

On Line On Point

MARY MOTHER OF JESUS INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

marymotherofjesus.org



ADVENT'S GIFT NONVIOLENCE

as related by Richard Rohr. In his recent pastoral letter, Archbishop John Wester of Santa Fe called for a conversation toward nuclear disarmament. He rooted his invitation in Jesus' teachings, by beginning with these words: I invite us to reflect on how Jesus practiced nonviolence and how we can do the same in the United States. When he began his public ministry, Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the Gospel" (Mark 1:15). In part, he was saying the days of violence, injustice, war, and empire are coming to an end. We are invited to welcome God's reign of peace and live in God's universal love and nonviolence here and now. In the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the

Mount (Matthew 5–7), Jesus commanded us to be peacemakers and to love our enemies, saying: "Blessed are the peacemakers, they will be called the sons and daughters of God" (5:9). "You have heard it said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' but I say to you: 'offer no violent resistance to one who does evil'" (5:38–39). "You have heard it said, 'Love your countrymen and hate your enemies.' But I say love your enemies and pray for your persecutors, then you will be sons and daughters of the God who lets the sun rise on the good and the bad and the rain to fall on the just and the unjust" (5:43–45). In these teachings, Jesus says that God is a peacemaker, and since we are God's sons and daughters, we are peacemakers too, not warmakers. He says that God practices universal nonviolent love, and since we are the

sons and daughters of the God of universal nonviolent love, we practice universal nonviolent love, too. There are no exceptions, no justifications for warfare, and no "just war theory."

Many would question these teachings as naïve, impractical, and idealistic. But as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote so well about this call to love our enemies, "Jesus is not an impractical idealist: he is the practical realist." Dr. King also stated: "Far from

YOU ARE INVITED
Annual Memorial Service for Salvadoran Martyrs
Friday, Dec 2
at 4 PM via ZOOM

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, peace and care for creation. Come join us.

Send articles/info by Wed to be published on weekend: rjbannerusa@gmail.com

being the pious injunction of a Utopian dreamer, the command to love one's enemy is an absolute necessity for our survival. Love even for enemies is the key to the solution of the problems of our world.

Archbishop Wester continues: I invite us to have a conversation together about what it means to follow the risen, nonviolent Jesus, who calls us to be peacemakers, put down the sword, and love everyone, even the enemies of our nation. Certainly, these commandments challenge us to face the violence that is being prepared in our name here in New Mexico, and to start the process of nuclear disarmament so that no one ever again calls down hellfire from the sky. As Dr. King concluded, "May we . . . hear and follow [Jesus'] words—before it is too late."

[Richard Rohr offers us this opportunity in the larger article to follow in this issue.]

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.

OUTREACH—The current recipient of our offered financial support is **Meals on Wheels of Sarasota** [Oct-Dec]. This non-profit 501(c)(3) volunteer community service organization, has been providing nutritious meals and friendship to eligible clients. They include those 60 or older who are disabled, homebound, and who have no one available to aid with meal preparation, and are unable to leave home without the assistance of another person. Five hundred times a day, Meals

on Wheels of Sarasota delivers nutritious meals that are cooked, prepared, packaged and hand delivered to members.

SALVADORAN MARTYRS—Of the four women martyred in El Salvador, **Sister Dorothy Kazel** is buried in Northeast OH with members of her Ursuline order. **Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clark and Ita Ford** are buried in Ossining, NY. And **Jean Donovan**, Lay Volunteer from OH, is buried here alongside her parents at Sarasota Memorial Cemetery. Each year since her death December 2, 1980, someone has visited Jean's grave, in ones, couples and groups, to bring roses and prayers. Since its inception in 2005, the Manasota Chapter of Pax Christi USA has held a song and prayer service at Jean's gravesite on Dec. 2. Because of Covid, we held last year's memorial service via ZOOM, and plan to do the same way, Friday, Dec 2, at 4 PM. Once again we will need readers and our usual large audience. All are welcome to join us. If you don't know who Jean was, by the end of the service, you will.

MOVIE CORNER

[Many thanks to Jerry for this week's movie review.]

It may prove difficult for many to digest the palatability of this 4-episode Netflix series, **Inside Man**. The main character, after all, killed his own wife and subsequently decapitated her. But somehow, Stanley Tucci pulls it off and pulls viewers into his Sherlockian mindset as a murder-solving mastermind on death row. With a parallel background story focused on an English vicar and his wife, who've imprisoned their son's math teacher in their basement, there would most likely be an appalling disgust level. But, again, well-cast, David Tennant as

the vicar and Lyndsey Marshal as his wife, draw you in. As Tucci puts it, to become a murderer all one needs is “a really bad day.” Atkins Estimond, as Tucci’s death row fellow cellmate, Dillon, adds additional spice to this series. Note that one can always tune in to Tucci’s Search for Italy Netflix series if Inside Man proves too distasteful.

ADVENT’S GIFT NONVIOLENCE

[continued]

Part of the genius of Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968), inspired by the teachings of Jesus and Gandhi, was that he was able to show people that violence was not only immoral but also impractical and, finally, futile. In the long run, violence does not achieve its own stated purposes, because it only deepens the bitterness on both sides. It leaves both sides in an endless and impossible cycle that cannot be stopped by itself. Instead, some neutralizing force must be inserted from outside to stop the cycle of violence and point us in a new direction. King would insist that true nonviolent practice is founded on spiritual seeing. . . . He took it as axiomatic that the attitudes of nonviolence were finally impossible without an infusion of agape love from God and our reliance upon that infusion. He defined agape love as willingness to serve without the desire for reciprocation, willingness to suffer without the desire for retaliation, and willingness to reconcile without the desire for



MLKJR Memorial, D.C.

domination. This is clearly a Divine love that the small self cannot achieve by itself.

We must live in and through Another to be truly nonviolent.

At a 1960 lunch counter sit-in protesting segregation in Arlington, Virginia, Quaker peace activist David Hartsough discovered God’s power in the power of nonviolence: “Love your enemies . . . do good to those who hate you.”

I was meditating on those words when I heard a voice behind me say, “Get out of this store in two seconds, or I’m going to stab this through your heart.” I glanced behind me at a man with the most terrible look of hatred I had ever seen. His eyes blazed, his jaw quivered, and his shaking hand held a switchblade—about half an inch from my heart. . . .

I turned around and tried my best to smile. Looking him in the eye, I said to him, “Friend, do what you believe is right, and I will still try to love you.” Both his jaw and his hand dropped. Miraculously, he turned away and walked out of the store. That was the most powerful experience of my twenty years of life. It confirmed my belief in the power of love, the power of goodness, the power of God working through us to overcome hatred and violence. I had a profound sense that nonviolence really works. At that moment, nonviolence became much more than a philosophical idea or a tactic that had once made a difference in Gandhi’s India. It became the way I wanted to relate to other human beings, a way of life, a way of working for change.

My response had touched something in my accuser. He had seen me as an enemy. But through my response, I believe I became a human being to him. The humanity in each of us touched.—*to be continued by Richard Rohr*

STAFF—Russ Banner, editor; Joan Pesce and Dorothy Sadowski, text review; Beth Ponce and Dotty Shugrue, features

Send articles/info by Wed to be published on weekend: rjbannerusa@gmail.com