



The Season of Nonviolence Week 1 January 30

Gandhi and the Beatitudes

To our Friends on the Journey of the Nonviolent Jesus,

According to Rev. John Dear, founder and executive director of *The Beatitudes Center for the Nonviolent Jesus* and a long-time Catholic advocate for nonviolence, "Gandhi thought that the Beatitudes were the greatest teachings on nonviolence in history" and each day Gandhi read from The Sermon on the Mount, chapters 5-7 from the Gospel of Matthew.

Why then, have most of us Christians never heard of this connection between nonviolence and the Beatitudes? Why was Gandhi moved to say the following?

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

What is nonviolence? We can certainly agree that Jesus was nonviolent, yet most Christians seem to have learned very little about nonviolence.

The time from January 30, the anniversary of the assassination of Mohandas Gandhi, through April 4, the anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., is *The Season of Nonviolence*. Let us explore nonviolence together and, with God's help, become the nonviolent disciples that Christ Jesus called us to be.

Action Steps

Easy

Read & pray The Beatitudes each morning this week. They are found in [Matthew 5:1-12](#).

The Sermon on the Mount—The Beatitudes

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. ² He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying,

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵ "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷ "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸ "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹ "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰ "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Harder

Listen to [Episode #1 of *The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast: An introduction with Fr. John Dear on "Living the Beatitudes"*](#) this week. Fr. John has an intriguing look at translation of the Biblical texts surrounding the word "blessed."

All In!

Read a book on Nonviolence. Suggested titles include:

[*The Nonviolent Life* by John Dear](#)

*[*Choosing Peace: The Catholic Church Returns to Gospel Nonviolence* Edited by Marie Dennis](#)

*[*The Nonviolent Moment: Spirituality for the 21st Century* by Mary Lou Kownacki, OSB](#)

[*Jesus and Nonviolence: A Third Way* by Walter Wink](#)

*Available in the Our Lady of Lourdes Parish library

[And read about the connections between religion and nonviolent movements from the United States Institute of Peace.](#)

Local Connect

People are working towards a nonviolent Milwaukee. Learn about the Milwaukee Christian Center's [Community Violence Intervention](#).

Gandhi on Nonviolence

We may never be strong enough to be entirely nonviolent in thought, word and deed. But we must keep nonviolence as our goal and make strong progress towards it. The attainment of freedom, whether for a person, a nation or a world, must be in exact proportion to the attainment of nonviolence for each. – Gandhi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace: where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Amen