

QUOTATIONS ON PEACEMAKING AND “JUST WAR”

The just war theory belongs in the same drawer as the flat earth theory.

Bishop Carroll Dozier

The term ‘just war’ is an internal contradiction. War is inherently unjust, and the great challenge of our time is how to deal with evil, tyranny and oppression without killing huge numbers of people.

Howard Zinn

Peace is a precious gift, which must be promoted and protected ... Never has the use of violence brought peace in its wake. War begets war, violence begets violence.

Pope Francis

When the economy is geared to the arming of the heavens rather than the development of the earth, neighbors and nations must learn to cry out their dissatisfaction together.

Sr. Joan Chittister

There is no such thing as a just war. It's a great lie, a gigantic myth, an illusion that leads to death. Its conditions certainly no longer apply given our weapons of mass destruction which kill civilians indiscriminately.

Fr. John Dear

The justice of humankind cannot dethrone the justice of God. There is no such animal as a “just war.”

Ben Salmon

I would be inclined to say you couldn't show me a just war. And the theory of the just war ... well actually it goes back to the efforts of the Christian community to reconcile itself to a practice, which it really knew in its Christian heart of hearts that it could not countenance. And so I put the ethics of the just war in almost the same boat with the ethics of the just adultery or the just murder.

Fr. John McKenzie

In stark contrast to a principle of “just war,” 90 percent of deaths in recent wars were civilian.

Donald W. Shriver, Jr.

The {just war} theory was formulated to show that some wars might be an exception to the law of the Gospel. Instead, it has become a theory used to justify every war that comes along. Instead of justifying an exceptional war, it is used to make all wars acceptable.

Richard McSorley, S.J.

A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

One cannot be aware both of the history of Christian war and of the Gospels without feeling that something is amiss. One may feel that, in the name of honesty, Christians ought either to quit fighting or quit calling themselves Christians.

Wendell Berry

A Christian, whose doctrine enjoins on him humility, non-resistance to evil, love to all (even to the most malicious), cannot be a soldier; that is, he cannot join a class of men whose business is to kill their fellow-men. Therefore it is that these Christians have always refused and now refuse military service.

Leo Tolstoy

We have somehow found that we can say we're following Jesus and still justify the use of violence and war, and yet as one scripture tells us if Jesus did not reject violence for any reason whatsoever, we know nothing about Jesus. In other words if you can't say that about Jesus, you may as well say you can't know anything, because it's so clear, Jesus said no to violence, no to killing, no to war. Everyone who is a follower of Jesus should do the same - reject war, refuse to serve in the military, say, “No to war, never again war.”

Bishop Thomas Gumbleton

It does not even enter our minds that there might be some incongruity in praying to the God of peace, the God who told us to love one another as we are loved by God, who warned us that those who took the sword would perish by it, and at the same time annihilate not thousands but millions of civilians and soldiers, women and children, without discrimination. Only love can exorcise the fear which is at the root of war.

Fr. Thomas Merton

We Christians do not bear arms against any country; we do not make war anymore. We have become children of peace, and Jesus is our leader.

Origen

When you hear the words of a man telling you to kill, remember instead the word of God, “Thou shall not kill.” God's law must prevail. No soldier is obliged to obey an order contrary to the law of God. It is time for you to come to your senses and obey your consciences rather than follow out a sinful command.

Bishop Oscar Romero

There is no way to follow Christ, to love as Christ loved, and simultaneously to kill other people. It is a lie to say that the spirit that moves the trigger of a flamethrower is the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ. It is a lie to say that learning to kill is learning to be Christ-like. It is a lie to say that learning to drive a bayonet into the heart of another is motivated from having put on the mind of Christ. Militarized Christianity is a lie.

Fr. George Zabelka

In loving and forgiving those who tortured and killed him, Jesus revealed the full potential of humanity.

Mary Evelyn Jegen, SND

God will settle disputes among great nations. They will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations will never again go to war, never prepare for battle again.

Isaiah 2:4

By preparing for nuclear war we are saying that for the sake of the perpetuation of our way of life, we are willing to destroy the life of everyone. No one has a right to make that claim. Life is sacred.

James Douglass

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children ... This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

The only people on earth who do not see Christ and his teachings as nonviolent are Christians.

Gandhi

The God of peace is never glorified by human violence.

Fr. Thomas Merton

I am a soldier of Christ; I cannot fight.

St. Martin of Tours

Jesus lived and died in vain if he did not teach us to regulate the whole of life by the eternal law of love.

Gandhi

The world is poisoned with morbid nationalism, built up on the basis of race and blood, in contradiction to the Gospel.

Pope John XXIII

{As war was declared in December 1941} We are still pacifists. Our manifesto is the Sermon on the Mount, which means that we will try to be peacemakers. Speaking for many of our conscientious objectors, we will not participate in armed warfare or in making munitions, or by buying government bonds to prosecute the war, or in urging others to these efforts.

Dorothy Day

Once weapons were manufactured to fight wars. Now wars are manufactured to sell weapons.

Arundhati Roy

We have grasped the mystery of the atom, and rejected the Sermon on the Mount.

General Omar Bradley

God doesn't start wars. That's the greatest load of nonsense. Mankind starts wars. But then we bless armies to go and kill in God's name. Somebody's got to blow that myth out of the water.

Betty Williams

There is no such thing as "just" war. It is just war. And it's antithetical to the Gospel.

David D. Flowers

I see no poverty in the world of tomorrow – no wars, no revolutions, no bloodshed. And in that world, there will be a faith in God greater and deeper than ever in the past.

Gandhi

One is called to live nonviolently, even if the change one works for seems impossible.

Daniel Berrigan, S.J.

Peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by Christ Jesus.

U.S. Catholic Bishops, The Challenge of Peace, Par. 333

To you who hear me, I say: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you.

Jesus, in Luke 6:27-28

Put away the sword; those who live by the sword will die by the sword.

Jesus, in Matthew 26:52

Blessed too are the peacemakers, for they will be called the sons and daughters of God.

Jesus, in Matthew 5:9