



# Where Justice and Truth Meet

May 2020

**Free our hearts to recognize and attend to Christ in hidden and unexpected places.**

– Prayer for the Life of the World

## Dominican Call to Justice



Our [Gospel Call to Justice](#), prepared by the North American Dominican Promoters of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, has been updated.

Through it, we join with Dominicans worldwide to promote the call for Gospel justice and embrace a deepening of the Dominican charism to search for and preach TRUTH as it impacts the lives of people and planet.

Following the lead of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*, it recognizes [integral ecology](#) as the new paradigm of justice. As a lens through which we see a comprehensive view of reality and an understanding of the interconnectedness of all within the whole, it respects our unique place as human beings in this world and our relationship to all which sustains us in the web of relationships. It calls us to

- listen to those who are oppressed, economically poor and living on the margins
- seek to understand the interconnected realities that are the roots of injustice and conflict
- work with others to challenge and change the systems that perpetuate the harm that is being done
- address injustice in a spirit of respect, compassion, and solidarity.

The Dominican *Gospel Call to Justice* commits us to contemplation, reflection and action on five interwoven priorities.

[Climate Justice](#) – What role must I take in bringing about the kind of world I wish for all to inhabit?

[Peace and Security for All Life](#) – How do I see the face of God in the whole of life, embrace the tenets of nonviolence, and practice loving those that I see as “other”?

[Migration and Immigration](#) – How do I welcome the stranger? How do I advocate for just immigration policies and practices?

[Human Trafficking](#) – What can I do to expose the truth about modern-day slavery and advocate for substantive laws that protect victims and hold accountable all who facilitate and enable human trafficking?

[Economic Justice](#) – What steps must I take to bring about a world in which the common good of all is realized? What changes can I make to my lifestyle to reflect this commitment?

Read the complete [Gospel Call to Justice](#).

## A Contagion of Hope

Christ Our Light! Your light rises in our darkness and assures us that you are present with us and that your powerful closeness to us transforms our fear into hope.

May we join with our Holy Father, Francis, in spreading a "contagion" of hope "from heart to heart".

Protect all your selfless servants who continue to serve the needs of the most vulnerable by both hands and heart.

Give our elected leaders wisdom of heart in decision-making that the common good of our human family may be achieved and the gift of each person's human dignity respected.

May the new Easter fire of love, energy and resilience burn within our hearts so that we may give witness to the mystery of your resurrected life among us and within us. Amen.

Sister Deborah Troillett

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## Easter 2020 Reflections

Meaningful action for Gospel justice flows from a deep contemplation of reality and profound hope. Watch for our weekly reflections during the Easter Season tying these Dominican justice priorities to the United Nations' [Sustainable Development Goals](#). Though not developed specifically from a perspective of integral ecology, the goals reflect an international consensus on what a just world would look like. They invoke resurrection and new life emerging from the "tomb" of injustice.



## Role of Racism in Human Trafficking

Since 2005 Dominican Sisters of Springfield have been actively working to dismantle racism in our own congregation and in the institutions we lead. We also have a corporate stance to educate ourselves and support efforts to end human trafficking. These two long-standing justice efforts are linked in the February edition of the [Stop Trafficking Newsletter](#) published by *U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking*.



Racism and oppression are deeply embedded and perpetuated in human trafficking. Throughout the world, victims of trafficking are disproportionately racial and ethnic minorities.

- In the United States it is estimated that 77% of child sex trafficking victims are non-white.
- Missing white children receive far more media coverage than missing black and brown children.
- Many victims come from poverty which increases their vulnerability.
- Racial bias compounds abuse upon abuse. Children of color are often further victimized by a system that is less likely to see them as victims, and instead is more likely to view them as criminals and sexual deviants.
- In a recent study of the economics of human trafficking, most of the traffickers interviewed believed that trafficking black women would result in less prison time if caught.

## Toward a Theory of Just Peace

While the Just War theory has been a part of Catholic theology (as well as wider Christian understanding) for centuries, growing voices are calling for—and working toward—a theology of Just Peace.

In a 2016 conference organized in collaboration with Pax Christi at the Vatican, peace activists and theorists engaged in dialogue with military theorists and educators. Among the participants were Cardinal Peter Turkson (Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development) and Bishop Robert McElroy (Diocese of San Diego) along with leaders from the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, the U.S. Naval Academy and the U.S. Air Force Academy.

In a consensus statement released at the end of the conference, participants appealed for a re-commitment to the centrality of Gospel nonviolence. As Christians committed to a more just and peaceful world, we are called to take a clear stand for creative and active nonviolence and against all forms of violence. Pope Francis, in his [World Day of Peace message](#) in 2017 spoke of nonviolence as “a style of politics for peace” especially needed in the world today.



In 2019 a follow-up conference, also held at the Vatican, nurtures the work of the [Catholic Nonviolence Initiative](#), founded to affirm the vision and practice of active nonviolence at the heart of the Catholic Church. We live in a time of tremendous suffering, widespread trauma and fear linked to militarization, economic injustice, climate change, and a myriad of other specific forms of violence. In this context of normalized and systemic violence, those of us who stand in the Christian tradition are called to recognize the centrality of active nonviolence to the vision and message of Jesus; to the life and practice of the Catholic Church; and to our long-term vocation of healing and reconciling both people and the planet.

The time has come for our Church to be a living witness and to invest far greater human and financial resources in promoting a spirituality and practice of active nonviolence and in forming and training our Catholic communities in effective nonviolent practices. In all of this, Jesus is our inspiration and model.