

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The name Jesus means 'Yahweh saves'. Jesus came to the world to show us how to work with God to help heal and save the world. Jesus' way of getting along with others is God's saving action in the world. This means Jesus is the Model of how Christians must act right now to bring healing, love, life and joy to the world. Jesus' Way which saves is Nonviolent Love of friend and enemy.

When Mary said "Yes" to God she said "Yes" to being the Nonviolent Mother of God forever. Through every event of family life Mary cared for Jesus with Nonviolent Love: when Jesus cried as a baby, when He fell down while learning to walk, when He was hungry and when Mary couldn't find Him on the way home from Jerusalem. Mary always acted with Nonviolent, Merciful Love. Mary remained Nonviolent even when she saw her Son being tortured and killed. We know this to be true because Mary united herself with God fully and God is Love, Abba, Loving Parent, Mercy.

Jesus is the Son of God. The empty tomb tells us Jesus rose from the dead. It also tells us Jesus' Way of love of friend and enemy is the Truth; it is the Way that leads us to Resurrection.

The few words of Mary that are recorded in the New Testament are said when she is at a wedding in Cana. She asked Jesus to make more wine. She told the servants to "Do whatever Jesus tells you."

A married couple who were Nonviolent Followers of Jesus is Eberhard and Emmy Arnold. Wanting to live the true message of the Gospel, Emmy and Eberhard started a community. In two ways this new community modeled itself after the earliest Christians. First, the members live nonviolently; they return good for evil, never using violence to try to solve a problem. Second, the members share all possessions in common. Today the Church Communities International has communities in the United States, Europe, Australia, and Asia. (Read Acts 2:44-47 and 4:32-35.)

Adin Ballou wrote down his thoughts about Gospel Nonviolence. Some of the most outstanding followers of Gospel Nonviolence were guided by Adin's writings. In 1841, in Milford, Massachusetts, Adin and a small group of friends formed a community called Hopedale where they could live out their beliefs more fully. When the Civil War started Adin stayed true to his conviction that evil can be overcome only by good. Ways other than war should be used to stop slavery and every evil.

With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Emmy and Eberhard Arnold started a nonviolent community. They invited those interested in becoming members to put all their possessions together. Just like with the first Christians, these objects would now belong to everyone in the community.

The community called Hopedale, formed by Adin Ballou and his friends, was so big it needed its own postage stamp. Children enjoyed serving the community by delivering the mail to the community's homes and buildings.

Violence is not the way of Jesus. Philip Berrigan and Fr. Dan Berrigan had to do something about the Vietnam War. Philip, Dan and the others of the Catonsville Nine knew their carefully planned act of civil disobedience would arouse horror. So they used that horror to make a terrible truth clear to the American people. "As we are burning paper (draft files) our government burns people in Vietnam when it drops napalm bombs." Dan and Philip had to go to jail for many months for what they did but their message made a difference. The hearts of the American people turned against the war. Philip and Dan used their lives living, working and witnessing for peace.

Burnt draft files remind us of Fr. Dan and Philip Berrigan. As the Berrigan brothers destroyed the files they asked the American people to demand that the government stop the war that was destroying the children of God in Vietnam. They destroyed paper but war destroys people.

"Sons, cease fighting. Lay down your arms, for we are told in Scripture not to render evil for good, but to overcome evil by good." These were the last words St. Boniface spoke before becoming a martyr. Boniface had spent his whole life bringing Jesus and His Way of Nonviolent Love to the people of Germany. He wasn't going to change that for anything, even if it meant he had to die. Following Jesus' Nonviolent Way is what Boniface wanted to do. He is called the Apostle of Germany.

Sometimes women and men who have given their lives to Jesus work, live and pray together in places called monasteries. St. Boniface worked hard to lead the people of Germany to follow the Nonviolent Jesus. He was so successful many monasteries were started.

Not many bishops would refuse to live in the bishop's mansion. But that is the kind of bishop Dom Helder Camara was. He lived like the poor. He took care of the poor. He knew violence always hurt the poor. Dom Helder Camara was committed to following Jesus' Way of Nonviolent Love among the poor of Brazil. He stayed away from anything that might lead to jealousy, greed or injustice and its spiral of violence.

Fr. Elias Chacour serves the people in the Middle East, the land where Jesus lived. He knows about violence from his own childhood. He wants to make sure people of all different faiths are kind to each other. So he started a school for children of every religion. Today over 4000 children are growing in love and living peacefully together in a part of the world that has a long history of fighting.

A spiral starts small at the top but doesn't stay small. Injustices and violence usually don't stay small either. The hurt that starts small grows and grows. Archbishop Camara wanted to stop the spiral of violence in Brazil. He wanted to stop the terrible hardship of poverty and suffering that leads to more and more violence.

Fr. Elias Chacour believes one of the best gifts to give to children is the opportunity to know how to love and live peacefully with all people. That's why he started a school for children of all faiths.

Most of the fruits and vegetables we eat come from far away where the climate is perfect for the plants. When Cesar Chavez was a farm worker the growers wanted to make as much money from the crops as they could even though they didn't pay the pickers fairly. Cesar Chavez made sure everyone knew about this problem. Cesar's love for Jesus helped him be strong in speaking the truth. Cesar's love for Jesus helped him stay nonviolent even when the pickers were treated harshly. Jesus is the Nonviolent Lamb of God; Cesar had to be nonviolent, too.

Cesar Chavez gathered his co-workers together so that they could let the world know about the serious problems the grape pickers were having. Working together, with Nonviolent Love, an answer was found.

New York City's poor had a good friend in Dorothy Day. She fed and clothed and comforted those in need for fifty years in the houses of hospitality she set up. Dorothy knew that war was against the Nonviolent Way of Jesus. She worked, hoped and prayed that the money used to build bombs would instead help the poor have holy, happy lives. That's what Jesus wanted—all His brothers and sisters living in peace together.

Everyday the long line of hungry men and women waited for a meal at the Catholic Worker house. For nearly fifty years Dorothy Day cooked soup for those hungry people. Everyday she gave the kind of care to the poor that Jesus directed His followers to give to them. She gave them nonviolent, merciful Love.

Lanza Del Vasto was given the name Shantidas, meaning Servant of Peace, by Mohandas Gandhi. Shantidas learned how to live peacefully from the great Indian leader. Shantidas and his wife, Chantarella, started the Community of the Ark in France as a place to live nonviolently. Together the members of the community, called Companions, use Gospel Nonviolence to solve problems in their community and in the world around them.

Living nonviolently has many parts. One way the Companions at Lanza Del Vasto's Community of the Ark in France help to keep life nonviolent and safe for everyone is to raise their own sheep for wool. This wool is then used to make the Companions' clothing.

Art work can help people desire real love. Adolfo Perez Esquivel painted a picture of Jesus on a cross with poor people around him. Adolfo knew Jesus wanted the poor comforted. He knew Jesus wanted God's people living in peace. So Adolfo worked to bring this about in South America where he lived. He helped groups of people come together to work for peace and happiness. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980 for his work.

Working together brings strength. Adolfo Perez Esquivel brought women together whose husbands or children were killed or "disappeared." They marched in silence in the downtown or plaza area. They wore a cloth like their child's diaper as a scarf so the harsh leaders would be reminded of the missing loved ones.

December 8, 1983 was going to be a terribly cold night the news reporter said. When Trevor Ferrell heard this he wanted to bring a blanket to the street person in downtown Philadelphia. That night Trevor learned something he will never forget. There was not just one person cold that night; hundreds of people lived on the streets instead of in homes—even in our country of great wealth. Hundreds of people would be cold on the street that night. That night Trevor began caring for street people and has been caring for them ever since. He is a living example of the Nonviolent, Merciful Love of Jesus.

Trevor was moved with compassion when he heard it was going to be a freezing cold, “code-blue” night. He insisted his father drive him downtown so he could give a blanket to the cold, homeless person. That began Trevor’s life work of doing the works of mercy.

Every person has the Light of Christ inside them. Two of the first people to teach this “dangerous” idea were George Fox and Margaret Fell. City leaders wanted to tell people how to act, what to believe and how to live their faith in Jesus. But George Fox said this cannot be. Each person must listen with his or her heart. He also said since everyone is a child of God, violence can never be used against anyone—each person is loved by God.

The candle reminds us that each person has the light of Christ inside. Nonviolent Love based on Jesus is the kind of love that honors the light of Jesus in each person. George Fox and Margaret Fell were sent to jail for preaching this. But they never gave up.

St. Francis of Assisi is known as the peace saint. He wanted everyone to enjoy God's loving presence; he wanted everyone to live in peace with each other and even with animals. Francis lived completely dependent on God. With such a pure life, a life free from worry and concern for possessions and worldly cares God's Love and power flowed freely through Francis. So many people were attracted to his joyfulness that Francis started a group, a religious order, called the Franciscans. There are still many Franciscans today.

Francis of Assisi didn't want the beautiful cloths his father sold. Francis was not concerned about what others thought of him and his clothes. Francis wanted to be known for trusting in God—that's what goes with Nonviolent Love of friend and enemy.

Mohandas Gandhi is perhaps the most well-known leader of nonviolence. He led his country, India, in a nonviolent struggle to be freed from British rulers. Though a Hindu, Gandhi was greatly influenced by Jesus and the part of the Gospel called the Sermon on the Mount. Gandhi's conversion to Gospel Nonviolence came through Leo Tolstoy's famous book *The Kingdom of God is Within You*.

Mohandas Gandhi marched with thousands of people to the sea to make their own salt. This was a great show of power—nonviolent power. The British rulers' hurtful power over the people was sure to end.

Conrad Grebel lived about 500 years ago when there were serious changes happening in the Church. Conrad wanted some changes in the Church, too. He wanted the Church to go back to living in the real presence of Jesus—Nonviolent Love. He wrote letters to others to ask them to stop fighting. He told them fighting is not what Jesus wants his brothers and sisters to do—ever. Conrad Grebel helped many people stay true to Jesus' Nonviolent Way.

Long ago when the Church was forming smaller groups, instead of staying as one large group, Conrad Grebel helped people decide what some of these groups should be like. Conrad wrote letters to a leader saying, "We must remain nonviolent in our thoughts and actions as Jesus taught and showed us."

God created all children and God likes children with all different colors of skin. Some people try to forget this about God. But not Clarence Jordan! Clarence was a preacher and he knew God loves all people. Clarence helped African-Americans and whites live together in a community of God's Nonviolent Love called Koinonia. This community had many hardships until the hearts of the people in the town changed. Changing hearts might take a long time, but it's worth it.

Like many people, Clarence Jordan was a Georgia farmer. But Clarence's way of farming was different—that's why he had so many hardships. Clarence's way was with Jesus' Way of Nonviolent Love for all. This means Clarence farmed, lived and prayed with African Americans—which, in the 1940's, offended many white people.

In the past black children and white children were not allowed to play together, eat together or shop together. They couldn't even go to school together. Using God's power of Nonviolent Love Martin Luther King made sure everyone knew how differently and badly the blacks were treated. Martin preached, gave speeches and refused to be quiet. Martin's love and hard work made a difference. African-Americans were slowly treated better. But on April 4, 1968, Martin was shot and killed by someone who hated him and his message of love for all.

Martin Luther King had a dream of African-American children and white children going to school together. He gave his life to using Jesus' Nonviolent Love to bring this about.

Muriel Lester saw the conditions of the poor factory workers in London and knew that was where she wanted to make a difference in the world. She bought an old chapel and converted it to a community center named Kingsley Hall. There she became pastor, friend and social worker to the poor factory girls. Muriel learned nonviolence from the great Indian leader Mohandas Gandhi. She stayed committed to Gospel Nonviolence through both World War I and World War II.

Muriel Lester was a brave woman who gave her life, her heart, to the poor in England. She purchased a building to use as a community center, called Kingsley Hall, for poor factory workers.

Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day started the Catholic Worker movement in 1933. Peter shared his deep understanding and love for the Catholic faith with Dorothy who was a newly baptized Catholic. Peter encouraged Dorothy to start the Catholic Worker newspaper so more people could know Catholic social teaching. He also brought the ideas of clarification of thought, living the Works of Mercy, farming communes and houses of hospitality to the Catholic Worker movement.

Peter Maurin, a very educated man, understood that Jesus really meant what He said in the Sermon on the Mount. So Peter lived simply and gave to others freely—even his own bed to sleep in. Peter frequently slept in his clothes on a park bench.

Maximilian lived close to the time of Jesus. He was the son of a soldier in the Roman army. He was expected to go into the army like his father. But Maximilian had become a Christian; he wanted to love his enemies. Maximilian died for his faith. No one could force him to change his mind. “I am a Christian. I cannot fight. I cannot do what is wrong.”

Maximilian was sent by his father to be measured for his soldier’s uniform. But Maximilian had become a Christian. He could not fight. No uniform was made for Maximilian. He was willing to be put to death rather than join an army that kills people loved by God.

We all know what it means to imitate—to do what another person did. An early Christian writer named Maximus the Confessor knew the importance of imitating. Maximus was a monk who knew the Unconditional Love of God and wrote about it in a book called *Four Centuries on Love*. Someday you can read his writing. One line from Maximus is: “The one who loves Christ thoroughly imitates Him as much as he can.”

Maximus the Confessor was a very holy monk. He wrote a book called *Four Centuries on Love*. Maximus knew what he was writing about. He was treated badly by the emperor many times. Through it all Maximus confessed that Jesus was Lord and His Way of Nonviolent Love was the Truth to be imitated.

It is an amazing mystery how a boy who loved baseball could end up spending his life leading the Church to the Truth of Gospel Nonviolence. But that’s what happened with Fr. Emmanuel McCarthy. The message proclaimed in his preaching, teaching and writing is:

Violence is not the
Christian Way,
Violence is not the
Holy Way,
Violence is not the
Catholic Way,
Violence is not the
Apostolic Way,
Violence is not the Way
of Jesus.

Agnus Dei is Latin for ‘Lamb of God’. The Holy Spirit revealed that Jesus is the Lamb of God. Jesus the Lamb gave His life to show us God and to lead us to God. The way to God is the Way of Nonviolent, Lamb-like Love. The Way of the Lamb is what Fr. Emmanuel McCarthy’s preaching, writing and life is all about.

Violence and then more violence seems to be the way of the world. But Jim and Kathleen McGinnis are trying to change that. For over thirty years the McGinnises have been writing, teaching, and helping others learn peace and solve problems of violence in the world through their Institute for Peace and Justice in St. Louis, Missouri.

Fr. John L. McKenzie was a writer and a modern day scholar. He was an expert on the Bible. Fr. McKenzie read the Bible in the languages it was written in—not just the English most people read. Fr. McKenzie really understood the meanings of the Bible. After all his study Fr. McKenzie was convinced: “Jesus rejected violence totally.” Now Christians need to figure out how to live that Nonviolent Love.

Jim and Kathleen McGinnis know it is through family life that children learn how to love. That’s why the McGinnises have given their lives to helping families live Jesus’ Way of love within families and in the world.

Fr. John L. McKenzie helped Christians know the truth of Jesus’ words. He helped Christians know that Jesus never wanted His followers to use violence—ever. And Fr. McKenzie knew what he was talking about. He gave his whole life to being an expert on the Bible.

Fr. McSorley was very outspoken. “It is a sin to build a nuclear weapon.” In fact, every war is against the teachings of Jesus. Fr. Richard McSorley will always be known for his commitment to Gospel Nonviolence, his preaching against war and his writings. His hope was that the Roman Catholic Church would “stop the silence about all the killing” and be an authentic witness to the Nonviolent Jesus.

Teachers have an important job in guiding young people. Fr. McSorley took his job as a professor very seriously. He even wanted everyone who walked past his office door to understand the Truth of Jesus’ Nonviolent Love. That’s why his door was covered with “No War” posters.

Dr. Maria Montessori started a way of teaching that respects each child. Dr. Montessori knew peace would come to the world if children were given what they need most—love and peaceful learning. Dr. Montessori died on January 6, 1952. Her grave stone reads “I beg the dear, all-powerful children, to unite with me for the building of peace in man and in the world.” There are many Montessori schools around the world today.

The peace of Jesus is not just for Christians. Jesus’ peace is for everybody—for every person in the whole world. Dr. Montessori taught her students the names of all the countries of all the continents on the globe. She wanted her students to know and love people from all over the world. She wanted education for peace for all of God’s children.

Lucretia Mott followed Jesus' command to love enemies closely. She was born into a Quaker family in Pennsylvania in 1798. Lucretia was married and had six children. She was an outspoken minister. She is known for her work for the equality of women and for working to break the chains of slavery. Lucretia, as a Nonviolent Follower of Jesus, believed in using peaceful ways to solve problems, even big problems like slavery.

Have you ever had such a big argument with someone that another person had to help you solve the problem? That's the kind of work that A. J. Muste did. When groups of people were not getting along, A. J. was called in to help each side listen better to the other side. War happens when countries can't get along. A. J. did everything he could—write letters, teach, preach and even civil disobedience—in an attempt to convince others that all war should be stopped. In trying to solve even the big problem of war A. J. Muste stayed faithful to Jesus' Way of Nonviolent Love.

Many people want peace. Sometimes when hard times come people change their mind. They say, "It can't be done." But not Lucretia Mott. Even when a terrible war was started over the serious problem of slavery Lucretia knew the chains of slavery must be broken—but broken through the Nonviolent Way of Jesus.

A. J. Muste tirelessly worked for Gospel Nonviolence. He listened to people, he listened to groups. Most of all, he kept saying: "Peace is the way to Peace."

Origen was once asked why he did not help the empire to be safe by fighting like most other people did. Origen said he did help the people of that land. He helped with the strongest help there is. Origen helped by praying to God; God is the strongest power there ever was or will be.

Mildred Norman was a modern day pilgrim. She walked throughout the United States with a message: “This is the Way of peace—overcome evil with good, and falsehood with truth, and hatred with love.” On January 1, 1953, Mildred changed her name to Peace Pilgrim and started walking. She had a goal of 25,000 miles but she walked much more than that. She walked for 28 years sharing her message of peace with everyone who would listen.

A scholar is an expert in a particular subject. Origen was an expert on the Bible. Origen knew Jesus was Nonviolent. He knew the weapon of the Christian is prayer and loving their enemies so much the enemy’s heart becomes filled with the love of Christ.

25,000 miles is a long way. But Peace Pilgrim walked even more than that. She walked for 28 years and needed many pairs of shoes to spread her message of peace.

Menno Simons lived fifteen hundred years after Jesus when the Church was going through a very difficult time. Menno Simons guided the Radical Reformers to stay on the path of Gospel Nonviolence. Many Mennonites were martyred for their faith. Their lives are like a mirror because they reflect Jesus' Nonviolent Love even for enemies. The group which took Menno's name, the Mennonites, are true to Jesus' teaching of Gospel Nonviolence even today.

Mother Teresa, the tiny nun who worked with the poorest of the poor in India, did not believe in using war to fix problems. War and even getting ready for war keep the gifts of the earth from the poor who need them to live. Mother Teresa knew the works of mercy—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, offering shelter to the homeless, caring and praying for the dying, forgiving and comforting others—were the Way of Jesus' Nonviolent Love.

Menno Simons helped his followers understand that just as a mirror reflects the face of whoever looks into it, so should the Christian reflect the face of Jesus to the world. The martyred Radical Reformers whose story is told in the book *Martyrs Mirror* are true reflections of Jesus' Way of Nonviolent Love.

There are many ways to heal suffering and many types of suffering to be healed. Mother Teresa brought the Love of Jesus to the poor by offering food, bandages for their wounds and a place to die. She brought the Nonviolent, Merciful Love of Jesus.

What is the meaning of my life? What will become of me and my work? These are the questions Leo Tolstoy asked himself. These are the questions that led Leo to the Bible for answers. Leo found some answers, too. He found that Jesus gave us the way to happiness for everyone. Jesus' Way of Nonviolent Love is the way to bring love and life and joy to everyone. Leo Tolstoy was a great Russian writer who put his serious questions and answers into his stories. Through his writing he helped many people grow close to Jesus, the Nonviolent Son of God.

Leo Tolstoy's stories and writings led his readers to find in their own hearts deep feelings of love and care for all human beings. Through his writing Leo shared his faith in Jesus' Way of Nonviolent Love.

A group of Christians called the Mennonites have a rich tradition of living Gospel Nonviolence. John Howard Yoder was born into that rich tradition. John had a great mind and studied hard. He wrote serious books about Gospel Nonviolence and taught at colleges. He is known most for one book called *The Politics of Jesus*. In this book he repeats a very old saying: Jesus is the Nonviolent Lamb of God. We must follow Him.

John Howard Yoder had a strong faith like so many other Mennonites. Through all the trials of life John Howard knew Jesus is the Lamb who conquered everything that keeps us from God. We must follow Him.

Sometimes saying, “I am sorry,” is hard to do. But, hard or not, we still need to say those words. Fr. George Zabelka needed to say, “I’m sorry,” for his part in the war that killed so many people. Fr. George Zabelka wished he had told the bombardiers “Don’t do it. Don’t drop that bomb.” So, many years after World War II when he was in his 60’s he walked around the world all the way to Japan to tell the people there he was sorry. Fr. George Zabelka worked the rest of his life asking Christians not to go to war. War is not the way of Jesus. Instead, we must find peaceful ways to solve problems.

Can you imagine a Catholic priest finding a censer in a Catholic church burnt up by a bomb—a bomb that he helped drop, a bomb that killed many thousands of people? This really happened. And Fr. George Zabelka was deeply sorry he didn’t say, “Don’t do it. Don’t drop that bomb.”

In Solitary Witness is a book about an Austrian who would not go to war. When many Christians were willing to fight and kill other human beings Franz Jagerstatter said “No, I won’t go to war.” Gordon Zahn refused to go to war too. Gordon Zahn must have felt close to Franz Jagerstatter—he’s the one who wrote the book about him. Gordon Zahn spent his whole life helping people who refused to fight in wars.

Gordon Zahn followed Jesus’ command to love the enemy. He did not fight in World War II. He wanted to help other young people stay out of war. He helped them add their names to a list of people who, with their whole mind, knew Jesus didn’t want them to fight in war. These people “objected” to going to war.