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Human Rights and the Ethics of Peace: The Contribution of *Pacem in Terris*

Zusammenfassung

Der Beitrag setzt sich mit der Bedeutung der Menschenrechte in der Christlichen Sozialethik auseinander und benennt Herausforderungen, die mit der Rezeption der Enzyklika *Pacem in terris* verbunden sind. In einem ersten Schritt werden die politischen und theologischen Kontexte der Entstehung der Enzyklika beleuchtet. Anschließend wird diskutiert, auf welche Weise *Pacem in terris* die Sprachformen christlichen Sozialengagements transformierte und dabei – trotz des seit langer Zeit bestehenden Verdachtes des Lehramtes gegen die Kategorie der Menschenrechte – für die Menschenrechte plädierte. Dann wird die These entwickelt, dass das Hauptverdienst von *Pacem in terris* in der Verbindung von Menschenrechtspolitik und Friedenspolitik für die Christliche Sozialethik bestand. Schließlich werden herausfordernde Aspekte der Rezeption dieser innovativen und bedeutenden Enzyklika diskutiert.

Abstract

This paper reflects on the significance of human rights in Christian social ethics and considers the challenges associated with the reception of the encyclical. In a first step, it provides an analysis of the political and theological contexts from which *Pacem in terris* emerged. It then discusses how *Pacem in terris* has transformed the language of Christian social commitment and promoted human rights notwithstanding the tradition's long-standing suspicion of the category of human rights. It suggests that one of the most important contributions wrought by *Pacem in terris* was the manner in which it brought the politics of human rights and the politics of peace into a seamless Christian social ethic and it ends with a discussion of the challenges associated with the reception of this transformative and iconic encyclical.

Human rights represent one of the great civilizing projects of modernity. From their formal promulgation in Paris in 1948 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to their subsequent embrace by the newly independent states from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, human rights have emerged as the primary discourse of global politics and as an increasingly prominent category in international and domestic legal systems. In the theological realm the concept of human rights has all but replaced its antecedent, the natural right, while in the world of Christian social engagement the language of human rights has become the *lingua franca* of political and social action.

The 50th anniversary of *Pacem in terris* provides an opportunity to reflect on the significance of human rights in Christian social ethics and

to consider the challenges associated with the reception of the encyclical. This paper begins with an analysis of the political and theological contexts from which *Pacem in terris* emerged. It goes on to discuss how the encyclical transformed the language of Christian social engagement and promoted human rights notwithstanding the tradition's longstanding suspicion of the category of human rights. It suggests that one of the most important contributions wrought by *Pacem in terris* was the manner in which it brought the politics of human rights and the politics of peace into a seamless Christian social ethic and it ends with a discussion of the challenges associated with the reception of this transformative and iconic encyclical.

The promulgation of *Pacem in terris* happened at the height of the Cold War. Although the Cold War was to continue for further decades, the years immediately preceding the issuing of the encyclical were particularly tense. In October 1962 the Cuban missile crisis grabbed the imagination of the world and led to the widespread fear that nuclear weapons would be used. Although the threat never materialized, the crisis left an indelible mark on the consciousness of the global polity, it was the first time that there was worldwide recognition that humanity had come perilously close to annihilation, and that the powers of destruction were in its own hands.

Pope John XXIII addressed this directly in his encyclical saying that "there is a common belief that under modern conditions peace cannot be assured except on the basis of an equal balance of armaments and that [...] if one country is equipped with atomic weapons, others consider themselves justified in producing such weapons themselves, equal in destructive force" (PT 110). "Consequently", he says, "people are living in the grip of constant fear. They are afraid that at any moment the impending storm may break upon them with horrific violence" (ibid. 111). Yet he insists that "justice, right reason, and the recognition of man's dignity cry out insistently for a cessation to the arms race." And reiterating the words of Pope Pius XII he reminds the world that "the calamity of a world war, with the economic and social ruin and the moral excesses and dissolution that accompany it, must not on any account be permitted to engulf the human race for a third time" (ibid. 59).

Pacem in terris is an iconic and important encyclical. It marks a significant breakthrough in the social ethics tradition since it is the first time that the language of human rights is explicitly used in a papal encyclical. Moreover it is also important because it establishes a threshold of

engagement with the world that is qualitatively different than earlier encyclicals: In *Pacem in terris* Pope John XXIII addresses and challenges global political leaders in a language that is both comprehensible to the world, and that simultaneously draws on Christian theological categories, and uses a language which is also embedded in the tradition's historic memory and its social witness.

It begins: "Peace on earth, which all men of every era have most eagerly yearned for, can be firmly established *only* if the order laid down by God be dutifully observed" (ibid. 1; accent. by L. H.).

And in a carefully constructed analysis and argument, it goes on to consider

- the rights of human beings and their corresponding duties;
- the relationship between the citizen and state, and in particular the nature of the authority of the state;
- the need for equality amongst nations and the responsibilities of states to live by the same rights and duties that are attendant on individuals;
- the need for better relationships between nations states and for a global civil society based on mutual respect and mutual aid.

The richness of the encyclical is evident for all to read, and there are many aspects on which one could fruitfully comment. The task today however is to discuss its importance for Christian social ethics specifically in relation to the politics of human rights.

1 *Pacem in Terris* and the Language of Human Rights

All traditions, whether they are secular or religious, are dynamic and evolving. Traditions are the products of discursive processes, they are historically constructed and internally diverse. The historian John Noonan (cf. 1993, 669) characterizes some aspects of the Catholic Church's moral tradition in this way: what was forbidden became lawful (the cases of usury and marriage); what was permissible became unlawful (the case of slavery); what was required became forbidden (the persecution of heretics).

So whether one examines the Roman Catholic Church's tradition on marriage, on divorce, on abortion, on slavery, on conscientious objection to war or on religious freedom one encounters an always evolving, sometimes inconsistent, and occasionally contradictory body of thought.

This is the case also with Christianity's engagement with the notion of human rights. Historical studies confirm that there has long been significant internal diversity on the matter of whether human rights language has any place in the Christian vocabulary.

In recent decades the Roman Catholic Church has enthusiastically adopted the language of human rights. The language of human rights is pervasive throughout the teaching and practice of Catholic social ethics today and is frequently the idiom through which Christian values are articulated to the modern world. Moreover the Catholic Church, through its organisational structures has played a key advocacy role in terms of promoting human rights in national and international contexts. Across the world national conferences of Catholic bishops pursue social justice concerns through the lens of human rights and this is also replicated at the inter-governmental and international level. For example the Catholic Commission of Bishops' Conferences of the European Community (COMECE), made a formal response to the *Draft Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union* in which they confirmed that "protecting the fundamental rights of citizens in relation to the European Union, its institutions and its agencies is an important initiative to which COMECE attaches great value" (COMECE 2000).

However it has not always been thus. Although the Roman Catholic Church now uses the language of human rights consistently in its political and social ethics, there was a time when it too expressed hostility to the modern concept of human rights. Not only did Pius VI declare that it was anathema for Catholics to accept the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, saying "this equality, this liberty, so highly exalted by the National Assembly, have then as their only result the overthrow of the Catholic religion",¹ but Gregory XVI's 1832 encyclical *Mirari vos* also strongly condemned liberalism, individualism, democracy, and also freedom of conscience, of speech, and of the press. The historical details of the progressive adoption of human rights by the Catholic Church are well understood and will not be repeated here. However, it is important in the context of assessing the significance of *Pacem in terris* to note that this encyclical marked one of the most seminal moments in the Catholic tradition's journey from its initial hostility towards human rights language to its enthusiastic embrace.

1 Quoted in Plongeron 1979.

Pacem in terris begins by linking the human desire for peace with the creation of a just and ordered society and highlights the obligations human beings have to use the progress of learning and the inventions of technology in the pursuit of this purpose. Immediately it articulates the foundational principle of any well-ordered society, and insists that it rests on the understanding “that every human being is a person, that is, his nature is endowed with intelligence and free will” (PT 9). And explicitly referencing Pius XII’s Christmas Eve radio message of 1942 the encyclical goes on to insist that it is “precisely because he is a person he has rights and obligations flowing directly and simultaneously from his very nature” and that furthermore “these rights and obligations are universal and inviolable so they cannot in any way be surrendered” (ibid. 9). Thus fundamental rights flow from the person’s nature, and, universal, inviolable, and therefore inalienable. *Pacem in terris* goes on to enumerate the substantive content of these inviolable and inalienable rights, in a very extensive and detailed manner. Amongst the fundamental human rights that are identified are “the right to life, to bodily integrity, and to the means which are suitable for the proper development of life; these are primarily food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, and finally the necessary social services” (ibid. 11). Arising from this moreover “human being also has the right to security in cases of sickness, inability to work, widowhood, old age, unemployment, or in any other case in which he is deprived of the means of subsistence through no fault of his own” (ibid.). In addition to these basic human rights the encyclical goes on to enumerate the political and cultural rights to which human beings can lay claim. Thus “every human being has the right to respect for his person, to his good reputation; the right to freedom in searching for truth and in expressing and communicating his opinions, and in pursuit of art, within the limits laid down by the moral order and the common good; and he has the right to be informed truthfully about public events” (ibid. 12). In this context too there is recognition of the supreme importance of the right to religious freedom, the right to practice one’s religion publicly and privately, and in the words of the encyclical “to honor God according to the sincere dictates of [one’s] own conscience” (ibid. 14). There is also the right to share in the benefits of culture, and hence to receive a good general education (cf. ibid. 13), the right to choose for oneself the kind of life which appeals to the person (cf. ibid. 15).

In terms of the evolution of the Catholic tradition of human rights *Pacem in terris* makes a significant contribution to the enunciation of

economic rights as human rights. From the late nineteenth century onwards, and especially after the promulgation of *Rerum novarum* in 1891, the church frequently spoke about economic rights, and particularly highlighted the rights of workers to safe and sustainable working conditions and to fair wages (cf. RN 34). With *Pacem in terris* however economic rights become articulated as human rights, and as fundamental to the just ordering of society. *Pacem in terris* locates these rights in the natural law, and speaks not only about the right to an opportunity to work, but also to be able to work “without coercion” (PT 18). Reasonable working conditions are mentioned as a right, and this is given substance by the way in which the encyclical insists on the right to working conditions in which “physical health is not endangered, morals are safeguarded, and young people’s normal development is not impaired” (ibid. 19). Moreover, there is special mention of the “right to a wage determined according to criteria of justice, and sufficient, therefore, in proportion to the available resources, to give the worker and his family a standard of living in keeping with the dignity of the human person” (ibid. 20). In addition, while the right to the private ownership of property, is explicitly noted, it is also recognised in the encyclical that the right to own private property entails a social obligation as well.

There is a remarkable consistency between the rights enumerated in *Pacem in terris* and those enumerated in the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Of particular interest is the manner in which *Pacem in terris* foregrounds economic and cultural rights, in addition to political rights, therefore giving support to those who argued for the inclusion of economic and cultural rights in the UN Declaration. The inclusion of economic, social and cultural rights in the UN Declaration was hard won and strongly resisted by the western powers. It was particularly the countries in the Latin American socialist tradition, together with the USSR and later the former colonies who really pushed for the inclusion and retention of these rights in the Declaration. Economic, social and cultural rights made their way into the Declaration initially because they were included both in the Inter-American text and in the Panamanian submission, both of which served as blue-prints for the first draft of the Declaration. They were retained because of the vigilance of the same delegates as well as on the insistence of China (cf. Morsink 1999, 191ff.).

It is clear especially from the debates during the Third Session of the Commission that the idea of individuals being entitled to socially

provided goods, services and opportunities such as food, shelter, health-care, 'social security' and education represented a significant challenge to the conventional western conceptualisation of rights. Although delegates from the USA and Britain reluctantly accepted their inclusion in the Declaration, they continued to regard these rights as having lesser status than civil and political rights. The fact that *Pacem in terris* took such a strong position on the equal importance of economic, social and political rights, while the international community was trying to broker an agreement on this (through the establishment of the different covenants which gave a legal force to these rights) was very important. It allowed the emerging human rights regime to move away from a discourse dominated by civil and political rights and towards a human rights discourse that has, over time transformed this standard liberal category into a multicultural discourse with which, and through which, different moral languages and narrative traditions, including religious ones, readily engage.

2 *Pacem in Terris* and the Re-valorisation of the Historic Tradition of Rights

The fluency and confidence with which *Pacem in terris* deployed the language of human rights is hugely significant in terms of what it says about *how* the modern category of human rights should be regarded in relation to its theological antecedents. As we know for many decades the dominant view among theologians and philosophers was that the emergence of liberalism should be regarded as something startlingly new.² However, this view has been modified significantly within the last two decades, not least because of the impetus given to the alternative point of view by *Pacem in terris*.

The historical studies of Roger Ruston (2004), Brian Tierney (1997) and John Witte Jr. (2007) in particular have challenged this assessment in respect of human rights, and have provided the basis for a new history

2 See in particular Leo Strauss 1952; 1953. Strauss argued that the enlightenment philosophers beginning with Hobbes and Locke were the first to use the term 'natural right'. See also the work of Michel Villey for whom the concept of subjective rights constituted a revolutionary idea that developed from the voluntarism of William of Ockham. See in particular Villey 1964. See also Kamenka 1978.

of rights in which the enduring significance of its Christian antecedents is acknowledged. Much of the debate about the appropriation of human rights language in Christian social ethics revolves around the question of the extent to which original theological meanings have persisted contemporary human rights discourse. Alasdair MacIntyre claims, for example, that “there is no expression in any ancient or medieval language correctly translated by our expression ‘a right’ until near the close of the middle ages: the concept lacks any means of expression in Hebrew, Greek, Latin or Arabic, classical or medieval, before about 1400” (1981, 69). However, Brian Tierney’s analysis of the jurisprudence of the twelfth century seems to contradict this conclusion, and refutes the view that human rights are a modern invention imposed on Christian political thought. According to Tierney the early medieval discussions about natural rights represent a thoroughly theological foreshadowing of the concept of human rights. Tierney’s discussion centres on the point at which *ius naturale*, which traditionally meant cosmic harmony or objective justice, began also to acquire the sense of a subjective natural right (cf. Tierney 1997, 43–77). He remarks that the context of the evolving interpretation was a medieval society that was “saturated with a concern for rights” (ibid., 57), and this undoubtedly influenced academic jurisprudence. Tierney assembles a host of textual sources that reveal how important individual subjective rights were to the canonists. Even Gratian wrote “of the rights of liberty that could never be lost, no matter how long a man was in bondage” (ibid., 57).³ Moreover in the discussions of whether the poor have a natural right to the superfluous goods of the rich we find the articulation of a subjective natural right in the form of a welfare right, thereby contradicting Cranston’s influential argument that rights of reciprocity were unknown even in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (cf. Cranston 1962).

Though there is a host of different discussions each with its specific emphasis, Tierney discerns a clear progression from the idea that a rich man has an obligation to share his superfluities with the poor, to the eventual articulation of a right to the material necessities of life. Alanus, Laurentius and later Vincentius Hispanus, for example, each used the language of right to refer to the poor man’s claim. Later Godfrey of

3 Quoting *Decretum Gratiani ... una cum glossis* (Venice, 1600), C. 16 q. 3 *dictum post c.* 15.

Fontaines wrote of this right as inalienable. “By law of nature (*ius naturae*) each one has a certain right (*ius*) in the common exterior goods of this world, which right cannot be licitly renounced” he claimed (*ibid.*, 75).⁴ Many of the canonists also insisted that the procedure of evangelical denunciation should be available to the poor person in need. In this way the local “bishop could then compel an intransigent rich man to give alms from his superfluities, on pain of excommunication if necessary” (*ibid.*, 74). Nor was this purely a passive right because in the case of necessity the canonists recognised that the poor had a right to take what they needed. Evangelical denunciation thus became a means by which this right was justiciable, a remarkable accomplishment given that we are still struggling today to find ways to achieve justiciability in relation to welfare rights.

So what is the significance of this ambiguous legacy for Christianity’s engagement with contemporary human rights discourse? That there was evolution in the concept of natural rights between the medieval and early modern period is not disputed. What continues to be debated however is its significance for the theological appropriation of rights-talk. The loss of the theological horizon, together with an entrenchment of the secularism that has attempted to relegate religion to the private sphere, has led some to conclude that Christianity and liberalism now represent two incompatible ways of conceptualising human social relationships. *Pacem in terris* suggests otherwise. Moreover much recent historical work suggests that, in different historical periods, a theological language of rights was generated from within the life of the Christian community and was articulated in response to questions about the nature of Christian witness in the social context. The medieval canonists, the early Calvinists and the Spanish Dominican reformers of the sixteenth century each moved effortlessly between the language of rights and the language of biblical texts and saw no conflict in so doing. Rights language was thus an indigenous theological language. It flourished within a religious world-view and expressed a fundamental theological belief about human beings as social creatures in a divinely providential universe. It was in effect deeply and incontrovertibly Christian. Nor was it a case that once the voluntarist interpretation took hold that it was the only frame through

4 Quoting Hoffmans, J. (ed.) (1932): *Les Quodlibets onze-quatorze de Godefried de Fontaines*. Louvain: Editions de L’Institut supérieur de philosophie.

which rights language was refracted. For example Tierney (cf. 1997, 340) mentions Pufendorf, Locke, Burlamaqui and Wolff as thinkers in whom traces of this theological frame were still evident and who moderated the sceptical tenor of the emerging liberal rights theories. Indeed particularly in Locke one can discern the continuing significance of the Christian tradition of rights, even though he is often mistakenly perceived as “a prototype liberal individualist” (Ruston 2004, 215).⁵

These early affinities together with a myriad of albeit fragile continuities, account for the ease and fluency with which Christians in the twentieth century re-appropriated the discourse of rights. Indeed one could argue, that the re-appropriation promoted by *Pacem in terris* not only has a historical warrant, but that it can be interpreted as the elaboration, not the abandonment, of a theological tradition. Thus, although the language of historic memory, of faithful witness and of moral virtue is often invoked by Christian communitarians to indicate a conflict with liberal, including human rights categories, I suggest that, at least historically, this situated memory, witness and virtue can also be read as facilitating a more positive mode of engagement.

3 Human Rights and the Ethics of Peace: The Untapped Legacy of *Pacem in Terris*

The legacy of *Pacem in terris* is secure in many important respects. The language of human rights is embedded in the language of Catholic social ethics and has become *the* mode of engagement internationally on critical social issues. In addition Catholic NGOs which essentially developed from *Pacem in terris*, Vatican II, and *Populorum progressio*, have given further force to human rights as important political social and legal categories on which to draw in pursuit of social justice. However gaps remain. We are highly aware of the shocking gaps in terms of rights and responsibilities in the institutional structures of the church. However there is another gap which I would like to consider, and it

5 See Ruston (2004) chapters 11–15 in particular for a comprehensive rebuttal of this view that Locke was the prototypical liberal individualist. Ruston traces the dominance of this interpretation, especially in the American academy to Strauss. See note 135.

relates to the failure to link substantially the politics of human rights with the politics of peace.

Pacem in terris made a highly significant intervention in relation to the politics of peace, and it is one which has not been given the attention it deserves. It is well acknowledged that the question of whether Christians should ever have recourse to war has been debated from the earliest centuries of Christianity. Moreover it is accepted that for the first three centuries Christians followed Jesus' prophetic denunciation of violence and adopted what we now call a pacifist stance. However, as Christianity was legitimized and became ever more closely associated with the civil authority (initially with Constantine in the fourth century), it began to re-consider the absolutist pacifist position and developed a set of principles that would allow for the defence of the innocent against unjust aggression in certain restricted circumstances. Thus began the just war tradition, initially developed by Ambrose and Augustine, and later elaborated by Aquinas, Vitoria and Suárez, and which quickly eclipsed the pacifist trajectory of the early church. Moreover the emergence, between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, of specific churches that were committed to a principled pacifism further distanced the major denominations, including the Roman Catholic Church, from pacifism, so that the just war tradition became the primary way that the church engaged with this question.

By the time Pope John XXIII addressed the issue of modern warfare the landscape had changed significantly and there was a growing recognition that the atomic capabilities of states raise new questions about the ethical acceptability of recourse to war as a means of righting wrongs, including wrongs associated with violations of human rights. This represents a major moment in the history of Catholic thinking on war and peace, since it signals a degree of unease with the predominance of the just war paradigm, and it is particularly notable when *Pacem in terris* asserts that "it is contrary to reason to hold that war is a suitable way to restore rights which have been violated" (PT 127) and later on when it suggests that "it no longer makes sense to maintain that war is a fit instrument with which to repair the violation of justice" (ibid.). In place of resorting to war, even in situations where human rights have been violated, *Pacem in terris* holds out an alternative paradigm, a paradigm based on a global commitment to a just political order. Of particular importance in this regard is the recognition that *Pacem in terris* fore-grounded three inter-related themes which gained prominence in the following decades

and which have become a central part of the legacy of *Pacem in terris* in terms of how it has promoted the politics of peace. These are (1) a re-articulation of the nature of peace as involving a commitment to a just international order and to human rights; (2) a focus on the role of international institutions as a means of resolving conflicts; (3) a highly critical assessment of the arms race (which the encyclical insists must cease, and the stock-piles of armaments reduced all round and simultaneously by all parties concerned) and the policy of deterrence, which is vociferously condemned (cf. *ibid.* 109–116).

The legacy of *Pacem in terris* will be further enhanced when the link between the politics of human rights and the politics of peace is more firmly established in Catholic social ethics. *Pacem in terris* clearly articulated this connectivity between human rights and the politics of peace, and insisted that peace on earth would be secured, not through the stock-piling of weapons, or through recourse to war, but only through the promotion of a juridical and political ordering of the world community, based in the recognition of the personal dignity of every human being (cf. *ibid.* 145). In this way the encyclical was clear that one of the premier ways of mitigating conflict was to ensure that all have access to the material resources necessary for authentic human development. This theme was taken up enthusiastically by Paul VI, especially in addresses on World Day of Peace. Paul VI insisted on the essential link between justice and peace and spoke consistently about the obligations of political authorities to ensure a just and equitable economic order. Later still Pope John Paul II was acutely aware that a genuinely peaceful society is premised on a just economic and political order. Recurrent themes include the centrality of justice and human rights, of solidarity and development, and of reconciliation in the task of building a culture of peace.

As his papacy progressed John XXIII began to re-assert the role of non-violent action as a means of political change and warns about the seductiveness and the destructiveness of violence. As we look to the next decades and reflect on the enduring challenge of *Pacem in terris* one must look to the question of the use of violence in order to secure basic human rights, and specifically at the question of the deployment of military force to halt gross violations of human rights. There is no doubt that this is one of the most difficult issues in political ethics today, notwithstanding the fact that there is a broad consensus amongst ethicists on the admissibility and necessity of the use of violence in order to achieve humanitarian outcomes. Philosophers Michael Walzer, Brian

Orend and Jean Bethke Elshtain and theologians David Hollenbach, Ken Himes and Nigel Biggar each defend versions of the just war tradition that allow it to be used to justify military interventions in sovereign states for the purposes of securing basic human rights and of ending gross violations of human rights. Moreover, the *Responsibility to Protect* doctrine, adopted by the United Nations in 2005, gives the UN the ability to intervene militarily in the context of grave abuses of human rights, including genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and war crimes (cf. International Commission 2001). It is difficult to argue against the position which holds that in such extreme circumstances, the only ethical course of action is to deploy violence to resist evil. In these situations the political, economic, historical, humanitarian and ethical imperatives all converge in order to make violence seem compelling, necessary, valuable even inevitable. Rwanda, 1994, serves as a caution against any diminution of the commitment to wage war to achieve humanitarian ends. However, even when it is directed towards just ends, the use of violence radically compromises the durability of a culture of human rights. Moreover the ethical appeal of violence is only compelling because of a fundamental failure of politics, a failure to prioritize non-violent conflict resolution, a failure to address grievances (real or imagined) a failure to build a culture of respect for human rights (cf. Hauerwas et. al. 2005).

As we seek to build a durable culture of human rights, in the spirit of *Pacem in terris* I wish to suggest that we must push back against the weight of this reality and challenge the dominance of the just war paradigm in the ethical responses of these limit situations. In particular we must consider why human rights advocates have accepted violence as a means of effecting justice and why violence has captured our ethical and political imaginations to such an extent that those who promote non-violence seem at best naive and at worst irresponsible. Indeed, even if the conclusion remains that, as a last resort, violence should be used to establish a culture of human rights, the fundamental questions about the nature of violence and its impact should not be by-passed. It is vital therefore that we are clear-sighted about the nature of the violence through which humanitarian interventions are pursued and that we attend to the particularity of the brutality of violence, even when pursued to secure basic human rights. Moreover, it is essential that we can understand as fully as possible the multiple meanings that this violence carries. No doubt it is difficult for those of us who have never endured

physical violence to understand the havoc that violence creates. Yet those of us who are concerned about the ethical questions raised by the use of violence, particularly in situations of grave humanitarian crisis, do need to gain some proximity to the perspectives of those who have both experienced and perpetrated violence. Thus while prior to *Pacem in terris* just war doctrine was central, its dominance has begun to wane somewhat. Moreover by foregrounding the individual conscience it provided an impetus for the growth of Catholic peace movements and ultimately for the support of conscientious objection as a legitimate posture within a democratic state. *Pacem in terris* challenges the tradition to move beyond the logic of violence, and into a space of non-violence, and towards the establishment of a culture of peace by peaceful means. *Pacem in terris* allows for an inter-twining of the politics of human rights with the politics of peace and is, I suggest, one of its most powerful legacies as well as its most enduring challenge.

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