

Rectifying Political Leadership Through a Just Peace Ethic

Eli McCarthy and Leo Lushombo

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church 2018 Conference in Sarajevo

TOO OFTEN, POLITICAL LEADERS UTILIZE different forms of violence to divide societies and countries. At times, this is a form of cultural violence manifested in de-humanization of certain groups, tribalism, nationalism and devaluing of human rights; also structural violence manifested in increasing income inequality and massive spending on arms; and even more direct violence manifested in civil and proxy wars, drones, military operations, rape and sexual assault, civilians increasingly being the main victims of war, the massive refugee crisis, as well as the ecological crisis.

However, we are becoming more aware of the long-term self-perpetuating destructive impact of violence, even where it may appear to achieve some limited short-term success. The global data on nonviolent civil resistance movements reveal their growing effectiveness compared to armed methods, such as being twice as effective and over ten times more likely to lead to durable democracy.¹ Awareness is increasing that there are indeed much better, more effective options than violence, and more resources are being invested in such options.

Although there have been some recent breakthroughs, this essay addresses the emerging trend of today's lack of unifying political leadership.² In the first part of this essay, we draw on Pope Francis's 2017 World Day of Peace message on nonviolence to provide a way forward to more unifying political leadership. We use this touchstone document to help clarify the value of seeing cultural, structural, and direct violence as an integrated whole we need to address together as missionary disciples. In the context of the Catholic Nonviolence

¹ Maria Stephan and Erica Chenoweth, *Why Civilian Resistance Works* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 7 and 213-214.

² This essay is a combination of two connected essays. Eli McCarthy wrote the first part of this essay, and Leo Lushombo, who is from the DRC, wrote the case study portion.

Initiative, we articulate how a just peace ethic offers key advantages to do that work, and thus, enables the cultivation of more unifying political leadership. In the second part of this essay, we apply this perspective to the ongoing, extensive violent conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with a particular emphasis on gender-based violence.³ We highlight Dr. Denis Mukengere Mukwege, a 2018 Nobel Peace Prize winner, and associates in the Panzi Hospital who model in key ways a virtue-based just peace approach to the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁴

“NONVIOLENCE: A STYLE OF POLITICS FOR PEACE”

In April 2016, the Vatican’s Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, members of the Justice and Peace Commission of the global leaders of women and men religious institutes (UISG, USG), U.S. Conferences of Women and Men Religious Leaders (LCWR, CMSM), Pax Christi International, and more than 85 representatives (including six bishops) from around the world were all part of a wonderful conference focused on gospel nonviolence and just peace.⁵ Many participants came from contexts of violence and war: Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, South Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Philippines, and Colombia.

Our focus was on active nonviolence in order to help the Catholic community develop a deeper understanding and commitment to nonviolence as the power of love in action; as the path to fuller truth,⁶ as a spirituality, way of life, and distinct virtue; and as an effective method and constructive force for social justice, transforming conflict, challenging all forms of violence, protecting all people and the earth, and building sustainable peace. Nonviolence is *positive* reverence for dignity and life, as well as a contextualized, creative praxis.⁷

³ The fuller case study along with ten others will be published in an upcoming book entitled *A Just Peace Ethic: Breaking Cycles of Violence and Building Sustainable Peace*, ed. Eli McCarthy (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2020).

⁴ The Nobel Prize, “The Nobel Peace Prize for 2018,” www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2018/press-release/.

⁵ Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, “About the Nonviolence and Just Peace Conference,” nonviolencejustpeace.net/about/.

⁶ This characteristic is based on the recognition that each person has a piece of the truth to offer. Gandhi used the phrase *satyagraha*, meaning “clinging to truth” to describe his nonviolent movement. Thus, if we kill others, we make it more difficult to apprehend the fuller truth.

⁷ See Pope John Paul II, “Holy Mass in Drogheda: Homily of His Holiness John Paul II,” September 29, 1979, w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19790929_irlanda-dublino-drogheda.html: “violence is evil, that violence is unacceptable as a solution to problems, that violence is unworthy of man. Violence is a lie, for it goes against the truth of our faith, the truth of our humanity. Violence destroys what it claims to defend: the dignity, the life, the freedom of human beings.”

We heard stories from Catholic leaders, such as Ugandan Archbishop Odama and Fr. Francisco de Roux, S.J., from Colombia, who successfully negotiated with very violent armed actors such as the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda and the FARC and paramilitaries in Colombia. We also heard from Sr. Matty Nazik from Iraq who called us to stop the militarization of her country, to stop bombing, and to rely on nonviolent strategies.⁸ Mairead Maguire, who is a Nobel Peace Prize winner from Ireland, and Father de Roux both spoke about how the just war mentality was getting in the way of Catholics developing nonviolent practices.⁹

In the end, we crafted an appeal to the Catholic Church that included asking Pope Francis to write an encyclical on nonviolence, to scale-up key nonviolent practices and education, to initiate a global conversation, to shift our focus to a just peace ethic, and to pivot away from a just war ethic.¹⁰ Over 250 religious orders or institutes have endorsed the appeal.¹¹ The national bishops' conferences of Japan and Belgium also have endorsed the appeal. This energy coalesced in the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, which has a rich website that offers many educational resources, expert background papers, action guides, a page to endorse the appeal as an individual or organization as well as the book *Choosing Peace*, which summarizes the conference and some subsequent dialogue.¹² A major follow-up workshop recently occurred at the Vatican on April 4-5th, 2019.¹³

⁸ See Rose Marie Berger, "Game Changer," in *Sojourners*, December 2016, 17-23, on Sister Nazik's contribution to the conference. As Berger quotes her: "Which of the wars we have been in is a just war? In my country, there was no just war. War is the mother of ignorance, isolation, and poverty. Please tell the world there is *no such thing as a just war*. I say this as a daughter of war. We can't respond to violence with worse violence. In order to kill five violent men, we have to create ten violent men to kill them. This encourages the spiral of violence up and up. And the people are so exhausted because they don't know what's happening. It's like a dragon with seven heads. You cut one and two others come up...[so] we try to create an environment of nonviolence."

⁹ See Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, "Videos from the Conference," nonviolence-justpeace.net/videos-nonviolence-conference-fishbowl-sessions/.

¹⁰ The specific nonviolent practices identified were nonviolent resistance, restorative justice, trauma-healing, unarmed civilian protection, conflict transformation, and peacebuilding strategies. See Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, "An Appeal to the Catholic Church to Re-commit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence," April 13, 2016, nonviolencejustpeace.net/final-statement-an-appeal-to-the-catholic-church-to-re-commit-to-the-centrality-of-gospel-nonviolence/.

¹¹ Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, "Organizational and Individual Endorsements of the Appeal," nonviolencejustpeace.net/organizational-and-individual-endorsements-of-the-appeal/.

¹² Marie Dennis, *Choosing Peace: The Catholic Church Returns to Gospel Nonviolence* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2018).

¹³ Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, "Faith Leaders, Peace Practitioners Deepen Church's Commitment to Nonviolence and Peace," April 6, 2019, nonviolence-justpeace.net/2019/04/03/path-of-nonviolence-toward-a-culture-of-peace/.

One of the major fruits from the 2016 conference was Pope Francis's World Day of Peace Message in January 2017 entitled "Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace."¹⁴ In this document, he said "I pray that the image and likeness of God in each person will enable us to acknowledge one another as sacred gifts endowed with immense dignity. Especially in situations of conflict, let us respect this, our 'deepest dignity,' and make active nonviolence our way of life." He went on to explain that "to be true followers of Jesus today includes embracing his teaching of nonviolence. For Christians, nonviolence is not merely tactical behavior but a person's way of being," and "to cultivate nonviolence in our most personal thoughts and values," and "daily gestures." Reflecting on violence he says that "countering violence with violence leads at best to forced migrations and enormous suffering;" "force of arms is deceptive," whereas "nonviolence is realistic, more powerful than violence." Pope Francis identifies Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a Muslim and leader of the first nonviolent peace army, and Leymah Gbowee, a black woman nonviolent leader from Liberia. He pledges the assistance of the Catholic Church in every effort to build peace through active and creative nonviolence.

Also, in this message, Pope Francis calls for peacebuilding to be expressed through active nonviolence, and "to limit the use of force by the application of moral norms." Yet the Pope brilliantly identifies the Sermon on the Mount as the "manual" for such a strategy of peace-making. He says, "This is also a program and a challenge for political and religious leaders, the heads of international institutions, and business and media executives: to apply the Beatitudes in the exercise of their respective responsibilities." He doesn't explicitly mention the just war ethic. As Gerald Schlabach has written, "He names instead the space that the Catholic moral traditions have hoped the 'just war' theory would fill."¹⁵ So how might we perhaps better fill this space today and offer a new moral framework for this larger strategy of peacemaking toward a more unifying political leadership?

JUST PEACE ETHIC

This ethic arises out of our tradition of creation as a sacred gift, a biblical vision of shalom, the Sermon on the Mount, Catholic social teaching, the vocation to be missionary disciples, the World Council of Churches 2011 call for a just peace approach, and broad experience

¹⁴ Pope Francis, "Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace," World Day of Peace Message, January 1, 2017, w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco_20161208_messaggio-l-giornata-mondiale-pace-2017.html.

¹⁵ Gerald Schlabach, "Pope Francis's Peacebuilding Pedagogy: A Commentary on his 2017 World Day of Peace Message," January 2, 2017, www.geraldschlabach.net/2017/01/02/wdp17/.

in cases of violent conflict. This ethic is both transformational and preventative. This ethic offers norms that focus on three distinct yet overlapping spheres or categories.¹⁶ Each of these norms also applies at all stages of conflict, and the spheres can overlap in time and space. Each sphere consists of a group of norms to guide strategy and action, such that each norm should be enhanced or at least not obstructed by any strategy or actions chosen. The spheres include: 1) develop virtues and skillsets to engage conflict constructively (*jus in conflictione*); 2) break cycles of violence (*jus ex bello*); 3) build sustainable peace (*jus ad pacem*).

In sphere one, the norm of sustaining spiritual disciplines accents discernment, contemplation, repentance, forgiveness, fasting, and prayer, particularly for Christians a Eucharistic prayer that explicitly names Jesus's love of enemies and rejection of violence. The norm of virtuous habits includes the key virtues of nonviolent peacemaking or active nonviolence, mercy, compassion, empathy, humility, hospitality, solidarity, justice and courage. It also includes a sensibility of what many Africans call "ubuntu," i.e. our interconnectedness and interdependence. The norm of education about nonviolence and training in key skillsets accents skills such as nonviolent communication, strategic nonviolent resistance, social and conflict analysis of root causes, needs-based analysis, gender analysis, as well as racial and intersectional analysis. Another norm for this sphere is cultivating nonviolent peacemaking communities, institutions and cultures.

In sphere two, the norm of reflexivity calls for actions to keep means and ends consistent to better ensure we truly actualize such ends.¹⁷ The norm of creative nonviolent direct action calls for actions to resist injustice and violence without responding in kind. It accents the key practices of unarmed civilian protection, mobilizing credible messengers, nonviolent civil resistance, providing sanctuary, and

¹⁶ With some adaption, these draw on the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative global roundtable on a new moral framework (2017-2018) and the synthesizing work of Gerald Schlabach, "What is Just Peace? A Synthesis based on Catholic and Ecumenical Christian Sources," www.geraldschlabach.net/2018/03/02/what-is-just-peace/. The norms identified in this essay have been refined further through recent case studies and a year-long global roundtable of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative and, thus, are updated from an earlier version published in June 2018. See Eli McCarthy, "A Virtue-Based Just Peace Ethic," *Journal of Moral Theology* 7, no. 2 (2018): 92-101. Also see Jarem Sawatsky, *Justpeace Ethics: A Guide to Restorative Justice and Peacebuilding* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2008); Maryann Cusimano Love, "What Kind of Peace Do We Seek?" in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Praxis*, ed. Scott Appleby, Robert Schreiter, and Gerard Powers (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2010); *Just Peacemaking: New Paradigm for Ethics of Peace and War*, ed. Glen Stassen (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2008); and Ferdando Enns, *Just Peace: Ecumenical, Inter-cultural, and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2013).

¹⁷ Some, such as Gerald Schlabach, consider reflexivity as a basic background assumption of the entire just peace ethic.

nonviolent civilian-based defense. For example, unarmed civilian protection entails an outside party intervening in a conflict as non-partisan, with compassion for all parties, with the aim of defusing violence and of creating space for reconciliation and peacebuilding. This proven practice includes tactics such as protective presence and accompaniment, proactive engagement with armed actors, and even physical interposition. One story from South Sudan tells of when two unarmed Nonviolent Peaceforce officers directly saved fourteen women and children during an armed militia raid. The NP officers courageously refused on three separate occasions to obey the militia's orders to leave the women and children.¹⁸ In addition, when they accompanied women to get firewood or water in South Sudan because they were regularly getting sexually assaulted or raped by armed actors from all groups in the area, they reduced these incidents from regularity to zero in those areas.¹⁹ Other organizations that offer unarmed civilian protection also include Peace Brigades International, Cure Violence, Christian Peacemaker Teams, and Operation Dove, which is a Catholic version.

Also, in sphere two is the norm of re-humanization, which calls for humanizing rhetoric and image creation, as well as truth-telling and correcting of narratives that de-humanize any of the parties. Another norm is participatory processes, which calls for decision-making and action chosen to be as participatory and inclusive of as many key stakeholders as possible, especially women, young adult leaders, other marginalized groups, local leaders, and adversaries. For example, including women and local civil society leaders more directly in Syrian negotiations would have likely led to better outcomes.²⁰ A closely related norm is diplomacy and dialogue. The norm of conflict transformation calls for action that draws adversaries toward partnership and addresses root causes. It accents a range of key practices such as independent initiatives to build trust, meeting human needs of all actors, and trauma-healing, such as the work of Jesuit Refugee Services in Syria. Closely related is a norm of acknowledging responsibility for

¹⁸ Nonviolent Peaceforce, "Andres Gutierrez and Derek Oakley on Their Experience of the Violence in South Sudan," April 17, 2014, www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/blog/south-sudan-news/60-andres-gutierrez-and-derek-oakley-on-their-experience-of-the-violence-in-south-sudan.

¹⁹ Mel Duncan, "Case Studies of Unarmed Civilian Protection," Nonviolent Peaceforce, March 2016, www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/images/publications/UCP_Case_Studies_v5.3_LQ.pdf.

²⁰ Renee Coulouris, "Here's Why Syrian Women Need to be Included More in Peacebuilding," *Atlantic Council*, July 11, 2018, www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/syriasource/here-s-why-syrian-women-need-to-be-included-more-in-peacebuilding. Including women makes peace agreements 64 percent less likely to fail and 35 percent more likely to last at least 15 years, "Women's Participation in Peace Processes," *Council of Foreign Relations*, www.cfr.org/interactive/womens-participation-in-peace-processes.

harm. This would accent key practices such as lament and dangerous memory, along with processes of restorative justice. The norm of integral disarmament, which is Pope Francis's term, calls for actions to diminish the "arming" sensibilities within our persons as well as significantly reducing all weapons and the arms trade.²¹

In sphere three, the norm of relationality and reconciliation calls for actions that invite, create, strengthen and heal relationships in ever wider (horizontal) and deeper (vertical) directions in society, with a particular accent on inter-religious cooperation. The norm of human dignity and human rights calls for actions that are consistent with and improve appreciation for the equal dignity of all people, including adversaries, by ensuring human rights and cultivating empathy. The norm of a robust civil society and just governance calls for actions that strengthen these, re-distributes power, and includes the practice of advocacy. The norm of ecological justice and sustainability calls for action that contributes to the long-term well-being of people, non-human animals, and the environment. The norm of economic, racial, and gender justice would call for actions to enable distributive and structural justice with a particular focus on the most marginalized and vulnerable.

In turn, some guiding questions to reflect on in this just peace ethic would include the following: What ongoing actions and policies could help build sustainable peace? What are the root causes of the conflict? What habits (virtues/vices) are at stake and skillsets needed to transform the conflict? What practices and transforming initiatives could be scaled up to break cycles of violence?

MORE UNIFYING POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

If the Catholic Church can reflect with, refine, develop, and help to mainstream a just peace ethic then we may be able to make some progress with cultivating more unifying political leadership in our societies. Imagine if political leaders increasingly focused on the three spheres of sustainable peace, the virtues and skills to engage conflict constructively, and breaking cycles of violence? The sustaining peace agenda at the United Nations is one promising initiative that could be supported and enhanced by a just peace ethic.²² Further, the just peace norms offer additional elements and practices to strengthen a sustaining peace agenda. For example, the norms of sustaining spiritual practices (centering, meditation, fasting, discernment, prayer, etc.) and cultivating key virtues (empathy, compassion, mercy, nonviolence, humility, hospitality, solidarity, courage) could be an

²¹ Jim Fair, "Pope Stresses Need to Halt Nuclear Arms," *Zenit*, November 10, 2017, zenit.org/articles/pope-stresses-need-to-halt-nuclear-arms/.

²² International Peace Institute, "Sustaining Peace and Prevention," www.ipinst.org/program/sustaining-peace-and-prevention.

area for growth in the sustaining peace meta-policy. The particular practices of unarmed civilian protection and nonviolent civilian-base defense could also enhance the implementation of the sustaining peace agenda.

How might the just peace ethic impact the national security strategies in terms of guiding vision, core values, key practices, and priority issues? For instance, we would likely emphasize a vision for the well-being of all people and the earth, not merely our own country.²³ We would identify values of equal dignity, interconnectedness, humility, and nonviolence. We would focus on practices of cooperation more than competition,²⁴ and better shift our investments into nonviolent strategies while we emphasize the root causes of conflicts. Rather than calling for military dominance when dialogue appears to fail,²⁵ we would lift up and focus on strategic nonviolent direct action to shift power, diminish injustice, and create a more fertile ground for dialogue. We would acknowledge the need for security but also that it is most sustainably met by acting in accord with human dignity through cooperation, trust, and creative nonviolent action.

The Catholic Church can take a number of key steps to help mainstream a just peace ethic. As academics, significantly scaling up education about nonviolence, particularly gospel nonviolence, is one key step. This also includes robust training in the sustaining spiritual disciplines, as well as in the virtues and moral imagination related to just peace. Lederach defines the moral imagination as the “capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist.”²⁶

In addition, imagine if our parishes and Catholic schools offered monthly nonviolent skill training and a robust restorative justice discipline system. Another key step is utilizing the church’s “ubiquitous presence” in many places to better accompany and take on some of the risk with those in situations of injustice, profound repression and mass violence, and thus, bridge different sectors of society.²⁷ A good example of this could be organizing direct, physical and pastoral accompaniment teams to be with the thousands of migrants traveling in large

²³ As an example to improve on, see the White House, “U.S. National Security Strategy, 2017,” 1, www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905-2.pdf.

²⁴ White House, “U.S. National Security Strategy,” 2-3.

²⁵ White House, “U.S. National Security Strategy,” 26-28.

²⁶ John Paul Lederach, *The Moral Imagination: Art and Soul of Building Peace* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), ix, 5, 38.

²⁷ John Paul Lederach, “The Long Journey Back to Humanity,” in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Praxis*, ed. Scott Appleby, Robert Schreiter, and Gerard Powers (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2010), 51.

groups from central America into Mexico and to the U.S. border.²⁸ With the many educational institutions and its multi-sector presence, the church can also better mobilize communities and social movements toward just peace practices.

Another key step is scaling up advocacy and institution building of nonviolent strategies and using a just peace moral framework in local, national, and international spheres as well as giving more clear emphasis to outlawing war, as Vatican II called us to do. For example, integrating trauma-healing exercises into political negotiations could better enable such actors to build trust, identify needs, and create more sustainable agreements. Advocacy could also include requiring frequent, ongoing de-escalation and empathy training of police officers, as well as developing unarmed civilian protection units, nonviolent civilian-based defense, and more robust nonviolent civil society organizations. Imagine if each diocese or local Christian community developed an unarmed civilian protection unit, i.e. a “peace team.” Perhaps these might include interfaith peace teams as well.

Building on Pope Francis’s 2017 World Day of Peace message on nonviolence, a just peace ethic helps to provide a way forward to more unifying political leadership. As we work together to develop this ethic toward such leadership, we need to work with and refine this ethic through case studies by authors from around the world. Here, we do this with a case study of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is located in Central Africa and shares land borders with a total of nine countries, including South Sudan and the Central African Republic in the north; Tanzania, Burundi, Uganda, and Rwanda to the east; the Republic of Congo in the western part; and Angola and Zambia in the southern part. The DRC shares with Uganda a land border that stretches 545 miles in length, while Rwanda shares 137 miles of the DRC’s land border, which is the shortest of the DRC’s land borders and where genocide occurred in 1994.

The rapes in the DRC spread in the regions which were afflicted by the conflicts as an aftermath of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. After the genocide, Tutsi imposed their military presence in the Eastern DRC in order to control the Hutu “genocidaires” and refugees who fled toward Congo and sheltered in the Eastern Congo’s borders, where they enjoyed the status of refugees. A Congolese leader, Laurent

²⁸ David Agren, “Migrant Caravan departs Mexico City as new caravans merge to reach capital,” *USA Today*, Nov. 10, 2018, www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/11/10/migrant-caravan-donald-trump-immigration-southern-us-border-mexico-honduras-asylum/1956952002/.

Kabila, took advantages of the chaos to initiate an armed revolution in 1996 against the dictator Mobutu, who remained in power for 32 years. He recruited soldiers, including children who came to be known as *Kadogo*, i.e., the little ones in Swahili.

Kabila's revolution was supported by Rwanda and Uganda who wanted to ensure the safety of their borders. These conflicts, which have been often misrepresented as "civil wars," are not civil wars. Rather, they are part of ongoing armed conflicts involving the neighboring countries.²⁹ These conflicts involve "armies of seven African states, and criminal groups from the armies of Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and the DRC have benefited by building up a self-financing war economy centered on mineral exploitation."³⁰ A 2002 panel of experts from the United Nations has shown the involvement of the neighboring countries in the wars in the DRC and the link between such involvement and the rampant rapes with the mining exploitation in the DRC.³¹

The 2004 UN Security Council Resolution 1533 identifies the role of Rwanda in supporting the munitions forces of the so-called rebels Mutebutsi and Nkunda and its role as a rear base for coordination of and recruitment for wars inside the DRC.³² One of the reasons they advanced to justify their invading presence was that militias opposed to their governments were based in the Kivu since the genocide.³³ The UN Security Council Resolution S/2012/843 also affirmed the Rwandan government's direct military support to and coordination of the "rebels" and Ugandan senior governmental officials' involvement in such support.³⁴ The reports also underline that "several traders have

²⁹ Amber Peterman, Tia Palermo, and Caryn Bredenkamp, "Estimates and Determinants of Sexual Violence Against Women in the Democratic Republic of Congo," *American Journal of Public Health* 101, no. 6 (2011): 1060–67, doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2010.300070.

³⁰ Denis Mukengere Mukwege and Cathy Nangini, "Rape with Extreme Violence: The New Pathology in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo," *PLoS Medicine* 6, no. 12 (2009): 7, doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000204.

³¹ United Nations Security Council, "Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo," UN Doc. S/2002/1146, October 16, 2002, www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/DRC%20S%202002%201146.pdf.

³² United Nations Security Council, "Letter Dated 15 July 2004 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee Established Pursuant to Resolution 1533 (2004) Concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo Addressed to the President of the Security Council," § 65–84, UN Doc. S/2004/551, July 15, 2004, digitalibrary.un.org/record/5262204/files/S_2004_551-EN.pdf.

³³ United Nations Security Council, "Letter Dated 15 July 2004," § 8, 21, 22, S/2004/551.

³⁴ United Nations Security Council, "Letter Dated 12 November 2012 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee Established Pursuant to Resolution 1533 (2004) Concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo addressed to the President of the

contributed to financing M23 rebels [group whose origin is traced to Rwanda] using profits resulting from the smuggling of Congolese minerals into Rwanda.”³⁵ Rigobert Minani, a Congolese Jesuit who has been committed to human rights in the Congo for decades, argues that, to address those militia groups, “these countries have deployed troops and sponsored militias in the eastern DRC, feeding the proliferation of armed groups. Nearly all of the illicit traffic in Congolese minerals that funds armed groups transits Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda.”³⁶

The Rwandan and Ugandan armed groups and foreign armies, including those rising from the DRC, were reinforced by those recruited from refugee camps such as those in the DRC, Burundi, and Uganda.³⁷ The eastern border land and waters of the DRC from north to south are full of key mineral and energy resources such as diamonds, gold, coltan, copper, cobalt, tin, manganese, lead and zinc, coal, uranium, and oil.

These “rebels” are accounted among the main perpetrators of rape as a weapon of war, while exploiting the natural resources in the border lands.³⁸ This rape refers to systematic or strategic and opportunistic forms of sexual violence that occur in the build-up to, active fighting in, and aftermath of armed conflict. It is a deliberate strategy of one or more parties in the armed conflict. This weapon is still used in war zones in Libya, Guinea, South Sudan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Rwanda, and in the DRC.

In the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide, several wars have been led in the DRC by the Rwandan political leadership. One key war was waged side by side with business activities by the Rwandan Patriotic Front politicians, particularly through minerals trade. Women were used as sexual slaves in mining zones that turn out to be the fighting zones and from where DRC’s mineral resources were plundered and exported to industrialized markets. While Rwanda justifies the presence of its military in the DRC as a question of security and common good, women are paying the higher price of their lives. The army groups use rape as a weapon of war while pillaging mineral resources in the mining zones in the Eastern DRC. For example, the

Security Council,” § 2-4, UN Doc. S/2012/843, November 15, 2012, digitallibrary.un.org/record/738098/files/S_2012_843-EN.pdf.

³⁵ United Nations Security Council, “Letter Dated 12 November 2012,” § 4, S/2012/843.

³⁶ Rigobert Minani Bihuzo, “Unfinished Business. A Framework for Peace in the Great Lakes,” Africa Center for Strategic Studies, July 2012, www.files.ethz.ch/isn/147787/AfricaBriefFinal_21.pdf.

³⁷ United Nations Security Council, “Letter Dated 12 November 2012,” § 74, 22, S/2012/843.

³⁸ United Nations Security Council, “Letter Dated 12 November 2012,” § 174, 38, S/2012/843.

region of Shabunda is rich in coltan, gold, and cassiterite. The Kabare region is rich in coltan,³⁹ “used for capacitors in cell phones and video game consoles,” and which contains the tantalum that is used widely in electronics in the industrialized world.⁴⁰ The area of Walungu is rich in cassiterite and gold. Importantly, Denis Mukwege and Cathy Nangini demonstrate that the rate of rape is directly correlated with proximity to mining zones.⁴¹

Mukwege states that “rape with extreme violence” (REV) has increased in the eastern part of DRC during the past 20 years. A nationwide survey reports that up to 1.69 to 1.8 million women were reported as victims of rape in 2011. Between 1999 and 2015, 45,482 women survivors have been treated in the Panzi Hospital (in Bukavu) alone by Mukwege and his associates.⁴² Since 2017, more than 50,000 women survivors have been treated by the hospital.⁴³

It is important to note that rape is listed among the crimes against humanity in the statute adopted by the United Nations Security Council in 1993.⁴⁴ The 1998 ICC Statute identifies the widespread and systematic attack of rape as a “crime against humanity” in both international and non-international armed conflicts.⁴⁵ Thus, the widespread rapes have become a peace-hindering factor and a security issue, as confirmed by the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820.⁴⁶ The political machine behind wars in the Great Lakes region (DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi) challenges the utility of other

³⁹ Also known as Columbite-Tantalite.

⁴⁰ Jason K. Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), 296.

⁴¹ Denis Mukengere Mukwege and Cathy Nangini, “Rape with Extreme Violence: The New Pathology in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo,” *PLoS Medicine* 6, no. 12 (2009): doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000204.

⁴² Jackson Sinnenberg, “A Doctor Who Treats Rape Survivors Seen as Nobel Peace Prize Contender,” National Public Radio, October 6, 2016, www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/10/06/496893413/doctor-who-helps-rape-survivors-is-shortlisted-for-nobel-peace-prize.

⁴³ Denis Mukwege, “Using Rape as a Weapon of War Should Cross Every International Red Line,” *Time*, April 24, 2017, time.com/4752092/denis-mukwege-chemical-weapons-sexual-violence-international-law/.

⁴⁴ See United Nations Security Council, “Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to Paragraph of Security Council Resolutions 808 (1993),” Annex, Article 5 (g), UN Doc. S/25704, May 3, 1993, www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/ICTY%20S%2025704%20statute_re808_1993_en.pdf. This statute was approved by Security Council Resolution 827, “Adopted by the Security Council at its 3217th meeting on 25 May 1993,” UN Doc. S/RES/827, May 25, 1993, www.icty.org/x/file/Legal%20Library/Statute/statute_827_1993_en.pdf.

⁴⁵ Roy Gutman, David Rieff, and Anthony Gary Dworkin, eds., *Crimes of War: What the Public Should Know*, Second Edition, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2007), 136.

⁴⁶ Kerry F. Crawford, *Wartime Sexual Violence: From Silence to Condemnation of a Weapon of War* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2017), 91–120.

predominant ethical approaches, such as the just war criterion of proportionality. Proportionality refers to the idea that “the overall destruction expected from the use of violent force must be outweighed by the good to be achieved.”⁴⁷ Yet, the use of rape as a weapon of war as performed in the DRC illustrates another example of how the criterion of proportionality is too easily manipulated and abused in the context of war and thus, too often functions to enable violence and war. Such justifying logic based on proportionality might go that armed force is needed to attack those in the DRC who committed genocide in Rwanda, and thus, the good that would come from this outweighs the harm that comes from rape. Because of the consistent failure to adequately address these issues and the ongoing cycles of violence, it is crucial and urgent to consider this from a new ethical perspective, particularly a just peace ethic.

REFLECTING WITH A JUST PEACE ETHIC

With a just peace ethic, we have a broader vision about conflict and a set of norms to adequately expose rape as a weapon of war as well as commit to effective, sustainable ways more likely to end both rape and war. A great example of using just peace norms is found in the Panzi Hospital, where Denis Mukwege and associates display the virtues of mercy and courage, which bring indispensable resources for a more just and peaceful world. In Mukwege’s case, mercy is that which enters into the chaos of another and takes responsibility by being in solidarity with the victims. As he states, “in every raped woman, I see my wife. In every raped mother, I see my mother and in every raped child, my own children.”⁴⁸ In addition to repairing women, Mukwege also calls on the responsibility of national and international governments to effectively collaborate in bringing peace in the DRC. These actions are examples of actualizing the just peace norm of cultivating key virtues. They echo Aquinas that “we are bound to have charity towards all men” (ST II-II q. 64, a. 2). This is the main reason why we should not become “guilty bystanders.” Taking responsibility requires embracing the virtue of courage.

As McCarthy put it, “The virtue of nonviolent peacemaking clarifies or expands the paradigmatic practices of the virtue of courage to the practice of suffering out of reverence for the dignity of others (and self) by risking, perhaps even giving one’s life without the distortion of our dignity created by relying on lethal force or by taking another’s life.”⁴⁹ Mukwege’s approach displays a courage which is

⁴⁷ Aline H. Kalbian, “Where Have All The Proportionalists Gone?,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 30 (2002): 16.

⁴⁸ Sinnenberg, “A Doctor Who Treats Rape Survivors.”

⁴⁹ Eli McCarthy, *Becoming Nonviolent Peacemakers: A Virtue Ethic for Catholic Social Teaching and U.S. Policy* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012), 93.

needed in everyday life to face the many fears that arise from his peacemaker's activities, including denouncing rape and its perpetuating systems. The virtues of mercy and courage are seen throughout the Panzi Hospital's "five-pillar process"⁵⁰ to address the evil of rape and reinforce the vision of a virtue-based just peace approach in many ways. They include medical treatment, psychosocial therapy, socioeconomic support and training, community reintegration, and legal assistance. These pillars display the virtues of mercy and courage needed in everyday life to face the many fears that arise from these peacemaking activities.

A virtue-based just peace ethic illuminates the needs for taking responsibility for the physical, clinical, psychological, socio-economic rehabilitation, and processes of restorative justice, as well as for addressing the roots of conflict and war at the national, regional, and international level. Mukwege's approach suggests that the international politics and Catholic church can better mainstream a just peace ethic by including gender analysis and equality as well as addressing the mining and arms trade factors which play a crucial role in hindering peace.

REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION OF VICTIMIZED WOMEN

Panzi Hospital has an extensive program of rehabilitation and integration of women victims to restore their physical, psychological, and socio-economic well-being. This program aims at supporting women in order for them to regain full confidence in themselves, reintegrate into the community in which they live, and take engagement to demand justice. As one of the women victims I (Lushombo) spoke with said, "I feel stranger to myself and to all the people around me. I feel like I do not fit here. I stay in my room days after days and alone. I wish they could kill me instead of doing what they did to me." Thus, these programs illustrate and advance the just peace norm of conflict transformation, particularly the practices of trauma-healing and restorative justice.

Actualizing the just peace norm of economic justice, the Panzi Hospital's peace-making actions have gone far to provide a training center called "Cit  de la Joie" or City of Joy for women to learn different kind of works to provide for their basic needs, including traditionally men's jobs such as carpentry. The perspective of the City of Joy includes equality of gender. Mukwege explains that patriarchy is part of the problem: "We raise our sons by stripping them of any emotion and our daughters end up in the kitchen. Africa's future

⁵⁰ Sinnenberg, "A Doctor Who Treats Rape Survivors."

begins when girls know that they are equal to boys.”⁵¹ Mainstreaming the norm of gender justice, such as equality of gender, makes women victims become stronger and more freely embrace the goal of peace.

Actualizing the just peace norms of sustainability and nonviolent peacemaking cultures, Mukwege believes that a sustainable just peace requires a cultural shift as well. As he puts it, “Men need to understand that to protect women is to protect themselves, and that respect for women is key to equity. Rape is not only a woman’s issue; it is humanity’s crisis to solve.”⁵² He continues that “Without considering women as our equals, we deprive future generations of our legacy.”⁵³ Since women are equal to men, “we must promote accountability, coherence, and transparency ... we must understand that wisdom comes not only from men but also from women.”⁵⁴

Through these three dimensions Mukwege exemplifies virtues of charity, courage, mercy, and justice. As he explains, “We have seen how medical intervention combined with psychosocial care, literacy, numeracy, and vocational training are catalysts for change, both for the short and long term.”⁵⁵ Panzi Hospital has also created a training center for nurses and physicians to meet this increasing humanitarian crisis. Mukwege displays well the virtue of mercy as far as he enters into the chaos of women victims leading him to embrace vulnerability, risking his own life and living like one of them, in the hospital. As he said, “My life has had to change, since returning [from exile after being attacked in his own home]. I now live at the hospital and I take a number of precautions, so I have lost some of my freedom.”

Hence, a virtue-based just peace ethic helps to drive the person to dare to take risks of suffering and even death without killing others, i.e., the virtue of courage. Mukwege’s example shows that even one single person can make the difference in helping secure a sustainable peace and build more unifying political leadership, rather than acting like “guilty bystanders,” which is how others and the governments whether national, regional, or international, too often seem to act.

NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL LEGAL DIMENSIONS

Beyond restoring the physical, psychological, and socio-economic well-being of the victims, Mukwege is embarked in another global campaign. As he puts it, “What I have seen and heard and experienced in eastern DRC is without a doubt the worst situation of violence

⁵¹ Women for Women International, “Read Dr. Denis Mukwege’s Speech Accepting the 2015 Champion of Peace Award,” November 2015, www.womenforwomen.org/blogs/read-dr-denis-mukweges-speech-accepting-2015-champion-peace-award.

⁵² Denis Mukwege, “Using Rape as a Weapon of War.”

⁵³ Women for Women International, “Read Dr. Denis Mukwege’s Speech.”

⁵⁴ Women for Women International, “Read Dr. Denis Mukwege’s Speech.”

⁵⁵ Women for Women International, “Read Dr. Denis Mukwege’s Speech.”

towards women in the world.”⁵⁶ Hence, he has turned his energy to also mobilize international politics to be involved in a more sustainable peace-making process in the DRC. The fate of these women continues in the DRC despite the deployment of the UN’s armed peacekeeping forces, which have also been routinely responsible for direct sexual abuse and rape of women. In an interview, Mukwege claims, “I operated on a mother, then 15 years later, I’d operate on her daughter, and three years after that, I’d operate on the granddaughter - a baby.” He continues: “I absolutely have to tell the world, show the world, that there is a collective responsibility to act in DRC. We share the same humanity and we cannot continue to allow economic wars to be fought on women’s bodies.”⁵⁷

Actualizing the just peace norm of conflict transformation, which seeks to address root causes, he urged the United Nations in 2014 to use all the international legal instruments to address the root causes of the regional conflicts in the DRC. These root causes include the exploitation of natural resources that benefit the industrialized countries today and around which many of the rapes are committed.⁵⁸ In the face of threats, he still endorsed the Global Witness conflict mineral report on the DRC arguing that:

Congo’s minerals are exported, smelted, and sold internationally, where they end up in cell phones, laptops, or as pieces of jewelry. We know that some of these minerals sourced from conflict-areas have funded violence, abuses, and corrupt criminal networks. And yet, the response of international companies and states has been too slow and timid to make the necessary fundamental changes.⁵⁹

EFFECTIVENESS OF MUKWEGE’S NONVIOLENT VIRTUE-BASED JUST PEACE APPROACH

Mukwege’s approach cultivates the virtue of love in the victims rather than the vice of violence that perpetuates war. It works to make the community stronger and resistant to all mechanisms fueling war in the DRC. Mukwege’s approach makes the community more responsible, at least at the very local level, and thus, enables the conditions for actualizing the just peace norm of a robust civil society.

⁵⁶ Kelly Morris, “Denis Mukwege: Caring for Victims of Sexual Violence in the DRC,” *The Lancet*, February 28, 2009, doi.org/10/1016/S0140-6736(09)60425-6.

⁵⁷ Eliza Anyangwe and Stephanie Busari, “Denis Mukwege: The Man Who Mends Women,” *CNN*, October 5, 2018, www.cnn.com/2017/10/19/africa/denis-mukwege-congo-doctor-rape/index.html.

⁵⁸ Denis Mukwege, “Speech of Dr. Denis Mukwege, 2014 Sakharov Prize Laureate, in Strasbourg, 26 November 2014,” www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujKEiMn-gGE.

⁵⁹ Global Witness “Digging for Transparency: How U.S. Companies are Only Scratching the Surface of Conflict Minerals Reporting,” April 22, 2015, https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/conflict-minerals/digging-transparency/.

Such an approach drives them not to be passive, guilty bystanders. Rape denies another's humanity, and no one should close his/her eyes when another's humanity is denied. Thus, he actualizes the norm of re-humanization to break the cycles of violence. Further, when a community becomes more responsible, Mukwege explains, it can better address root causes.

The virtue-based just peace approach embodied by Mukwege and Panzi Hospital is a cautionary example of what Erasmus and Pope Francis call nonviolent means as a "style of politics." Mukwege's specific acts may not immediately end wars in the DRC, but they do have significant social and political effects that can make the end of war much more likely.

To illustrate the political effects of Mukwege's approach, it is important to note that one hundred and twenty-two countries have endorsed the United Nations' historic "Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict" of October 2013, a Declaration issuing in part from the work of Mukwege and other peacemaker activists against sexual violence in the DRC.⁶⁰ This accomplishment illustrates advancing the just peace norm of just governance and the particular practices of advocacy. Several nations, including two presidents, attended the ceremony of endorsement and made a commitment to participate in the implementation of the declaration. Such an endorsement is meant to end sexual violence as a weapon of war not only in the DRC but also around the world. Two African presidents have agreed to join the "Circle of Champions" created to exercise special influence to prevent conflict-related sexual violence. I strongly affirm that violent means would not be more effective than a change in consciousness that is materialized into politics in the long term. In accord with the just peace norm of sustainability, a more lasting peace can be reached if governments involved in the DRC's wars affirm the sacredness of the whole human community such as the virtue of nonviolent peacemaking cultivates, not only that of their own people and their economic interests.

In addition to the range of international humanitarian laws regarding rape, there is a need for a just peace response to transform conflicts in the DRC and its neighboring Great Lakes region. On the one hand, the DRC's example and Mukwege's just peace approach suggest that it is crucial to tackle the legal and illegal trade of weapons that benefits several countries in the region and beyond. These efforts would actualize the just peace norms of integral disarmament and economic justice. This demands a broad political will. On the other hand, Mukwege's approach shows that to better address rape and help

⁶⁰ United Nations, "A Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict," UN Doc. A/68/633, December 3, 2013, <https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/A/68/633>.

defuse the war, there is a need to educate not only the victims but also the community on gender analysis and equality.

Another method for protecting women and significantly reducing rape in the DRC might be the just peace practice of unarmed civilian protection, which has been effective, as illustrated in places of violent conflict such as South Sudan. Civil society-based organizations such as the Nonviolent Peaceforce could enhance some of the other essential efforts expressed above by Dr. Mukwege. For a sustainable peace, we need a holistic approach. Thus, unarmed civilian protection must go along with the other efforts mentioned, particularly providing basic human needs, an accountable legal system, democratization, and regional government responsibility.

As lawful as it may be for the Rwandan government to hold accountable the *genocidaires*, any quest for “just” accountability that leads to the denial of the humanity of another group is both unacceptable and ineffective, not to mention violating the just peace norms of human dignity and reflexivity. It is time, as Lisa Cahill puts it, to “go far deeper than fending off aggressors and [supposedly] vindicating the rights of injured parties by killing perpetrators.”⁶¹ Going after perpetrators with lethal force is also killing many other lives, not to mention harming the ones who kill as they experience trauma, moral injury, and brain damage.⁶² There is another way. No selfish notion of peace can work out. No one can enjoy peace if one’s neighbors do not. The peace that is sustainable binds us together.

CONCLUSION

This essay offered a way to cultivate more unifying political leadership through the mainstreaming of a just peace ethic. We analyzed some recent Catholic contributions to a just peace ethic and then explored the value of this ethic in a case study of violent conflict. Utilizing a case study enables us to see more clearly the value of a just peace ethic, to stir our imagination about how it might function in praxis, and to motivate a stronger commitment to its ongoing development and refinement. **M**

⁶¹ Lisa Cahill, “Catholic Tradition on Peace, War, and Just Peace,” *A Just Peace Ethic: Breaking Cycles of Violence and Building Sustainable Peace* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, forthcoming 2020).

⁶² Rachel McNair, *Perpetration-Induced Traumatic Stress: The Psychological Consequences of Killing* (Westport: Praeger/Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002).