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SCM'S PEACE AND NONVIOLENCE
DEVOTIONAL

WEBSITES

- Pilgrimage of Resistance | www.scmcanada.org/pilgrimage
- Christian Peacemaker Teams | www.cpt.org
- Canadian Peace Alliance | www.acp-cpa.ca
- Christian Peace Witness | christianpeacewitness.org
- Mennonite Central Committee | www.mcc.org
- Nonviolence International | nonviolenceinternational.net
- Pace e Bene | paceebene.org/
- SOA Watch | soaw.org

BOOKS

- Mohandas K. Gandhi – *My Experiments With Truth* [alternatively titled *Gandhi: an Autobiography*]
- Chris Hedges – *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*
- Mark Kurlansky – *Nonviolence: The History of a Dangerous Idea*
- Daniel C. Maguire – *The Horrors We Bless: Rethinking the Just-War Legacy*
- Ron Sider – *Nonviolence: The Inviolable Weapon*
- Leo Tolstoy – *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*
- Walter Wink – *Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way – Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*
- John Howard Yoder – *The Politics of Jesus – When War Is Unjust*

HE SHALL JUDGE BETWEEN MANY
PEOPLES, AND SHALL ARBITRATE BETWEEN
STRONG NATIONS FAR AWAY; THEY SHALL
BEAT THEIR SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES,
AND THEIR SPEARS INTO PRUNING-HOOKS;
NATION SHALL NOT LIFT UP SWORD
AGAINST NATION,
NEITHER SHALL THEY
LEARN WAR ANY MORE.

Micah 4:3

SCM'S PEACE AND NONVIOLENCE DEVOTIONAL

'Only the dead have seen the end of war.' -Plato

War has ravaged humanity and the Earth since time immemorial. Further exasperating the pain and suffering of war are the divisions, violence, and oppressions people experience caused by a myriad of issues, such as gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, culture, creed, and class. The destruction of the environment and the impending climate catastrophe only adds more pain to an already hurting and broken humanity.

The urgent need to take action and break the cycle of death and despair falls now upon a new generation. The Christian Peacemaker Teams ask, "what would happen if Christians devoted the same discipline and self-sacrifice to nonviolent peacemaking that armies devote to war?" Another world is possible. Through peacemaking and direct action protests, change can occur. War can end, power and domination can be brought down, and an ecologically sound society can be created.

Central to the success of direct action social campaigns and peacemaking is the commitment of each person involved to a life of nonviolence. It is by this commitment to nonviolence that we model the community and the world we imagine, for if we seek change by any other means, we perpetuate the systems and structures of violence and end up changing nothing at all.

Together, let us wage peace, defeat war, and become, with God, co-creators of that beloved community where all are welcome and destruction and division are no more.

An Introduction to Nonviolent Peacemaking and Direct Action

Historically, nonviolent direct actions have been some of the most successful ways in which structures of oppression and domination have been toppled. From Gandhi's use of the nonviolent satyagraha during the Indian Independence Movement and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s nonviolent protest during the Civil Rights Movement, to the Solidarity Movement which toppled Soviet Imperialism in Poland, and the Philippines' People Power Revolution led by Corazon Aquino which toppled the authoritarian regime of Ferdinand Marcos, to the more contemporary examples such as the overthrow of Serbian dictator and war criminal, Slobodan Milosevic, and the restoration of democracy in Ukraine with the 2004 Orange Revolution which restored democracy and the democratically elected president, Victor Yushenko, nonviolent means have been used to achieve massive social and political change. At the same time, people around the world, in places such as Iraq, Colombia, Palestine-Israel, the African Great Lakes region, and the US-Mexico border, are actively making peace by placing themselves in harms way to secure peace and safety for others.

While both nonviolent peacemaking and nonviolent direct action require much commitment and intense training, they also require an inward conversion and self-cleanse from the forces of hate and violence within each of us. This devotional is meant as a first step on the path towards nonviolence – to awaken your curiosity to the power of nonviolence for positive change in the world, to provide a framework for praying for peace and nonviolence, to help you turn away from the violence and domination of Empire, outside and within, and to guide you towards the path of peace and nonviolent social and political change.

WHAT IS SCM?



Founded in 1921, the Student Christian Movement is a national youth-led movement passionate about justice, community & spirituality. We engage the prophetic teachings of the revolutionary Jesus of Nazareth. As an ecumenical movement, we include people of many beliefs and faiths seeking to explore and challenge the Christian tradition.

www.scmcanada.org

Nonviolence Guidelines of SOA Watch, Adopted by SCM Canada on it's annual Pilgrimage of Resistance

Our goal is to expose and close the School of the Americas / WHINSEC and to resist the oppressive policies and systems that it represents. We act in solidarity with our Latin American sisters and brothers and those all around the world whose lives are impacted by these policies, as one part of the international struggle for human rights and global justice.

As SOA Watch we gather in the diverse traditions of nonviolence, with respect for the right to self-determination of oppressed people and communities. Together we envision a day in which a culture of peace with justice and respect for Earth will prevail, where all people will live together free from oppression.

This weekend, in our tradition of nonviolence:

- *we will gather in a manner that reflects the world we choose to create.
- *we will promote an alternative to domination systems by acting with love, respect, mutuality, compassion, and acceptance for the interdependence of all life.
- *we will struggle for a world free from violence and we will use actions, words and symbols consistent with this struggle.
- *we will not use or instigate violence against any person.
- *we will act with respect for the people and property of the local community.
- *we will promote the safety of ourselves and others through our actions and interactions.

We commit to recognize and to work to dismantle all forms of oppression in our personal relationships, local neighbourhoods, globally and with Earth itself. We will return to our communities with renewed energy to close the SOA / WHINSEC.

SUNDAY

Conversion to Peace

I will appoint Peace as your overseer and Righteousness as your taskmaster. Violence shall no more be heard in your land, devastation or destruction within your borders; you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise.

Isaiah 60:17-18

Let us then pursue what makes for peace.

Romans 14:19

The key to changing the world and pursuing justice and disarmament is to allow the God of peace to disarm our hearts, make us instruments of peace, and lead us together on the road to peace.

John Dear
(Jesuit priest and peace activist)

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FRIDAY

Teaching Peace

You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?

Matthew 5:43-46

Wisdom is better than weapons of war.

Ecclesiastes 9:18

We will not obey unjust laws or submit to unjust practices. We will do this peacefully, openly, cheerfully because our aim is to persuade. We adopt the means of nonviolence because our end is a community at peace with itself. We will try to persuade with our words, but if our words fail, we will try to persuade with our acts. We will always be willing to talk and seek fair compromise, but we are ready to suffer when necessary and even risk our lives to become witnesses to truth as we see it.

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, jr.
(Civil Rights Movement leader and practitioner of nonviolent direct action)

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TUESDAY

Speaking for Peace

My anguish, my anguish! I writhe in pain! Oh, the walls of my heart! My heart is beating wildly; I cannot keep silent; for I hear the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.

Jeremiah 4:19

A harvest of righteousness is sown for those who make peace.

James 3:18

Voices like ours are needed now more than ever for peace, for civil rights, for children for a life on this planet, for our grandchildren. War is stupid. To bring about the changes we need in society, all of us must speak out and act.

Muriel Duckworth
(Canadian peace activist and 1920s SCMer at McGill University)

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WEDNESDAY

God's Dream of Peace

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain.

Isaiah 11:6-9

Guide our feet into the ways of peace.

Luke 1:79

Only together, hand in hand, as God's family and not as one another's enemy, can we ever hope to end the vicious cycle of revenge and retribution. This is the only hope for us and for making God's dream a reality.

Desmond Tutu
(Retired Archbishop of Cape Town, leader of the South African anti-apartheid movement and Nobel Peace Prize laureate)

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SATURDAY

The Courage of Nonviolence

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 14:27

Don't react violently against the one who is evil.

Matthew 5:39

The followers of Christ have been called to peace. . . . And they must not only have peace but also make it. And to that end they renounce all violence and tumult. In the cause of Christ nothing is to be gained by such methods. . . . His disciples keep the peace by choosing to endure suffering themselves rather than inflict it on others. They maintain fellowship where others would break it off. They renounce hatred and wrong. In so doing they over-come evil with good, and establish the peace of God in the midst of a world of war and hate.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer
(German pastor, pacifist, and theologian
martyred at the hands of the Nazis)

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Daily Prayers for Peace and Nonviolence

Below is an outline for a simple service that can be followed using the meditation verses, daily readings, and theological reflections found in this devotional. (Prayers are adapted from 'Midday Prayer' in The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia's *A New Zealand Prayer Book*, 1989.)

Begin with silent meditation on the daily verse.

Opening: Let us worship the God of love. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Daily Reading

Intercessions: Let us accept that we are profoundly loved and need never be afraid. (Silence) Let us be filled with the presence of the great compassion towards ourselves and towards all living things. (Silence) Realising that we are all nourished from the same source of life, may we so live that others be not deprived of air, food, water, shelter, or the chance to live. (Silence) Let us pray that we ourselves cease to be a cause of suffering to one another. (Silence) With humility let us pray for the establishment of peace in our hearts and on earth. (Silence)

Theological Reflection

Collect: May God kindle in us the fire of love to bring us alive and give warmth to the world.
Lead me from death to life, from falsehood to truth;
lead me from despair to hope, from fear to trust;
lead me from hate to love, from war to peace.
Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe. Amen.

Closing: The Divine Spirit dwells in us.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

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THURSDAY

Peaceful Revolution

They came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.'

Matthew 26:50-52

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:21

Violence simply is not radical enough, since it generally changes only the rulers but not the rules. What use is a revolution that fails to address the fundamental problem: the existence of domination in all its forms, and the myth of redemptive violence that perpetuates it.

Walter Wink
(anti-apartheid activist and
theologian of nonviolence)

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MONDAY

Peacemaking as Vocation

Come, behold the works of the Lord; see what desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire. 'Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.' The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Psalms 46:8-11

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Matthew 5:9

This is not a time for peace-loving, but rather for peacemaking, which is much more demanding. And peacemaking is, finally, less a position than a path – the path Jesus has clearly instructed us to take. That path cost him dearly, and no doubt will us too. But the alternatives are both impractical and frightening.

Jim Wallis
(Theologian, author, and founder
of the Sojourners community)

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