



Where Justice and Truth Meet

March 2021

"We renounce our participation in the sin of racism and reject the societal barriers created by the misuse of power." – A Prayer for the Life of the World

Transitioning from *Just War* to *Just Peace*

Continuing our reflection on the call to *Just Peace*, we explore the underlying principles** shared in the book *Choosing Peace*. The writings in the book flow from the April 2016 *Nonviolence and Just Peace* conference, held in Rome and sponsored by the Vatican Council for Justice & Peace and Pax Christi International.

****Just cause, Right intention, Participatory process, Right relationship, Reconciliation, Restoration, Sustainability**

We present the principles sharing the experience of our Peruvian sisters and brothers. Our sisters missioned in Peru participated in that journey.

SEE: In 2001 the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, responding to a **just cause**, was formed in Peru. During 20 years of armed conflict over 69,000 Peruvians were killed; many more endured unspeakable violence.



From the mural in the church of San Juan de Jarpa.

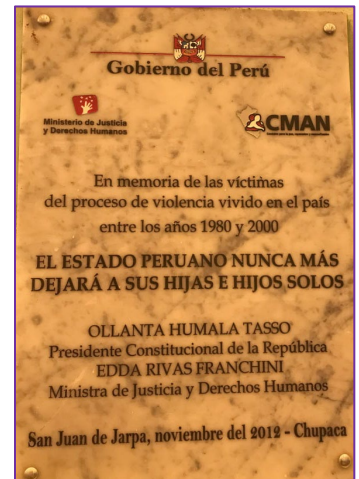
More than ¾ of the victims were from rural areas. Two terrorist groups (*Shining Path* and the *Revolutionary Movement Túpac Amaru*) and aggressive antiterrorist actions of the police and military were identified as directly responsible for these crimes.

The Catholic Church and several civil organizations, with **right intention**, pushed for the formation of the Commission. This **participatory process** lasted for three years and involved more than 800 people in listening and documenting testimonies, processing the information, and

developing recommendations for the whole country. Members of diverse religious faiths and various professionals accompanied, prayed with, and initiated projects promoting healing. The people who shared their stories became actors of their own process of healing and of the nation's **restoration**.

Thanks to these courageous witnesses, Peruvians today know that on November 2, 1991, six people were executed in San Juan de Jarpa, a town where our sisters have ministered since 2000. Witnesses shared about the disappearance of family members, destruction of their properties, abuse they suffered by terrorists/antiterrorist groups, and the continuing trauma of survivors.

Plaque in the church of San Juan de Jarpa remembering those killed and promising that Peru will never abandon her daughters and sons.



The inhabitants of Jarpa initiated actions to restore the social fabric of their town. A nation's **reconciliation** and restoring **right relationships**, however, are not possible without uncovering the truth publicly. Their stories were part of the almost 17,000 testimonies collected in Lima, Huancayo, Ayacucho, Huánuco and Sicuani. The six deaths in Jarpa were part of the nearly 30,000 deaths that were not documented previously by the State.

The final report of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* included an analysis of the political, social and cultural factors which contributed to the twenty years of violence. Racism was one of these.

The report also outlined recommendations towards the nation's **sustainability** to ensure that such horrible events will never happen again. The

process of integral healing of wounds as individuals and as a society is still ongoing.

For more information, you can read the Amnesty International Report: <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/412de7fb4.pdf>

JUDGE: Just Peace Principles

Just Peace offers a framework for international global relationships, for interpersonal relationships, and our relationships with Earth and all creation. The *Just Peace* principles help us to fill in that framework with actions that can lead us to both personal and social transformation.

As you read the story of Peru's reconciliation process, the words in bold print point to the principles that can guide our actions. A few of them you might recognize from the Just War requirements, though you'll see they have a

different focus.



Members of the Archdiocesan Commission on Human Rights visit Jarpa, pictured with Hermana Maria Luisa (left with mike) and Hermana Doris (third from left).

1. **Just Cause:** The work of *Just Peace* is a response to all types of violence – whenever the fundamental dignity of a person or group is violated by injustices such as racism, poverty, exploitation, and discrimination. Protecting, defending, and restoring the dignity of all human life and the common good of the home we share with other creatures and the gifts of creation is a just cause.

2. **Right Intention:** Intentional efforts to establish gospel justice include:

- Deepening awareness of our interconnectedness;
- Standing in solidarity with the *rostros concretos* of the marginalized;
- Recognizing the gifts of all persons and all creation.

Jesus' words and actions lay out for us both motivation and model for our response.

3. **Participatory Process:** Justice cannot be established *for* people; it has to come *from* the people, *with* the people. Consultation. Dialog. A place at the table. Influence in decision-making. All are profound signs of respect and affirmation of the inherent worth and dignity of persons affected by injustice.

“Anything done for me
without me
is done against me.”

– Anta Gueye-James
Catholic Relief Services, Senegal

4. **Right Relationship:** Social relationships encompass both hierarchical and horizontal experiences. In right relationship, all of these are directed toward mutuality and the common good. The social fabric of a broken society can only be restored on a foundation of respect and affirmation of the inherent worth and dignity of each person. Right relationship calls for humility to understand more deeply our interconnectedness and the mutual benefit to all of truly just relationships.



Butterfly reflecting the colors of the Peruvian flag. The blood of the victims of terrorism fertilizes the earth and peace processes.

Discussion of the *Just Peace* principles of **Reconciliation, Restoration** and **Sustainability** will continue in the next edition of *Where Justice and Truth Meet*.

For additional pictures from San Juan de Jarpa and past issues of *WJTM* go to: <https://springfieldop.org/where-justice-and-truth-meet/>