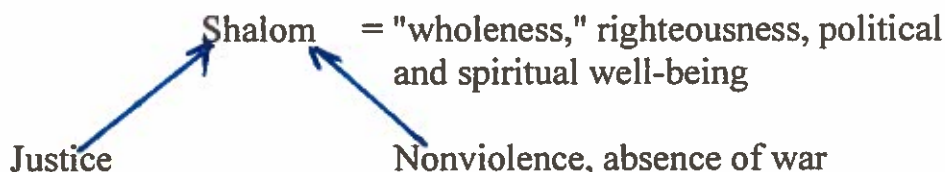


NONVIOLENCE, JUSTICE, RECONCILIATION: RECENT CATHOLIC DEVELOPMENTS
Institute on Peace and Justice, David Hollenbach, S.J., Entebbe, Uganda, Nov. 8, 2017

I. Development today: importance of nonviolence

II. The relation of justice and peace.



"Already/Not Yet" The fullness of both justice and peace achieved in messianic age ("kindness and truth will embrace, justice and peace will kiss" [Ps 85:10-11]) and in reign of God ("a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love, and peace" (Preface, Feast of Christ the King)).

III. Two Christian sub-traditions: Nonviolence and Just/Unjust War.

Throughout history, both the ethic of nonviolence and just/unjust-war thinking present in the actual life of the church. **Roots:**

A. Interpretation of history.

- If you want peace, work for justice (Paul IV).
- "There is no way to peace, peace is the way" (A. J. Muste).

B. Philosophical. Absolute vs. relative duties.

C. Theological. interpretation of ethical significance of death of Jesus:

- the cross as self-sacrifice;
- the cross as consequence of fidelity to the kingdom of God and justice
- resurrection as vindication of self-sacrificial love;
- resurrection as "down payment" on a world of justice and reconciliation.

Both ethic of nonviolence **and** just war tradition essential to reign of God.

IV. The presupposition against violence. Thomas Aquinas begins discussion of war: "Whether it is always a sin to fight in war?" (ST II,II, q. 40, art. 1).

A. Killing in defense of justice an exception. **B.** Justification of force must rest on the same commitment to human life and dignity as commitment to nonviolence.

Use of Force an exception to duty of nonviolence. See U.S. bishops' 1993 "The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace":

- (1) In situations of conflict, our constant commitment ought to be, as far as possible, to strive for justice through non-violent means.
- (2) But, when sustained attempts at nonviolent action fail to protect innocent against fundamental injustice, legitimate political authorities permitted as a last resort to employ limited force to rescue the innocent and establish justice.

V. Just/unjust war norms

A. Jus ad [into] bellum (just decision to go into war)

- 1) **Just cause**—**fundamental human rights**. E.g. intervention to stop genocide.
- 2) **Legitimate authority**—increasingly multilateral.
- 3) **Proportionality**
 - a) **last resort**: *Catechism* #2309) rejects preventive war
 - b) **reasonable hope of success**
- 4) **Right intention**. All the above criteria must be the intention of combatants.

B. Jus in [within] bello (justice within war, morality of means)

- 1) **Discrimination**. No terrorism, no attack on population centers.
- 2) **Proportionality**.

C. New Developments today:

Jus ante [before] et contra [against] bellum--justice to prevent war
Jus post [after] bellum—restorative justice, reconciliation.

VI. Reconciliation, Just Peace, and Restorative Justice.

Elimination of the causes of war is a central duty of Christians. Applies equally in the pacifist and just war traditions.

Promotion of restorative justice includes human rights, economic development, post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation; construction of institutions of conflict prevention, the rule of law, world order, etc.

Christians must be agents of long-term peace.

Justice as way to peace

Meaning of justice:

- "Basic justice demands the establishment of **minimum levels of participation** in the life of the human community for all persons.
- "The **ultimate injustice** is for a person or group to be treated **actively or abandoned passively as if they were nonmembers of the human race.**"

Implications for peacebuilding:

- **Negative:** No violation of just war norms or law of war (no aggression, no genocide, no crimes against humanity, no ethnic cleansing)
- **Positive:** Responsibility to protect (R2P); post-conflict reconciliation; build institutions that promote peace and development.

*National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Economic Justice for All (1986), no. 77

