



# Nonviolence and Social Analysis in Mission

## What is nonviolence?



Rooted in gospel values – the sanctity of life, the dignity of the person, truth and reconciliation – a commitment to nonviolence requires that we identify all forms of violence, including **direct violence**, **structural violence**, and **violence against creation**.

Broader and more holistic than pacifism, or the refusal to use violence, gospel nonviolence seeks to stop, reduce, and prevent violence by building just peace.

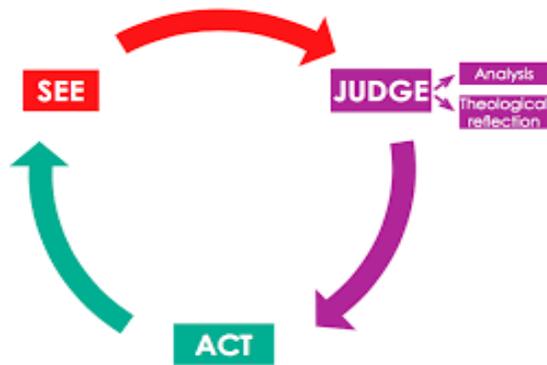


## Nonviolence in Pope Francis' integral vision of Catholic Social Teaching

Drawing on the model of St. Francis of Assisi, Francis highlights the interconnection of **peacebuilding**, **justice for the poor**, and **care for our common home**.

A commitment to gospel nonviolence is the unifying key to this integral understanding of Catholic Social Teaching.

## Social Analysis: The Pastoral Circle



**SEE:** Take stock of the signs of the times: What is happening, what is the impact? Are impacted people involved in this process?

**JUDGE:** Analysis: What are the root causes? Theological reflection: What does our faith tell us about this? View reality in light of Gospel, scripture, Catholic Social Teaching.

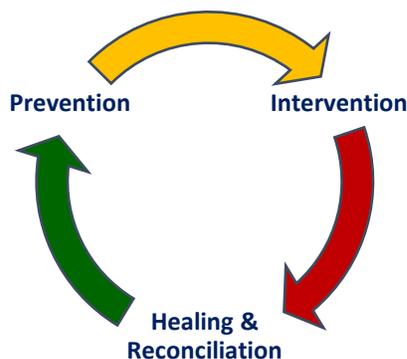
**ACT:** How are we called to respond? Outline strategies, organize, take concrete steps.  
(and we add):

**Evaluate:** What has changed? What is happening now?

*which brings us back around the circle...*

## Analysis for Nonviolence:

An ample understanding of nonviolence integrates: **peacebuilding**, **social justice**, and **care for our common home**, and seeks to resist **direct violence**, **structural violence**, and **violence against creation**. In order to translate this understanding of nonviolence into cohesive strategies for action, Pax Christi International's [Catholic Nonviolence Initiative](#) employs the concept of **Just Peace**: an ethical framework for considering how a whole array of nonviolent actions function together as parts of a greater whole. A **Just Peace ethic** is a set of practical norms that enable society to reduce violence and build and sustain peace. Eli McCarthy, Maryann Cusimano Love, and other thinkers have developed different ways of organizing these norms. The [Maryknoll Lay Missioners](#), in outlining their own commitment to nonviolence, have identified three basic ways nonviolence is employed. The three function together as a kind of cycle of nonviolence:



**Prevention:** Sustainable peacebuilding, early warnings, strengthening relationships, awareness raising...

**Intervention:** Direct action such as accompaniment and unarmed civilian protection, land protection, antiracism...

**Healing and Reconciliation:** Trauma healing, restorative justice, forging right relationships...

Social analysis focused on living gospel nonviolence requires a dynamic relationship between these two cycles: We engage each stage in the pastoral circle - **SEE**, **JUDGE**, and **ACT** – with an eye toward identifying one or more of the three areas in the cycle of nonviolence – **PREVENTION**, **INTERVENTION**, and **HEALING & RECONCILIATION**. This focus on nonviolence will lead us to questions such as:

- Where can we identify a *risk* of violence?
- Where do we see incidents of:
  - direct violence?
  - structural violence?
- What are the impacts of that violence? (Who needs healing? What relationships need reconciliation?)

These questions will, in turn, help us identify strategies for effective nonviolent action.