

LECTURE SERIES ON GOSPEL NONVIOLENCE

STUDY GUIDE

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This study guide is designed to support deeper, more meaningful engagements with the [Lecture Series on Gospel Nonviolence](#), a collaborative initiative led by the [Catholic Nonviolence Initiative](#) and [Casa Esther Catholic Worker, Omro WI](#). The guide contains a few reflection/discussion questions and resources for further exploration. Facilitators are strongly encouraged to adapt the suggested questions and resources based on participants' needs and context. We hope you find this useful and appreciate any feedback you may have. Please kindly direct your comments to rememberdorothy@gmail.com.

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LECTURE 1: WHY NONVIOLENCE

Featuring Dr. Ken Butigan, Eliane Lakam, and Rosie Davilla.

Brief Summary:

This lecture explores the spirituality and role of nonviolence. Presenters elaborate on how and why nonviolence is such an effective tool in bringing about sustainable political, social, and economic change. For summaries of each speaker's presentation, go to <https://cniseries.info>

Ken Butigan's Presentation

(Run time: 18 min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. *List words, phrases, or statements from Clip One that helped you better understand the spirituality of nonviolence.*
2. *Why is nonviolence essential to building a culture of peace?*
3. *Ken shares that he learned from his own experience of four decades as an activist that "all of us have more power than we think to unleash nonviolent change." What are your thoughts about this statement? How did you discover the power of nonviolence?*

Eliane Lakam's Presentation

(Run Time: 14 min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. *Eliane argues that nonviolence is not pacifism. What does that mean?*
2. *Why are nonviolent civil resistance campaigns more effective for achieving sustainable change than violent ones?*
3. *What nonviolent resistance methods have been more effective within the context of contemporary conflicts in your own country/community? Why?*

Rosie Davila's Presentation

(Run Time: 11min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. *What patterns, and experiences in your life can you draw on to help promote the culture of nonviolence?*
2. *What areas of nonviolent activism do you gravitate toward? (i.e. - environmentalism, anti-racism work, anti-war work, activism against nuclear weapons)*
3. *Rosie uses visual art to illustrate various aspects of nonviolence. In your own context, what other forms of art are used to promote and support nonviolence?*

RECAP

- ★ In summary, what new information did you learn about nonviolence in this lecture? What questions remain?

LECTURE 2: RETURNING TO & EXPLORING THE POWER OF NONVIOLENCE

Featuring Marie Dennis and Rose Marie Berger

Brief Summary:

This lecture places emphasis on the centrality of Gospel nonviolence in the context of today's world and highlights contemporary examples of Catholic nonviolent responses to violence, including the pilgrimage of interreligious leaders to Kyiv, following an appeal by its Mayor. For summaries of each speaker's presentation, go to <https://cniserries.info>

Marie Dennis's Presentation

(Run Time: 18 min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. Pope Francis invites us to "active nonviolence." Have you ever heard of Pope Francis' call to nonviolence"?
2. *Has the "call to active nonviolence" been discussed in your community, church, or on campus?*
3. *What could be done to empower more people to fully embrace "active nonviolence" in response to Pope Francis' call?*

Rose Berger's Presentation

(Run Time: 22 min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. *Scripture and the church teach that we must work to convert injustice to justice and we must take a courageous stand against evil, as we see in the aggression of the Russian government against Ukrainians. How does active gospel nonviolence do this effectively? Where might it fail?*
2. *What does this "failure" mean in light of the gospel?*
3. *Rose Marie shares that she went to Ukraine to "see Jesus speak in the language of the Ukrainian people, to see their suffering and their creative determination, to touch their wounds and see how the word of life is surviving there." How does the spirituality of nonviolence contribute to creating a culture of peace rooted in solidarity and the protection of human dignity?*

RECAP

- ★ *In summary, what new information did you learn about nonviolence in this lecture? What questions remain?*

LECTURE 3: CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS OF NONVIOLENCE

Featuring Dr. KC Choi and Dr. Lisa Sowle Cahill

Brief Summary:

This lecture explores the Christologically-grounded nature of nonviolence. Among other important fundamental materials, presenters draw on Biblical texts— including scriptures highlighting the nonviolent ethos of Jesus and papal statements relating to Catholic teaching on nonviolence. For summaries of each speaker's presentation, go to <https://cniseries.info>

KC Choi's Presentation

(Run Time: 21 min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. *List scriptures, words, phrases, or statements from Clip One that helped you better understand the Christian Foundations of nonviolence.*
2. *How would you respond to someone who says God is violent and supported war in the scriptures?*
3. *What would it mean to practice nonviolence in the form of encounter? What kind of concrete practices would nonviolence as encounter enjoy?*

Lisa Cahill's Presentation

(Run Time: 28 min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. *List scriptures, words, phrases, or statements from Clip Two that helped you better understand the Christian Foundations of nonviolence.*
2. *Dr. Cahill notes that the work of nonviolence is "eschatological". What does this mean to you? Are there any examples from your own experience that illustrate this idea?*
3. *In what ways have Church teaching documents elaborated the centrality and urgency of nonviolence? What do you think gets in the way of fully committing to the teachings and example of the nonviolent Jesus?*

RECAP

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LECTURE 4: EMBRACING NONVIOLENCE: A NEW MORAL FRAMEWORK

Featuring Dr. Eli McCarthy and Dr. Wamuyu Wachira.

Brief Summary:

This lecture provides an overview of a nonviolent Just Peace Framework. Through case studies, presenters delve into its practical applications on some of the most pressing issues of our time, including the war in Ukraine and conflicts within the context of Kenya. For summaries of each speaker's presentation, go to <https://cniserries.info>

Eli McCarthy's Presentation

(Run Time: 28 min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. *How would you describe a just peace moral framework to a friend or colleague?*
2. *What are the 3 key categories of a just peace moral framework?*
3. *Knowing what you now know about the "Just Peace" framework, what steps must be taken to incorporate such a framework as a means of action within the context of your community?*

Sr. Wamuyu Wachira's Presentation

(Run Time: 29 min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. *What role do rituals, traditions, and local values play in indigenous approaches to addressing conflict?*
2. *What activities can your faith community engage in to pass on the just peace values to today's and future generations?*
3. *Sr. Wamuyu describes rituals often used by a family when a family member returns home from war. How do we integrate our veterans returning home from war? What can we do better in regards to challenges related to veteran integration back into the community—and in nonviolent peacebuilding efforts?*

RECAP

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LECTURE 5: EMBRACING NONVIOLENCE: TRANSFORMING THE CHURCH

Featuring Judy Coode and Fr. John Heagle

Brief Summary:

This lecture focuses on pastoral implications and opportunities to advance the practice of nonviolence as a way of life within the Church and beyond. For summaries of each speaker's presentation, go to <https://cniseries.info>

Judy Coode's Presentation

(Run Time: 18 min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. *In what ways have your life experiences (in family, education, church, and U.S. culture) challenged or changed the way you think about nonviolence, conflict resolution, and war?*
2. *Judy argues that "The mission, vision, and practice of active nonviolence is at the heart of the Church." What can be done to integrate the practice of nonviolence at every level of the Church?*
3. *What practical steps must be taken to better engage young people and empower them to embrace nonviolence as a lifestyle and strategy for social change?*

John Heagle's Presentation

(Run Time: 28 min)

REFLECT/DISCUSS

1. *What impact do you believe a commitment to nonviolence and just peace would have on the Church and the broader human community?*
2. *From your current life experience, what do you believe are the most important practical steps that the Catholic community- both leaders and members - need to take to 'embrace nonviolence and transform the Church'?*
3. *If a new Eucharistic Prayer centered on the nonviolence of Jesus was used consistently at Mass, do you think this would have the potential to change people's attitudes over time?*

RECAP

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Catholic Nonviolence Initiative](#)

The Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, a project of [Pax Christi International](#), the Catholic peace movement, affirms that active nonviolence is at the heart of the vision and message of Jesus, the life of the Catholic Church, and the long-term vocation of healing and reconciling both people and the planet.

Ken Butigan, [The university's responsibility for peace and nonviolence](#), *Educatio Catholica*, Congregation for Catholic Education, May 2020

Pope Francis, [Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace](#), World Day of Peace Message, 2017

Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, [Why civil resistance works: The strategic logic of nonviolent conflict](#), Columbia University Press, 2012

Erica Chenoweth, "The Success of Nonviolent Civil Resistance," TEDx Boulder, November 4, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRIU34w>

A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict may be viewed online at <https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/force-powerful-english/>.

Gene Sharp, [198 methods of nonviolent action](#), Albert Einstein Institution

Pace e Bene: [What Nonviolence Means](#), Artwork by Rosie Davila

Lisa Sowle Cahill, [Just War. Pacifism. Just Peace. and Peacebuilding](#), *Theological Studies*, 2019, Vol. 80, No. 1, pages 169–185

Pope Francis, [Fratelli Tutti](#), sections 255-270

Eli McCarthy, [Just Peace Ethic Primer: Building sustainable peace and breaking cycles of violence](#), Georgetown University Press, 2020

Archbishop John Wester, [Living in the Light of Christ's Peace: A Conversation Toward Nuclear Disarmament](#). A summary can be found [here](#).

[Casa Esther Catholic Worker. Omro WI](#)

Casa Esther is a Catholic Worker House bringing "Christ to the Poor" in the Omro, Wisconsin area.