to grave, public evil. Certainly, that was true during the Second World War. Denied church support, conscientious objectors like Gordon Zahn did prison time for their refusal to serve in the military. Even on the eve of the Second Vatican Council, Vatican officials were still rejecting conscientious objection. But the Council changed all that. It condemned ‘total war,’ urged an evaluation of war with an entirely new attitude,” praised active nonviolence and supported legal protection for conscientious objection.

With the teaching of John Paul II, the Church has repudiated war as an instrument of policy and embraced nonviolence as a better way to resist injustice. The pope scorned the 1981 Gulf War as “an adventure with no return” and opposed the 2002 Iraq War as “a defeat for humanity.” While church teaching continues to permit governments the right of self-defense, including defense against terrorism, it repeatedly urges the pursuit of alternatives to war. Indeed, under John Paul, just war has become a subordinate part of a rich theology of peace.

Unfortunately, in time of crisis, especially in debates over American foreign military policy, the just war doctrine is too often debated – controversies in which I confess I have played a part – to the detriment of appreciation of the larger church teaching on peace. In fact, Pope John Paul’s teaching, described by Msgr. Giampaolo Crepaldi, the Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, as the “ordinary magisterium,” includes a strong anti-war critique.

In his 2000 World Day of Peace Message, for example, the Holy Father wrote:

“...and embraced nonviolence as a better way to resist injustice. The pope scorned the 1981 Gulf War as “an adventure with no return” and opposed the 2002 Iraq War as “a defeat for humanity.” While church teaching continues to permit governments the right of self-defense, including defense against terrorism, it repeatedly urges the pursuit of alternatives to war. Indeed, under John Paul, just war has become a subordinate part of a rich theology of peace.

Unfortunately, in time of crisis, especially in debates over American foreign military policy, the just war doctrine is too often debated – controversies in which I confess I have played a part – to the detriment of appreciation of the larger church teaching on peace. In fact, Pope John Paul’s teaching, described by Msgr. Giampaolo Crepaldi, the Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, as the “ordinary magisterium,” includes a strong anti-war critique.

In his 2000 World Day of Peace Message, for example, the Holy Father wrote:
of inter-ethnic and interreligious conflict, in which he had been among the advance guard calling for “humanitarian intervention.” Pope John Paul II insisted on negotiation as the way to resolve such conflict. “[I]n the face of modern armed conflicts, negotiation between parties, with appropriate attempts at negotiation by international and regional bodies, is of the greatest importance . . . to prevent such conflicts and to end them once they have broken out.”

The Holy See’s recent diplomatic experience has not always been as successful as the pope’s 1989 intervention with Gorbachev and Juszczak. In the Middle East, the Synod for Lebanon and the Holy Father’s 1996 pilgrimage to that country helped promote unity and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, but despite significant agreements with Israel (1993) and the PLO (2000), the Vatican faced rejection of some of its proposals to resolve aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

During the 90s, under the leadership of then-Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, the Holy See’s foreign minister (formally titled Secretary for Relations with States), Vatican diplomacy underwent a dramatic transformation. According to his sub-secretary, Mgr. Celestino Migliore, now an archbishop and the Holy See’s permanent observer at the United Nations, the Vatican today practices “a diplomacy of peace” and “conciliation.”

**The 1997 World Day of Peace Message**

The 1997 World Day of Peace Message proposed mediation by “non-governmental humanitarian organizations and religious bodies . . . to promote peace . . . help to overcome age-old rivalries, reconcile enemies, and open the way to a new and shared future.” This was a papal endorsement of the work of groups like the Community of San Egidio, known for its successful mediation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

The Holy See’s recent diplomatic experience has not always been as successful as the pope’s 1989 intervention with Gorbachev and Juszczak. In the Middle East, the Synod for Lebanon and the Holy Father’s 1996 pilgrimage to that country helped promote unity and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, but despite significant agreements with Israel (1993) and the PLO (2000), the Vatican faced rejection of some of its proposals to resolve aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

During the 90s, under the leadership of then-Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, the Holy See’s foreign minister (formally titled Secretary for Relations with States), Vatican diplomacy underwent a dramatic transformation. According to his sub-secretary, Mgr. Celestino Migliore, now an archbishop and the Holy See’s permanent observer at the United Nations, the Vatican today practices “a diplomacy of peace” and “conciliation.”

**The 1997 World Day of Peace Message**

The 1997 World Day of Peace Message proposed mediation by “non-governmental humanitarian organizations and religious bodies . . . to promote peace . . . help to overcome age-old rivalries, reconcile enemies, and open the way to a new and shared future.” This was a papal endorsement of the work of groups like the Community of San Egidio, known for its successful mediation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

The Holy See’s recent diplomatic experience has not always been as successful as the pope’s 1989 intervention with Gorbachev and Juszczak. In the Middle East, the Synod for Lebanon and the Holy Father’s 1996 pilgrimage to that country helped promote unity and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, but despite significant agreements with Israel (1993) and the PLO (2000), the Vatican faced rejection of some of its proposals to resolve aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

During the 90s, under the leadership of then-Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, the Holy See’s foreign minister (formally titled Secretary for Relations with States), Vatican diplomacy underwent a dramatic transformation. According to his sub-secretary, Mgr. Celestino Migliore, now an archbishop and the Holy See’s permanent observer at the United Nations, the Vatican today practices “a diplomacy of peace” and “conciliation.”

**The 1997 World Day of Peace Message**

The 1997 World Day of Peace Message proposed mediation by “non-governmental humanitarian organizations and religious bodies . . . to promote peace . . . help to overcome age-old rivalries, reconcile enemies, and open the way to a new and shared future.” This was a papal endorsement of the work of groups like the Community of San Egidio, known for its successful mediation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

The Holy See’s recent diplomatic experience has not always been as successful as the pope’s 1989 intervention with Gorbachev and Juszczak. In the Middle East, the Synod for Lebanon and the Holy Father’s 1996 pilgrimage to that country helped promote unity and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, but despite significant agreements with Israel (1993) and the PLO (2000), the Vatican faced rejection of some of its proposals to resolve aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

The Holy See’s recent diplomatic experience has not always been as successful as the pope’s 1989 intervention with Gorbachev and Juszczak. In the Middle East, the Synod for Lebanon and the Holy Father’s 1996 pilgrimage to that country helped promote unity and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, but despite significant agreements with Israel (1993) and the PLO (2000), the Vatican faced rejection of some of its proposals to resolve aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

The Holy See’s recent diplomatic experience has not always been as successful as the pope’s 1989 intervention with Gorbachev and Juszczak. In the Middle East, the Synod for Lebanon and the Holy Father’s 1996 pilgrimage to that country helped promote unity and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, but despite significant agreements with Israel (1993) and the PLO (2000), the Vatican faced rejection of some of its proposals to resolve aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

The Holy See’s recent diplomatic experience has not always been as successful as the pope’s 1989 intervention with Gorbachev and Juszczak. In the Middle East, the Synod for Lebanon and the Holy Father’s 1996 pilgrimage to that country helped promote unity and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, but despite significant agreements with Israel (1993) and the PLO (2000), the Vatican faced rejection of some of its proposals to resolve aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

The Holy See’s recent diplomatic experience has not always been as successful as the pope’s 1989 intervention with Gorbachev and Juszczak. In the Middle East, the Synod for Lebanon and the Holy Father’s 1996 pilgrimage to that country helped promote unity and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, but despite significant agreements with Israel (1993) and the PLO (2000), the Vatican faced rejection of some of its proposals to resolve aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

The Holy See’s recent diplomatic experience has not always been as successful as the pope’s 1989 intervention with Gorbachev and Juszczak. In the Middle East, the Synod for Lebanon and the Holy Father’s 1996 pilgrimage to that country helped promote unity and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, but despite significant agreements with Israel (1993) and the PLO (2000), the Vatican faced rejection of some of its proposals to resolve aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.

The Holy See’s recent diplomatic experience has not always been as successful as the pope’s 1989 intervention with Gorbachev and Juszczak. In the Middle East, the Synod for Lebanon and the Holy Father’s 1996 pilgrimage to that country helped promote unity and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, but despite significant agreements with Israel (1993) and the PLO (2000), the Vatican faced rejection of some of its proposals to resolve aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. When the occupied Church of the Nativity was besieged by the Israeli Defense Force in 2002, for example, Israel and the Palestinian Authority alternately rejected mediation by the papal nuncio, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. In the end, however, the solution Sambi first proposed – exile for the most militant among the occupiers – was implemented by the American and British mediators with the aid of other governments.
Equal Time for Peace

BRITISH ROBINSON

Excerpted from a speech given on October 7, 2003, at the United Nations to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of Pope John XXIII's encyclical Pacem in Terris and the Silver Jubilee of the Pontificate of Pope John Paul II.

Where were you in 1963?

In 1963, America’s involvement in Vietnam was escalating, the protests for civil rights were increasing in pitch, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King had launched his Poor People’s Campaign, and the women’s liberation movement was taking shape. Many of the people involved in these movements knew nothing of Pacem in Terris but, as a whole, they were acting on behalf of the human spirit, drawing on its collective conscience, trying to set it right with God. In their own way, they were trying to build a culture of peace at the local level – within their communities, churches and schools.

When we think about building a culture of peace, we often forget about the rich teaching the Catholic Church offers us as we discern difficult and complex issues of the day. One such example is the encyclical Pacem in Terris. Shocking in its simplicity and spellbinding in its truth, its goal is to lay a path to help mankind find unity in an increasingly complex world. Simply put, it holds the key to establishing universal peace on earth.

It is significant that Pope John XXIII addressed this encyclical not only to the hierarchy of the Church but also to the clergy, the faithful and all people of good will. As a member of the faithful, I am reminded that peace in the world must come from within. Peace will come if we stay connected to God, and find God in everything, in all things. If we want peace on earth, we first must be willing to reconcile ourselves with God.

We don’t always hear it, or we dismiss it because others refuse to credit it. In the societies in which we live, peace is not a big news story. Instead, we study war like never before with "embedded journalists" reporting to us on its every detail.

But where is equal time for peace?

Peace is not just the resolution of conflict. As Christians and Catholics, peace must become a way of life for us. Although John XXIII said this at the height of the Cold War, the mandate is just as urgent today in this post-Cold War world.

As individuals, we must join Church-based and other efforts...
to promote international development. As Pope Paul VI said in his 1967 encyclical, Populorum Progressio, “The new name for peace is development. Efforts at building peace today are linked inextricably to efforts of economic development.”

Efforts to bring about development do not appear spontaneously. They take will among individuals. And, as Pacem in Terris makes clear, these individuals must act out of conscience — their innate understanding of what is right before God.

We cannot underestimate the power of the individual. At its most basic level, peace will come when all of us, as individuals, take responsibility for the fate of others. In order to move toward global peace and lasting justice, we must engage in a spirituality that reconnects us to the “truth” of the inherent dignity of every person created in God’s image.

As a result of these experiences, key Catholic stakeholders have established the new Catholic Peacebuilding Network. This initiative is an attempt to be more intentional about integrating the tools of conflict resolution. “It is the lens through which we view and promote human dignity... the peacebuilding lens.”

Catholic institutions like CRS, CARITAS and JRS (Jesuit Refugee Service) play a vital role in bringing about global peace and justice.

In fact, it is the individual JRS, CRS and CARITAS worker who puts him/herself on the front lines, amidst danger, violence and conflict to bring about peace. Like them, we too must embed ourselves in efforts designed to create peace. We must become “embedded peacemakers.”

But not all of us can join relief or development missions. Still, we can get more involved in promoting peace by educating ourselves about the issues, donating money, raising consciousness in our communities, promoting socially responsible investing and holding our respective governments accountable.

Making peace happen is an incremental process, but a process that transforms every one of us and thereby shapes and transforms our world. It is among us that His Kingdom should arrive, and it is in the reality of our world that the vision of God for the good of our world might come true. As we get connected to God, and stay connected to God, we each become the face of goodness, the reflection of God in the world today - a world where peace is possible.

We cannot underestimate the power of the individual. At its most basic level, peace will come when all of us, as individuals, take responsibility for the fate of others. In order to move toward global peace and lasting justice, we must engage in a spirituality that reconnects us to the “truth” of the inherent dignity of every person created in God’s image.
The Christian Vocation of Peacemaking

MARIE DENNIS

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

-- Matthew 5:1-15

Woven into the fabric of Jesus’ story from beginning to end is an identification of his mission with peace on earth – deep peace, peace rooted in justice, shalom and a call to the task of peacemaking for those who would be disciples.

We say the words often and easily: “Peace be with you.” We call him Prince of Peace. We listen to the promise, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.”

We struggle to follow his mandates: “Love your enemy;” “Leave your gifts at the altar and go to be reconciled with a brother or sister who has something against you.” And we are deeply puzzled by his warning, “I come not to bring peace, but the sword.”

To seek peace, deep peace rooted in justice, shalom – not a mere absence of war, but the fullness of life for all – is the Christian vocation. As followers of the One who is Peace, the Already, who on the cross overcame the violence of our world, we are called to help move our broken and violated world toward the full flowering of New Creation. We are invited to claim the hope that is the hallmark of the Christian life.

The prophets among us, the ones whose lives are given to proclaiming peace, seem to understand at a soul-deep level that every human life is unique, precious, of utmost value in the eyes of God, and that we are part of a community of life that is a beautiful and gratuitous gift from the Creator.

It was very easy for me when I was in Afghanistan a few months ago to cherish the life of a little girl I met there named Amena, who was just the same age as my granddaughter. US bombs had inadvertently hit Amena’s house near Kanduz, killing her mother, all her brothers and sisters, her aunts and uncles and her cousins, including a two-day-old baby – 16 people in all. No one believes that such a tragedy was intended, but it was a good example of what modern wars do, and my encounter with Amena offered a powerful motive to pursue peace.

But the Christian vocation would demand even more: that we honor the fact that every terrorist is also a beloved and that each one is as precious in the eyes of God as are my Cati Adele and Bobby, and Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein are as precious in the eyes of God as are my Cati Adele and Bobby.

In our context of thirty plus years of troubles – violence, fear, and division are known. Peace is the mystery! People are frightened...
of peace. It is simultaneously exciting and fearful. This is mystery. Peace asks a lot of you. Peace asks you to share memory. It asks you to share space, territory, specific concrete places. It asks you to share a future. And all this you are asked to do with and in the presence of your enemy. Peace is Mystery. It is walking into the unknown.

Peace is Mystery. It is the Promise, the “already and the not yet.” The pursuit of peace is an act of hope. It requires careful theological reflection on the values of our faith tradition in specific situations of violent conflict and war; presence, accompaniment and the nurturing of relationships across boundaries; the creation and use of a moral framework and ethical tools for peacemaking appropriate to these times; vigorous spiritual exercises, and creative liturgical expression.

First, theological reflection. For people of the Word, this suggests a familiar practice—that of praying with the Sacred Texts in one hand and the newspaper in the other. It implies careful social analysis and identification of root causes of violence.

The clearest lessons emerging repeatedly from such a reflection in communities dealing with violent conflict are that lasting peace has to be rooted in an absolute commitment to preserving every human life and the integrity of the rest of creation and that deep peace cannot be accomplished by war. If we really believe, for example, that every terrorist is precious in the eyes of God as is every victim of terrorism, what principles and practices will we promote in US foreign policy?

“Lasting peace has to be rooted in an absolute commitment to preserving every human life and the integrity of the rest of creation and that deep peace cannot be accomplished by war. If we really believe, for example, that every terrorist is precious in the eyes of God as is every victim of terrorism, what principles and practices will we promote in US foreign policy?”

Fr. Bob M Cahill and other Maryknollers have lived very simply in predominantly Muslim and Hindu Bangladesh since 1975. When asked why he is there, he says, “I am here to serve seriously sick persons who are poor. Your religion and mine teach that those who serve the poor serve Allah. I respect your Islamic faith. It is good. My Christian faith is also good. You fulfill your faith, and I will fulfill mine. We shall meet again in paradise.” Bob M Cahill is planting deep and lasting roots of peace.

People of faith can also contribute to the work for peace by helping to develop a moral framework for peacemaking that is shaped by the experience of communities devastated by conflict, communities that know all too well the consequences of war and the urgent need for cultures of peace. A thorough review of the just war theory may also be called for here.

Another task for us as people of faith is to tap the spiritual energies in our own traditions and to appropriate religious ritual and symbol into the work for peace. For years, a small community of Maryknoll Sisters lived in a cloistered community in the Sudan. As war raged around them, their mission was to pray, only to pray—powerful witness to a peace that surpasses all understanding.

Before the most recent war began in Iraq, thousands of people around the world joined together in prayer and fasting, a practice that was both personally transformative and politically powerful. At the same time, public prayer and creative liturgies, accompanying other work for peace and justice, enable our communities to make visible our vision of peace and to encourage each other in discouraging times.

When we retell the story of Jesus’ last supper and remember the meaning of Eucharist, the One Loaf that already accomplished reconciliation in our broken world, we reclaim a hopefulness that defines the Christian vocation. We who would be peacemakers, who yearn to build a culture of peace, need to remember in these times who we are as people of faith and why we believe that even the greatest of evils— including terrorism and tyranny, injustice, genocide and war—will not have the last word.
Peace As Pathology: A Critical Look at Peace

REV. RICHARD RYSCAVAGE, S.J.

What is ideology and how does it relate to the pursuit of peace? An ideology is a set of ideas and assumptions about social behavior and the way social systems operate. It emerges in the shape of political doctrines about the world of domestic and international life. An ideology tends toward a narrow perspective that disavows compromise or ambiguity. Ideologues see life in black and white. This highly focused perspective can explain their persuasive power.

Often, charismatic leaders require an ideological base. In their person, they capture the aspirations of a particular people. Once dead, their charism folds into the ongoing ideology. Castro, Lenin and Mao are classic examples from the 20th century ideology of communism. Mandela, Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. are more honored examples from the 20th century ideology of nonviolent social change.

Ideology can become pathology, a damaging social phenomenon. We know clearly from history how the ideology of Marxist-Leninism became a social pathology, justifying mass murder, severe abuses of human rights, and the suppression of religion in the name of social engineering. Is it possible that the proponents of peace and nonviolence inadvertently created the fertile conditions for injustice and war? Henry Kissinger once wrote: “Whenever peace has been the primary objective of a nation or a group, the international system has been at the mercy of the most ruthless member of the international community.” Kissinger embodies the so-called “realist” school of international relations. He casts a skeptical eye on the idealist pursuit of peace for its own sake. The problem with peace is that it is a highly value-laden concept. The promotion of peace, or even the collection of objective data on peace, can be charged with normative judgments about what is good and what is bad. A core presumption often exists that peace is always good and attainable; secondly, there is an assumption that one can and should “socially engineer” people in the direction of peace. Peace as a normative value can veer into ideology when it becomes doctrinal and rigid. Saint Augustine may have said that the purpose of war is peace, but for a peace ideologue, political violence can never serve the cause of peace. A just war becomes practically impossible. “Nothing in life is worth the exercise of violence” and “peace at any price” are the placards of an ideological doctrine. They express the uncompromising clarity of a dedicated but rigid pacifist.

This ideological perspective on war and peace can seep into less rigorous political viewpoints. Normally there are two ways that people approach the challenge of peace. The first approach is subjective, rooted in psychological and spiritual dimensions. Archibald MacLeish, the U.S. poet laureate and playwright, wrote the beautiful opening lines of the constitution of UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization): “Since wars begin in the minds of men it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.” From this perspective, peace comes through education and spiritual shifts within the human person. In the traditions of Christian spirituality, peace takes root in the human heart as part of a conversion toward God. In a more secular context, education for peace or peace workshops aim for similar individual and group breakthroughs.

The second typical approach to peace is more...
structural. Instead of starting with the individual human person (the “wars begin in the minds of men” tradition), it starts with the objective general social conditions in the world or in a particular society. The assumption is that structures condition people toward war, so different structures could produce peace. “Social engineering” in favor of peace can become an explicit political goal. We can, for example, align one political party with peace or we can create economic sanctions against a country that prepares for war.

More elaborate ideals of world governance propel people to argue for the surrender of national sovereignty to international structures that would guarantee world peace.

There are ideological dangers for both approaches. In the first instance, there is no guarantee that individual peace of heart will lead to a collective communal peace in this world. Saint Augustine was always clear about this point. The peace we feel in our souls should not blind us to the fact that we are pilgrims in a grim, dark and perilous social world. To put on the “blinders of peace” and not look social evil in the eye can produce a dangerous political naïveté. Better communication does not necessarily ensure the peaceful behavior of groups. Throughout the Cold War, for example, the Soviet Union manipulated individuals through “peace exchanges” with the West. In the process of “making friendship for peace” goodhearted individuals became unwitting apologists for tyranny. Even today, one hears the call to personal peace and reconciliation while ignoring the tough demands of social justice.

In the second approach, creating structural social conditions for peace can easily become ideological if this does not recognize and welcome the varieties of peace building at work in the world. Traditionally, peacemakers were professional diplomats such as Dennis Ross, who worked for years on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Yet it is common in various “peace movements” not to recognize the quiet role of official diplomacy in preventing wars. (See Fr. Drew Christiansen’s article on p.12 in this issue.) There is also an ideological tendency to assume that concern for peace belongs exclusively to the “democratic left.” It is rarely acknowledged that an institution such as the U.S. Institute for Peace – which sponsors peace research – was authorized and funded with the support of President Ronald Reagan and his administration. It would not have come into existence without the endorsement of the conservatives. Sometimes, anti-religious prejudice prevents the acknowledgement of faith-based diplomacy – for example, the role of right wing Christian fundamentalists in efforts to bring the Sudan conflict in Africa to a peaceful solution. Disdain for the military can cloud any understanding of the peacekeeping role of the armed forces. Anti-capitalist, anti-big business prejudices can prevent any understanding of how multinational corporations could play a positive role in solving conflicts.

Both the personal and social approaches to peace can run into an ideological ditch by selectively drawing on the heroes of twentieth century nonviolent social change. Ideologues for peace prefer to pass over lightly the intense Catholic doctrinal loyalty and orthodoxy of Dorothy Day, as well as her devotion to the Blessed Mother; the reactionary anti-modern economic views of Gandhi; the call for coercion in Bayard Rustin; the belief of Martin Luther King that “love is not enough”; and John Paul II’s linking of anti-abortion efforts to peace. To draw a fully complex picture of these formidable leaders would compromise the ideological simplicity of a typical left wing peace movement.

Religious activists are particularly prone to these distortions. Their moralism seems to make them immune to honest criticism. How can promoting peace do any harm? Normally, it is harmless. But when it takes on the qualities of an ideology, it can slowly and subtly transform itself into a pathological and socially dangerous condition. Peace becomes self-validating and a closed circle of believers gradually loses touch with reality, making them and their cause more easily dismissed.

St Ignatius Loyola, the great teacher of spiritual discernment, warned us about the spirit of evil cloaking itself in self-evident goodness. That is why we should never unreservedly and uncritically give peace a chance.
Contents

What Do We Mean by “Peace” Anyway?
JOHN KLEIDERER
What do we mean when we talk about peace? ........................................... page 1

Peace Practices, Practicing Peace
REV. RICK MALLOY, S.J.
The realities and practices of culture ....................................................... page 3

Peace and War, Death and Life
REV. JOHN KAVANAUGH, S.J.
Recovering personal meaning and value ................................................. page 5

A Culture of Peace that Includes the Homeless
REV. BILL CREED, S.J. AND BR. MIKE O’GRADY, S.J.
Respect for the marginalized as an act of peacemaking ........................... page 6

Cheating Students out of a (Peace)Full Education
COLMAN McCARTHY
A challenge to Jesuits to educate for peace ............................................ page 8

FROM THE THEOLOGATES
The war in Iraq as seen by Jesuits in formation
“Can We Still Talk?”: Two Perspectives
DESHI RAMADHANI, S.J. ................................................................. page 10
RAY DONALDSON, S.J. ................................................................. page 11

“Can We Still Talk?”: A Response
REV. JOHN LIBENS, S.J. ................................................................. page 11

Catholic Peacemaking as Diplomacy
REV. DREW CHRISTIENSEN
A new age of Catholic peacebuilding ..................................................... page 12

Equal Time for Peace
BRITISH ROBINSON
An address to the United Nations on the 40th anniversary of Pacem in Terris ... page 14

The Christian Vocation of Peacemaking
MARIE DENNIS
A contemplation of peace rooted in justice .......................................... page 16

Peace as Pathology: A Critical Look at Peace
REV. RICK RYSCAVAGE, S.J.
The dangers of an ideological approach to peace ............................... page 18

BOOKS

(Chicago: Loyola Press, 1997). Written in the final two months of Bernardin’s life, the
insights and reflections that make up this book are part of the Cardinal’s pastoral legacy.

■ Being Peace.
Thich Nhat Hanh. (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 1987). A classic introduction to the art of mindful living by the
Nobel Peace Prize-nominated Buddhist monk, poet and peace activist.

■ Building Peace. Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies.
Explores the dynamics of conflict and suggests a holistic approach to peace that transforms conflict and effects recon-
ciliation. The book on conflict transformation, as opposed to conflict resolution.

reveal the violence inherent in the vocation of peacemaking.

■ Just Peacemaking. Ten Practices for Abolishing War.
Glen Stassen, ed. (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1998). A collaboration of 23 scholars that explores the intentions
to restore a just and enduring peace, and what must be
done to live up to those intentions.

■ Approaches to Peace. A Reader in Peace Studies.
David P. Barash, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press). A unique and interdisciplinary sampling of classic articles
and short literary selections on peace and conflict studies.

John R. Donahue, S.J. (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2000). Includes a select bibliography on peace on page 68.