

# On Line and On Point

## MARY MOTHER OF JESUS INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

[marymotherofjesus.org](http://marymotherofjesus.org)

**PEACE WORKER**—One resource, respected in communities affected by gun violence, that was severely handicapped by the pandemic, was the presence of violence interrupters. Around our nation there are people who have taken it upon themselves to nonviolently work to stop gun violence. Community members come together to build relationships with those most likely to participate in gun violence, hanging out on street corners and in other places where young people gather. They may give someone a Metro card to get somewhere, or perhaps a little cash to help someone get by. They may assist someone in getting a driver's license or a job. They begin conversations about how to stop gun violence. They respond to late night texts to mediate quarrels and talk down potentially violent situations. They show up after shootings and attempt to comfort and console family members and friends of the deceased. They work to break the cycle of violence and vengeance. Many of the groups grew organically. Others such as Brownsville In, Violence Out are anti-violence branches of non-profit organizations, and still others, like the God Squad, are clergy who work to mediate differences in their Brooklyn communities. As we celebrate the birth of the Ruler of Peace and wonder what happened to the angels' promise of peace, we might turn our attention to these violence interrupters. We might remember that nowhere in Scripture does Jesus tell us that people who merely love peace will be blessed. What he did say is



“Blessed are the peacemakers.” [Matt 5:9]. We are to do something, not simply wish for peace like we would for a gift under the Christmas tree. We must make peace. These violence interrupters offer an example of what that looks like. It is on people like these, peacemakers, that I believe God's favor rests. Perhaps with God's grace we may become like them.—*from an article found in The Catholic Worker [Dec '21] entitled “Violence and the Media,” by Jim Reagan*

**OFFERINGS**— If you have made a recent donation to our community, we thank you for your generosity. We are most grateful for your demonstrated care and concern. Please remember to make your regular donations to MMOJ by sending your check to MMOJ % St. Andrew UCC, 6908 Beneva Road, Sarasota. FL 34238.

**Remember:** MMOJ continues to donate 5% of all received offerings each month to Outreach, which will continue to focus on real issues of food and hunger in our surrounding communities.



**OUTREACH**—The current recipient of our offered financial support continues to be All Faiths Food Bank of Sarasota [AFFB] in its mission of providing food for hungry and needy children. According to the latest estimates, as many as 13 million children in the United States live in

“food insecure” homes. That phrase may sound

### Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community Mission Statement

We are a Christ-centered community of equals, consisting of women and men, ordained and non-ordained, empowered by the Spirit whose mission is to worship, to serve, to promote compassion, justice and care for creation. Come join us.

Send articles/info by Wed to be published on weekend: [rjbannerusa@gmail.com](mailto:rjbannerusa@gmail.com)

### 3. PURSUING NONVIOLENCE—Year II—Supporting our community need to renew a vow of nonviolence for a second time. Heading toward January 1st.

mild, but it means that those households don't have enough food for every family member to lead a healthy life.

#### MOVIE CORNER

On a recent day trip to St. Louis with Suzanne and Jerry Bires we stumbled upon The World Chess Hall of Fame; a lovely three story brick building with a delightful museum and a gigantic chess piece out front. You might asked how we could have possibly missed something so obvious. In honor of that lovely adventure this week's recommendation is the Netflix series **The Queen's Gambit**. Although a fictional story, it is my understanding that the orphanage and chess completion portions are authentic to real life. The series follows a young girl with a phenomenal aptitude for chess as she develops from an orphan child into a competitive chess player. I'd have to describe it as a bit edgy but mostly because I was anxious for her to make good decisions. It made chess interesting and also had some great costuming especially as the season progressed. Send your comments, criticisms, suggestions, to [ponce.beth@gmail.com](mailto:ponce.beth@gmail.com) —*Beth Ponce*

**CHRISTMAS IS NOT FOR CHILDREN**—Christmas is a strange season. When you're a child, it is a season of presents. When you're young, it's a season of parties. When you get your own home, it's a season of preparations. But when you get older, Christmas changes color drastically. Suddenly, out from behind the advertisements and big dinners, through the haze of old carols and soft candles, past the dazzling altars and sumptuous crib scenes, we begin to see what Christmas is really all about. Christmas is about finding life where we did not expect life to be.



Every year of life waxes and wanes. Every stage of life comes and goes. Every facet of life is born and then dies. Every good moment is doomed to become only a memory. Every perfect period of

living slips through our fingers and disappears. Every hope dims and every possibility turns eventually to dry clay. Until Christmas comes again.

Then we are called at the deepest, most subconscious, least cognizant level to begin to live again.

Christmas brings us all back to the crib of life to start over: aware of what has gone before, conscious that nothing can last, but full of hope that this time, finally, we can learn what it takes to live well, grow to full stature of soul and spirit, get it right.

There is a child in each of us waiting to be born again. It is to those looking for life that the figure of the Christ, a child, beckons. Christmas is not for children. It is for those who

refuse to give up and grow old, for those to whom life comes newly and with purpose each and every day, for those who can let yesterday go so that life can be full of new possibility always, for those who are agitated with newness whatever their age. Life is for the living, for those in whom Christmas is a feast without finish, a celebration of the constancy of change, a call to begin once more the journey to human joy and holy meaning.—*Joan Chittister*



<—**IN MY CHRISTMAS CARD [2021]**—We who have become the elders of our time [it seemed to happen when we were not looking] are grateful for the little ones whose simplicity seems so powerful a lesson at this time of the year. The call to become like little children is our ticket to seeing the world with a fresh, childlike

wonder—no matter how old we get. Isn't that a great gift of the season. Thank you, little ones! Merry Christmas!—*Russ Banner*

**STAFF**—*Russ Banner, editor; Joan Pesce, Lee Breyer, Anna Davis, text review; Beth Ponce and Dotty Shugrue, features*

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**PURSUIING NONVIOLENCE—By John Dear—*continued and concluded.* Nonviolence as participation in global grassroots movements**

While we practice nonviolence toward ourselves, all people, all creatures, and Mother Earth, we also join and support the global grassroots movements of nonviolence for justice, disarmament, and environmental sustainability. This is essential; otherwise, our nonviolence is passive complicity with the structures of violence. Nonviolence is a political methodology of social change that always works, if it is tried. That is how positive social change has always worked—through bottom up, people power, grassroots movements of nonviolence. With humanity on the brink of global destruction through permanent war, extreme poverty, nuclear weapons, and climate crisis, we need to build a global grassroots movement of nonviolence for global justice, disarmament, and environmental sustainability the likes of which the world has never seen. This means each one of us should join in and do our part. If everyone gets involved, the grassroots movement will grow and become contagious. With the power of engaged nonviolence, we can wear down even the most entrenched structures of violence and empire, because nonviolence is methodology of God. As we experiment publicly in organized movements, we discover that Dr. King was right: we are not powerless. Nonviolence is power, a methodology for social transformation. A recent book, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*, by Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, documents how, over the last century, nonviolent movements were far better at mobilizing supporters, resisting regime crackdowns, creating new initiatives, defeating repressive regimes, and establishing lasting democracies. Their book conclusively

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**JANUARY 1, 2022—WORLD DAY OF PEACE will be the day we renew our Vow of Nonviolence during our usual weekend Liturgy. These weekends of Advent have been designed as preparation. Add your personal prayer and perhaps invite a friend or neighbor to join with us as we renew our Vow of Nonviolence.**

proves through exhaustive social science that nonviolence can transform even the bleakest political reality if it is wielded wisely in organized grassroots movements.

As I reflect on the challenge of living and practicing nonviolence, I find hope that all of us can become more peaceful and nonviolent to ourselves and one another, and like Dorothy Day, Gandhi, and Dr. King, we too can contribute to world disarmament.

More, nonviolence helps us better understand Jesus. This is why I recently founded “The Beatitudes Center for the Nonviolent Jesus,” [[www.beatitudescenter.org](http://www.beatitudescenter.org)] to teach that Jesus was nonviolent and help Christians become more nonviolent.

Through the lens of nonviolence, the scandal of the Gospel makes sense: that God is nonviolent, that to be human is to be nonviolent, and that we are headed toward a new realm of total nonviolence.

With nonviolence, even the good news gets better.—*John Dear*  
*This article was found in the **Catholic Agitator**, newsletter of the LA Catholic Worker which dedicated its November issue to nonviolence.*  
*Note: John Dear has authored more than 40 books on peace and nonviolence, including most recently, *Praise Be Peace: The Psalms of Peace and Creation**

*in a Time of War and Climate Change—[johndear.org](http://johndear.org)*

**101 Ways to Foster Nonviolence in your life**

1. Educate yourself on injustice and nonviolence,
2. Be aware of God’s embrace.
3. Question the status quo.
4. Spend time with a child.
5. Be conscious of your privileges—on the basis of place of birth, skin color, wealth, etc.
6. Use cars less-walk bike, use public transit
7. Use gender inclusive language.
8. Seek justice and reconciliation, not victory.
9. Serve someone in need.
10. Shout “Yes” to life —*to be continued*

## VOW OF NONVIOLENCE

*[created for Pax Christi USA by Eileen Egan and John Dear, SJ]*

### ***Pledging to try and live nonviolently for one year***

Recognizing the violence in my own heart, yet trusting in the goodness and mercy of God, I vow for one year to practice the nonviolence of Jesus who taught us in the Sermon on the Mount:

*“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons and daughters of God... You have learned how it was said, ‘You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy,’ but I say to you, ‘Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. In this way, you will be daughters and sons of your Creator in heaven.”*

Before God the Creator and the Sanctifying Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus

- **by striving for peace within myself and seeking to be a peacemaker in my daily life;**
- **by accepting suffering rather than inflicting it;**
- **by refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence;**
- **by persevering in nonviolence of tongue and heart;**
- **by living conscientiously and simply so that I do not deprive others of the means to live;**
- **by actively resisting evil and working nonviolently to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth.**

God, I trust in Your sustaining love and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so you will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it.