

***The Narrow Path: From Just War to Nonviolence:  
Reading the Signs of the Times***

*It is by uniting his own sufferings for the sake of truth and freedom to the suffering of Christ on the Cross that man is able to accomplish the miracle of peace and is in a position to discern the often narrow path between the cowardice which gives into evil and the violence which, under the pretext of fighting evil, only makes it worse.*

***Centesimus annus, no. 25***

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. . . we cannot fail to praise those who renounce the use of violence in the vindication of their rights and who resort to methods of defense which are otherwise available to weaker parties too,

provided that this can be done without injury to the rights and duties of others or of the community itself.

***Gaudium et spes, no. 77***

As long as the danger of war remains and there is no competent and sufficiently powerful authority at the international level, governments cannot be denied the right to legitimate self-defense once every means of peaceful settlement has been exhausted.

***Gaudium et spes, no. 79***

[T]he “new moment” in which we find ourselves sees the just-war teaching and non-violence as distinct but interdependent methods of evaluating warfare. They diverge on some specific conclusions, but they share a common presumption against use of force as a means of settling disputes.

***Challenge of Peace, no. 120***

It seemed that the European order resulting from the Second World War and sanctioned by the Yalta Agreements could only be overturned by another war. Instead it has been overcome by the non-violent witness of people who . . . succeeded time after time in finding ways of bearing witness to truth. . . .

May people learn to fight for justice without violence, renouncing class struggle in their internal dispute[s] and war in international ones.

***Centesimus annus, no. 23***

“Never again war!” No, never again war, which destroys the lives of innocent people, teaches how to kill, throws into upheaval even the lives of those who do the killing and leaves behind a trail of resentment and hatred, thus making it all the more difficult to find a just solution of the very problems which provoked the war.

***Centesimus annus, no. 52***

Our conference’s approach . . . can be summarized this way:

- In situations of conflict our constant commitment ought to be, as far as possible to strive for justice through nonviolent means.
- But, when sustained attempts at nonviolence fail to protect the innocent against fundamental injustice, then legitimate political authorities are permitted as a last resort to employ limited force to rescue the innocent and establish justice.

**The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace**