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Editorial

Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding

Peace, as often said, is not merely the absence of war; rather, it is a state of wellbeing with oneself and others. Though peaceful living may sound rather easy, this has significant demands for our relationship with ourselves, others and nature. Peace is often disrupted by conflicts. In general, it can be said that a conflict is caused by struggles between two ideas fighting to occupy the same space at the same time. Not infrequently conflicts happen at personal, communitarian, national and international levels, sometimes leading to death and suffering of hundreds and thousands of people. Peacebuilding is an attempt to create a better place for humanity to live in through mediation, negotiation and reconciliation process between disagreeing parties. There are different agencies—religious and others—and individuals working on peacebuilding, sometimes even risking their own lives.

It may be paradoxical that religions have sometimes become the cause of conflicts and disruption of peace. However, in general, religions uphold the basic message of peace and harmony. September 2021 issue of *Asian Horizons* is dedicated to the reflection on Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding. Although peacebuilding is a task that involves multiple agents, we focus on the Catholic theological tradition on conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and various initiatives inspired by faith experience. Articles in this issue addresses conflicts, conflict resolution and peacebuilding in various contexts.

Delfo C. Canceran discusses the relevance of interfaith dialogue in the context of the Southern Philippines as a means of peacebuilding. By analyzing the African culture with its comprehension of humanity and peace as embodied in its “Ubuntu” concept, Johny Thachuparamban presents African culture as a model for global peace and reconciliation. Turning to biblical concepts and approaches to conflict resolution, Bincy Thomas Thumpanathu looks at the

influential role played by the Lord's pedagogy for conflict resolution in the book of Amos. Continuing to reflect on the biblical approaches to conflict resolution, Christoph Stenschke identifies a number of contested domains in the religious conflicts of Acts 4-5.

Arguing that the theological discourse and praxis of nonviolence has a range of expressions, Eli McCarthy, especially drawing on some prominent voices in the Asian context, delineates an emerging horizon of nonviolence from a theological perspective. Katja Voges discusses how the contextual approach of Abdullah Saeed, a Muslim theologian, can offer resources for peacebuilding, as it encourages Muslims to develop a dialogue-oriented attitude based on their faith and to stand up for the dignity of every human being without distinction. Dhinakaran Savariyar explores the notion of 'caste war' in the context of the increasing atrocities against Dalits in India where caste-based internal enmity has far worsened of late, and illustrates how Christian peacemaking would pursue a triple fold framework that promotes the Christian social justice agenda, Dalit agency, and annihilation of caste within the Church and society.

Aimee Allison Hein, considering the increased conflicts over how to respond to migration, elaborates upon a more relational understanding of migration ethics and offers a responsibility ethics framework, as a way forward. Archbishop Thomas Menamparampil, analysing various causes of conflicts, is optimistic that in spite of conflicts people can work together to bring about peace and contribute towards a shared future. Joseph Mattam pointing out that we live in a divided world, looks at the attempts at reconciliation in various cultures and religions, and then elaborates upon the essentials of the process of reconciliation. Paul Thelakat shows that fascism comes from the human urge to dominate and subdue and proposes justice as an antidote. Levy Lara Lanaria, proposes that rejecting the just war theory warrants a compelling retrieval of Christianity's original inspiration and counter-cultural paradigm of prophetic inclusivity grounded on compassion. Inocent Mária V. Szaniszló discusses how Catholic Social Teaching shows ways of peacebuilding. Daniel Cosacchi analyses the just war theory in *Fratelli Tutti* and argues that there is a development of Catholic doctrine. Joe Evans presents the Virgin Mary as a model and inspiration for Catholic interfaith peacebuilding efforts in the mountains of South Asia. Following the discussion on conflict resolution and peacebuilding, we have an article by Gerald O'Collins, SJ which presents George Hunsinger as theological interpreter of scriptures.

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