



Where Justice and Truth Meet

October 2021

“Through our contemplation, transform us to listen deeply to one another and to the brokenness of the world.” – A Prayer for the Life of the World

On the Journey of Transformation

We started a journey of understanding the urgency of transforming our vision to counter violence in our world, with our *WJTM* Newsletter of [November 2020](#). In [January 2021](#), our newsletter described how the *Just Peace* vision expands our living, being, and peacemaking. Our issues of [March](#) and [May](#) invited us to reflect on six principles of a *Just Peace* vision: Just cause, Right intention, Participatory process, Right relationship, Reconciliation, Restoration, and Sustainability. All these peacemaking tools can guide our day-to-day practices.



There are additional practices, however, which are grounded in the teachings and actions of Jesus and which effectively implement a *Just Peace* vision.

Before we name these, we must

remember that Jesus and the community of disciples around him lived in times of occupation and conflict. They experienced violence from external forces (Rome) and from their internal political and religious institutions. Violence was present at all levels of the society.

The Gospel of Matthew was also written in times of turmoil. The emerging Christian community in the Middle East faced confrontation and hate crimes. The teachings of Jesus according to this Gospel, however, do not fuel violence. On the contrary, they reveal God's ultimate desire of an integral peace among all creation.

Grounded in the gospel values, the following practices have the potential to implement *Just Peace* in our midst:

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](#)).

Working for Justice

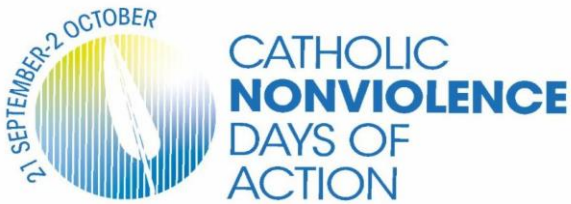
5. Advance democracy, human rights, and religious liberty (biblical basis: [Matt 6:19-34](#)).
6. Foster just and sustainable economic development (biblical basis: [Matt 6:19-34](#)).

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](#)).

The many ongoing conflicts in our world makes us realize the urgency of these practices towards *Just Peace*. Because of their complexity and painfulness, we can be tempted to withdraw and say “there is nothing I can do.”

However, if we begin to cultivate the thinking, attitude, and practice of JUST PEACE in our own self and relationships and let it ripple out from us, we can do something.



2021 is the second year for the [Catholic Nonviolence Days of Action 2021](#), a time to think about, pray and act for peace and nonviolence.

It is celebrated between **September 21 (International Day of Peace) and October 2 (International Day of Nonviolence and Gandhi's birthday)**.

These dates align with [the Season of Creation](#), which extends from 1 September (Day of Prayer for creation) until 4 October (feast of St. Francis of Assisi.)

Fittingly the theme for 2021 is: ***Nonviolence as a way of life in the web of creation.***

Using this theme, the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative believes that nonviolence offers an approach and tools to address the call to protect Earth.



These efforts of the Catholic Nonviolence Days of Action contribute to the [Laudato Si Action Platform](#), the seven-year plan with the Vatican Dicastery on Integral Human Development.

This is a massive undertaking by the entire Church community (Families, Dioceses & Parishes, Educational Institutions, Hospitals & Healthcare Centers, Organizations and Groups, Businesses and Agriculture, and Religious Orders) to achieve sustainability and help avert the worst scenarios of the climate crisis.

Because it involves a Vatican office, an international Steering Committee, seven international working groups, individual national

groups, and the Platform developer, the timeline for implementation undergoes regular revision.

The current timeline for the initiation of LSAP:

Oct 4, 2021 Feast of St. Francis

This date, once set for implementation of the Platform, is now the opening of a time of *40 Days of Prayer*. Major Superiors are asked to sign a commitment letter that their congregation will begin the journey to sustainability.

Oct 14, 2021

Roll-out of commitment process (format to be determined)

Nov 14, 2021

End of 40 Days of Prayer. Enrollment Launched. Manuals (planning guides) for each of the seven sectors are to be published.

Our congregational LSAP Committee is working on the final draft for our Public Commitment Statement, which is the first of the three pillars of the LSAP process. Once it is drafted, the community will have a chance to review it. Leadership will give final approval before we announce it to our various media outlets.

Even though information has been slow in coming from the Vatican, timelines are regularly revised, and many of us in religious congregations have been asking one another the same questions, there is a growing excitement and energy in participating in a global movement whose goal is for the life of the world.



In the spirit of integral ecology, hope for the Earth and the Poor.