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## Bishops of Peace

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***Bishops of Peace***

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*This essay seeks to draw conclusions from this collection of essays on peace bishops (and other Christian leaders who work for peace). It opens with a brief modern history of magisterial teaching about peace in the Catholic Church and proceeds with a survey of the actions of peace bishops (and other leaders). It then looks at three factors that characterize effective work for peace by religious leaders: a favorable political theology, institutional independence from the state, and leadership. It draws evidence for each factor from the essays.*

**Keywords:** bishops' functions, political theology, Vatican II, institutional independence, leadership, peacebuilding

**Introduction**

Ronald Musto opens his essay in this collection on the history of peace bishops by citing the Catholic Church's canon law's description of the three functions of bishops: to teach, to govern, and to administer the sacraments. Although the Church's magisterium and the wide mainstream of Catholic political thought have always held that Church authority and temporal authority are separate in their ends, the bishop's proper functions give him a strong warrant to influence matters of peace and justice as they are exercised by kings, presidents, dictators, commanders, and soldiers. In the bishop's teaching office, he conveys with his authority the moral teaching of the Church, which is nothing other than the contours of life lived in fellowship with Jesus Christ, and when he does so pointedly in the face of injustice, he exercises moral force and sometimes elicits the state's opposition, including incurring martyrdom. In his governing role, the bishop leads consecrated religious and lay people in their witness to peace and justice, defends the freedom of the Church, and engages in other measures such as mediation, the building of communities of peace, or government service such as chairing a truth commission. His sacramental role should not be overlooked, either, Musto points out. Indeed, the Eucharist transforms its recipient to live in a eucharistic fashion, to live the justice of right relationship in all spheres of life, not least the political (Philpott, 2022). The sacrament of reconciliation can also be an occasion for the bishop to uphold the Church's teaching about justice, as when Bartolome de las Casas, O.P., Bishop of Chiapas, withheld absolution from holders of slaves in sixteenth century Mexico. All of these episcopal functions shine brightly in this innovative collection of essays that vivify and document the work of the Christian church for peace and justice around the world.

Here I aim to synthesize what these essays teach about peace and how religious leaders promote it. Most of these leaders are "peace bishops" in the Catholic Church, but the collection also includes Protestant bishops and pastors such as those in Kenya as well as Martin Luther King, Jr. (In the essay, then, I sometimes refer to "peace bishops," meaning the Catholic bishops who make up the vast majority of case studies, but other times indicate that the set of leaders includes others, too) I begin with a brief reflection on the modern Catholic Church's teaching and witness in matters of peace, proceed to outline what activities the peace work of bishops and other religious leaders

involves, and then look at the broad factors that favor Catholic (and other Christian) peacebuilding. These include the leader's political theology; the degree of institutional independence from the state; and leadership, or the ability to move people towards a just end.

### **The Teaching of Peace**

The work of peace bishops reflects the teaching office of the universal college of bishops, not least the Bishop of Rome, also known as the magisterium. In modern Catholic thought, following Pope Leo XIII's landmark encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* (1891), Catholic thought on war and peace is characterized by two broad themes. First, the Church has affirmed the just war ethic, centering on the conditional justice of the state's use of armed force. According to this ethic, it has judged particular wars and acts of war to be just or unjust. For instance, the Second Vatican Council's pastoral constitution, *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), espouses a "declaration" that "[a]ny act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation" – a clear reference to the obliteration bombing practiced by the Allied powers during World War II just over twenty years earlier.

The second broad theme is a condemnation of war itself and a call for its reduction and eventually elimination. Even while war may be just, it is always a "defeat for humanity," a "scourge," a fruit of sin, and a breakdown of love and justice and has proven immensely destructive in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries both for the people fighting war and for the large number of civilians killed. Thus, Pope Benedict XV proposed a peace plan in 1917 that would create an architecture of international community and that predated and contained many of the same features as U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points of a year later, while after the war Pope Benedict XV proposed a peace that included forgiveness (1920). Popes ever since consistently have endorsed disarmament, international law, international governance, mediation and negotiation and have repeatedly declaimed against war, Pope Paul VI thundering "no more war" in his speech to the United Nations in 1965, Pope John Paul II, "no more war, war never again" in 2003, and Pope Francis, "no more war! Let us stop all conflict," in October 2022.

Both of these themes – the just war ethic and the call to turn away from war – persisted over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. They are present in the pontificate of Pius XI and his support for the League of Nations, in that of Pius XII and his addresses during World War II, and in the support of the magisterium and of Catholic political leaders for the origins of European federalism, which they saw as an endeavor of peace and forgiveness following World War II (Guth and Nelson, 2015, pp. 181-207).

Both themes found expression and achieved new depth at the Second Vatican Council and in the period immediately surrounding it. Pope John XXIII's encyclical of 1963, *Pacem in Terris*, gave new force to human rights, refugees, disarmament, international law and organization, and economic development. *Gaudium et Spes* repeated these same themes in 1965 and, in addition to condemning the bombing of civilians, placed new emphasis on the destructiveness of war and the urgency of reducing war, affirmed non-violence as a form of witness, and stressed that no true peace lacks justice, a theme that Pope Paul VI would voice many times. Other council documents developed new dimensions of peace. *Nostra Aetate* (1965) set forth a posture towards other religions that stressed commonality and friendship, launching numerous initiatives in

interreligious dialogue over ensuing decades. *Dignitatis Humanae* (1965) declared a human right of religious freedom, categorically rejecting the coercion of religion and distancing the Church from regimes that practiced it. A change in emphasis in the Church's theology of missions also took place in this period, stressing indigenous leadership and initiative, worship in local languages and cultural forms, and a greater integration of service to the poor into the mission of evangelization, some of these themes finding expression in the Council's document, *Ad Gentes* (1965).

Following the Council, magisterial teaching on peace unfolded through several themes. One was episcopal teachings on war and military policy. The United States Bishops' letter of 1983, *The Challenge of Peace*, was unprecedented for national bishops conferences as a direct and developed statement on military policy, in this case the nuclear weapons policy of the United States and its allies. It allowed nuclear deterrence on a conditional basis as a step towards bilateral disarmament, a position similar to what Pope St. John Paul II espoused in his address to the United Nations in 1982. John Paul II subsequently condemned both the Persian Gulf War of 1991 and the Iraq War of 2003, in both cases placing him at odds with the United States and expressing his profound skepticism of the morality of war. In 2008, Pope Benedict supported the "duty to protect," involving a commitment to undertake multilateral intervention to stop the large-scale loss of life. Most recently, Cardinal Robert McElroy has followed Pope Francis in calling for a peace ethic that gives central place to non-violence.

In a different setting, Latin America, liberation theology, stressing the oppression of the poor by "structural sin," emerged first through Christian Base Communities in the 1960s and reached its episcopal apotheosis at Medellin, Colombia in 1968 at the conference of CELAM (in English, the Episcopal Conference of Latin America). Theologian Gustavo Gutierrez's book of 1971, *A Theology of Liberation* (published in English in 1973), became the movement's classical statement. At CELAM's meeting at Puebla, Mexico in 1979, at which Pope John Paul II spoke, the consensus of bishops affirmed the Church's commitment to justice for the poor though they did not adopt some strands of liberation theology. In notifications of 1984 and 1986, the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) warned of violence and of the errors of Marxist analysis in liberation theology, while concepts such as structural sin and the preferential option for the poor lived on in Catholic social teaching.

A separate strand of the Church's teaching of peace arose in Pope St. John Paul II's theology of reconciliation. Incubated in his life under Nazism and Communism in Poland, taking up the Second Vatican Council's call for renewing the scriptural and Christocentric dimension of ethics, John Paul II set forth an ethic of reconciliation and forgiveness rooted in the Cross and Resurrection. The most important sources of this ethic are his encyclical of 1980, *Dives in Misericordia* and his addresses of the World Day of Peace in 1997 and 2002, in the latter of which he appended to Pope Paul VI's dictum, "no peace without justice," the phrase, "no justice without forgiveness." He manifested the ethic when he visited and forgave his assassin, Mehmet Ali Agca, in prison in 1983.

A final expression of Catholic peace teaching developed through what can be called Catholic peacebuilding. Its setting was the global wave of countries who overthrew and then faced the past injustices of genocide, dictatorship, and civil war beginning in 1974 with Portugal and Greece,

coursing through Latin America beginning in the 1980s, moving through the fall of Communist dictatorships in Eastern Europe in 1989, and taking place also in Africa and East Asia. Practices emerged and developed, including truth commissions, trials, reparations, political apologies, political forgiveness, village-level reconciliation forums, and the building of museums and monuments. The establishment of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, discussed by Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, in his address published in this collection of essays, attests to the global rise of peacebuilding. The Catholic Church has been involved in peacebuilding actively in numerous settings around the world, often involving bishops, while Catholic theologians have developed a theology and praxis of peacebuilding. The axis of such an ethic is rebuilding right relationships in a holistic sense in societies sundered by war and systemic injustice centered on the “connectivity” of the Church at all levels and on doctrinal sources such as human rights and reconciliation (see Schreiter, Appleby, and Powers 2010; Lederach 1997, Philpott 2012. McElroy 2023). Some themes of peacebuilding are expressed in Pope Francis’s encyclical of 2020, *Fratelli Tutti* (secs. 224-254).

### **Peace Bishops**

Reflecting these teachings, bishops have undertaken a range of activities to oppose violence and injustice and to promote peace. Following the two major themes in the Church’s teaching, they both invoke the Church’s doctrines of the justice of war and seek to reduce war and injustice. This is not to say that the Church’s teaching on peace are always generated and initiated by bishops who then bring the teachings to their countries. Often, rather, teachings begin through the work of Christians on the ground and make their way into magisterial doctrine. The influence – that is, the Holy Spirit – flows in both directions.

Sometimes speaking for peace is prophecy, taking on an oppositional form. John Ashworth’s essay on Sudanese Catholic Bishop Macram Max Gassis expresses the virtue behind this opposition in describing Gassis as the “Angry Shepherd.” Gassis’s anger, as Ashworth explains, is righteous anger, the sort that the Bible and the tradition affirm as just. In Ashworth’s words:

The suffering of his flock makes him angry and frustrated, and he is not shy at expressing his anger. He has a strong sense of justice, and consequently injustice makes him angry, particularly when it is caused by human actions, such as the Islamist regimes which have oppressed the people of Sudan, and the power struggles by South Sudanese leaders which are causing untold suffering in that newest of nations.

Ashworth proceeds to document Gassis’s vocal opposition to slavery, religious persecution, and violence in Sudan, rooted in human rights and religious freedom, spoken both on the ground in Sudan and through international advocacy such as testimony to the United States Congress.

Several of the bishops in these essays spoke in opposition to unjust war or practices of war. Maria Power describes how Irish Cardinal Cahal Daly taught against the violence of both sides of the communal conflict in Northern Ireland and called them to a mutual democracy based on love. Joseph Fahey’s essay on Bishop Thomas Gumbleton and William Portier’s essay on Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen each describe how these American bishops spoke out against the nuclear policies of the United States in the 1970s and 1980s on the basis of the just war ethic and a broader critique of militarism. Scott A. Wright tells of the decision of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar

Romero and Guatemalan Bishop Juan Gerardi to remember the poor and victims of violence. Both spoke out publicly against their regime's massive armed violence and were martyred for it.

Other bishops spoke out against the injustices of their regimes, often involving violence but also systemic racial discrimination, suppression of democracy and other human rights violations. David Tarus documents the opposition of Kenyan bishops to the one-party regime of President Daniel Arap Moi in the 1980s and 1990s, eliciting the regime's opposition to them and rallying others to oppose the regime. South African Archbishop Denis Hurley's opposition to apartheid is the subject of Anthony Egan's essay, which documents his vocal opposition to the South African *apartheid* state and state atrocities in Namibia. Hak Joon Lee shows how the themes of the *imago dei*, grounding the dignity of the human person, and of communal love propelled Martin Luther King in the United States and Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu in South Africa in their political opposition to racist laws and structures.

Sometimes the opposition of bishops included not only an appeal to principles but also demonstrative protest, including the practice of liturgy with a political message. Though the essays here do not document it, Pope St. John Paul II's three pilgrimages to Poland attracted tens of thousands of Poles to open-air masses and liturgical processions in which John Paul said little directly about the regime's injustices yet galvanized non-violent opposition to the Communist regime that contributed to its downfall in 1989 – perhaps the largest peace protests that church leaders have ever led. As John Ashworth describes in his essay on Ugandan Catholic Archbishop John Baptist Odama, Odama's visit to the “night commuters” in Gulu, where he slept on the ground with children in the parking lot of the town's bus station, served to bring international attention to the plight of these young people displaced from their homes by violence. King's galvanizing sermons fueled, and injected a religious spirit into, protest marches.

In other instances, bishops are mediators rather than opponents. *God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics*, authored by Monica Duffy Toft, myself, and Timothy Samuel Shah, documents twenty-six cases of religious communities or officials, many of them bishops, conducting peace negotiations, all but one of them taking place between 1989 and 2005 (2011, pp. 186-196). As Ashworth mentions, Archbishop Odama pioneered the peace process in Uganda in the early 2000s through making forays through the bush to meet with Joseph Kony, the leader of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army. Archbishop Hurley in South Africa mediated violent conflict between the Natal-based Inkatha Freedom Party and its rivals in the late 1980s and early 1990's, as Egan documents. In South Sudan (and Sudan prior to South Sudan's independence in 2011), Bishop Paride Taban was an active mediator in violent conflicts between armed rivals, as Alberto Eisman Torres depicts in his essay.

In some cases bishops have played the role of peacebuilder in a position appointed by the government, as did Archbishop Tutu as Chair of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Bishops or other top religious officials also have served on truth commissions in Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste, and elsewhere (Toft, Philpott, and Shah, 2011, p. 202).

Still another role of bishops is exhorting and negotiating with governments to undertake humanitarian relief. Bishop Bo of Burma pleads for humanitarian assistance in his address published here. Bishops Taban and Gassis each advocated for humanitarian aid in Sudan (or South Sudan).

Bishops sometimes direct their peace efforts towards populations of communities. Archbishop Odama became an apostle of forgiveness, proclaiming this message to Northern Ugandans who had lived through the violence of the war between the LRA and the Government of Uganda between the late 1980s and around 2009. He urged Ugandans to undertake *mato oput* rituals, designed to bring about reconciliation in villages and rooted in the traditions of the Acholi people. Tutu likewise preached reconciliation and forgiveness to the entire population of South Africa, indeed even to a greater extent than he did in the hearing rooms of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He appealed to the Ubuntu tradition as well as Christian theology. In Northern Ireland, Cardinal Daly directed his message of building the Kingdom of God broadly to the citizens of the community.

Bishops have also sought to build communities of peace whose inhabitants live together according to teachings and practices of peace and thus model peace to the surrounding community. One of the boldest of these is Bishop Paride Taban's Holy Trinity Peace Village in the town of Kuron in the state of Eastern Equatoria in South Sudan, whose residents agree not to carry guns, to resolve disputes peacefully, to vest neighbors with land for growing crops, and to provide a strong education to all children, including girls, an elusive goal elsewhere in the country. Another of these, documented by Loreto Navarro-Castro, is the Group of Women Advocates for Peace in the Archipelago, founded by Archbishop Anthony Ledesma in the Philippines in 2017. Composed of Christian, Muslim and Indigenous women, the group conducts peacebuilding, supports war victims, and hosts conferences on transitional justice.

The collection of essays also documents several bishops who have built peace by building bridges with other religious leaders. Bishop Taban built cooperative friendships with Muslim leaders in South Sudan. Archbishop Odama chaired the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, which included Catholic, Protestant, and Muslim political leaders and was an influential advocate of reconciliation in Northern Uganda. Denis Hurley reached out to Protestants in South Africa in the mid-1960s and even issued a public apology for harms that the Catholic Church committed against them, a pioneering form of a gesture that John Paul II later would perform abundantly (Accattoli, 1998). Hurley established relationships with Jews, Hindus, and Muslims over the years of his political advocacy. Archbishop Ledesma, Cardinal Bo, Bishops Gassis, and Cardinal Daly all forged ties with leaders of other religious faiths in settings of conflict, as these essays describe.

All of these activities, described in the essays in this collection and illustrated with a few additional examples, are the kind that peace bishops carry out. What, then are the factors that favor some bishops becoming and carrying out this work of peace?

### **Political Theology**

One of these influences is political theology, a set of doctrines about political authority and justice that are derived from more fundamental theological tenets (Toft, Philpott and Shah, 2011, pp. 31.) Examples are pacifism, liberation theology, a commitment to human rights and political reconciliation. Most of the peace bishops described here carry and are motivated by a political theology. It is one that they adopted during their formation, although it also may have evolved and developed. Archbishop Denis Hurley, for instance, was exposed to Catholic social thought in his studies in Ireland and Rome in the 1930s, where he became committed to racial equality and

contributed to the Catholic Church being the first church to condemn *apartheid* in 1957. In subsequent decades, he adopted human rights and ecumenical and interreligious harmony into his political theology so that, at the Second Vatican Council from 1962 to 1965, he was both a contributor to and recipient of ideas. Archbishop Tutu came to his commitments to reconciliation in the context of the South African churches, where this concept was widespread, as well as through the ubuntu tradition, both of which led him eventually to express this political theology at length in his book, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (2000). Other bishops and religious leaders in this collection, including Bishop Taban, Archbishop Odama, Dr. King, Archbishop Romero, Bishop Gerardi, Bishop Gumbleton, Bishop Hunthausen, Bishop Njoya and other Kenyan bishops, Archbishop Ledesma, Cardinal Daly, Cardinal Bo, and Archbishop Caccia all espoused robust political theologies, as did other peace bishops such as Cardinal Jaime Sin in the Philippines, Pope St. John Paul II and Pope Francis.

In John Ashworth's article on Bishop Gassis, he argues that Gassis and other Sudanese bishops were not influenced by the Second Vatican Council in their work for peace but rather were cut off from the outside world. These bishops came to their work for peace, Ashworth argues, through praxis, as a "natural part of [their] pastoral ministry" and not on the basis of a political theology. Ashworth's argument, that a developed political theology is not necessary for a bishop's work for peace, may be granted, though even Sudanese bishops, one may reason, were influenced by the scriptures and core moral teachings of the Church. Yet in the work of almost all of the bishops in these essays a political theology is discoverable. This is not to say that political theology always derives directly from magisterial teaching. Archbishop Hurley was an opponent of apartheid before Pope St. John XXIII taught about human rights in *Pacem in Terris* in 1963, while Pope St. John Paul II had developed his ideas on reconciliation well before he became pope and published *Dives in Misericordia* in 1980. Again, experience and magisterial teaching are mutually influential.

The influence of political theology is illustrated effectively in David Tarus's essay on the contrasting politics of churches in Kenya under Moi. Evangelical churches, tied together in the Evangelical Alliance of Kenya, were pro-government in good part because of their political theology. On the basis of their reading of Romans 13, they shunned opposition to governmental authority and favored a theology that called for the salvation of souls and led them away from challenging political injustices. By contrast, in the 1980s and 1990s, the Catholic bishops spoke out against the government on the basis of teachings of human rights, democracy, and socioeconomic justice and the teaching that opposition to government may be justified when the government is tyrannical.

A few themes in the political theology of religious leaders who work for peace may be identified. One is the influence of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. Often it is difficult to tell how directly these teachings influenced a given bishop. In some cases such as Archbishop Hurley and Cardinal Daly, the influence seems to be direct. The teachings also exerted influence by pervading the Catholic Church so that bishops and other leaders would pick up on them. It is difficult to imagine the interreligious bridge building conducted by the bishops mentioned in the previous section, for instance, apart from the imprimatur given to interreligious dialogue by *Nostra Aetate*. True, figures such as Hurley began to preach ecumenism prior to the end of the Council, yet he also encountered criticism in the Church, as Egan's essay recounts. Such dialogue had not yet been sanctioned magisterially. Although the Council did not originate the Church's commitment to



natural, or human, rights, expressions of which can be found in the early Church, documents such as *Gaudium et Spes* and *Dignitatis Humanae*, as well as the contemporaneous but not conciliar document, *Pacem in Terris*, gave new prominence to human rights and inspired peace bishops who made them central to their teachings such as Pope St. John Paul II. Archbishop Caccia mentions human rights centrally and repeatedly in his address. In *God's Century* (2011, pp. 111-113), my coauthors and I argue that the Council's teachings about human rights, especially religious freedom, were adopted squarely by national churches who helped overthrow dictators in the subsequent global wave of democratization, including churches in Poland, Chile, Brazil, the Philippines, and Malawi, but were adopted only weakly or not at all by churches that failed to oppose dictatorships strongly such as in Argentina and Hungary.

Reconciliation is another form of political theology. I have described it in the teaching and witness of Pope St. John Paul II. In the collection here, it can be found in the witness of Archbishop Tutu, who made reconciliation a major theme of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission; Martin Luther King, who developed his ideas on love for enemies and building a beloved community through his doctoral studies; Archbishop Odama, whose robust and developed concepts of reconciliation and forgiveness informed his public ministry in northern Uganda in the late 1990s and 2000s; and Bishop Gerardi, who espoused reconciliation in his speech presenting his Church's truth commission report in April 1998, leading to his assassination two days later. Cardinal Bo gives strong voice to reconciliation and measures of peacebuilding in his address.

Several of the bishops and religious leaders represented in this collection espoused a political theology of non-violence. None of them is a strict pacifist but several of them view non-violence as both an effective and moral form of opposition. Martin Luther King, inspired by Mohandas Gandhi in India, taught non-violence and made it an integral to the civil rights movement in the United States in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Hurley favored non-violent modes of opposition to *apartheid* even while he indicated that he understood the violent methods adopted by some opponents to apartheid, as Egan describes. John Paul II's opposition to the Communist dictatorship in Poland featured non-violent popular protest, as did the "people power" movement that overthrew Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines in 1986.

Other tenets of political theology show up in the writings, speeches, and work for peace of bishops and other religious leaders: the tenets of the just war ethic, international law and organization, and liberation theology. Almost all of them carry some set of robust doctrines that informs their work.

### **Institutional Independence**

The other major influence that my coauthors and I argue in *God's Century* affects the ability of religious actors to promote peace effectively is institutional independence – the distance that religious actors keep from political authorities. Religious authorities possess institutional independence when they are free from the state in carrying out their distinctive activities of worship, education, service, and the like; when they are autonomous in their governance; when they are autonomous in their finances; when they hold no standing prerogatives of their own over governmental policy or appointments; and when they are not closely identified with national identities (Toft, Philpott, and Shah, 2011, pp. 32-39). When religious authorities are independent, they are free to carry out the work of peace, including sometimes speaking out against the state (though often with cost). When they are not independent, they are confined to accept and promote

the state's purposes, often violent and unjust ones. We show that in almost all instances in which bishops and other religious leaders conducted mediation, they practiced institutional independence from the state. In most cases, they were independent both from the state and opposition movements, which enhanced their credibility as mediators. In other forms of work that they conducted for peace, their credibility derived from the fact that they were part of the opposition movement to a dictatorship and were thus widely respected in the period after the dictatorship fell. Archbishop Tutu, for instance, was appointed Chair of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the 1990s on the strength of his opposition to the apartheid regime in the 1980s, which had won him a Nobel Peace Prize (Toft, Philpott, and Shah, 2011, pp. 199-200). In the global wave of democratization, beginning in 1974, churches such as those in Chile that opposed dictatorships were ones that remained independent of them in their authority, whereas ones that were comparatively complicit such as in Argentina were ones that were tied closely with the authority of governments. The Catholic Church and the Anglican Church in Rwanda were closely tied with the Hutu government from the 1960s, including in their ethnic affiliation, and were thus impotent to oppose, and even complicit in, the genocide of 1994. As Cardinal Roger Etchegaray commented, "the blood of tribalism ran deeper than the waters of baptism" (cited in Carney, 2013, p. 207). Few religious leaders illustrate better the lack of institutional independence and the accompanying counter witness to peace than Patriarch Kirill of the Russian Orthodox Church. Perpetuating the tight intertwining of the hierarchy of this church with the Russian government and its virtual identification with the Russian nation, Kirill has supported ardently President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine, even promising Russian troops that participating in the military operation would gain them eternal salvation.

All of the religious leaders who promoted peace in the studies in this collection were ones who practiced institutional independence from the state. Here again, David Tarus's essay on the Kenyan churches, offering rigorous comparisons across time and place, illustrates the importance of institutional independence. During the 1980s and the 1990s, the Catholic bishops voiced opposition to the Moi government, while evangelical churches supported it. Tarus points out that in addition to factors of political theology, the desire for patronage from the state and identification with ethnic groups, both factors of institutional independence, shaped the evangelical churches' stance. Between 2002 and 2008, following the fall of Moi's government, Tarus argues, the churches were divided along ethnic lines and by the close relationship of some of them with the state, resulting in a muted voice for justice on the part of the churches – a failure for which churches would come to apologize in public.

The importance of institutional independence for the work for peace on the part of bishops and top religious leaders is also supported in an article on the church's non-violent opposition to dictatorships in Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s by sociologist Sharon Erickson Nepstad (2019). Comparing religious leaders in Chile, Argentina and El Salvador, she finds that differences in their stances (oppositional in Chile, largely supportive in Argentina, mixed in El Salvador) are explained not only by their political theologies but also in part by their reception of financial and political support from the state, a matter of institutional independence.

### **Leadership**

A final systematic quality that emerges in the studies in this collection is Christian leadership, by which is meant the ability to set a goal based on Christian justice and to mobilize large numbers

of people to act in support of that goal. A strong theological and spiritual foundation, the ability to speak inspiringly, a skill in pastoral care for followers and a strategic ability to build coalitions are accompanying qualities. Leadership can be seen in several of the studies here. Martin Luther King's ability to inspire people to join him in his marches is quintessential. The outpouring of support for Archbishop Romero at his funeral mass on March 30, 1980, which more than 250,000 people attended, was indicative. The large number of people who followed Archbishop Tutu or Archbishop Odama in forgiveness and reconciliation, or the outpouring of support for Bishop Gerardi when he presented the truth commission report and was then assassinated in Guatemala City in April 1998, is indicative. Bishop Taban's ability to create and sustain a peace village in South Sudan is leadership. Outside of these essays, the ability of John Paul II to mobilize hundreds of thousands to follow him in non-violent protest of the Communist government in Poland is leadership. In some cases, bishops or other religious figures who do not succeed in mobilizing masses – perhaps because of oppression – but practice a witness that inspire later generations also exercise leadership. Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan, who was imprisoned for 13 years by the Government of Vietnam, stands as an example.

### **Conclusion**

This collection of essays on peace bishops and other religious leaders who have borne witness for peace such as Martin Luther King, Jr. serve to advance our knowledge of Christian churches' work for peace and of the conditions and qualities that favor this work. They help to establish a wider recognition in the Christian church that working to establish a just peace is part and parcel of living the Gospel.

A closing recommendation is that this recognition, this incorporation of the promotion of peace into the warp and woof of the Church's life, could be furthered still by a recognition of what counts as work for peace. Commonly in parishes and congregations, as well as in the political and media arenas, the pro-life movement, which has sought to secure the end of abortion, is looked upon as something distinct from work for peace and justice – both on the part of members of the pro-life movement and those who work for separate forms of peace and justice. Why? Is not 64 million abortions in the United States over the past fifty years, and a billion abortions around the world since 1920, the world's largest denial of human rights – and thus of peace and justice? (Jacobson and Johnston, 2018). Is not the March for Life the world's largest non-violent movement protesting the compromise of peace and justice, at least when viewed cumulatively over 50 years? Add to this the movement's efforts to support pregnant women through pregnancy resource centers and to extend healing and forgiveness to post-abortive women through organizations such as Project Rachel, and one sees most of the themes espoused by the peace bishops in this collection. If we add unborn persons and their mothers to the world's vast victims of war, genocide, dictatorship, refugees, and impoverishment, we begin to realize the holistic and unifying nature of work for peace and justice – a work that repairs a “seamless garment,” as U.S. Cardinal Joseph Bernardin called it, and that builds a culture of life through a civilization of love, as Pope St. John Paul II voiced it.

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