No Longer Legitimating War: Christians and Just Peace

By Rose Marie Berger

Pero es bello amar al mundo con los ojos de los que no han nacido todavía.
[But it's beautiful to love the world with the eyes of those still to be born.]
—Otto Rene Castillo[1]

In this Year of Mercy, Roman Catholics have an opportunity to love the world in new ways and to see it through the eyes of future generations. Pope Francis models in Laudato Si' how a fresh approach to ancient tenets can catalyze astonishing change in our human family. As he has led on climate change and care for "our Sister, Mother Earth,"[2] we too can find fresh approaches to the biblical call to be peacemakers. Many are desperate in these days for a peace that is swollen with hope; a peace that is not merely a cessation of violence, but is the "peace of God that passes all understanding."[3] What can Catholic just peace offer to the world today? How can just peace help the Body of Christ in loving "the world with the eyes of those still to be born"?

I. WHAT IS JUST PEACE?

Just peace is a Christian school of thought and set of practices for building peace at all stages of acute conflict—before, during, and after. It draws on three key approaches—principles and moral criteria, practical norms, and virtue ethics—for building a positive peace and constructing a more "widely known paradigm with agreed practices that make peace and prevent war."[4] Just peace principles and moral criteria guide actions that can assist institutional change and provide a framework for judging ethical responsibility. Just peace practical norms provide guidance on constructive actions for peace, can be tested for effectiveness, and point toward a comprehensive just peace pedagogy and skills-based training. Just peace virtue ethics teaches how to change our hearts. It asks what type of people we are becoming through the virtues we cultivate and shows us how to become people of peace. These three aspects form a "head, body, heart" approach. Just peace is not merely the absence of violence but the presence of social, economic, and political conditions that sustain peace and human flourishing and prevent conflicts from turning violent or returning to violence.[5] Just peace can help Christians move beyond war.

II. JUST PEACE IN BIBLICAL AND CHRISTIAN TRADITION

Just peace is rooted in the biblical concept of *shalom*. Its meaning encompasses definitions such as wholeness, soundness, to be held in a peaceful covenant, to be restored, healed, and repaid. It describes both domestic tranquility as well as neighborliness among nation-states; both a physical state and a spiritual state. It is a quality

of right relationship.[6] The rabbinic scholars have taught "All that is written in the Torah was written for the sake of peace."[7]

The phrase "Christian peacemakers" ought to be redundant. For Christians, Jesus is the incarnation of God's shalom and the manifestation of just peace. Many Christians, by the very nature of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, prioritize peace with justice and reject violence as a means toward peace, recognizing it as a failure. We are called to be courageous innovators who defend the "least of these"—without benefit of the world's weapons. The World Council of Churches spent the millennial decade studying how to overcome violence. The WCC produced two seminal documents: "An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace"[8] and the "Just Peace Companion."[9] The first declared the concept and the mentality of "just war" to be obsolete.[10] The second offered extensive direction on implementation of just peace theology and practice. Both documents delivered a comprehensive review of scripture, ethics, values, practices, curricula, human stories, and prayer for embodying just peace within the Christian tradition and within the condition of the world in which this faith is practiced.

Every Christian is charged with resisting evil, but none are given the right to kill. In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI preached on Luke 6:27 ("Love your enemies"), saying it "is rightly considered the *magna carta* of Christian nonviolence. It does not consist in succumbing to evil, as a false interpretation of 'turning the other cheek' claims, but in responding to evil with good and thereby breaking the chain of injustice."[11]

Pope Francis stressed that "faith and violence are incompatible."[12] In his 2014 address with Presidents Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas, Pope Francis said, "Peacemaking calls for courage, much more so than warfare. It calls for the courage to say yes to encounter and no to conflict; yes to dialogue and no to violence; yes to negotiations and no to hostilities."[13] In 2015, Francis continued, "It is not enough to talk about peace, peace must be made. To speak about peace without making it is contradictory, and those who speak about peace while promoting war, for example through the sale of weapons, are hypocrites. It is very simple."[14]

Just peace is an integral expression of Catholic faith and catechism[15] that can be further developed into a robust and resilient theology,[16] theory, and praxis. If, as the U.S. Catholic bishops wrote, "The content and context of our peacemaking is set not by some political agenda or ideological program, but by the teaching of his Church,"[17] then that teaching must be full-bodied, theologically grounded, effective, and adaptable from the local parish to the United Nations. However, the legitimation of war in Catholic social teaching remains,[18] and according to theological ethicist Glen Stassen, "without a widely known paradigm with agreed practices that make peace and prevent (and defuse) war, public debate will remain vague and unclear about the effective alternatives to the drive to war." [19]

III. THREE STREAMS OF THE JUST PEACE RIVER

There are three broad scholarly streams that feed into the great river of just peace.

Just Peace Principles

The first stream identifies "principles and moral criteria" to guide action and provide a framework for judging ethical responsibility. Maryann Cusimano Love, a scholar at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., has spent much of her career shaping these criteria after drawing them from the practices of Catholic organizations such as Caritas Internationalis (CI). She has also been honing their effectiveness in the highest circles of government and the military. In a formulation that is familiar from just war principles,[20] Love has identified seven just peace principles that serve as a guide for directing action.

> Just Peace Principles[21]
> 1. **Just cause:** protecting, defending, and restoring the fundamental dignity of all human life and the common good
> 2. **Right intention:** aiming to create a positive peace
> 3. **Participatory process:** respecting human dignity by including societal stakeholders—state and non-state actors as well as previous parties to the conflict
> 4. **Right relationship:** creating or restoring just social relationships both vertically and horizontally; strategic systemic change requires that horizontal and vertical relationships move in tandem on an equal basis
> 5. **Reconciliation:** a concept of justice that envisions a holistic healing of the wounds of war
> 6. **Restoration:** repair of the material, psychological, and spiritual human infrastructure
> 7. **Sustainability:** developing structures that can help peace endure over time

Just peace principles are applied at all stages of conflict. They are not only for *responding* to violence or war. From Love's point of view, peacebuilding tools and other methods of conflict transformation and nonviolence[22] are all tools to implement just peace, and her just peace criteria guide those practices.

For example, Love has examined the work of Caritas Internationalis, a confederation of 165 Catholic relief, development, and social service organizations operating in 200 countries. CI's mission is to work for a better world, especially for the poor and oppressed. "Emergency response" to natural disaster, conflict, and climate change is one part of CI's work. The bulk of it, however, is the systemic building up of just societies. CI and its U.S. partner, Catholic Relief Services, have embedded Love's just peace principles into their trainings, and they practice ways of operationalizing just peace on the ground. [23]

Love's approach is relationship-centered and participatory. [24] Right relationship requires high levels of participation, bringing in multiple stakeholders. "That is very different from the type of peace being built by the United Nations or the [U.S.] Department of Defense," said Love.[25] "They very rarely, if ever, ask for any input from the local population. If you look at the United Nations-sponsored peace negotiations held since 1992, 98 percent have been without any—zero—participation of women. That's a pretty significant omission. And there are many other omissions, such as of civil society groups, religious groups, and youth groups. … Participation is not an important value for Catholic peacebuilders just because it works, but because we truly believe in the

fundamental dignity of all human life. If all people have this sacred human dignity, then all people should be part of that process."

Love's just peace criteria are particularly well suited for use with institutional change. Institutions, wrote Love, "are key for new norms to take hold."[26] Institutions *do* change, she wrote, but they "learn by doing."[27] She has used these principles in her work with the United Nations, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of State, as well as other large institutions. "The Catholic Church helped create, publicize, and institutionalize just-war norms internationally," wrote Love. She argues that it is an opportune time to do the same with just-peace norms.

Just Peace Practices

The second stream identifies just peace "practical norms." These are just peacemaking practices, available for use before, during, and after conflict, that can be tested for effectiveness, provide guidance on constructive actions for peace, and point toward a comprehensive just peace pedagogy and skills-based training. Over the past 30 years, numerous scholars have contributed to honing a set of 10 just peacemaking practices. Ethicist Glen Stassen at Fuller Theological Seminary in California and theologian Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite at Chicago Theological Seminary have brought significant leadership to this robust set of just peace practical norms. Stassen has described just peacemaking as "the new paradigm for an ethics of peace and war,"[28] shifting the debate away from limiting war, as just war principles do, to practicing peace.

These just peace norms have been used in a variety of settings, such as negotiations on nuclear disarmament, diplomatic intervention seeking to stop the U.S. invasion of Iraq,[29] denominational general conventions choosing to identify as "just peace churches,"[30] interreligious and interfaith collaborative efforts to develop just peace in other traditions,[31] and intervention to combat global gender-based violence.[32]

Stassen has argued, "It is necessary to have both (1) an explicitly Christian ethic with a strong scriptural base and (2) a public ethic that appeals to reason, experience, and need, and that cannot place the same emphasis on scripture and prayer that an explicitly Christian ethic can."[33] The version of the 10 just peacemaking practices[34] below reflects both.

> *Part One: Peacemaking Initiatives*
> 1. Support nonviolent direct action (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:38-42)
> 2. Take independent initiatives to reduce threat (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:38-42)
> 3. Use cooperative conflict resolution (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:21-26)
> 4. Acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice and seek repentance and forgiveness (Biblical basis: Matt. 7:1-5)
> *Part Two: Working for Justice*
> 5. Advance democracy, human rights, and religious liberty (Biblical basis: Matt. 6:19-34)
> 6. Foster just and sustainable economic development (Biblical basis: Matt. 6:19-34)
> *Part Three: Fostering Love and Community*

7. Work with emerging cooperative forces in the international system (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:43ff)
8. Strengthen the United Nations and international efforts for cooperation and human rights (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:43ff)
9. Reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:38ff)
10. Encourage grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations (Biblical basis: Matt. 5:1-2, 7:28-29)

In his work, Stassen has said, his team was "aware that our social context includes a private/public dualism in which Jesus' way and also peacemaking get interpreted as idealistic and individualistic. To counter this distortion, we intentionally focused on ten practices—not ten ideals—and on historical and political-science evidence showing each practice is in fact working to prevent some wars. Furthermore, with the human nature variable in mind, a realistic understanding of human sin argues that these practices need to be institutionalized in policies, international networks, and laws in order to check and balance concentrations of political, economic, and military power."[35]

Just Peace Virtues and Ethics

The third stream is just peace virtue ethics. A virtue is a disposition to "do good." It is not just doing something good because it is required or because one can see the benefits. It is being good deep down, with an innate wisdom and intuition of what will be generative for life and flourishing. Some virtues come naturally. Others, called "moral virtues," are acquired through practice, devotion, and community. Virtue ethics teaches how to create morally good cultures that foster morally good people.

Eli S. McCarthy is a Catholic theological virtue ethicist at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. He has elaborated a just peace virtue ethic by integrating the just peace approaches of Stassen, Thistlethwaite, and Love. Virtue ethics, wrote McCarthy, "is focused on the character of persons, but includes concern for both acts and ends or consequences. In virtue ethics, the primary ethical question asked is 'Who are we (am I) becoming?' before, 'What is the rule?' or 'What are the consequences?'"[36]

McCarthy stated that "nonviolent peacemaking ought to be assessed as a distinct and central virtue" in and of its own right. If nonviolent peacemaking is a key virtue, then other virtues, such as justice and courage, are qualified in a new way and often-overlooked virtues such as "humility, solidarity, hospitality, and mercy" might be better recovered. McCarthy has developed seven practices[37] that flow from and cultivate nonviolent peacemaking as a virtue. They are:

1. Celebrating the **Eucharist** as Christ's nonviolent act of self-sacrifice,[38] with secondary components of prayer, meditation, and fasting
2. **Training and education** in nonviolent peacemaking and resistance, with secondary component of forming nonviolent peacemaking communities

3. **Attention to religious or spiritual factors,** especially in public discourse, and learning about religion, particularly in the form of intra-religious or inter-religious dialogue

4. A **constructive program** with its particular focus on the poor and marginalized

5. **Conflict transformation and restorative justice,** particularly in the form of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions

6. **Unarmed civilian protection,** a third-party intervention both in the form of international implementation and local peace teams

7. **Civilian-based defense,** a nonviolent form of civil defense that engages the broader society against an external threat or in the overthrow of a government

McCarthy has argued that Love's just peace criteria and Stassen and Thistlethwaite's just peacemaking practical norms have embedded in them a desire for Christians to become better and more just peacemakers. He has added to their work an "orienting virtue ethic" along with the focused question, "What kinds of people are we becoming?"

A virtue ethics approach to nonviolent peacemaking would amplify the development of character and the kind of imagination that engages and creatively applies, extends, and even corrects the practical norms of Stassen's just peacemaking. (For example, some limits to Stassen's original just peacemaking principles have been that they focus only on reducing offensive weapons and so have nothing to say about nuclear abolitions. Some scholars have interpreted the principles to legitimate limited violent intervention in conflict.[39]) It would create the environment for the kinds of people who are willing to risk "unarmed civilian protection" and create the space for the practices of reconciliation, conflict transformation, and care for creation[40] through the related virtue of solidarity and nonviolent civilian-based defense.[41]

McCarthy has described his just peace approach as both a vision and an ethic. As a vision, it expresses the reality of *shalom* and the integration of peace and justice as modeled by Jesus. As an ethic, it offers a way of justice via peace-making and peace via justice-making. Here, just peace must include a "moral commitment to illuminating human dignity, but also ensuring human rights and cultivating thriving relationships," argued McCarthy. "This ethic offers a set of core virtues to form our character and shape core practices, as well as to both orient and better apply a set of just peace criteria for specific actions to engage conflict."[42]

IV. WHAT DOES JUST PEACE LOOK LIKE IN ACTION?

Catholic communities already embody and practice just peace. Cardinal Peter Turkson said in 2013, "From South Sudan, the Middle East, and Central America to Congo, Colombia, and the Philippines, the Catholic Church is a powerful force for peace, freedom, justice, and reconciliation. But this impressive and courageous peacebuilding often remains unknown, under-analyzed, and unappreciated."[43] There is an opportunity for developing these significant bodies of experience, wisdom, and research into an effective and integrated just peace approach across the breadth of the Church.

Having looked at three streams, let us look now at the river in action. What can be learned when just peace principles, practical norms, and virtue ethics are applied to nuclear weapons, armed drones, and civil war?

Just Peace and Nuclear Weapons

If the Cold War is over, why do we still have nuclear weapons? Maryann Cusimano Love has argued that analyzing the Cold War through the lens of just peace teaches us that the Cold War did not end well. Not only did it leave us with nuclear weapons, but also with "alert force postures and cultures of suspicion," wrote Love.[44] Therefore, in just peace terms, relationships are not "right." Without right relationships, reconciliation, restoration, and long-term sustainable peace are not possible. Love proves her case by applying a standard peacebuilders tool called "disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration/reconciliation" to the relationship between the U.S. and Russia. She has argued that this peacebuilding process was never completed, because the Cold War didn't "end," it just changed. There was some disarmament, but without demobilization and without building deeper relationships. Love wrote, "To achieve deeper disarmament we need to build deeper relationships. To build deeper relationships, we need more people-building relationships. That means not just state government activities but exchanges between church and civil society, dialogue and engagement to broaden the work of reintegration and reconciliation." Just peace in this case, she wrote, means "moving away from a peace based on desolation and mutually assured destruction, and instead moving to a peace based on right relationships and mutually assured reductions of nuclear weapons."[45]

Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite has seen just peacemaking practical norms at work in the Obama administration's nuclear negotiations with Iran. "One can see how much 'multiple stakeholders' were brought in to the significant Iran Nuclear Deal," she wrote, "and that is central to just peace practice #9" (to reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade). Obama's 2009 Nobel Peace Prize speech[46] exemplified some understanding of just peace practices. However, Thistlethwaite is concerned that the Obama administration has tried to "cobble together elements of both just peace and just war theory without, in fact, analyzing deeply how many contradictions are thus imported into foreign policy."[47]

Eli S. McCarthy has argued that if one examines the issue of nuclear weapons in the context of the nonviolent peacemaking virtue ethic—including that the "how" of the process must be consistent in character with the "what" of the goal—then a just peace virtue ethic would challenge just peacemaking practice #9 of reducing only "*offensive* weapons" as both an unclear distinction and an inadequate one.

Just Peace and Armed Drones

Using just war theory, the Obama administration defined U.S. drone strikes in Afghanistan as "legal, ethical, and wise."[48] Are they? Love has argued against the Obama administration's position. Proponents of drone warfare argue that use of armed drones is "more moral" than sending in ground forces or massive aerial bombing. Love

said that "drones are used where the U.S. would never send ground troops … where wars have not been declared and where the U.S. would otherwise not intervene conventionally. Thus drones are extending, not limiting, killing." They do not build a positive peace. They do not protect the common good.[49]

Thistlethwaite also has critiqued the Obama administration authorizing drone strikes. Killing without risk, without humanization, she argued, greatly increases "moral hazard" and risky behavior. She has seen nations too easily tempted to use armed drones. Just peace, Thistlethwaite wrote, "can offer a roadmap to create real conditions for addressing the causes of terrorism that will obviate the perceived need for drones. Just peace, in this sense, is a proposal for a counterterrorism strategy that does not involve the use of drones, or presume the necessity of force."[50]

McCarthy has argued that "Just war theory doesn't prioritize or illuminate a more important *moral* question about human habits"[51] when it comes to drones. He suggested shifting the primary moral analysis of armed drones away from law, just war, and rights to the question of virtue and character: "What kind of people are we becoming by using armed drones?" Rather than building right relationships, drones instill fear and decrease trust. Using drones to kill people makes us the kind of people who "cultivate fear in communities as they wonder if they may be attacked just because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time."[52] Rather than respecting human dignity, drones dehumanize. Using armed drones often dictates against promoting development, practicing restorative justice, and training for nonviolent civilian resistance. Drones mask the root causes of conflict, which leads to cycles of violence. Using armed drones significantly damages our capacity for empathy, a core virtue of human flourishing. Drones drain hope—they create deep levels of anxiety in the targeted communities and erode any sense of being able to change one's situation. Drones diminish the virtues of solidarity—both with the targeted communities and within our own society where the vulnerable become a "faceless" other.[53]

Just Peace and Civil War in Mozambique

Peacebuilding principles, practices, and virtues can also arise from the ground in a manner that is reflective of just peace. More than 1 million Mozambicans died as a result of war in the years between the 1964 fight for independence and the civil war that followed it. Using a version of just peace principles, the Mozambican Christian Council (CCM) and the Mozambican Catholic Church helped end the armed conflict.

Working across traditional divisions, the multidenominational Christian council and Catholic Church adopted six just peace principles of engagement:[54] 1) look for what unites rather than what divides (right relationship); 2) discuss problems step-by-step (participatory process); 3) keep in mind the suffering that so many people endure as war continues (cultivate empathy and human dignity); 4) work with the friends and supporters of both sides; this is fundamental (reconciliation, right relationship, virtue of solidarity); 5) remember the deeper dimensions of peace such as forgiveness, justice, human rights, reconciliation, and trust (right

intention); 6) work with other groups—the power of the churches being much increased by inter-denominational cooperation (reconciliation, right relationship, virtue of solidarity). The Mozambican churches determined that "in working for solutions to armed conflicts, it is necessary to have patience and a method."[55] Through the virtue of patience and the method of their six just peace principles, the churches were able to adapt to the complexity of the war. Because church members had contacts on all sides of the conflict, they built up sufficient trust at the local level to travel in zones inaccessible to anyone else. In this way, the Mozambican Christian Council and Catholic Church opened up diplomatic space, provided shuttle diplomacy, and eventually brokered the 1994 Rome General Peace Accords.

V. JUST PEACE, JUST WAR, JUST CATHOLIC: A CONVERSATION

In a globalized world, it no longer takes centuries for Catholic witness to reach the ends of the earth. We've moved from papyrus to @Pontifex, from frigates to Facebook. Catholic teaching on war and peace has developed slowly, over time and circumstance. In the current era, the weapons of war and the communication of hate have exploded with the advance of the Internet and related technologies. There arises an opportunity to clearly communicate the Catholic faith in new ways. Does it become more important now to clearly separate "justice" from "war" and violence in the language and witness of the Church? Does just peace as language and a framework offer a positive, generative Catholic witness that, if articulated well, can take root around the world? If Catholics are called to be "first responders" in the "field hospital" of the Church, what kind of training in principles, practices, and virtues does a just peace approach provide?

Just Peace as the Primary Framework for the Church?

The centuries-old "just-war theory" sought to provide a means of determining when it was morally justifiable to break the commandment "Thou shall not kill," with guidelines regarding whether to go to war (*jus ad bellum*) and how to fight war in an ethical manner (*jus in bello*). Some Catholic scholars have worked to extend just war criteria to include *jus post bellum* to guide restorative practices in a post-war context.[56]

Love asserted that just war tradition, if anything, "tells you only how to limit war. It has nothing to say about how to build peace."[57] She compared the applicability of just war criteria to the decline in the death penalty. "It was once thought necessary to protect people, but now capacity has grown to protect people in other ways than the death penalty," wrote Love.[58]

Thistlethwaite wrote that just peace is not just a change in terminology; instead it is "a paradigm shift away from the basic assumption behind just war criteria that war is inevitable."[59]

McCarthy argued that even a small shift in language might help delegitimize any link between "justice" and "killing," possibly opening space in Catholic imagination for re-linking justice and life, justice and dignity, justice and peace. Although a shift to the language of "limited war" instead of "just war" might better illuminate

some "good intentions" in the just war tradition, "without the *turn* to a just peace approach—criteria, core practices, core virtues—then we as the Catholic Church continue to legitimate war as a practice as long as it is 'limited.' Such religious legitimation and more so the practice of war itself already has and will likely continue to obstruct the development of our imagination, will, and practice of just peace approaches, and thus, leave us too easily influenced and determined by those in political, economic, and military positions of power."[60]

McCarthy wrote that a virtue-based approach would better prepare the Catholic Church to orient, apply, and develop Love's just peace criteria. He has advocated changing the culture of the Church on war and peace by keeping its attention on this central question: "What kind of people we are becoming?" and what virtues or vices are being cultivated?

Just Peace and the Catholic Church's Diplomatic Work

Just war principles are deeply institutionalized in international law. If the Catholic Church adopted a just peace approach, how would it impact its diplomatic ability to persuade governments away from military action or war? Love wrote that just peace principles are becoming more widely recognized and institutionalized, at the United Nations, within governments, and even in the U.S. Department of Defense. The DOD, in some cases, is turning away from use of lethal force and toward civilian-military relations, recognizing the need for peacebuilding over war. "I think that much of the just war vs. just peace take down is not helpful and productive," Love wrote. "Just war principles are deeply institutionalized in the Geneva Conventions, the U.S. military code of justice, etc. Every arms control agreement that has ever been written has owed a debt to just war tradition's attempts to limit conflict, and limit civilian casualties. I would never want to 'do away' with those normative constraints, with those limitations. But limiting conflict and trying to make war more humane is not the same as building peace."[61]

Love stressed that just peace criteria can and should be operative in every phase of conflict and conflict resolution, as well as at all levels of participation. It should entail multiple stakeholders, especially women, as well as active conflict prevention, education, economic development, and the building of participatory and transparent governance.[62] Exclusion from the process, Love argued, often fires war and lengthens it.[63] Just peace allows for a more robust intentional inclusion of women who are disproportionately affected by war. Thistlethwaite wrote that sexual violence is a weapon of war and women's bodies are a strategic battlefield in any combat zone.[64] Therefore just peace principles can address the disproportionate damage that war and violence do to women in a way that just war principles have not.

Love and others currently implement just peace criteria at the highest levels of the U.S. government and in international and military circles. Love posited that the number of major armed conflicts in the world has declined by more than half since the beginning of the current century and that casualties in war have declined. She attributed this to overlapping trends (e.g. rising number of democracies, rising economic interdependence), but also to the growing acceptance of just peace principles and a greater commitment across sectors to use

peacebuilding tools to implement these principles. "Our overemphasis on just war since Constantine's time," observed Love, "has caused us to miss just peace principles, which are not new, and have been hiding in plain sight."

McCarthy has argued that the Catholic Church's diplomatic work would actually be enhanced by focusing on just peace principles, practices, and virtues. However, "such impact will be truncated if the Catholic Church continues to draw on 'just war' argumentation," he wrote, "in part because it will obstruct the development of imagination, will, and practice of just peace approaches. Further, the 'just war' concept and particularly the language tends to perpetuate habits of violence in a society, thus undermining its often stated purpose of limiting war. It does this in part as an expression of Johan Galtung's 'cultural violence' concept, because as a *concept* that war can be justifiable or just, it often functions as one cultural idea among many to legitimate direct and structural violence, such as large military spending and the arms race."[65] According to McCarthy this is one reason why it is insufficient to say that the historical use of just war mostly to justify war is "*simply* a 'mis-use' of the approach due to human sin. The language itself functions to enable, make more likely, or perpetuate such use." McCarthy has recognized that the present legal code, both domestically and internationally, has legal limits on war which will still function. Yet, both Vatican II and Pope Paul VI have called us to go further saying boldly it is "our clear duty, then, to strain every muscle as we work for the time when all war can be completely outlawed by international consent."[66]

Just Peace and the "Responsibility to Protect"

At the U.N. 2005 World Summit, leaders adopted a responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. Just war has been used to measure the moral legitimacy of this intervention in cases of "imminent threat" of lethal atrocities. How would just peace engage the "responsibility to protect"?

International law is relatively clear. The question here is one of ecclesial responsibility. How should the Catholic Church act? Love wrote that any limited use of violence that the Church might allow in cases of grave atrocity should be "more akin to policing, like Gerald Schlabach's work on just policing."[67] Schlabach has said that "just policing" fits well within a just peace model. "Policing seeks to secure the common good of the very society within which it operates; because it is embedded, indebted, and accountable within that community, it has an inherent tendency to minimize recourse to violence," he wrote. "Warfare may also seek to secure the common good of a society, of course; but because it extends beyond that society through threats to other communities it has an inherent tendency to cut whatever slender bonds of accountability would truly limit its use to 'last resort.'"[68]

Thistlethwaite has reminded us that "imminent threat" is just war language and that we must always ask who is doing the defining. Some have argued, she said, that the U.N.'s "responsibility to protect" (R2P) doctrine

fills a gap between just war and just peace. Thistlethwaite offers caution. "I think one can see that R2P gives license to a 'soft interventionism.' ... R2P is an unstable mix of peacemaking and forceful interventionism. R2P incorporates 'military intervention within the same norm as conflict prevention and peace support operations [and that] skews the whole R2P doctrine toward the extreme option of coercive intervention, which tends to become the center of the entire principle.'"[69]

McCarthy argued that, especially when a lethal threat is immediate and grave, the Church—as the Body of Christ—should urgently participate in just peace analysis, advocacy, intervention, and healing before, during, and after such events. "If governments or the U.N. decide based on present international law for military action in such atrocity cases," wrote McCarthy, "the Catholic Church's role is less about condemning those *persons* who took such action. Instead, the Catholic's role is to clearly name such violent *action* as a tragedy, a failure on the way of just peace, as well as inconsistent with human dignity and a culture of human rights for all." Even more important, the Church's role is to keep a just peace approach front and center in all such cases and advocate, even in the midst of violence, for actions that will transform the violence with just peace.

"During and after the violence," wrote McCarthy, "Catholics should be clearly taking a restorative justice approach to all actors, which includes the human need for accountability. During and after the violence, the Catholic Church should promote public mourning rituals for the violence, advocate for addressing the root causes, and urgently call for the government actors particularly, but also the Catholic Church, to significantly increase nonviolent intervention strategies as well as investments in such training and institutions."[70] The Catholic Church does not need, and McCarthy suggested "should not" provide, "explicit justification or legitimation for military violence. When the level of dehumanization is so high, then what is 'necessary' is not so much lethal force, but the willingness to risk one's life for the sake of the dignity of *all* people."

A Wellspring of Peace
Catholic Social Teaching provides a rich context in which to build a systemic body of thought and practice of Christian nonviolence. An overarching strategic objective of just peace is to develop a systematic analysis of nonviolence in order to cultivate effective approaches to addressing contemporary challenges in society through nonviolent means. Just peace can be applied at all stages of conflict, including climate change-related conflict and "resource wars." Just peace can be thoroughly integrated with Laudato Si' in a manner that recognizes that violence done to human communities is often accompanied by devastating environmental destruction. An integral ecology contributes to an integral just peace.

"For the Church," wrote Love, "a tradition of just peace has been ... given to us by Jesus. Jesus dialogued with enemies and with poor and marginalized persons, raising them up and healing impoverished, war-traumatized peoples, driving out their demons. Jesus not only had a declaratory policy urging peace-building, he lived peace-building and commissioned us to follow him."[71]

Pope Francis reminds us that out of the mystery of mercy comes the wellspring of peace. The commandment to be merciful is "a program of life as demanding as it is rich with joy and peace."[72] Reconciliation is not a theory or an approach for Catholics. It is a sacrament at the center of our lives, and it is the way of peace. Out of this wellspring comes the spiritual imagination to create just peace. Out of this wellspring we can, as Guatemalan poet Otto Rene Castillo wrote, learn to "love the world with the eyes of those still to be born." [73]

Rose Marie Berger, senior associate editor at Sojourners *magazine, is a Catholic peace activist and poet living in Washington, D.C.*

END NOTES

[1] Excerpt from Otto Rene Castillo's poem "Frente al Balance, Mañana" ("Before the Scales, Tomorrow") with translation by Barbara Paschke and David Volpendesta. Reprinted with permission of the translators.

[2] Pope Francis, Laudato Si', paragraph 1. http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

[3] Philippians 4:7.

[4] Glen H. Stassen, "Just-Peacemaking Theory," Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics, eds. Joel B. Green, Jacqueline Lapsley, Rebekah Miles, Allen Verhey (Baker Publishing Group, 2011), 443.

[5] Part of this language came from a personal email exchange with David Cortright at Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace (personal email, 3 March 2016).

[6] See Malachi 2:6

[7] See Midrash Tanchuma (Shoftim 18).

[8] World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Call to Just Peace (Geneva, 2011). http://www.overcomingviolence.org/fileadmin/dov/files/iepc/resources/ECJustPeace_English.pdf Founded in 1948, the WCC promotes Christian unity in faith, witness and service for a just and peaceful world. A global fellowship, the WCC brings together more than 349 Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican, and other churches representing more than 560 million Christians in 110 countries and works cooperatively with the Roman Catholic Church.

[9] World Council of Churches, Just Peace Companion (Geneva, 2012). http://www.overcomingviolence.org/fileadmin/dov/files/iepc/resources/JustPeaceCompanion_2ndEd.pdf

[10] World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Call to Just Peace (Geneva, 2011), paragraph 23.

[11] Pope Benedict XVI, Angelus sermon at St Peter's Square, 18 Feb 2007. https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/angelus/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_ang_20070218.pdf

[12] Junno Arocho Esteves, "Pope Francis: 'Faith and Violence are Incompatible'" in Zenit, 19 Aug. 2013. https://zenit.org/articles/pope-francis-faith-and-violence-are-incompatible/

[13] Pope Francis, address with Shimon Peres and Mahmoud Abbas, Vatican, 8 June 2014. https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/june/documents/papa-francesco_20140608_invocazione-pace.html#Distinguished_Presidents

[14] Pope Francis, interview by journalists during return from Sarajevo, reported by Vatican Information Service, 6 June 2015. http://www.news.va/en/news/the-pope-interviewed-by-journalists-during-return

[15] Catechism of the Catholic Church (Part 3, Section 2, Chapter 2, Article 5, Peace, paragraphs 2302-2306). http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a5.htm

[16] See "Toward an Ecumenical Theology of Just Peace" by Fernando Enns in Just Peace: Just Peace: Ecumenical, Intercultural, and Interdisciplinary Perspectives (Wipf & Stock, 2013).

[17] U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, The Challenge of Peace: A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace (USCCB, 1983). http://www.usccb.org/upload/challenge-peace-gods-promise-our-response-1983.pdf

[18] Catechism of the Catholic Church (Part 3, Section 2, Chapter 2, Article 5, Avoiding War, paragraphs 2307-2317). http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a5.htm

[19] Glen H. Stassen, "Just-Peacemaking Theory," Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics, eds. Joel B. Green, Jacqueline Lapsley, Rebekah Miles, Allen Verhey (Baker Publishing Group, 2011), 443.

[20] For Maryann Cusimano Love's comparison of just war principles and just peace principles, see "Drones: Ethics and Use" (4 Feb. 2014), 44. http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/upload/drones-ethics-and-use-2014-02-04.pdf

[21] Maryann Cusimano Love, "What Kind of Peace Do We Seek? Emerging Norms of Peacebuilding in Key Political Institutions" in Peacebuilding: Catholic theology, ethics, and praxis, eds. Robert J. Schreiter, R. Scott Appleby, and Gerard F. Powers (Orbis Books, 2010), 82. For Love's comparison of just war and just peace principles, see presentation by Maryann Cusimano Love, "Drones: Ethics and Use" (4 Feb 2014). http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/upload/drones-ethics-and-use-2014-02-04.pdf

[22] Maryann Cusimano Love specifically refers to the conflict transformation work of John Paul Lederach and Lisa Schirch and to Gene Sharp's 198 methods of nonviolence (personal email correspondence on 2 March 2016).

[23] Pursuing Just Peace: An Overview and Case Studies for Faith-Based Peacebuilders, eds. Mark M. Rogers, Tom Bamat, Julie Ideh (Catholic Relief Services, 2008), frontmatter. http://www.crs.org/sites/default/files/tools-research/pursuing-just-peace.pdf

[24] Pursuing Just Peace, 5.

[25] "Peace by piece: On peacebuilding with Maryann Cusimano Love" an interview by the editors (U.S. Catholic, Vol. 76, No. 9), 12-16. http://www.uscatholic.org/culture/war-and-peace/2011/07/peace-piece-peacebuilding-maryann-cusimano-love

[26] Maryann Cusimano Love, "What Kind of Peace Do We Seek? Emerging Norms of Peacebuilding in Key Political Institutions" in Peacebuilding: Catholic theology, ethics, and praxis, eds. Robert J. Schreiter, R. Scott Appleby, and Gerard F. Powers (Orbis Books, 2010), 56.

[27] Love, Peacebuilding, 58.

[28] Glen H. Stassen, "Winning the Peace," (Sojourners, Vol. 34, No. 1, January 2005), 19.

[29] See the Six-Point Plan and Glen H. Stassen, "Winning the Peace," (Sojourners, Vol. 34, No. 1, January 2005), 19.

[30] Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, "A Just Peace Future," part 1 (United Church News, 5 June 2011) and part 2 (United Church News, 12 June 2011). For more see the Just Peace Church Handbook (United Church of Christ: Justice and Witness Ministries, 2015) http://www.uccfiles.com/pdf/just-peace-handbook-06-2015.pdf

[31] See Interfaith Just Peacemaking: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives on the New Paradigm of Peace and War, edited by Susan B. Thistlethwaite (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2012)

[32] See Women's Bodies as Battlefield: Christian Theology and the Global War on Women by Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2015)

[33] Glen H. Stassen, Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives for Justice and Peace (Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 93-94.

[34] Glen H. Stassen, "Just-Peacemaking Theory," Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics, eds. Joel B. Green, Jacqueline Lapsley, Rebekah Miles, Allen Verhey (Baker Publishing Group, 2011), 443.

[35] Glen H. Stassen, "Transforming Initiatives of Just Peacemaking Based on the Triadic Structure of the Sermon on the Mount," a paper prepared for the Society of Biblical Literature, 2006. https://www.sbl-site.org/assets/pdfs/Stassen_Transforming.pdf

[36] Eli S. McCarthy, "Called to Holiness: Integrating the Virtue of Nonviolent Peacemaking," Journal of Catholic Social Thought (Volume 11, Issue 1, Winter 2014), 67-92.

[37] McCarthy "Called to Holiness," 67-92.

[38] See Emmanuel Charles McCarthy's "The Nonviolent Eucharistic Jesus: A Pastoral Approach" (Center for Christian Nonviolence) http://www.centerforchristiannonviolence.org/data/Media/NV_Eucharist_PastoralApproach_01d.pdf and Raniero Cantalamessa's sermon "Eucharist Is 'God's Absolute No' to Violence" (3rd Lenten Sermon, delivered 11 March 2005) https://zenit.org/articles/eucharist-is-god-s-absolute-no-to-violence/

[39] For more see "Just Peacemaking: Challenges of Humanitarian Intervention" by Martin L. Cook (Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics, Vol. 23, No. 1, 2010), 241-253.

[40] Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home makes it clear that care for creation is integral to human flourishing and abuse of creation leads to conflict and war. One avenue of exploration is to ask how the Earth Ethics Charter or the emerging field of Earth Law fit in the just peace paradigm? Restorative justice practitioner Elaine Enns uses restorative justice principles in determining moral responsibility with regard to "injured" biosystems. How might this fit in a just peace ethic? See "Healing the Ventura River" by Elaine Enns (February 2010) from personal correspondence with author. See also "Galvanizing Will: What 'restorative justice' means to the voiceless victims" by Elaine Enns (Sojourners, August 2010) https://sojo.net/magazine/august-2010/passion-gulf

[41] Eli S. McCarthy "Summoning the Catholic Church: Turn to Just Peace," (2016). http://www.academia.edu/13007825/Summoning_the_Church_Turn_to_JustPeace

[42] McCarthy, "Summoning the Catholic Church: Turn to Just Peace," and "Beyond Just War: Pope Francis and Justpeace" (Catholic Moral Theology blog, 3 June 2014) http://catholicmoraltheology.com/beyond-just-war-pope-francis-and-justpeace/

[43] Cardinal Peter Turkson, "Enhancing the study and practice of Catholic peacebuilding" (presentation in Washington, D.C, Catholic University of America, 9-10 April 2013) http://iprcua.com/2013/04/12/cardinal-turksons-speech-pacem-in-terris-conference

[44] Maryann Cusimano Love, "Building a Better Peace: A future worthy of our faith" (America, Vol. 213 No. 3, 3-10 Aug. 2015). http://americamagazine.org/issue/building-better-peace

[45] Love, Building a Better Peace.

[46] President Barack H. Obama, "A Just and Lasting Peace," (10 Dec. 2009). http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2009/obama-lecture.html

[47] Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[48] Press briefing by White House press secretary Jeff Carney on 5 Feb. 2013. https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/02/05/press-briefing-press-secretary-jay-carney-2513

[49] See presentation by Maryann Cusimano Love, "Drones: Ethics and Use" (4 Feb. 2014). http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/catholic-social-ministry-gathering/upload/drones-ethics-and-use-2014-02-04.pdf

[50] Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, "Just War, Just Peace and Drones" (Interfaith Drone Network).

[51] Eli S. McCarthy, "What Are Drones Doing to Us?" (America, blog post,2 April 2013). http://americamagazine.org/content/all-things/what-are-drones-doing-us

[52] McCarthy, "What Are Drones Doing to Us?"

[53] McCarthy, "What Are Drones Doing to Us?" For other examples see McCarthy, "Just Peace Response to Syria," (America, 24 Feb. 2012); McCarthy, "Interrupting Hostilities and Seeking Justice in Syria," (America, 4 Sept. 2013); and McCarthy, "Religious Leaders Urge a JustPeace Response to ISIS," (Huffington Post, 19 Sept. 2014).

[54] Dinis S. Sengulane and Jaime Pedro Gonçalves, "The Mozambican peace process in perspective" (Accord, Issue 3, 1998). http://www.c-r.org/accord-article/calling-peace-christian-leaders-and-quest-reconciliation-mozambique. See also "JustaPaz, 1996: Lifting Mozambique from the Rubble of War" by Bonnie Price Lofton (Eastern Mennonite University, Peacebuilder, 28 July 2015). http://emu.edu/now/peacebuilder/2015/07/justapaz-1996-lifting-mozambique-from-the-rubble-of-war/

[55] Dinis S. Sengulane and Jaime Pedro Gonçalves, "The Mozambican peace process in perspective" (Accord, Issue 3, 1998).

[56] See After the Smoke Clears: The Just War Tradition and Post War Justice by Mark J. Allman and Tobias L. Winright (Orbis, 2010)

[57] Maryann Cusimano Love, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[58] Maryann Cusimano Love, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[59] Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[60] Eli S. McCarthy "Summoning the Catholic Church: Turn to Just Peace," (2016). http://www.academia.edu/13007825/Summoning_the_Church_Turn_to_JustPeace

[61] Maryann Cusimano Love, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[62] Can War Be Just In The 21st Century?: Ethicists Engage the Tradition, eds. Tobias Winright and Laurie Johnston (Orbis, 2015, ebook), section "Just War and the Gospel Today."

[63] Maryann Cusimano Love, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[64] See Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, Women's Bodies as Battlefield: Christian Theology and the Global War on Women (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2015).

[65] Eli S. McCarthy, personal email correspondence with author (14 March 2016).

[66] Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, 1965, par. 81. Pope Paul VI, World Day of Peace Message, 1975.

[67] Maryann Cusimano Love, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016).

[68] Gerald W. Schlabach, "Just Policing: How War Could Cease to Be a Church-Dividing Issue." http://www.geraldschlabach.net/documents/policing.htm

[69] Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, personal email correspondence with author (2 March 2016). Here she quotes from "In Whose Name? A critical review on the responsibility to protect" by Lou Pingeot and Wolfgang Obenland (Global Policy Forum, May 2014). https://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/images/pdfs/In_whose_name_web.pdf

[70] Eli S. McCarthy, personal email correspondence with author (14 March 2016).For further response to common challenges associated with just peace, but particularly Christian nonviolence, McCarthy suggests A Faith Not Worth Fighting For: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions about Christian Nonviolence, eds. T. York and J. Bronson Barringer, (Cascade Books: Eugene, OR, 2012).

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[73] Excerpt from Otto Rene Castillo's poem "Frente al Balance, Mañana" ("Before the Scales, Tomorrow") with translation by Barbara Paschke and David Volpendesta. Reprinted with permission of the translators.