

Christian Peacemaking

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Saint Joseph College
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Course Reading

Charles McCollough, *Resolving Conflicts with Justice and Peace* . Pilgrim Press, 1991.
J. Milburn Thompson, *Justice and Peace: A Christian Perspective* . Orbis Books, 1997.
Other readings will be distributed to the class. If an article is handed out, it is required.

Course Description

This course will study the issues of Conflict, war, and peace from a Christian perspective. We will explore the non-violent resolution of everyday conflict, the realities of armed conflict in our world, and the resources of Christian faith for addressing our present situation. Our purpose is a critical understanding of both the problems and the possibilities of being a Christian peacemaker today. Modes of instruction will include lecture, discussion, and A-V materials. As a result of this course the student should have:

- an understanding of a non-violent strategy for conflict resolution and of the principles and practice of non-violence
- an understanding of a Biblical perspective on war and peace
- an understanding of the tradition of the Christian Church regarding war and peace and of the Church's contemporary teaching
- an understanding of the current global situation and of the problems and prospects in international relations and foreign policy
- an ability to critically assess and morally evaluate foreign policy statements and actions
- an understanding of the causes and consequences of contemporary war
- an appreciation of the various responses and alternatives to war and of the resources for further education and involvement in building peace
- a deeper appreciation of the meaning of Christian faith and Christian living

Course Assignments

1. *Reading and Papers* .

The readings for this course have been assigned so they will complement class lectures and discussions (see Course Outline). After major divisions of the-course,-you are required to turn in a paper on the central theme of that section of the course. The *purpose* of these three papers is to stimulate your response to the issues presented in the course, to allow me to see how you are responding and what you are thinking, and to demonstrate that you have read and understood the required readings. In these papers you should argue in favor of your position on the issue or respond to the major issue of this section of the course. Your paper should demonstrate accountability for the *readings* and a critical understanding of the issue. There should be copious direct references to the readings. Dialogue with the authors (by name), the teacher, and fellow students. The papers should honestly express your position and your critical thinking. See the Course Outline for topics, titles, and DUE DATES.

2. *Project* .

Each student will be required to do a project related to war and peace. The nature of your project is your choice and your creation (subject to my approval). Your project should relate directly to the topic of this

course and should require about ten (10) hours to complete. I suggest that you choose a topic that interests you and a method that suits your talents. The following are some suggestions:

- a. You might read and critique a book about the issues covered in the course. Consult with me for suggestions about books.
- b. You might read a biography of a prominent peacemaker and respond to it. Prominent peacemakers include: Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Bishop Desmond Tutu, Dorothy Day, Philip-Berrigan, Daniel Berrigan, Dom Helder Camara, Camillo Torres, Cesar Chavez, Thomas Merton, Gordon Zahn, Bishop Oscar Romero, Dag Hammarskjold, A. J. Muste, Albert Schweitzer, Anwar Sadat, Mikhail Gorbachev, Nelson Mandela, Jimmy Carter, etc.
- c. A mini-research paper on a dimension of the issue of war and peace, e.g., the Arms Race, Just Revolutionary? the Just War Tradition, Scripture and War, Nonviolence, Civil Disobedience, Militarism and Machismo, Feminism and Nonviolence, War Tax Resistance, Spirituality and Peace, Conflict Resolution, Language and Violence, Violence in Families or Relationships, Causes of War, Military Spending and the Economy, the Military-Industrial Complex, Economic Conversion, Hiroshima & Nagasaki, the Ethics of Nuclear Deterrence, Arms Control and Disarmament, Gun Control, ROTC and the Catholic College, Children and War, Guns and Gangs: Urban Violence, Christ and Violence, The Early Christian Attitude Toward War, the Morality of the Persian Gulf War (or Vietnam, WWII, etc.), Resolving Regional Conflict or Ethnic Conflict (e.g., Nicaragua, South Africa, Philippines, El Salvador, Middle East, Haiti, Rwanda, Bosnia, etc.), etc.
- d. Follow an issue or conflict related to the course (e.g., Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Iraq, the Middle East, land mines, defense spending, etc.) in a daily newspaper (New York Times) and/or weekly news magazine, clipping articles and responding to them from the perspective of a Christian peacemaker. This idea might combine attention to daily news and daily attention to Scripture.
- e. Visit and research an organization working for peace, (e.g., Connecticut Peace Action (formerly Freeze Campaign), Pax Christi, Beyond War, Catholic Worker, the American Friends Service Committee, the War Resisters League, or the Fellowship of Reconciliation), and find out what they are doing. Maybe help them out.
- f. Dramatize the issue of peace through a play, art show, movie, collage, sculpture, painting, slide presentation, etc. (for artists).
- g. Organize an educational program or discussion on peace in your local church, synagogue, or community.
- h. Attend a conference or series of lectures on the topic of peace.
- i. Try to accomplish a particular instance of conflict resolution.
- j. Organize or participate in a public demonstration for justice and peace and reflect on your experience.
- k. Choose an issue and lobby your elected representative on behalf of peace.
- l. Research and evaluate the positions of candidates for elected office on issues of peace.

You must submit a written proposal for your project early in the course. The proposal should briefly state what you are going to do, how you are going to do it, and why you chose this project (rationale).

PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE DATE: Feb. 13.

THE ORDINARY PROJECT DUE DATE: April 15.

3. Presence and Participation .

Because I value your responses and contributions, your presence and participation in class are essential

and will influence your grade. Absence from one-third of the classes in the course will ordinarily mean that the student has failed to meet the minimum requirements for the course, and therefore will fail the course.

4. *Final Exam* . Essay form. Scheduled date.

Position/Response Papers 60%
Project 20%
Final Exam 10%
Participation 10%

Course Schedule

Jan. 21. 23

Introduction. Syllabus. Discussion Starter.

Jan 26 - Feb. 13 PART I

Topic:

The principle and practice of active non-violence and of non violent conflict resolution in everyday life.

Reading:

Charles McCollough, *Resolvina Conflict with Justice and Peace* .

Assignment:

McCollough and class material in this section endeavor to explain the principles of non-violence and to suggest a method for non violent conflict resolution. Your response paper should attempt to *apply* the material to your life. The paper should be in two sections. The first section should briefly summarize and discuss the theory (McCollough). The second section of your paper might be entitled "Non Violent Conflict Resolution: A Case Study". Choose a past or (better) present conflict from your everyday life and analyze how this conflict might have been or might be resolved non-violently. Explain the conflict and the steps you could take to resolve it in a way that ends in reconciliation. If the conflict is ongoing, you might experiment with a non-violent approach. Thus your paper should briefly discuss the theory of conflict resolution, then apply the theory to a conflict situation from your own experience. DUE DATE: Feb. 9

PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE DATE: Feb. 13

Bibliography:

John Dear, *Disarmina the Heart: Toward a Vow of Non-Violence* . Paulist, 1987.
Gerard Vanderhaar, *Active Non-Violence* . Twenty-Third Publ., 1990.
James McGinnis, *Journey Into Compassion* . Meyer/Stone, 1989.
Mark Juergensmeyer, *Fighting Fair: A Non-Violent Strategy for Resolving Everyday Conflicts*. Harper & Row, 1986.
Joseph Fahey & R. Armstrong, *A Peace Reader* . Paulist, 1992.
Roger Fisher, et.al., *Getting to Yes ; Beyond Machiavelli* .

Feb. 16 - March 6 PART II

Topic:

Biblical and Theological Perspectives on War and Peace.

Reading:

Thompson, *Justice and Peace* , Ch 8, pp. 179-97.
James Hanigan, "War & Peace: Christian Choices", *Religion Teachers Journal* , Nov./Dec., 1983.
N.C.C.B., *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response* . USCC, 1983. Part I.
Glen Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives For Justice and Peace* . Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1992. Ch. 3. (see also Chs. 2 and 4).
Eileen Egan, "Beatitudes, Works of Mercy, and Pacifism," in T. Shannon, *War or Peace?* . Orbis, 1982.

Assignment: Write a *position* paper that responds to the readings and class material entitled "Should a Christian Participate in War?" or "Can Contemporary War Be Morally Justified?"

DUE DATE: March 9.

Bibliography:

John Howard Yoder, *When War Is Unjust* . Orbis, 1996.
Robert Beck, *Nonviolent Story* . Orbis, 1996. Michael Duffey, *Peacemaking Christians: The future of Just Wars Pacifism and Nonviolent Resistance* . Sheed & Ward, 1995.
John Dear, *The God of Peace: Towards Theology of Nonviolence* . Orbis, 1994.
Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Love Your Enemies: Discipleship, Pacifism, and Just War Theory* . Fortress, 1994.
Walter Wink, *Violence and Non-Violence in South Africa: Jesus' Third Way* . New Society, 1987. (Especially Ch. 2.)
Walter Wink, *Engaging The Powers* . Fortress, 1992.
Ronald Musto, *The Catholic Peace Tradition* . Orbis, 1986.
William Au, *The Cross, the Flag, and the Bomb: American Catholics Debate War and Peace 1960-83* . Greenwood Press, 1985.
James Turner Johnson, *Can Modern War Be Just?* Yale University Press, 1984.
Ronald Sider & Richard Taylor, *Nuclear Holocaust and Christian Hope* . IVP/Paulist, 1982. Gerard Vanderhaar, *Christians and Nonviolence in the Nuclear Age* . Twenty Third Publ., 1982
Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars* . Harper, 1977.
J. M. Thompson, "Moral Theology, War, And Peace: A Bibliographic Survey", *Choice* , v. 23 (July/August, 1986), pp. 1637-1645.

March 9 - April 17 PART III

Topic:

Just Peacemaking and Contemporary Global Conflicts.

Reading:

Thompson, *Justice and Peace* , Chs. 1, 5, 6, 7, 4(esp. pp. 106-111), 2(esp. pp. 58-59), and 3(esp. pp. 83-85). Additional readings on current conflicts may be distributed.

Assignment:

Respond to the reading and class material by writing a *position* paper on the *challenges* that confront international relations and the *direction* that you think U. S. foreign policy should take. It might be entitled "A Just Foreign Policy for a Peaceful Post-Cold War World."

PAPER DUE DATE: April 24

PROJECT DUE DATE: April 17

Bibliography:

Michael Klare and Daniel Thomas, eds. *World Security: Challenges for a New Century* , 2nd ed., St. Martin's Press, 1994; 3rd ed., 1998.
Chester Crocker, et. al. *Managing Global Chaos* . U.S. Institute of Peace, 1996.
Michael Klare, *Rogue States and Nuclear Outlaws: America's Search for a New Foreign Policy* . Hill And Wang, 1995.
Gerard Powers, et. Al. *Peacemaking: Moral and Policy challenges for a New World*. U.S. Catholic Conference, 1994.
Paul Kennedy, *Preparing for the 21st Century*. Random House, 1993.

April 20 - May 1 PART IV

Topic:

Becoming Peacemakers: Personal, Pastoral, and *Political* Response.

Reading:

Thompson, *Justice and Peace* , Ch. 8, pp. 197-204; Resources.

Assignment:

No paper due.

Bibliography:

Artur Simon, *Christian Faith and Public Policy: No Grounds for Divorce* . Eerdmans, 1987. Carolyn Thomas, *Gift and Response: A Biblical Spirituality for Contemporary Christians* . Paulist, 1994.

FINAL EXAM : Scheduled Date.

Summary of Due Dates:

Paper on Non-violent Conflict Resolution - Feb. 9

Project Proposal - Feb. 13

Paper on the Morality of War - March 9

Project due April 17

Paper on a Foreign Policy for Peace - April 24

Final Exam - Scheduled Date.

This syllabus is a guide to the course and is subject to change. The student is, of course, bound by the duty of academic integrity and the honor code of the College.