

DOMINICAN SISTERS OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

JUST *Words*

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Nonviolence:

A Contemplative Response TO THE *World*



The *JUST Words* remote board meeting in October included a discussion that explored the violence following the recent tragic death of George Floyd. This devastating incident triggered violence that penetrated facets of society and galvanized a global protest including participants from all races.

Our struggle was how to understand that violence.

When I was studying for my doctoral degree one of my professors challenged me to think differently about how people perceive right and wrong. He helped me to see that while our perception affects how we understand right and wrong, it doesn't change the fact that there is such a thing as right and wrong.

That is why in the article on page 5, you see Sister Judine Hilbing's struggle with what she witnessed out the convent window last spring and Erica Smith's powerful explanation. The challenge is to understand systemic racism and the history that Black people have experienced since the days of slavery. White people who struggle to understand racism sometimes want to absolve themselves because they see it as a historical problem and not a current one. People of color don't have that luxury. We still face the consequences of America's racist history.

It rests on all of us to become culturally competent. Then we will begin to understand violence. It does not mean we condone it. Understanding requires sustainable action to eliminate systemic racism by examining the spectrum of discrimination and injustice that has haunted minorities and remains

prevalent today. We are governed by the culture in which we are born which constructs the climate in which we live. People's desire to deny the existence of oppression, social injustice, poverty, and racism, positions them in a comfort zone wherein their biases and assumptions are fueled by others who think the same.

Individuals must engage in authentic reconciliation with each other to bridge the racial gaps before becoming a part of the solution. Robust involvement in working toward solutions will provide an environment wherein all citizens have an equal opportunity to flourish and reap the benefits to which every person is entitled.

"Authentic reconciliation does not flee from conflict, but is achieved in conflict, resolving it through dialogue and open, honest and patient negotiation." - Pope Francis



Dr. Shirley Morris is a Dominican associate, a member of the JUST Words editorial board, and an Archdiocese of Chicago school administrator.

Mission Statement:

Called by God
into right relationship
with all creation and graced by
Dominican life and mission,
we compassionately preach the
Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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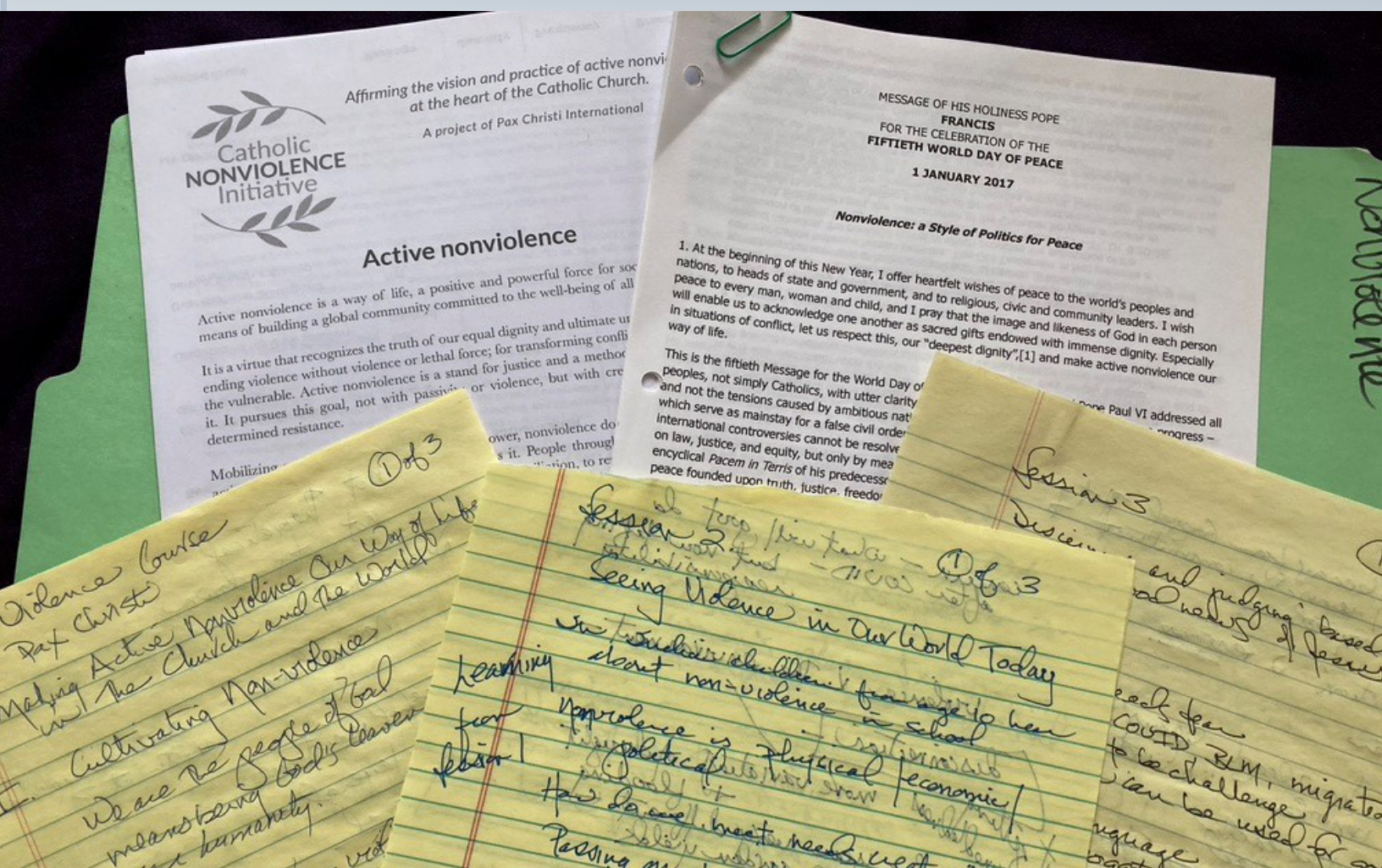
Sister Mila Díaz Solano, OP

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ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE: TO CELEBRATE, CONTEMPLATE, AND LIVE

by Susan M. Hickman



Recently I was privileged to participate in a Pax Christi United Kingdom workshop on nonviolence. The sessions took place over five weeks and each included prayer, scripture, presentation, reflection, and discussion in small groups. Participants came from across the globe, despite the inconvenience for people in many time zones.

This workshop, “Making Active Nonviolence Our Way of Life in the Church and in the World,” came to our attention as we on the Springfield Dominican Sisters’ Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Committee

(JPIC) were completing our study of *Choosing Peace: The Catholic Church Returns to Gospel Nonviolence*. This book was published after the April 2016 conference, Nonviolence and Just Peace, organized by Pax Christi International and the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and was encouraged and blessed by Pope Francis. Learning of the workshop was serendipitous even though the time zone difference for the sessions was not; we started at 5:00 am CST! The discussions and learnings were rich. Here are a few of the learnings, many of which lead to further

reflection, study, and dialogue.

What is “active nonviolence?” It certainly is not passive or submissive. Active nonviolence is developed as individuals and groups seek to find creative, life-affirming ways to resolve conflict, overcome oppression, establish justice, and protect Earth. As Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote as part of his first principle for nonviolence, “It is active nonviolent resistance to evil. It is aggressive spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.”

One of the sessions called us to reflect on how we see violence in

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our world today. It is impossible to define nonviolence without defining violence. We most often think of violence as physical, as in war, in criminal assaults, and attacks. But violence exists everywhere, at every level, from the personal to the global: in language, in economic and political institutions, and in industrial exploitation of workers and the environment. Seeing violence in all these spheres leads us to ask: How can we meet people's needs creatively without recourse to violence? How can we educate ourselves and future generations for nonviolence? How can we help people see the pervasive violence against Earth? How can we respond to persons displaced by violence of any kind, without understanding our deep interconnection with all of creation? Each of these questions calls for study, reflection, contemplation, and dialogue.

Pope Francis calls us to nonviolence based on Jesus' life and teaching. Our own strivings to live from our gospel values also call us to nonviolence. As Francis said in his 2017 message for the fiftieth World Day of Peace, "I wish peace to every man, woman, and child, and I pray that the image and likeness of God in each person will enable us to acknowledge one another as sacred gifts endowed with immense dignity. Especially in situations of conflict, let us respect

this our 'deepest dignity.'" In his message Francis reminds us "Jesus himself lived in violent times. Yet he taught us that the true battlefield, where violence and peace meet, is the human heart: for 'it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come' (Mk 7:21)."

From one of our small group discussions came the insight that Jesus' response of nonviolence is rooted in his awareness of all that was around him, and of its blessedness. Jesus invites us all to see that blessedness and respond out of it. This seeing with love, seeing with the eyes of our



hearts, needs to be nurtured. We are thus called to contemplation, study, prayer, and dialogue.

Another learning from the workshop struck me especially forcefully as a member of JPIC: We must recognize the connection of every effort toward justice with nonviolence. In his 2019 World Day of Peace message Pope Francis reminded us that peace is central to the mission of Christ's disciples and a challenge to be taken up again and again. Our justice efforts gain immeasurably when we mindfully remember to see them through the lens of nonviolence.

Active nonviolence is just that—active. Here are a few insights gleaned from our discussions to orient ourselves more fully toward nonviolence:

Find ways to affirm and celebrate nonviolence (e.g., the Dominican Month for Peace each December);

Be mindful of the language we use so we do not scapegoat, demonize, or promote fear;

Sit with the question: How would the world look if nonviolence was our first choice in working to resolve conflicts?

Cultivate nonviolence in ourselves. Understand that nonviolence informs everything we do: our relationships, conversations, what we buy, what we choose to read, watch, and listen to. Practice making nonviolence our own first choice in response to conflict and injustice.

Respond to conflict rather than reacting to it. Give ourselves and others an opportunity to pause and to think, to enable a creative response to come forth. Sometimes even a simple cough can interrupt what is becoming a reactive interchange and give space for a more considered response. Jesus drawing in the sand before he responds to the mob demanding the adulteress be stoned is one of my favorite examples.

Participate in training about and for nonviolence.

This workshop reminded me that active nonviolence is a stand for justice and a method to help create justice. I look forward to further contemplation, study, and dialogue about these important lessons.

Susan M. Hickman is a Springfield Dominican associate and a member of the sisters' Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation Committee.

“WHAT HAPPENED HERE?”

UNDERSTANDING THE SURVIVAL TRAUMA RESPONSE AS A STEP TOWARD HEALING

by Erica Smith and Sister Judine Hilbing, OP



How are we to understand episodes of violent civil unrest? An experience on the streets around one of our Chicago convents provided an opportunity to take a deeper look.

Sister Judine Hilbing witnessed a burning building and chaos on the street of her south Chicago neighborhood after the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis, Minn., police officer.

Sister Judine Hilbing reflects:

It was the feast of the Visitation, a day to remember Mary as she ran with joyful news to her cousin Elizabeth. It was also the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend and COVID-19 had cancelled all hope of family and friend gatherings such as Mary and Elizabeth had enjoyed. We had just witnessed the murder of George Floyd, and city streets everywhere were filled with rage, violence, and a search for justice. In Chicago, a perfectly beautiful spring day stood in sharp contrast to what I witnessed from my bedroom window. At precisely 2 p.m., the alleys outside St. Martin de Porres Convent became jammed with cars arriving from all directions as violence, looting, and burning descended upon the stores within a block of my view.

For two hours, I stood riveted to the scene playing out before my eyes. I was not watching the news; I was standing in the midst of it, and all I could do was search for understanding. I prayed if there were

any measure of peace within my soul, it would somehow connect with that which I did not fully understand. I stood, I watched, and I tried to understand. The pain is so deep. How do we heal?

Erica Smith Responds:

In scenes of unleashed rage—violence, looting, destruction—if we want peace, we must resist the temptation immediately to determine who is wrong and instead first ask, “What happened here?”

This shift in approach is a basic tenet of being trauma-informed, which means we know what trauma is and how it affects individual and community behaviors and health. We can identify signs that a person or community has experienced trauma, and we intentionally build responses and environments that avoid re-traumatization.

What Sister Judine watched—and the trauma she experienced by watching—is a response to the

community trauma of racism and inequity. Community trauma affects the individual, but is experienced collectively by populations, even if the individuals within the population have different roles and perspectives in the traumatic event(s).

Community trauma is passed down over generations and changes how our DNA is read and transcribed. It's in the stem cells that create every part of our body. It's in the deepest part of our brain, the area gifted to us by an ancient ancestor whom reptiles and mammals share. And it's in our collective unconscious that houses memories and stories from those we descended from long ago.

When that trauma is triggered, the amygdala (the brain's fire alarm) activates the fight or flight response. The amygdala, however, cannot speak or reason—that's what our prefrontal cortex is for. All the amygdala can do is react, and most commonly expresses aggression,

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Some of the consequences of trauma-turned-violence in south Chicago after the murder of George Floyd in spring 2020.

but it also can express avoidance or apathy. These automatic expressions must be understood as an innate survival response to trauma. People with a history of individual and/or community trauma may not be able to articulate or control this natural reaction; it literally happens before they can think.

The “what happened?” for many was watching a Black man be lynched by a white knee; but that is not the whole story. The murder of George Floyd set off a reaction in many people of color that white people cannot comprehend. This is more than one “bad cop” in one botched arrest. This is 400 years of Black lives mattering less than white ones. America was founded by men who wrote of freedom and justice, yet owned and sold enslaved people, whom they counted as “three-fifths” of a human being. This is four centuries of legalized violence, oppression, and discrimination that looted and silenced millions of men, women, and children because of the color of their skin.

Science will tell you that when people are triggered by trauma and cannot articulate the pain because it is too deep for words, they will simply make you feel the way they feel.

That may be anger, or frustration, or terror—but you won’t leave the situation until you experience the same emotions.

When we pause to consider the intergenerational suffering created by the institution of slavery, and the experience of inequity, violence, and intimidation people of color still survive, we may begin to see the depth of the trigger that George Floyd’s death was; and, how for some, taking to the streets to destroy may have been the only way to express their trauma.

The fact that many Caucasians were equally—or more—upset to see Target burn than a Black man die only further fueled the anger that burned for weeks.

This is what happened and what is still happening. Until we give all human experiences space to exist, to be heard, to be mourned and apologized for, we will not heal. Our society’s most typical reaction when we see the aggression, apathy, or avoidance (all survival trauma responses) is to blame and punish; but this actually re-traumatizes and further instills the behavior that is destructive.

When we stop to listen to what has happened before we make judgments,

as Sister Judine sought to do, we are on the road to healing. And yes, undoubtedly, we will find both right and wrong as we listen; it is wrong to destroy another’s property. But if we fail to see the relevance of the truth that until recent history Black people themselves were considered property, and if we fail to see that they still endure the kind of injustice that led a police officer to kneel on a man’s neck until he suffocated, we will not find a way to heal that ends the violence that re-traumatizes us all.

Erica Smith is a SAMHSA-certified Trauma Informed Care trainer and a Springfield Dominican associate. SAMHSA is an acronym for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Sister Judine is a member of the JUST Words editorial board.

Learn more:

Van der Kolk, Bessel A. *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. United Kingdom, Penguin Books, 2015.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy*. United States, One World, 2018.



Reality through Another's Eyes: Poems for Peacemaking

by Sister Patricia Stark, OP

Recently, Springfield Dominican Sister Mila Díaz taught a Scripture class on the Minor Prophets to our community at Sacred Heart Convent. We learned of the many injustices suffered by the people during the times of the prophets. Unfortunately, we witness similar abuses in our society today. Those in power sometimes systematically oppress the weak and marginalized, enslaving them in a life of poverty through systems

which have been operating for centuries.

In his recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis makes a specific call: "Let us hear the true stories of these victims of violence, look at reality through their eyes, and listen with an open heart to the stories they tell. In this way, we will be able to grasp the abyss of evil at the heart of war. Nor will it trouble us to be deemed naive for choosing peace." (#261)

In the context of our study of the prophets and our current reality, one of our class assignments was to place ourselves in the position of someone today who is suffering from racism or another "ism" of our time and compose a poem. Those poems appear on the following pages.

Sister Patricia lives at Sacred Heart Convent and participated in Sister Mila's course on the prophets.



La autora del artículo a la izquierda y las hermanas en el curso de Profetas Menores.

La realidad a través de los ojos de otro: *Poemas para la construcción de la Paz*

by Hermana Patricia Stark, OP

Hace unos meses, la Hna. Mila Díaz enseñó la clase de Biblia en torno a los Profetas Menores a nuestra comunidad en el Convento Sagrado Corazón.

Nos enteramos de las muchas injusticias sufridas por la gente durante la época de los profetas. Desafortunadamente, hoy somos testigo de abusos similares en nuestra sociedad actual. Quienes están en el poder a veces oprimen sistemáticamente a las personas vulnerables y marginadas, esclavizándolos a una vida de pobreza mediante sistemas que han estado operando durante siglos.

En su reciente encíclica *Fratelli Tutti*, el Papa Francisco hace un llamado específico: “Prestemos atención a la verdad de esas víctimas de la violencia, miremos la realidad desde sus ojos y escuchemos sus relatos con el corazón abierto. Así podremos reconocer el abismo del mal en el corazón de la guerra y no nos perturbará que nos traten de ingenuos por elegir la paz”. (#261)

En el contexto de nuestro estudio de los profetas y abrazando nuestra realidad actual, una de nuestras asignaciones de clase fue ponerse en el lugar de alguien

que hoy sufre de racismo u otro “ismo” de nuestro tiempo y componer un poema.

Asumiendo el papel de la hermana de Breonna Taylor, la siguiente es la expresión de mi /su profundo pesar, dolor y pena duraderos.

Hermana Patricia vive temporalmente en Rantoul y participó en el curso de Profetas Menores ofrecido por Hermana Mila.

Este poema expresa el profundo dolor y duelo continuo sentido por Breonna Taylor desde los ojos de
Hermana Patricia Stark, OP.

*Lamento por
Breonna Taylor,
Mi Amada Hermana*

¿Cómo encontrar un significado?
¿Encontraré justicia en la muerte repentina, violenta y sin sentido
de mi querida hermana, Breonna?
¡Su exnovio, Marcos fue ya detenido!
¿Qué causa tuvo la policía para ejecutar la orden de registrar “sin tocar”?
Buscando drogas ... violentamente,
Disparando de forma imprudente 22 balas sin tregua
A través de la puerta cerrada del apartamento de Breonna...
¡Ocho balas impactaron y mataron a Breonna!
(¡No se encontraron drogas esa madrugada en el apartamento de Breonna!)
Se produjeron protestas en la sede de la policía de Chicago y en todo el país.
Su muerte tocó a personas en África y en Europa y en todo el mundo.
Empezaron campañas “Digan su nombre”.
Un recordatorio de las mujeres de color que han sido víctimas de la policía.
La gente de todo el mundo se acercó, respondió, apoyó
Familia, amigos, extraños buscaban calmar el dolor y calmar la angustia.
¡¡¡No!!!, ¡¡¡En absoluto!!!...
AHORA, mi única esperanza es ver algún día a Breonna, mi
querida hermana Breonna,
En toda su GLORIA!

This poem is an expression of the deep-felt remorse and enduring grief of Breonna Taylor's sister as seen through the eyes of **Sister Patricia Stark, OP.**

*Lament for
Breonna Taylor,
My Beloved Sister*

How do I find meaning?
Find justice in the sudden, violent, senseless death of my dear sister, Breonna?
Her ex-boyfriend, Marcus, already apprehended!
What cause had the police for executing the “no-knock” search warrant
Looking for drugs... violently, recklessly firing 22 bullets without reprieve
Through Breonna’s locked apartment door...
Eight bullets striking and killing Breonna!
(No drugs were found that early morning in Breonna’s apartment!)
Protests ensued at Chicago Police Headquarters and around the country,
Touching people in Africa and in Europe and across the world.
“Say Her Name” campaign ‘rose up,’
A reminder of women of color who’ve been victimized by police.
All around people reached out, responded, supported
Family, friend, stranger sought to soothe the pain and calm the sorrow.
No!!!...not at all!!!...
NOW my single hope is to one day see Breonna, my dear sister Breonna,
In all her GLORY!

*Imaginando estar en el lugar de una mujer de una nación indígena en la Amazonía, la **Hermana Marie Michelle Hackett, OP**, expresó las siguientes palabras:*

Amazonas

Desde mi juventud he compartido esta tierra con mi gente.
Hemos pescado en tus ríos,
Comido fruto de tus árboles,
Cosechamos tu tierra,
Y nos hicimos amigas de los muchos habitantes que
habitan en tu vientre.
¡Oh! Amazonas mi paraíso, gritas a los cuatro
rincones de la tierra
La gloria y majestad de Yahvé.
Yahvé, esta es tu tierra y nosotros somos tu pueblo.
Nos has protegido de todos los que desean violar
nuestra selva virgen
Así que ya no tenemos un lugar para descansar en tu belleza.
Al caer la noche, rezo a Yahvé, mi Dios
Y cuando amanece
Expreso mi gratitud y agradecimiento a mi amado.
¡Oh! Amazonas, Amazonas, mi dulce Amazonas.
Por la fidelidad de Yahvé te tomo en mi abrazo amoroso
Y te cuido ahora y por todas las generaciones
Que vendrán de aquí en adelante.

*Imagining to be in the place of a woman from an indigenous nation in the Amazon, **Sister Marie Michelle Hackett, OP**, expressed the following words:*

Amazon

From my youth, I have shared this land with my people.
We have fished in your rivers,
Eaten fruit from your trees,
Harvested your land,
And befriended the many inhabitants that dwell in your womb.
Oh! Amazon, my paradise, you shout to the four corners of the earth
Yahweh's glory and majesty.
Yahweh, this is your land and we are your people.
You have protected us from all who wish to rape our virgin forest
So, we no longer have a place to rest in your beauty.
As night befalls, I pray to Yahweh, my God
And when the dawn breaks forth
I utter my gratitude and thanks to my beloved.
Oh! Amazon, Amazon, my sweet Amazon.
Because of YHWH's faithfulness I take you in my loving embrace
And hold you now and for all generations
That will come hereafter.



*Putting herself in the shoes of the mother of Inti Sotelo and Bryan Pintado, two young students killed during the demonstrations against the corruption of the Congress in Perú, **Sister Beatriz Vila Alania, OP**, wrote a poem. She is participating in the class of the Minor Prophets with a group of Spanish-speaking associates and associate candidates via Zoom.*

To My Son...

So full of dreams and illusions ...
They removed your life, they killed you!!
There is no word that can ease the pain
that I'm feeling here in my bosom.
Every day that arises
Your memories come to my mind:
Your gaze, your smile, your jokes,
Your determination to move forward....
Your departure was unexpected ...

The men who killed you will know
That this is a time of death, sorrow, pain
And fight without a fourth
In the face of installed impunity
in our society.

I, your mother,
I will make your memory be affixed
In the collective memory of the times;
Because you struggled without weapons
In the defense of democracy in our country.
Now, you are an angel who has
ascended to heaven.
To guide your generation.
Forever, my son, you will live in my heart.

These poems represent one effort among women peacemakers prepared, as Pope Francis asks "to work boldly and creatively to initiate processes of healing and renewed encounter." (FT #225).

*Poniéndose en los zapatos de la madre de Inti Sotelo y Bryan Pintado, dos jóvenes estudiantes asesinados durante las manifestaciones contra la corrupción del Congreso en Perú, **Hermana Beatriz Vila Alania, OP**, escribió un poema. Ella participa en la clase de los Profetas Menores con nuestros asociados y candidatos a ser asociados en español y vía Zoom.*

A Mi Hijo...

Tan Lleno de Sueños e Ilusiones...
¡¡Te cegaron la Vida, te mataron!!
No hay palabra que pueda mitigar el dolor
Que estoy sintiendo aquí en mi pecho.
Cada día que pasa,
Vienen a mi memoria tus recuerdos:
Tu mirada, tu sonrisa, tus bromas,
Tu empeño por seguir adelante....
Tu partida fue inesperada...

Sabrán los hombres que te mataron,
Que es un tiempo de muerte, pena, dolor
Y lucha sin cuartel
Frente a la impunidad instalada
en nuestra sociedad.

Yo, tu madre,
Haré que tu recuerdo quede encadenado
En la memoria colectiva de los tiempos.
Porque luchaste sin armas,
Por defender la democracia en nuestro país.
Ahora, eres un ángel que ha subido al cielo.
Para guiar a los de tu generación.
Por siempre, hijo mío, vivirás en mi corazón.

Estos poemas representan un esfuerzo de mientras artesanas de la paz, dispuestas a "generar procesos de sanación y de reencuentro con ingenio y audacia." (FT #225).

32 Ways To Live Less Violently

by Sister Rose Miriam Schulte, OP

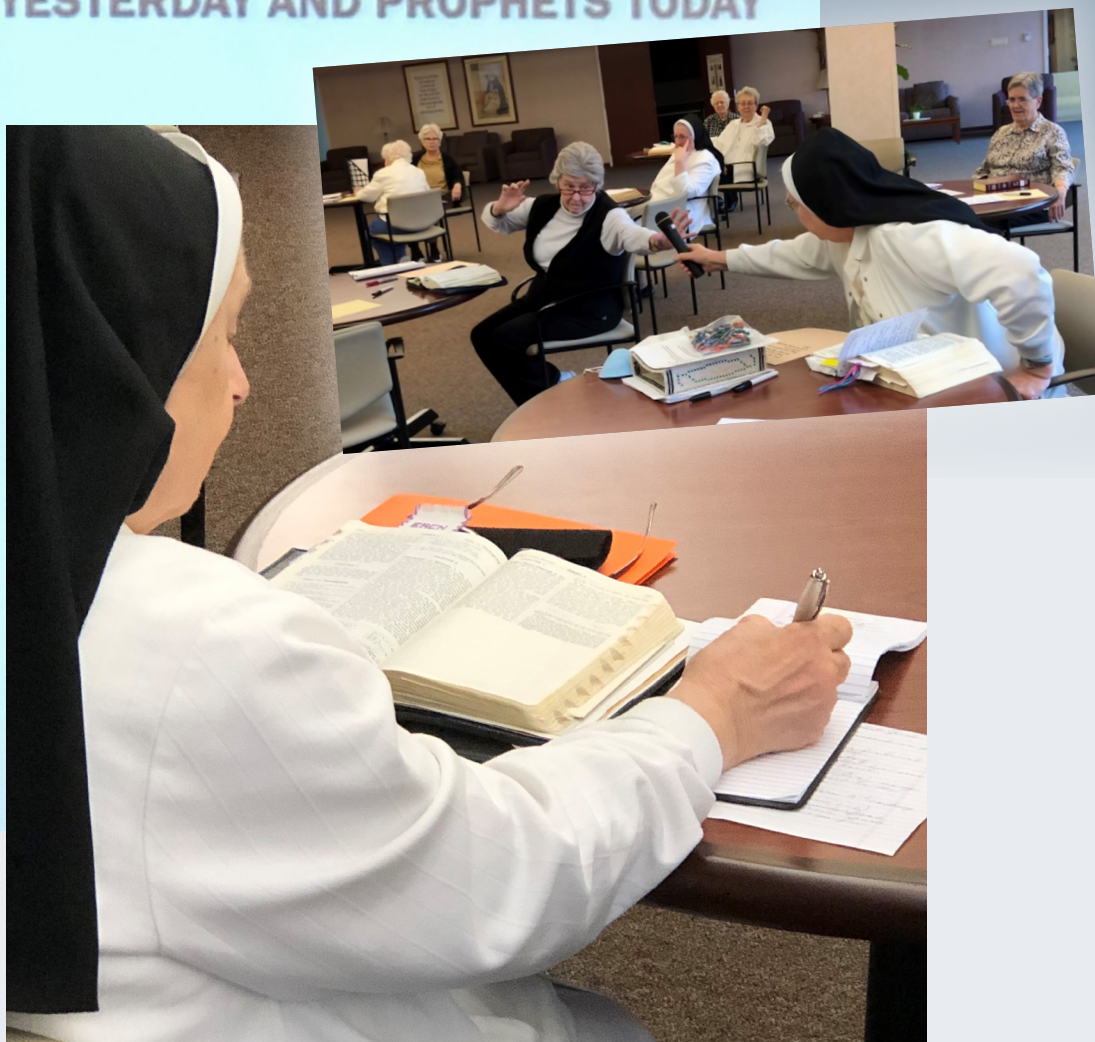
Recognizing our interconnectedness in the cosmos, we have embraced the common call toward communion with God and all creation. Non-violence is an integral part of that journey—a journey which is both inward and outward. Awareness motivates behavior; behavior strengthens one's internal orientation. Following are a few suggestions for living non-violently in relation to the cosmos, others, and ourselves.

1. Spend time each day with the God of peace.
2. Consciously seek to expand your capacity for empathy.
3. Seek the wisdom of non-violent mentors.
4. Adopt Gandhi's assumption that human nature unfailingly responds to love.
5. Avoid placing yourself or others in a situation that feels unsafe.
6. Develop a healthy appreciation of your own sexuality and that of others.
7. Reject manipulation and coercion as means of maintaining control.
8. Appreciate beauty . . . in nature, art, poetry, another person.
9. Uphold the integrity of the planet in addressing the destruction of rainforests, cluttering of outer space, use of fossil fuels, fracking, etc.
10. Use resources wisely, e.g., water, fresh air, soil, food crops and animals, time.
11. Recognize and applaud non-violent attitudes and behaviors in others.
12. Reflect on the notion: non-violence is NOT synonymous with passivity.
13. Be open to understanding ideas or people that you have previously opposed.
14. Embrace honesty in all circumstances.
15. Refuse to do harm to people and all living things.
16. Practice self-control in all the circumstances of life.
17. Humbly acknowledge simple mistakes; avoid over-reacting.
18. Take responsibility for how you contribute to conflict.
19. Reject a stance of passive complicity in damaging systemic "isms."
20. Intervene on behalf of others when violence has resulted in abuse.
21. Speak your truth with compassion; listen intentionally with empathy.
22. Replace potentially violent interactions with negotiation and arbitration.
23. Listen to others debrief or "vent," without engaging in or supporting violent reactions.
24. Reflect a non-violent attitude in the leisure-time activities you choose.
25. Recall a painful instance in life . . . reflect on the gift it gave you.
26. Be willing to endure hardship and suffering without inflicting it on others.
27. Choose not to use language that includes micro-aggressions.
28. Support harmony by choosing not to participate in gossip.
29. Learn how to express your righteous anger non-violently.
30. Avoid "humor" that is disrespectful toward individuals or groups.
31. Recognize that resentment and ruminating in old hurts opens the heart to violence.
32. Ponder Cesar Chavez's words: "If you use violence, you sell part of yourself for that violence."

Sister Rose Miriam is a member of the Springfield Dominican leadership team and an experienced child and family therapist.

PROPHETS YESTERDAY AND PROPHETS TODAY

- AMOS
- HOSEA
- MICAH
- NAHUM
- HABBAKKUK
- ZEPHANIAH
- OBADIAH
- JONAH
- HAGGAI
- ZECHARIAH
- JOEL
- MALACHI



Sister Joan Sorge takes notes in one of the October sessions of Sister Mila Díaz Solano's course on the minor prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures. The sisters had a powerful experience sharing their assignment from the previous session: poems written from the perspective of people who today suffer indignities that call for a prophetic response.

IN MEMORIAM

Please join us in prayer for these sisters and associates who have died:

Sister M. Dominic Joerger, OP • October 9, 2020

Sister M. Sara Koch, OP • October 18, 2020

Sister Marie André Dougherty, OP • October 28, 2020

George Eck, Associate • November 7, 2020

Sister Mary Melanie Roetker, OP • November 16, 2020

Anna Mae Schmidt, Prayer Associate • December 5, 2020

Mary Ellen Connolly, Associate • December 17, 2020

POPE FRANCIS ON NONVIOLENCE AND PEACEMAKING

FROM THE ENCYCLICAL ON SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP, *FRATELLI TUTTI*

225. In many parts of the world, there is a need for paths of peace to heal open wounds. There is also a need for peacemakers, men and women prepared to work boldly and creatively to initiate processes of healing and renewed encounter.

235. Those who work for tranquil social coexistence should never forget that inequality and lack of integral human development make peace impossible... If we have to begin anew, it must always be from the least of our brothers and sisters.

226. Every “peace process requires enduring commitment. It is a patient effort to seek truth and justice, to honour the memory of victims and to open the way, step by step, to a shared hope stronger than the desire for vengeance.”

244. Authentic reconciliation does not flee from conflict, but is achieved in conflict, resolving it through dialogue and open, honest and patient negotiation.

270. I ask Christians who remain hesitant on this point, and those tempted to yield to violence in any form, to keep in mind the words of the book of Isaiah: “They shall beat their swords into plowshares” (2:4). For us, this prophecy took flesh in Christ Jesus who, seeing a disciple tempted to violence, said firmly: “Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword” (Mt 26:52).

228. The path to peace does not mean making society blandly uniform, but getting people to work together, side-by-side, in pursuing goals that benefit everyone.



PARTNERS *In Mission*

THE BLESSINGS OF 2020

SISTER KATHLEEN ANNE TAIT LOOKS BACK—AND FORWARD

by Sister Kathleen Anne Tait, OP
Director of Mission Advancement



The Mission and Ministry class during the Decemehr 6, 2020, associate candidate formation session.

January is a month to reflect back and look forward. Far from pulling us in opposite directions, this two-way vision provides a valuable perspective on the experience we are now enduring.

Much to my delight, my reflection has revealed three precious gifts that came our way in 2020.

Dedication. Throughout this pandemic our coworkers at Sacred Heart Convent have repeatedly illustrated their dedication to our mission. Their daily efforts to keep our sisters safe have been extraordinary. This is a stressful time for front line workers. In spite of the challenge, our sisters have continued to receive compassionate nursing care and nourishing food in a home that is carefully cleaned and disinfected

and kept in serviceable repair. Our technology and communications teams have met the challenge of increased demands of online communications. All our coworkers' dedication has been gift to us!

Prayerful Companionship. For the past eight months, our associates have stayed away from Sacred Heart Convent in order to safeguard our vulnerable sisters. Yet we know they are praying for us and serving, each in his or her own capacity, to further the Dominican mission. Our collaborative fulfillment of God's mission continues through virtual meetings. Personal commitments to Dominican service are bright lights of hope and promise.

Loyalty. Each of you, our Partners in Mission, values the relationships you have nurtured with our sisters.

You might be a former student or coworker, a treasured family member, or a companion in our commitment to gospel values. In each case, your phone calls, cards, emails, and prayers for our mission and our wellbeing are a treasure. Your loyalty sustains us!

Dedication, prayerful companionship, and loyalty are at the heart of our relationships with one another, with those we serve, and with you. It is through these things that we experience the love of God. It is from that solid foundation that the goals of Mission Advancement are strengthened. The generosity that flows from our relationship with you is deeply appreciated and needed. Thank you! We look forward to a time in 2021 when we will be able to meet joyfully, face-to-face.



DOMINICAN SISTERS
OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

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About the Cover Art:

Tony Rothering, biology professor at Lincoln Land Community College and a bird banding expert, took this photo of a volunteer gently holding a male Golden-crowned Kinglet during a recent bird banding event at Jubilee Farm. Jubilee Farm hosts bird banding events in the summer and fall. Learn more at jubileefarm.info.



Dominican Sources

“The only way to extinguish the fear that grips us is to break down the walls that separate us, to recall the manner in which God spanned the abyss of separation.”

~ Pierre Claverie, OP

from *A Life Poured Out: Pierre Claverie of Algeria*
by Jean-Jacques Pérennès, OP. Orbis Books, 2007.

DATEBOOK

Events not public unless otherwise noted.

February

- 2 Feast of the Presentation,
World Day for Consecrated Life
- 12 Mr. Lincoln's Birthday
- 14 St. Valentine's Day
- 17 Ash Wednesday
- 25 56th Anniversary of the foundation of our
missions in Peru

March

- 8 International Women's Day
- 8-14 Catholic Sisters Week
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 19 Feast of St. Joseph
- 28 Palm Sunday

Call 217-787-0481 or visit springfieldop.org for details about digital events.