

The courageous nonviolence of Jesus (1)

“Jesus himself lived in violent times...But Christ’s message in this regard offers a radically positive approach.” Pope Francis, World Peace Day Message, 2017

Read through these passages.

- What do they say to you about the way Jesus engages with his community/his times?
- What approaches can you see Jesus taking in these passages in facing injustice or exclusion or violence?

Mark 2: 15-17

When Jesus was at dinner in his house, a number of tax collectors and sinners were also sitting at table with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many of them among his followers. ¹⁶ When the scribes of the Pharisee party saw him eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, ‘Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?’

¹⁷ When Jesus heard this he said to them, ‘It is not the healthy who need the doctor, but the sick. I came to call not the upright, but sinners’.

Mark 2: 23-28

It happened that one Sabbath day he was taking a walk through the cornfields, and his disciples began to make a path by plucking ears of corn. ²⁴ And the Pharisees said to him, ‘Look, why are they doing something on the Sabbath day that is forbidden?’

²⁵ And he replied, ‘Have you never read what David did in his time of need when he and his followers were hungry- ²⁶ how he went into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the loaves of the offering which only the priests are allowed to eat, and how he also gave some to the men with him?’ ²⁷ And he said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; ²⁸ so the Son of man is master even of the Sabbath.’

Matthew 23

Then addressing the crowds and his disciples Jesus said,

² ‘The scribes and the Pharisees occupy the chair of Moses. ³ You must therefore do and observe what they tell you; but do not be guided by what they do, since they do not practise what they preach.

⁴ They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on people’s shoulders, but will they lift a finger to move them? Not they! ⁵ Everything they do is done to attract attention, like wearing broader headbands and longer tassels, ⁶ like wanting to take the place of honour at banquets and the front seats in the synagogues....

‘Alas for you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You pay your tithe of mint and dill and cummin and have neglected the weightier matters of the Law - justice, mercy, good faith! These you should have practised, without neglecting the others. ²⁴ You blind guides, straining out gnats and swallowing camels!

John 4: 5-15

On the way he came to the Samaritan town called Sychar near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob’s well was there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. ⁷ When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, ‘Give me something to drink.’ ⁸ His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.

⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, 'You are a Jew. How is it that you ask me, a Samaritan, for something to drink?' -- Jews, of course, do not associate with Samaritans. ¹⁰ Jesus replied to her: 'If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me something to drink,' you would have been the one to ask, and he would have given you living water. ¹¹ 'You have no bucket, sir,' she answered, 'and the well is deep: how do you get this living water?' ¹² Are you a greater man than our father Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?

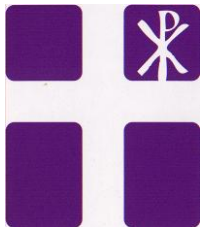
¹³ Jesus replied: 'Whoever drinks this water will be thirsty again;¹⁴ but no one who drinks the water that I shall give will ever be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will become a spring of water within, welling up for eternal life.'

Mark: 11:15-19

¹⁵ So they reached Jerusalem and he went into the Temple and began driving out the men selling and buying there; he upset the tables of the money changers and the seats of the dove sellers. ¹⁶ Nor would he allow anyone to carry anything through the Temple.

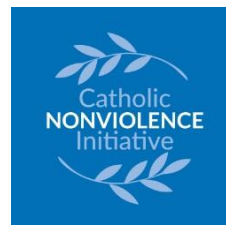
¹⁷ And he taught them and said, 'Does not scripture say: My house will be called a house of prayer for all peoples? But you have turned it into a bandits' den.' ¹⁸ This came to the ears of the chief priests and the scribes, and they tried to find some way of doing away with him; they were afraid of him because the people were carried away by his teaching.

¹⁹ And when evening came he went out of the city.



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