

Means available to us

1. Pray and exhort to prayer
(Include the Nuns)
2. Be informed about the important issues of Human Rights
3. Join a "Justice and Peace" organization in the Order or outside it
4. Organize networks of information and action
(among Congregations and NGO.)
5. Send letters, cards, email, sign petitions...
It is far from being useless.
6. Support those who are in danger

Bibliography

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(especially N° 90)

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(especially N° 5)

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Chrétienne, Albin Michel/Cerf, 1992 pp. 73-74

Albert Nolan, *Jésus before Christianity*, London,
Darton Longman and Todd 1979 (Still very current,
not to be missed)

Towards a Spirituality of Justice by Albert Nolan.

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WHAT IS JUSTICE & PEACE SPIRITUALITY?

Justice and Peace is a personal involvement. It means to fall in love... everyday, every morning falling in love with the earth and the whole of creation. Falling in love with all human beings. Who are my brothers and sisters. To fall in love is a wonderful thing. Your personal experience will tell you that. If you don't fall in love it is a tragedy. If you don't have this feeling of love then there is no need for Justice and Peace. Because Justice and Peace is not an ideological work, or a social work, or a political or purely pastoral work. Justice and Peace includes social and political analysis, social and political work (projects, campaign, actions...) but it is not equal to them (there is a real danger to identify them with Justice and Peace).

It is just a love affair. It is a love affair because you love... You love people one by one, concrete real people. 'You also love the earth which is frightened by an irresponsible way of using it' (Louis-Joseph Lebret OP, 1897-1966, Paths to God).

Justice and peace spirituality may be defined as, 'a global experience of the immense love of God for humankind and for the creation, specially the poor and the victims of injustices of society and our own response to this love by a way of life, plus making the poor and the victims the cornerstone.'

Justice and Peace spirituality is a way of life enlightened by the love for those who are struggling and suffering. Justice and Peace, I repeat is a 'love affair.'

Justice and Peace is not only a fighting process, it is also a loving process, agape – see Lk 4:16-20 and Rom 8:31-39.

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Spirituality

A ccording to the Gospel of Christ, we speak of spirituality when listening to the Word opens up a relationship of love with God and our brothers and sisters. This relationship is expressed in prayer and in our daily lives under the action of the Spirit.

There are many ways of living spirituality, of accepting the love of God and responding to God, according to the emphasis put on one or the other aspect of the Gospel. "Justice and Peace" is one of these.

Justice and Peace

"Justice and Peace" is a strong current of thought and action which started at the Second Vatican Council and taken up again in "*Populorum Progressio*" by Pope Paul VI in 1967. It expresses in the name of the Church special attention to the poorest of peoples.



1. *Peace is a state of harmony*

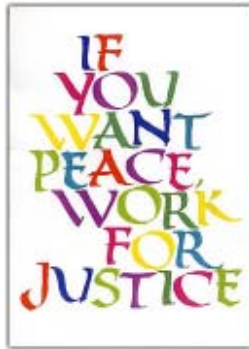
- with the earth and nature
- with the people around us
- with ourselves
- with God

It is the return to God's creative project, to the relationship in which He established the human being in regards to Himself and in regards to the world.

There can be no peace as long as a human being is unjust with another in the social or private realm.

2. *If you want peace, work for justice.*

In the world that we live in, the majority of humans is maintained in poverty and rejection. It is a world without justice, without peace.



Listening to the Word

1. *In the old Testament*

- God has always remained close to the poor; He defended them and maintained their rights (Es.3,7-11); Israel was invited to have the same conduct. (Dt.24, 18, 22). The attitude we have toward God is defined by the attitude we have toward the poor. (Ex.23, 11, 24; Lv. 25, 46).
- In the biblical mentality, exercise of power is exercise of justice, that is to achieve the moral rights of the poor. The prophets reproached the governors on this point and call them to conversion: (Is 1, 21-23; Jr. 21, 12).

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2. *In the New Testament*

- Jesus mingled with the lowly, the sinners and the poor. (Lk. 15,2; 7,34).
- He always gave special attention to the weakest, the oppressed, the marginalized, and the strangers...

3. *Dominican life*

- Dominic did the same. So did Marie Poussepin (*Foundress, Dominican Sisters of the Presentation*)
- The General Chapters of the brothers and sisters remind us with more and more emphasis that "The defense of Human Rights and the option for 'Justice and Peace' is part of our consecration as well as our mission in Dominican Life." ¹

For us as Christians and Dominicans, Justice and Peace is not really optional.

Live Justice and Peace

To live Justice and Peace consist, therefore, in being situated as Prophets, always on the side of the weakest of the poor, of those who are at the mercy of other human beings.

1. *Pray without ceasing.*

- To contemplate Christ in His closeness with the little ones.
- Intercede
- Ask forgiveness for our own injustices. The Church must name its own violations of human rights and ask forgiveness.
- Discern together in the light of the Spirit.

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2. *Live compassionately* (Lk10, 29-37)

- be closer in order to understand
- allow to be touched
- help

3. *Step back and seek the truth*

- analyze the reality
- go to the cause
- identify the unjust structures

4. *Speak with humility, in the spirit of the prophets*

- denounce injustices
- work for change of structures
- proclaim the Word of Life
- promote forgiveness and mercy

5. *Accept being little or not at all understood*

- The struggle for social justice is controversial, because we are all attached to social structures as they are, all the more that we are more comfortable there.
- If we care for the cancer victims due to holes in the ozone layers - and it is absolutely necessary to do it - we will be universally admired. But if we work to eliminate the causes of these holes, we will have to face industries and the investors whose profits we are threatening.

6. *For some it means accepting persecution, and even martyrdom*

In some countries, those who work for justice and peace are systematically persecuted.

- Many live under threats and some have been killed, such as Bishop Pierre Claverie, to name but one.

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