

# Exploring Gospel NONVIOLENCE - 4

## The two hands of active nonviolence

This simple action and description could be used as part of a homily, a service or discussion on what active nonviolence seeks to do. (It could also be used with children)



You will need: a living 'visual aid' of two hands in this position, clear for all to see.

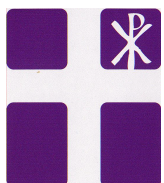
The upright hand is saying to the person involved in the injustice or violence: Stop what you are doing. I cannot accept this behaviour. I refuse to build walls... making it clear that there will be no cooperation with injustice or violence.

The outstretched hand is saying to the same person: But we need to talk. I believe we can make better choices. I will not reject you. My heart is open to you as a sister/brother... making it clear that you are seeking change and an opportunity to work things out together, not revenge or punishment.

*Based on metaphor of two hands, Barbara Deming*

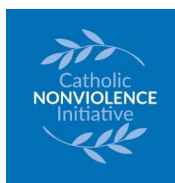
Invite people to try this for themselves, thinking of a situation or time when they have had to confront injustice or violence. What words might they have used in each case?

*Look at the picture of a stained glass window in the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama. Welsh artist John Petts made the window after hearing that four young girls had been killed when the church was bombed in a racist attack one Sunday morning in 1963. His black Jesus shows the two hands of nonviolence: one stopping the oppression, the other reaching out in forgiveness and reconciliation. The window was donated to the church by the people of Wales.*



**Pax Christi**

[www.paxchristi.org.uk](http://www.paxchristi.org.uk)



**Catholic Nonviolence Initiative**

[www.nonviolencejustpeace.net](http://www.nonviolencejustpeace.net)