

The *Just War Theory*, A Path to Peace?

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Saint Augustine said that all things desire peace, and Saint Thomas Aquinas commented that because we, all human beings, desire peace we desire to obtain what we desire. Christians in particular are called by their faith in Jesus Christ to have peace and to work for peace – to be peacemakers. *May we speak today of the so-called “Just War Theory” as a path to peace?*

INTRODUCTION

In the past, in a world of apparently inevitable wars, Christian theologians and ethicists constructed *the Just War Theory*. In our world, still permeated by wars, the study of war, or *polemology*, continues to be unfortunately relevant.

War is understood as an armed conflict between armies of enemy States. In the current context, it is also understood as an armed conflict between a State – or many States – and organized social groups or organizations similar to States, for instance terrorist groups.

There are different kinds of war. For our purpose, we point out two different categories of wars. First, we speak of *offensive war* (unprovoked war against another State), *preventive war* (going to war to prevent the threat of war from another State) and *defensive war* (war against an unjust aggressor). Second, and founding the division of war on the weapons of destruction used, we talk of *nuclear*, *bacteriological* or *chemical* wars.

After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington D.C., the Just War Theory was “resurrected” again. President George W. Bush and other world leaders, including some religious leaders from different religious affiliations, used the Just War Theory to justify the war against terrorism – some defended the war against Afghanistan that followed those terrorist attacks. May we speak today, at the beginning of the third millennium, of a just war?

To develop our topic from an ethical and theological perspective, we plan to present five main points. First, we shall consider the Just War Theory in traditional theology, and focus on Saint Thomas Aquinas. Second, we shall analyze the just war theory in the Social Doctrine of the Church, centering on Pius XII and Vatican II. Third, we will study the Just War Theory in the teachings of Pope John Paul II after September 11, 2001. Fourth, we shall present briefly the teachings of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. And fifth, we plan to close our discussion with a personal reflection on war and peace.

An important distinction and *caveat*: there are two possible approaches to the study of the just war tradition, namely, the ethical/theological approach and the practical/empirical approach. We shall present mainly the ethical and the Catholic theological perspective.

THE JUST WAR THEORY: SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

In Christian perspective, the two undisputed pillars of the doctrine on war are Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas.¹ Traditional theology up to Vatican II was clearly dominated by the brief and clear teaching of the Angelic Doctor in his *Summa Theologiae*, Second Part of his moral theology, Question 40.²

Saint Thomas writes in the 13th century, when wars between and within nations were frequent. In Italy at that time there were

¹ Cf. Edmund Ryden, S.J., *Just War and Pacifism. Chinese and Christian Perspectives in Dialogue*, Taipei: Ricci Institute, Variétés Sinologiques New Series, 89, 2001.

² Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, question 40, articles 1-4.

many internal wars; in fact, members of his family were involved in different and at times opposing sides.³ Moreover, we do not forget that in the 13th century, the Church was also involved in wars, in the Crusades and the Inquisition.

After studying the nature of charity (questions 23-24), its material object (25-26), its acts (27-33), Saint Thomas examines the vices opposed to the theological virtue of charity (34-43), including the vices against peace (an effect of charity), particularly the vices against a peaceful life, namely, war (40), brawling (question 41), and sedition (42).

Question 40 has always been the classical source of the ethical and theological teaching on war, radically on the just war. "When the question is the just war, the name of Saint Thomas is the first that comes to the pen of almost all theologians."⁴ Saint Thomas develops his teaching on war in four articles. In the introduction of question 40 he presents the articles thus:

1. *Are some wars permissible?*
2. *May clerics engage in warfare?*
3. *May belligerents use subterfuge?*
4. *May war be waged on feast days?*

Our interest is centered on article one, which is formulated differently in the title of the article: *Is it always a sin to wage war?* In reality, and as it has been pointed out by different commentators of Aquinas, the two titles of article 1 seem to tell us that the priority stand of the author of the *Summa* is against war, which is usually considered not legitimate or just. When may a war be judged, exceptionally, a just war?

Three conditions are required to consider a war just, namely: when legitimate *public authority* calls it; when there exists a *just cause*; when there is a *right intention*.

³ Cf. Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Vol. 35, Consequences of Charity (II-II, qq. 34-46). *Commentaries and Appendices* by Thomas R. Heath, O.P., Great Britain: Blackfriars, 1972, Appendix 2, pp. 193-197.

⁴ Bruno Solages, *La theorie de la guerre just*, Paris, 1946, p. 9; quoted by Marceliano Llamera, O.P., *Introducciones a la Suma Teológica*, VII, Madrid: BAC, 1959, pp. 1014-1015.

The *first condition* is *public authority*. The authority to go to war does not come from individuals or social associations, or from a supranational authority – non-existent in the time 13th century of Saint Thomas. On the first condition for a just war (II-II, 40, 1), Thomas writes:

Since the care of the commonweal is committed to those in authority they are the ones to watch over the public affairs of the city, kingdom or province in their jurisdiction. (...) And just as they use the sword in lawful defense against domestic disturbance when they punish criminals... so they lawfully use the sword of war to protect the commonweal from foreign attacks.

The *second condition* required for a just war is a *just cause*, or a just objective: war is declared against another nation to fight an injustice suffered by a nation and to restore justice between nations. The words of Saint Thomas:

A just cause is required, namely that those who are attacked are attacked because they deserve it on account of some wrong they have done. So Augustine, *We usually describe a just war as one that avenges wrongs, that is, when a nation or state has to be punished either for refusing to make amends for outrages done by its subjects, or to restore what it has seized injuriously.*

A war is just when it is a question of self-defense, that is, the collective defense of a people or nation, the defense of the common good. Moreover, for Saint Thomas a war can be just if it is an expression of retributive justice. The doctor uses similar arguments to defend the death penalty for guilty criminals.⁵

The *third condition* required is a *right intention* – the subjective motivation. The just war is a path to peace – a peace disturbed by injustice. The military exercise is “ordained to victory and peace. War, purely for its sake, would be stupid.”⁶ From the second condi-

⁵ Cf. Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, Vol 2: *Living a Christian Life*, Quincy, Illinois: Franciscan Press, 1993, pp. 900-902; Fausto B. Gómez, O.P., “Abolition of the Death Penalty: A Christian Perspective,” in *Taiwan Opposes the Death Penalty*, edited by Edmund Ryden, S.J., Taipei: John Paul II Peace Institute, 2001, pp. 81-108.

⁶ Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Contra Gentiles*, III, 34.

tion another important condition is deduced: the *probability of victory*. Earlier in the *Summa*, Thomas wrote: "All wars are waged that men find a more perfect peace than that which they had before." (II-II, 29, 2 ad 2). In Question 40, Article 1, Thomas writes:

The right intention of those waging war is required, that is, they must intend to promote good and to avoid evil. Hence, Saint Augustine writes, *Among true worshippers of God those wars are looked on as peacemaking which are waged neither from aggrandizement nor cruelty, but with the object of securing peace, of repressing the evil and supporting the good*. Now it can happen that even given a legitimate authority and a just cause for declaring war, it may yet be wrong because of a perverse intention.

Later in the *Summa*, its author will write: "It is in no way lawful to kill the innocent." From this assertion, another condition of the Just War Theory was deduced, namely, the principle of *discrimination*. In fact, he states that a human being should kill no human being because God created his nature. Unfortunately, at that time he thought that some sinners might lose their right to life.⁷

Most moral theologians have commented this article, in particular the great theologians of the 16th and 17th centuries, including Vitoria, Soto, Bañez and Suarez, who contributed much to the ethical and theological construction of the just war theory. These theologians, however, did not study war under peace as an effect of charity, but under the virtue of justice. While Saint Thomas spoke of war as, in general, a sin against peace, and the Just War Theory as a possible instrument of peace, those theologians spoke of war as an instrument of justice, including legal justice: a war is illegal, or immoral, when the laws on war are violated: it is deemed illegal if the war is carried out against the conventional law; it is immoral, if it violates the 'natural right'.⁸

⁷ II-II, 64, 6.

⁸ Cf. R. Bosc, *Sociología de la paz*, Barcelona: Ed. Estela, S. A., 1967, p. 227; Id., *Evangelio, violencia y paz*, Madrid: Ed. Morova, 1977, pp. 53-55; Teófilo Urdanoz, O.P., "Pacifismo y guerra justa," *Estudios Filosóficos*, Vol. XVI, No. 41, Enero-Abril 1967, pp. 5-64.

The commentators of Saint Thomas Aquinas developed carefully the three conditions of the Just War Theory, in particular the condition of the *just cause* with its four conditions:

1. The presence of grave injustice obstinately pursued;
2. The need to make recourse to war to obtain justice;
3. Proportion between the gravity of the injustice and the calamities to ensue from the war (the principle of "the lesser evil"),
4. A realistic probability of victory.⁹

Let us add here that the classical commentators of the Angelic Doctor usually apply to the Just War Theory the *principle of double effect*.¹⁰

As we proceed to study the second point, a few questions come to mind: *Did the Just War Theory avoid wars? Did it justify wars? May public authority be self-interested against others, or, perhaps at times, just the powerful against the powerless? Is retributive justice a just cause or an expression of a vengeful "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"? What is really a good intention in the concrete? Is the Just War Theory rooted in the Old Testament and/or in the Gospel of Jesus?*

THE JUST WAR THEORY: THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

The traditional Catholic teaching on war was maintained without any notable change until Pope Pius XI. Pope Pius XII introduced some significant developments that were dynamically continued by the popes of the Second Vatican Council, John XXIII and Paul VI, and by the Council itself.

Pope Pius XII

Theologian José Luis Gutiérrez García, an expert of the Social Doctrine of the Church, says that the new doctrine on war of Pius XII

⁹ Cf. René Coste, *Moral Internacional*, Barcelona: Herder, 1967, pp. 479-480; Fausto Gómez, O.P., "The Justice of the 'Just War'," in his book *The Praxis of Justice and Solidarity*, Manila: UST/SRC, 1998, pp. 131-136.

¹⁰ Cf. Edmund Ryden, S.J., *Just War and Pacifism*, l.c., pp. 23-26.

is centered on three points: in general, war is strongly condemned; a defensive war against an unjust aggressor is licit or moral; and the atomic war is immoral. This last point is more developed by John XXIII and Vatican II.¹¹

In his *Benignitas et Humanitas* (1945), Pius XII writes that "the theory of war as an appropriate and proportionate means to solve international conflicts is already passé; there is no proportion between the good and the evil effects of war. War, therefore, ought to be forbidden." The Pope also condemns strongly selfish nationalism, which is one of the main causes of wars.¹² *Should the war be forbidden absolutely?* Yes and no. If the war is a war of aggression or an offensive war, yes, it must be absolutely forbidden as an immoral and unjust war: "The future work for peace demands that all aggressive use of power, all offensive war should be removed from the world."¹³

Should the defensive war be absolutely forbidden, too? The answer may be in the negative, if all the conditions of the Just War Theory are fulfilled. In *Gravi*, Pious XII writes: "A people threatened by or victim of an unjust aggression, if they want to think and act as Christians, cannot remain in passive indifference; with more reason the solidarity of the family of all peoples forbids to the others behaving as mere spectators in an attitude of impassible neutrality."¹⁴ This text is truly significant: it opens the door to *humanitarian interventions*, which John Paul II defended later to extend it to "disarming the aggressor."¹⁵

While condemning the aggressive war and accepting with conditions the defensive war, Pius XII proposes the formation of good consciences and a spirituality for peace. He states that the disarmament of consciences is very important towards disarmament. He

¹¹ Cf. José Luis Gutiérrez García, "Guerra," in his monumental work *Conceptos fundamentales en la doctrina social de la Iglesia*, Vol. II, Madrid: Centro de Estudios Sociales del Valle de los Caídos, 1971, pp. 225-236.

¹² Cf. Pius XII, *Gravi*, 1949, no. 20.

¹³ Pius XII, *Negli ultimi*, 1946, no. 29.

¹⁴ Pius XII, *Gravi*, 1949, no. 28. see José Luis Gutiérrez García, o. c., Vol. II, p. 230.

¹⁵ Cf. Edmund Ryden, S.J., *Just War and Pacifism*, l.c., pp. 50-53.

adds that "the knot of the problem of peace is actually of the spiritual order; it is a spiritual failure or defeat."¹⁶

In his encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (no. 112), John XXIII had already condemned deterrence and the fear it creates and strongly recommended a progressive disarmament. The Pope was strongly against war in the new context of nuclear weapons: "In this age which boast of an atomic power, it no longer makes sense to maintain that war is a fit instrument with which to repair the violation of justice."¹⁷

For his part, Paul VI, who spoke powerfully against war at his Address to the United Nations in 1965, deplored deterrence not only because it does not remove but aggravates the risks of war, but also because it leaves the poor poorer: every exhausting armaments race is an intolerable scandal.¹⁸

Vatican II

The teaching of Vatican II on war continues dynamically the previous Church's doctrine. It closes the door a little more to the possibility of a just war in the context of nuclear weapons and the arms race. Vatican II states: "War today must be evaluated "with an entirely new attitude." "The horror and perversity of war are immensely magnified by the addition of scientific weapons." It deplores the fact that "in many cases the use of terrorism is regarded as a new way to wage war." Hence, all human beings ought to commit themselves to free our world from the age-old slavery of war. The goal of humanity is a warless world: "It is our clear duty to strain every muscle as we work for the time when all wars can be completely outlawed by international consent." Thus, there is a great need of a *universal public authority*, acknowledged by all, and with effective power to safeguard security, justice and rights.¹⁹ It is interesting to note here that modern commentators of Saint

¹⁶ Pius XII, *La Decimoterza*, 1952, nos. 32-34; in Gutiérrez García, o.c., p. 233.

¹⁷ John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, no. 55; quoted by Germain Grisez, o.c., p. 901.

¹⁸ Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, no. 53

¹⁹ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 79, 80 and 82.

Thomas affirm that if there would be an international authority or tribunal, all wars would be considered illicit by Aquinas.²⁰

Vatican II is opposed to *deterrence*, although it seems to accept the stand of others who consider it an instrument to avoid war. It considers the *arms race* “an utterly treacherous trap for humanity” that harms the poor immensely.²¹

Summarizing the social doctrine of the Church, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that the method of deterrence gives rise to strong moral reservations: “A danger of modern warfare is that it provides the opportunity to those who possess modern scientific weapons – specially atomic, biological or chemical weapons – to commit such crimes.”²²

Vatican II is against an atomic total war: “Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation.” The Council accepts a non-total atomic defensive war (using the principle of proportionality) against unjust aggressors.²³

Still the Second Vatican Council speaks of the right – and duty – of *legitimate defensive war as a last resort*:

As long as the danger of war remains and there is no competent and sufficiently powerful authority at the international level, governments cannot be denied the right to legitimate defense once every means of peaceful settlement has been exhausted. Therefore, government authorities and others who share public responsibility have the duty to protect the welfare of the people entrusted to their care and to conduct such grave matters soberly.²⁴

A defensive war, Vatican II adds in *Gaudium et Spes* (79), must respect “the permanent binding force of universal natural law and

²⁰ Cf. Marceliano Llamera, O.P., *Introducciones a la Suma Teológica*, l.c., p. 1015.

²¹ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 81.

²² *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1992, nos. 2314-2315.

²³ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 80 and 81.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 79.

its all-embracing principles.” Moreover, the conscience of those persons who refuse to bear arms – conscientious objectors – ought to be respected as long as they are willing to serve the human community in other forms of service.

Commenting on the teachings of Vatican II, Karl Peschke defends the morality of a defensive just war, including a preventive just war – “a preventive war against an unquestionably threatening, deadly aggression.” He accepts deterrence, including nuclear weapons, as an instrument of persuasion against war. However, he adds: “Only controllable nuclear weapons may be used against an aggressor who used nuclear weapons.”²⁵

I ask: *If a country does not have nuclear – and other – weapons, how does it defend itself?* Again: the powerful are more equal than the powerless and poor! I never understood the philosophy of those rich nations who possess certain deadly weapons, but do not allow others to have them. This is called hypocrisy, double standard of morality: what is evil is evil – for all!

Pope John Paul II

In his *Message for the 1982 World Day of Peace*, John Paul II spoke of war in general and of defensive war. He says that Christians strive “to resist and prevent every form of warfare,” for war is “the most barbarous and least effective way of resolving conflicts.” Nevertheless, facing grave injustice, Christians favor the collective defense of society in the name of justice: “In the name of an elementary requirement of justice, people have a right and even a duty to protect their existence and freedom by proportionate means against an unjust aggressor.” This traditional teaching is harder to apply – if at all possible – in the context of the new deadly weapons: “However, in view of the difference between classical warfare and nuclear or bacteriological war a difference so to speak of nature and in view of the scandal of the arms race seen against the background of the needs of the Third World, this right, which

²⁵ Karl Peschke, *Christian Ethics*, 2, Manila: Divine Word Publications, 6th Printing, 1997, pp. 592-600.

is very real in principle, only underlines the urgency for world society to equip itself with effective means of negotiation.”²⁶

Even before the September 11 terrible terrorist attacks, John Paul II spoke more on peace than on war, on love of neighbor as the path to true peace – of a *nonviolent love of neighbor*. He made this clear in his social Encyclical *Centesimus Annus* (1991). He wrote here that under the illusion of fighting evil, violence only makes it worse.” Love of neighbor urges us “to search for ways to resolve international conflicts other than by war.” The Pope wrote powerfully:

I myself, on the occasion of the tragic war in the Persian Gulf, repeated the cry: ‘Never again war!’ No, never again war, which destroys the lives of innocent people, teaches how to kill, throws into upheaval even the lives of those who do the killing and leaves behind a trail of resentment and hatred, thus making it all the more difficult to find a just solution of the very problems which provokes the war.²⁷

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* speaks of war within the fifth commandment: *Thou shall not kill*. It presents with brevity and clarity the teaching of the Church, particularly the conditions for a just war after Vatican II:

- > The damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave and certain;
- > All other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective;
- > There must be serious prospect of success;
- > The use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The powers of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition.²⁸

Defensive war, then, may still be ethical, provided the strict conditions of the Just War Theory are fully followed – something

²⁶ John Paul II, *Message for the 1982 World Day of Peace*, no. 12.

²⁷ John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, nos. 52, 25 and 51.

²⁸ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2309. For its treatise on war and peace, see CCC, nos. 2307-2317.

that some theologians consider possible while others do not. Those who still admit the morality of the Just War Theory – as renewed by Pius XII, Vatican II and John Paul II – underline the condition of a really *just cause*, the principle of the *last resort*, the principle of *discrimination* or respecting the innocent (civilians, and also non-military targets), a *good end* and *good means*. There has to be then what traditional theology calls *ius ad bellum*, or “war-decision law” (moral law before going to war) and *ius in bello*, or “war-conduct law” (moral law during the war).²⁹

In conclusion: according to the social doctrine of the Church and to philosophical and theological ethics, a defensive just war, although an evil (a lesser evil), may be, a path to justice and peace. Can this teaching on defensive war be maintained after the terror attacks of September 11, 2001?

THE TEACHING OF JOHN PAUL II AFTER THE SEPTEMBER 11 TERROR ATTACKS

Right after the September 11, 2001 incredible terrorist attacks against the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington DC, Pope John Paul II spoke against these barbaric attacks and asked for solidarity with their victims. He spoke of peace repeatedly – not war – and he prayed and asked all to pray and fast for a peace that comes from justice and love.

We shall concentrate here on the most significant message of the Holy Father after that dreadful September 11. We refer to his *Message for the 2002 World Day of Peace* entitled “No peace with-

²⁹ Cf. René Coste, *Moral Internacional, I.c.*, pp. 478-480; George Weigel, “The Catholic Difference. Getting ‘just war’ straight,” *Zenit News Agency*: <http://www.zenit.org/english>, November 24, 2001. On the application of the Just War Theory, I wish to refer to four significant articles published in *New Blackfriars*, Vol. 73, No. 859, April 1993: Robert Dodaro, OSA, “The Gulf War and the Just War Theory: View from the Vatican,” *I.c.*, pp. 200-209; Rosemary Hollis, “The Gulf War and the Just War Theory: Right Intention,” pp. 210-217; Brian Wicker, “The Just War and the Criterion of the Last Resort,” pp. 218-223; James O’Connell, “The Principle of Discrimination in the Gulf War: a Common Humanity and the Tension of Competing Rights,” pp. 224-234.

out justice. No justice without forgiveness."³⁰ In this important Message, the Holy Father speaks of terrorism and how to face it from an ethical, religious, and Christian perspective. He talks of peace and of the pillars of peace, namely justice and forgiveness – and prayer.

Terrorism and Religion

On September 11, 2001, "a terrible crime was committed: thousands of innocent people of many ethnic backgrounds were slaughtered." It was a "horrific violence." It was "a true crime against humanity" (2002 *Peace Message*, nos. 2 and 4).

It was international terrorism, which is "a sophisticated network of political, economic and technical collusion which goes beyond national borders to embrace the whole world." "Terrorism springs from hatred, and it generates isolation, mistrust and closure." It is "built on contempt for human life" (no. 4).

How may we answer the scourge of terrorism? The Holy Father recalls the right to defend oneself – personally and collectively. His words: "There is a right to defend oneself against terrorism." This right, however, "as always, must be exercised with respect for moral and legal limits in the choice of ends and means" (no. 5). These are the only direct words of the Pope on the war – and the just war! His attention – as it is clear in all his interventions touching on the terror attacks of September 11, 2001 – is somewhere else: above all on peace and the paths to peace. Certainly the guilty must be identified and duly punished. He cautions: "Criminal culpability is always personal and cannot be extended to the nation, ethnic group or religion to which the terrorists belong" (no. 5).

In his *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* on January 10, 2002, John Paul II talked on defensive measures against terrorism:

The legitimate fight against terrorism, of which the abhorrent attacks of last September are the most appalling expression, has once again let the sound of arms be heard. Barbarous aggressions and killings raise not only the question of legiti-

³⁰ John Paul II, *Message for the World Day of Peace*: January 1, 2002: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/jp-ii_mes/20011211_xxxv-world-day-for-peace_en.htm 12/13/01.

mate defense but also issues such as the most effective means of eradicating terrorism, the search for factors underlying such acts, and the measures to be taken to bring about a process of "healing" in order to overcome fear and to avoid evil being added to evil, violence to violence.³¹

There is, then, legitimate defense, but it should not be the priority measure to fight terrorism. As he added in that *Address to the Diplomatic Corps*, referring to the tensions between India and Pakistan, but applicable to other conflicts: the absolute priority is found in dialogue and negotiation. "Weapons and bloody attacks," he said referring to the Holy Land war, "will never be the right means for making a political statement to the other side. Nor is the logic of the law of retaliation capable any longer of leading to paths of peace" (no. 3).

The answer to international terrorism, the Pope said in his 2002 *Message*, requires *international cooperation* against terrorism. The fight against terrorist activities must also include – the Holy Father avers – "a courageous and resolute political, diplomatic and economic commitment to relieving situations of oppression and marginalization that facilitate the designs of terrorists. The recruitment of terrorists in fact becomes easier in situation where rights are trampled upon and injustices tolerated over a long period of time" (2002 *Peace Message*, no. 5).

Are existing injustices then a justification of terrorist acts? The Holy Father unwavering answer: "It must be firmly stated that the injustices existing in the world can never be used to excuse acts of terrorism." He adds: "The terrorist claim to be acting on behalf of the poor is a patent falsehood" (Ibid., no. 5). In reality, poor people and countries are the ones to suffer most as a result of terrorism that decreases international solidarity.

Terrorism, in fact, *exploits people*. It "despairs of humanity, of life, of the future." It does not respect a person's conscience: "To try to impose on others by violent means what we consider to be the truth is an offence against human dignity and ultimately an offence against God whose image that person bears." We should not try to

³¹ John Paul II, *Address to the Diplomatic Corps*: January 10, 2002: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/2002/januray/document_01/11/2002.

impose our truth to others, “we can only propose the truth to others” (2002 *Peace Message*, no. 6).

Terrorism also *exploits* God, who thus becomes an idol for one’s own purpose. As Italian theologian Bruno Forte commented after the September 11 attacks: “God is the Father of all; He whom Islam invokes as merciful and compassionate cannot be the executioner of his children.” *Why did God allow the attacks?* His answer: “Faith has only one answer: The omnipotent God cannot take away from his children the liberty He has given them.”³²

Terrorism, John Paul II said, is often the result of fanatic *fundamentalism*, which wants to impose its own vision of truth on others. *May religion be a banner for terrorism?* The Pope writes: “It is a profanation of religion to declare oneself a terrorist in the name of God, to do violence to others in his name” (2002 *Peace Message*, nos. 6 and 7). In his *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* (no. 3), the Pope said: “Killing in the name of God is an act of blasphemy and a perversion of religion.” Truly, “genuine religious belief... is the chief antidote to violence and conflict” (2002 *Peace Message*, no. 14). Hence, “no religious leader can condone terrorism and much less preach it” (Ibid., no. 7). Religious leaders are obliged to lead the world “in condemning terrorism and in denying terrorists any form of religious or moral legitimacy.” Moreover, they must teach “the greatness and dignity of the human person,” spread “a clearer sense of the oneness of the human family” (Ibid., no. 12).

In his *Message for the 1997 World Day of Peace*, John Paul II had said (no. 4) that religions could make an important contribution to the culture of peace by talking against war and bravely facing the consequent risks. In his 2002 *Message*” (no. 12), John Paul II underlines the need of truth in the context of war and peace. In particular, he added, Jews, Muslims and Christians, are asked by their faith in One God “to bear common witness to the truth that the deliberate murder of the innocent is a grave evil always, everywhere, and without exception.”³³

³² See <http://www.zenit.org/english/visualizza.phtml?sid=11909>, 10/30/2001.

³³ John Paul II, 1997 *Message for the XXX World Day of Peace*: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/jo.../hf_jp_ii_mes_08121996_xxx-world-day-for-peace_en.htm 1/5/02.

For Christians in particular, terrorism is contrary to faith in Christ, who lived a peaceful life and taught his disciples to pray, "*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*" (Mt 6:12). God is merciful and Christians must also be merciful, for the God of Jesus Christ is a God of mercy and forgiveness (cf. Mt 9:13). John Paul II writes: "The followers of Christ, baptized into his redeeming Death and Resurrection, must always be men and women of mercy and forgiveness" (2002 *Peace Message*, no. 7).

Justice and Forgiveness

That justice is the path to peace is an idea rooted in the Bible, taught by the Church and expanded by theology. In his innovative 2002 *Peace Message*, John Paul II tells us, quoting the prophet Isaiah, "True peace is the work of justice" (Is, 32:17), a seminal concept developed by Vatican II in *Gaudium et Spes* (no. 78). To define peace, John Paul II brings up the popular definition given by Saint Augustine of Hippo, that is, peace as *tranquillitas ordinis*.³⁴ The peace to be built up in this world is the peace of the right order, that is, "the tranquility of order in justice and freedom" (2002 *Peace Message*, nos. 3 and 12).

In our context, a tranquil order includes respect for God's creation, part of eco-justice. War is certainly a destructive invasion of the environment. The *environment* is harmed by war. In his *Message for the 1990 World Day of Peace* (no. 12), John Paul II affirmed that war is dangerous menace to the environment and to humanity. In this greatly significant address on ecological awareness and responsibility, the pope wrote: "Despite the international agreements, which prohibit chemical, bacteriological and biological warfare, the fact is that laboratory research continues to develop new offensive weapons capable of altering the balance of nature."³⁴

Peace is indeed the fruit of justice! *Justice* is a basic social virtue, "that moral virtue and legal guarantee which ensures full

³⁴ John Paul II, *Message for the World Day of Peace: January 1, 1990*, no. 12: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/.../hf_jp-ii_mes_19891208_xxiii-world-day-for-peace_en.htm 1/18/02.

respect for rights and responsibilities, and the just distribution of benefits and burdens" (2002 *Peace Message*, no. 3).

Peace is the fruit of justice. It is also – and mainly – the fruit of love, for justice is not enough! However, the first essential condition of love is justice. Two intrinsic demands of love are respect for truth and justice (1997 *Peace Message*, no. 5). In Christian perspective, moreover, all virtues are mediations of love, and, therefore, justice, too. True justice in Christian perspective cannot be merely retributive justice, much less vindictive justice, but – like the justice of Jesus Christ – fraternal justice. Holistically speaking, peace is the fruit of justice and love as solidarity: *opus iustitiae pax*, and also *opus solidaritatis pax*. The virtue of charity, or love of God and neighbor, has three main effects: joy, beneficence and mercy. Mercy entails compassion and forgiveness.

How to restore the moral and social order shattered by terrorist violence? John Paul II answers: "The shattered order cannot be fully restored except by a response that combines justice with forgiveness. The pillars of true peace are justice and that form of love that is forgiveness." "Human justice is always fragile and imperfect; it must be completed by forgiveness which heals and rebuilds troubled human relations from their foundations" (2002 *Peace Message*, nos. 3 and 2).

In a truly innovative manner, the Holy Father connects forgiveness with justice in his 2002 *Message*. *Are justice and forgiveness irreconcilable?* The Holy Father answers in the negative: no, both are not irreconcilable! Why? Forgiveness is not the opposite of justice, but of resentment and revenge: "Justice and forgiveness are essential to that healing." The Holy Father considers justice as an essential requisite of forgiveness and reconciliation. In this context, he presents justice as founded ultimately on God; justice, then, "is not limited to establishing what is right between parties in conflict but looks above all to re-establishing authentic relationships with God, with oneself and with others." He wrote in his 1997 *Message for the World Day of Peace*:

There is no contradiction between forgiveness and justice. Forgiveness neither eliminates nor lessens the need for the reparation which justice requires, but seeks to reintegrate

individuals and groups into society, and States into community of Nations. No punishment can suppress the inalienable dignity of those who have committed evil. The door to repentance and rehabilitation must always remain open.³⁵

To attain true peace, forgiveness is required, not only forgiveness at the personal level but also at the social level. At the *personal level*, we all, wounded creatures, need and want to be forgiven of our weaknesses, failures, sins. Therefore, we should also forgive others their weaknesses, failures and sins: if we want to be treated by others mercifully, we ought to treat others mercifully. "All human beings cherish the hope of being able to start all over again, and not remain for ever shut up in their own mistakes and guilt" (2002 *Peace Message*, no. 8).

To attain peace, there is also the need of *social forgiveness*. In truth, forgiveness begins in the heart and extends to society: we are all social beings. The Holy Father says that society is absolutely in need of forgiveness. All the communities that make up society, including families, groups, societies, States and the international community itself, need forgiveness. "The ability to forgive lies at the very basis of the idea of a future society marked by justice and solidarity." Contrarily, "the failure to forgive, especially when it serves to prolong conflict, is extremely costly in terms of human development. Resources are used for weapons rather than for development, peace and justice." Indeed, *peace is essential for development, but true peace is made possible only through forgiveness* (no. 9).

When societies, States are not able to forgive, they may cause great sufferings to others, like in the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Holy Land, which continues crying for a negotiated solution. *Is not forgiving another, instead of fighting him a kind of weakness? Is not forgiveness a weak link to true peace?* Forgiveness might appear as weakness but in reality it requires great spiritual strength and moral courage. (See nos. 10 and 11).

At the human and ethical level, justice and peace require forgiveness. How much more at the level of faith! Religions, therefore,

³⁵ John Paul II, 1997 *Message for the World Day of Peace*, no. 5; see John Paul II, *Dives in Misericordia*, no. 14.

cannot but pursue – John Paul II states – “the path of forgiveness, which opens the way to mutual understanding, respect and trust. The teaching of forgiveness is really the best help religions can give to fight terrorism” (no. 13).

Prayer and Peace

Peace is the fruit of justice and forgiveness. All religious people, all believers pray for peace and its main elements, namely, justice, freedom, mercy as forgiveness and truth. In his *2002 Peace Message*, John Paul II writes:

To pray for peace is to pray for justice, for a right ordering of relations within and among nations and peoples. It is to pray for freedom, especially for the religious freedom that is a basic human and civil right of every individual. To pray for peace is to seek God's forgiveness, and to implore the courage to forgive those who trespassed against us (*2002 Message*, no. 14).

Since September 11, 2001, John Paul II has asked the world, particularly Christians and other believers to pray and fast for peace in the world. His most dramatic call took place in the Day of Prayer for Peace, celebrated on January 24, 2002 in Assisi, where the Holy Father prayed for peace with more than 250 religious leaders representing many religions and faiths. The Pope and the other religious authorities prayed for true peace – a peace rooted in justice and forgiveness.³⁶

Our prayer will be an offering pleasing to God, the Holy Father says, if it is preceded by a sincere effort to reconcile with our brothers and sisters, that is, to forgive them and ask for their forgiveness. (Cf. John Paul II, *Message 1997 World Day of Peace*, no. 6).

³⁶ Cf. *final Declaration of Religious Leader*: <http://www.zenit.org/english/visualizza.phtml?sid=15683> 01/27/2002. John Paul II, *Angelus*: November 18, 2001: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/angelus/2001/documents/hf_ip_ii_12.

TEACHINGS FROM THE USA BISHOPS AFTER SEPTEMBER 11

On November 14, 2001, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued a notable Pastoral Message entitled *Living With Faith and Hope After September 11*.³⁷ In this Pastoral Message, the American Bishops wish to offer “words of consolation, criteria for moral discernment, and a call to action and solidarity in these troubled and challenging times.”

From an *ethical perspective*, the American Bishops state firmly and repeatedly that “no injustice legitimizes the horror we have experienced,” “no cause, no grievance can justify flying civilian aircrafts into office towers or infecting postal workers and public figures.” “The common good is threatened when innocent people are targeted by terrorists.”

From a *faith dimension*, no religion can justify the incredible attacks on innocent people: “It is wrong to use religion as a cover for political, economic or ideological causes.” “Only a distorted faith can justify violence and hatred.” On September 14, 2001, just three days after the terrorist attacks, Catholic Bishops and Muslim leaders issues a *Joint Statement* that said in part: “We believe that the one God calls us to be peoples of peace. Nothing in our Holy Scriptures, nothing in our understanding of God’s revelation, nothing that is Christian or Islamic justifies terrorist acts and disruption of millions of lives, which we have witnessed this week. Together we condemn those actions as evil and diametrically opposed to true religion.”³⁸

From human dignity and faith, how may one judge the horrible September 11 terrorist acts? These lethal deeds cannot go unanswered! Indeed, “there is a moral right and grave obligation to defend the common good against mass terrorism.” In their *Joint Statement* of September 14, 2001, Catholic Bishops and Muslim leaders affirmed: “We join in supporting our Government in the pursuit of those who were responsible for Tuesday’s terrorist acts,

³⁷ Cf. USCCB, *A Pastoral Message: Living With Faith and Hope After September 11: November 14, 2001*: <http://usccb.org/sdwp/sept11.htm>.

³⁸ *Catholic Bishops and Muslim Leaders Issue Joint Statement: September 14, 2001*: <http://www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2001/01-163.htm>.

always mindful of the moral imperative to act with restraint and respect for civilian lives.”

Although *military action* is not sufficient to face terrorism of this kind – and may be undertaken “with a sense of deep regret” –, “it may be necessary.” Different responses can be given: “Diplomacy, economic measures, effective intelligence, more focus on security at home, and the legitimate use of force. Our main concern here: *the legitimate use of force*. Even facing terrorism, the traditional norms regarding the use of force still apply.

In exceptional situations and when the peaceful means have been exhausted, the norms of the just war tradition may be applied, with all the limitation on the use of military power. In their 2001 Pastoral Message, the American Bishops included in an Appendix their two immediate sources on the Just War Theory: the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and their 1993 *Pastoral Letter*.

In their 1993 Pastoral letter, *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace* the American Bishops write: “In a disordered world, where peaceful solution of conflicts sometimes fails, the just war tradition provides an important moral framework for restraining and regulating the limited use of force governments and international organizations.” In this important Letter, the American Bishops spell out the major components of the just war tradition including *ius ad bellum* and *ius in bellum*:

- *Just Cause*: force may be used only to correct a grave, public evil, i.e., aggression or massive violation of the basic rights of whole populations;

- *Comparative Justice*: while there may be rights and wrongs on all sides of a conflict, to override the presumption against the use of force the injustice suffered by one party must significantly outweigh that suffered by the other;

- *Legitimate Authority*: only duly constituted public authorities may use deadly force or wage war;

- *Right Intention*: force may be used only in a truly just cause and solely for that purpose;

> *Probability of Success*: arms may not be used in a futile cause or in a case where disproportionate measures are required to achieve success;

> *Proportionality*: the overall destruction expected from the use of force must be outweighed by the good to be achieved. It includes the principle of discrimination, or *noncombatant immunity*: "It is of utmost importance, in assessing harms and the justice of accepting them, to think about the poor and the helpless, for they are usually the ones who have the least to gain the most to lose when war's violence touches their lives;"

> *Last Resort*: force may be used only after all peaceful alternatives have been seriously tried and exhausted.³⁹

The American Bishops prefer nonviolent means to war. In their pastoral Letter, they praise People Power Philippine style as an example of successful nonviolent struggle. Only reluctantly and conditionally do the American Bishops accept a just defensive war when the peaceful paths have failed.

In closing this section, may I ask: *When can one really say that the nonviolent means have failed?*

NONVIOLENT LOVE IS MY PATH TO PEACE

When I was a student theologian studying the treatise of charity of Saint Thomas, I was in favor of the just war theory as the saint explained it within this treatise (II-II, 40): he spoke of a just war and made it almost impossible to have a just one! There was one statement that I wrote in my edition of the *Summa*, which became since then a piercing question to me. This statement was from outstanding French Dominican moralist Labourdette: "The classic formulation of war was made in an extremely different period than ours. The texts of Saint Thomas are lovely and at the same time deceptive." *Deceptive*? Indeed, Thomas was an incredibly wise man – may be the best theologian of all times –, but of course a man of his time. I find the renewed war theory today – stricter

³⁹ Cf. USCCB, *Two Traditions: Nonviolence and Just War*: October 3, 2001: <http://www.usccb.org/nationaltragedy/justwar.htm>.

than Saint Thomas' – still a bit deceptive from the point of view of a new global humanism and a renewed Christian faith.

I remember vividly the slim figure of Pope Paul VI, dressed in immaculate white, before the podium of the United Nations in New York. And I will never forget his dramatic appeal to all: "No more war! War never again! Peace, it is peace which must guide the destinies of peoples and all mankind." It was October 4, 1965.

I know, we live in an imperfect, even violent world and a defensive war might be (with other conditions respected), if not a just war perhaps a less unjust war than an offensive war, an unjust aggression or a terrorist attack. Abstractly this appears reasonable, but the abstract does not exist: in ethics, in moral theology, we deal, as Saint Thomas said, with the concrete – with particular human acts. In concrete cases, for instance, when we refer to the Gulf War of 1991, or to the US-lead coalition against terrorists in Afghanistan (2001), may we speak of a proportionate means to fight terrorists there? ((John Paul II judged, with many others, the Gulf War as unjust. Eight who received the Nobel Peace Prize wrote a letter to the UN Secretary Koffi Annan condemning the military offensive in Afghanistan).⁴⁰

May I be sure of the right intention of our political leaders? May I be a good judge in my own cause? Writes theologian Rafael Larrañeta: "The motherland as a noble intention has been replaced by the economic greed of the powerful."⁴¹ May we ever talk of a defensive war that uses proportionate means to fight unjust aggressors and terrorists? Will the war, any war not create new injustices and new kinds of violence and unstoppable destruction, and deeper hatreds among warring peoples? Regarding the principle of discrimination, how can it be just when innocent people are killed,

⁴⁰ See EFE, "Ocho premios Nobel de la Paz condenan el ataque y exigen la mediación de Naciones Unidas," *el mundo*, 10/12/200: <http://www.elmundo/2001/10/09/enespecial/1112585462.html>. "El juez Garzón considera ilegal la Guerra de EE. UU. contra Afganistán," *ABC*, 12/10/2001: <http://www.abc.es/servicios/imprimir.asp?id=65006&seccion=Guerra&dia> 12/10/2001.

⁴¹ Rafael Larrañeta, O.P., "Ya no hay guerras justas," in the book *La maldición de la Guerra*, Salamanca: Editorial San Esteban, 1984, p.117. See also, Michael Amaladoss, S.J., "Listen to the Spirit: Peace and Religious Violence," *Vidyajyoti*, 65, 2001, pp. 477-479; Editorial: *Religions and peace*, *Vidyajyoti*, 66, 2002, pp. 81-84.

maimed, and their means of livelihood destroyed? ("Collateral damage"?) When is a resort the last resort? Why not a peaceful means (political, economic, spiritual) – a peaceful means once more?

It was said, "*Si vis pacem, para bellum*" (if you want peace prepare for war). I do not think so today: "*Si vis pacem, para pacem*" (if you want peace prepare for peace).

As a Christian, I have a very hard time trying to justify the defensive just war with the Gospel of Jesus, particularly the *Sermon on the Mount*. A moralist writes: "There are among moralists dealing with the Just War Theory certain scruples, for they always base their theological arguments in the Old Testament, which, although it is also inspired word, was judged already an imperfect or preparatory step to the definitive revelation brought by Jesus." He adds: "The Gospel does not provide any type of justification of the collective homicides caused by wars... The opposite model of the martyr seems more consistent with the Good News."⁴²

As a follower of Jesus, I find the justification for a just defensive war almost impossible: the virtue of my life is charity as love of God and neighbor; love of neighbor inclines me to love my enemies – including terrorists – and, therefore, to forgive them and reconcile with them. I know that forgiveness does not cancel justice, but I wonder if does not cancel killing others. *Self-defense*? May be, although being killed by the unjust aggressor – and martyrdom – is another option! *How about self-defense against criminals*? This is a wrong argument – like all others, I submit – in defense of the death penalty. *How about collective defense*? Is it a just option to peace? May be! But I seriously doubt it.

As a Christian, my most radical and ever present question is: *Is Christ, my Christ in favor of a possible "just defensive war"*? With many other Christians, I do not think so! Certainly Jesus could have defended himself while being apprehended in the Garden of Gethsemane. He told Peter: "Put your sword back, for all who

⁴² Rafael Larrañeta, O.P., o. c., pp. 109 and 111. See Bernard Haring, *Free and Faithful in Christ, III*, Australian Edition: Saint Paul Publications, 1981, pp. 398-399; Valerie Flessati, "Stop War, Please," in *Justice, Peace and Dominicans 1216-2001*, ed. by John Orme Mills, O.P., Dublin: Dominican Publications, 2001, pp. 152-160.

draw the sword will die by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father who would promptly send more than twelve legions of angels to my defense?" (Mt 26: 52-53). *Did Jesus repudiate collective defense, or the defense of others, too?* It would seem so, at least for his disciples! Writes Brian Wicker:

It is the world, which is violent and talks of self-defense by force as a last resort. It does this because as Jesus says quoting the psalmist 'it hated me for no reason' (Ps 69:4). The disciples, however, are not of this world, and their task is simply to be witnesses of the Advocate whom Jesus will send for their defense. It is hardly apt to call the Holy Spirit a weapon of last resort. In short, Jesus trusts his Father completely, and for this reason He does not need the 'last resort' principle. Neither do his disciples.⁴³

The first Christians were against war and the death penalty. As Christians, we have to continue recovering the nonviolent path to peace. Today I am strongly inclined in theory and practice to be against the Just War Theory. It has been said that the Just War Theory have restricted significantly violence in wars, and even limited the number of wars. I wonder if it has not at times justified wars.⁴⁴ There is a moral argument in bioethics that is called the slippery slope!

I strongly believe that the best way to fight the culture of war is not by more wars but by the *culture of peace*. I want to work for peace, for a true peace. Peace is not merely the absence of war: it is also this. It is the presence of justice and solidarity, the continuing work for justice and solidarity, including respect of human rights – beginning with the right to life of every human being, born and unborn, "guilty" or "innocent" – and education in values, and a fight against poverty, that is, against injustice and wasting of resources. This is the peace of which Pope John XXIII speaks powerfully and prophetically in *Pacem in terris*, a dynamic peace, a peace that may

⁴³ Brian Wicker, "The Gulf War and the Criterion of Last Resort," *New Blackfriars*, Vol. 73, No. 859, April 1992, p. 223.

⁴⁴ Cf. Marciano Vidal, *Moral de Actitudes, III: Moral Social*, Madrid: PS Editorial, 1980, pp. 614-620.

be defined as *living together in justice and love*. Indeed, "there is no true peace without fairness, truth, justice and solidarity."⁴⁵ The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches the just war theory tradition, but it is interesting to note that it entitles its discourse on war as *Avoiding War*. CCC states:

Injustice, excessive economic or social inequalities, envy, distrust and pride raging among men and nations constantly threaten peace and cause wars. Everything done to overcome these disorders contributes to building up peace and avoiding war.⁴⁶

I respect those who are convinced by their humanity and faith that the renewed just war tradition ought to be followed in exceptional situations of violence and injustice. Personally, I am now more and more inclined to follow the growing tradition of non-violence after Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Oscar Romero, Theresa of Calcutta, Thomas Merton, Henri Nouwen – and, above all, the Man from Nazareth, Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary.⁴⁷

I believe and hope in a new humanism that underlines not only the value of nationhood, but also the fundamental value of a common humanity journeying to a civilization where human dignity and rights and the values of freedom, justice, truth and solidarity are respected.

I will not favor the Just War Theory. My option is peace not war; love not violence, cooperation not competitiveness, and compassion not power. I will try to be a peacemaker, an instrument of peace in my family, my associations, my nation and the world.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ John Paul II, *Message for the World Day of Peace: January 1, 2000*, no. 13.

⁴⁶ CCC, no. 2317. See Vatican II, GS, no. 78.

⁴⁷ Cf. Thomas Merton, *Passion for Peace. The Social Essays*, ed. by William H. Shannon, New York: Crossroad, 1995; Henri Nouwen, *The Road to Peace*, ed. by John Dear, Pasay City: Paulines, 1999.; Fausto Gómez, O.P., "Promoting Peace Through Nonviolence," in his book *The Praxis of Justice and Solidarity*, Manila: UST/SRC, 1998, pp. 130-163.

⁴⁸ Cf. Fausto Gómez, O.P., *Peace and Peacemaking*, Manila: UST/SRC, 1990, pp. 1-48.

As a peacemaker for Christ, I have to be at peace within myself: the body under the spirit and the spirit under God (Saint Augustine). I remember the challenging words of Saint Seraphim: "Acquire inner peace and thousands around you will find liberation."

To be at peace with myself I need to be at peace with God. Sin is division and brokenness and slavery. Saint Thomas Aquinas wrote: "Without sanctifying grace, where there may be appearance of peace, there is, in reality, no true peace" (II-II, 29, 3 ad 1).

I have to try to be at peace with all others: "Do all you can to live at peace with everyone" (Rom 12:18). And I have to work with others for peace and justice based on truth and in solidarity with all: "Just as I have loved you, you must love one another" (Jn 13:34). And I have to love the poor and oppressed with preferential love. Why spend money in what is not bread? (Is 55:2).

I have to be at peace with the whole creation. "And God saw that it was good" (Gen 1). Interesting statement by John Paul II: "If man is not at peace with God, neither the earth is at peace" (*Message for World Day of Peace*, January 1, 1990).

Without playing the prophet, I foresee that in the future – hopefully sooner than later –, as the death penalty is being condemned by a growing number of persons and nations as cruel and unnecessary (to use the words of pope John Paul II), likewise the Just War Theory will be replaced by peaceful means, such as dialogue, negotiations, and a morally strong United Nations where the weak are respected like the powerful. I do pray for this – for the realization of Isaiah's powerful vision: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; one nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again" (Is 2:4).

The Just War, a path to peace? The path to genuine peace is the path of peaceful nonviolent love. As Gandhi said: "There is no way to peace, peace is the way."

I wish to close with the closing words of John Paul II in the *Joint Declaration* of religious leaders on January 24, 2002, at Assisi: "War never again! Terrorism never again! In the name of God, may every religion bring upon earth justice and peace, forgiveness and life, love!" □