

WALKING THE WAY OF PEACE

Paulachan Kochappilly*

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more (Isaiah 2: 4).¹

War against terror!!! 11 September 2001 attack on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon buildings in Washington was an unprecedented and unexpected humiliation to the pride of modern civilization and globalization. The message is loud and clear: no nation is absolutely safe and secure, however fortified with armaments. They are of no use to save the lives of people. On the contrary, they promote the misery and greater destruction of humanity. The aftermath of the air-attack on these two major arteries of American civilization was colossal: thousands of people lost their lives, the huge loss on wealth and business establishments, the unimaginable increase of unemployment, the crackdown of world economy, and so on and so forth. At this tragic moment of helplessness, the American administration declared a worldwide war against terrorism. The attack on Afghanistan marked the beginning, a war waged against the suspected band of Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. On the part of the Americans, the hunt for Osama bin Laden goes on, but in vain. With all the sophisticated and scientific equipments and expertise, the United States of America has miserably failed to locate the hideout of Osama bin Laden. The more the hunt for Osama bin Laden, the greater the following and hallowing he enjoys.

Another disturbing and dangerous news is that the American administration is now shifting its target of waging war from Afghanistan to Iraq. It is pondering on and preparing the ground for a possible strike on Iraq.² Unlike in 1991, this time there is no sign of big consensus building

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¹Written on a wall of the United Nations Building in New York.

²In a recent editorial entitled "Planning for a Pre-emptive Strike," *The Hindu* (Monday, September 2, 2002): 10 presents the so-called argument of the States for declaring a war on Iraq, on which even the countries that have been closely allied with the U.S. differ. "The main thrust of Washington's argument is that Iraq under

up to justify the action. Yet the American Administration is busy in pursuing an attack on Iraq at a favourable time. Who is worried about the disaster of such a war? Whose interest is behind the war? What moral justification can the States give to the world at large?

Besides the chain of attacks against terrorism worldwide, wars of small or large scale are waged all around the globe: the tension in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the ethnic clashes in Sri Lanka, in Chechnya, the war-torn Yugoslavia, the huge deployment of military along the Line of Control (LOC) of Pakistan and India, to mention only a few. Take the burning issue of Kashmir:

For more than five decades Kashmir has remained a contested terrain. Three, or is it four, wars; years of insurgency and terrorism; a proliferation of militants, both home-grown and foreign; an overwhelming presence of armed forces; thousands of civilians killed, maimed, tortured, detained, disappeared, and what have you – have done little to persuade the dramatis personae that a continuing expenditure of force may deliver the ‘peace’ of a graveyard, it cannot ensure a solution. To talk of peace in a blood-soaked land is never easy. To not talk of it, however, is only to invite disaster.³

Against such alarming military build-up around the globe, the questions we should ask ourselves are: Why war? What is the use of war? How far is war a means in establishing peace on earth? Is there any alternative way to peace?

Mr. Hussein, possessing a WMD capability as it does, poses a grave danger to world peace since it might use that capability once it has been sufficiently developed or that it might pass on the capability to state-less terrorist groups. For this reason, Washington argues, there can never been a stable and peaceful world order till Mr. Hussein is toppled from office and the regime in Baghdad re-cast. To most of the rest of the world, this case appears over-drawn.”

³*Frameworks for Peace*, “The Problem,” *Seminar* 496 (December 2000): 12. It is terrifying to look at the death toll in Kashmir, even though India has not used extensive mechanized or airborne firepower to suppress this rebellion. According to one of the reports, “Between 35,000 to 50,000 individuals have died in the insurgency. Even the more conservative figure would amount to more than all the combined military losses in the four Indo-Pakistani conflicts of 1947-48, 1965, 1971 and 1999” in *Seminar* 496 (December 2000): 68.

In answering these burning questions, what is urgent and relevant to my mind as remedial alternative, is *walking the way of peace!* To establish a lasting peace, there is no other way, but walking the way of peace and non-violence. This means, peace rooted in truth and justice is to be given a chance throughout the process: before, during and after. The global appeal of John Paul II on New Year's Day clarifies the misconception on war and peace:

To all I say: together we must firmly oppose the temptation of hatred and violence, that only give the illusion of resolving conflicts but instead causes real and permanent damage. Instead, forgiveness, that can appear to be weakness, demands great spiritual strength and guarantees long-term advantages.⁴

It is a *walk* - a continuous, conscious and conscientious walk. Walking is biblical and Indian in concept and ethical in content. It is a march one has to pursue all through one's life and in every sector of life. It is an awakened walk. It is a decisive, demanding and determined walk. Yet it is a spontaneous and natural walk. It is a rhythmic movement, along with the cosmic rhythm. It is a harmonious walk - recognising, respecting and responding to the principle of interdependence and interconnectivity permeating the universe. It is a walk being aware of the divine design. It is a walk with an end in mind, intending the welfare and flourishing of everybody: *shalom* or *sarvodaya*.

It is *walking the way* - the way of the Lord. The Christians were known as the people of the Way. They understood themselves as pilgrims on earth, nevertheless committed to the wholeness of the world. In the East, in general, and in India, in particular, the idea of *marga* or "way" is something fundamental and functional in the realization of the Divine. Hence the usage "the way" is conspicuously significant. The way stands for the appreciation and appropriation of *the Way of Jesus Christ*. It is to follow His Way, who said I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. It is to embrace the life style of the Master. It means to die in order to find life. It is to carry one's cross and follow the footsteps of Jesus. It is the way of

⁴John Paul II, "Global Mobilization of Consciences." Reflections during the Angelus on New Year's Day, *L'Osservatore Romano*, (Weekly Edition, 2-9 January 2002): 3.

shalom, wellbeing. It is the way of *diakonia*, service. It is the way of *Qurban*, sacrifice. It is the way of *ahimsa*, non-violence. It is the mystery of the cross. It is the way of the Master.

It is *walking the way of peace*. Peace stands for the total and integral development of the whole. It is the being and becoming of the whole and holy. It is to live the full breadth and length, depth and heights of the Angelic hymn resonated at the Nativity of the Lord, "...Peace on earth . . ." In other words, it is the full flowering of the person in the context of the society as envisioned in the salutation of Jesus, "Peace be with you!" Peace is something that wells up in our heart and flows from there in all directions without measure.

In the light of the above preliminary remarks on the title of the paper, we shall now highlight walking the way of peace in three successive stages: i) seeing the way of the peace; ii) making the way of peace; and iii) celebrating the way of peace.

1. Seeing the Way of Peace

The basic presumption here is that it is of paramount importance to see the way in order to walk. We cannot afford to walk in darkness, without any direction. Light is necessary to see the way. In order to walk the way of peace, we need light and sight.

1. 1. The Way of Jesus

In view of seeing the way of peace, to gather the light and sight concerning the way, it is helpful to survey the teaching of Jesus Christ, the messenger of peace. It is "peace" that encompasses the whole life and teaching of Jesus Christ. The birth of Jesus was marked with the hymn of peace the angels sang (Lk 2: 14). Jesus' solemn declaration of peace on the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Mt 5: 9) is the charter of the life of Christ, consequently Magna Carta of Christian life. So also the post-resurrection scenes are filled with the greetings of "peace" (Jn 20: 19, 26; Lk 24: 36).

Some of the important texts from the New Testament on peace are given here: "On earth, peace among those whom he favours" (Lk 2: 14); "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Mt 5: 9); "Do not resist evil with evil" (Mt

5: 39); "If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other" (Mt 5: 39); "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Mt 5: 44); Put your sword back in its place, for all who take the sword, will perish by the sword" (Mt 26: 52); "Enough of that" (Lk 22: 51); "My kingdom is not of this world" (Jn 18: 36); Soldiers are not to extort money by violence (Lk 3: 14); "Call down blessings on your persecutors" (Rom 12: 14); Jesus made peace by the blood of the cross (Col 1: 19-20).

There are texts in the New Testament appearing to support some acceptance of violence. For example, "I have not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Mt 10: 34); the cleansing of the temple (Mk 11. 15-19), etc. At least these texts reveal to us the possibility of different interpretations on the basis of "proof text" method concerning the process of peace. The study of the above texts and other related texts on peace and violence on the basis of contemporary scripture scholarship is a great task. In the light of his study, Brian Johnston suggests, "The result of such studies would be that the word and witness of Jesus clearly teaches non-violence."⁵ This suggestion rightly indicates the way of Jesus, that is, the way of peace and non-violence.

Jesus' invitation to people to aspire to the perfection of God the Father (Mt 5: 48) spells out His attitude and approach regarding the way to peace. His teaching on forgiveness, "forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Mt 6: 12) and reconciliation, "when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift (Mt 5: 23) stands in good stead on the path of peace. The supreme example of His compassion is found on the cross, "Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing" (Lk.23: 34). On the cross we find the climax of Jesus' walking the way of peace.

The audacity with which Jesus spoke out the truth, in perfect harmony with the divine design is accessible in the Sermon on the Mount. His insistence on the preservation, protection and promotion of life is

⁵Brian Johnstone, *Peace and War in the Christian Tradition* (Roma: Accademia Alfonsiana, Lecture Notes for Students, 1993), 13.

another important aspect of the way of Jesus, which underscores the path of peace. Jesus focuses on the culture of life. While interpreting the law (the Sermon on the Mount), Jesus was very precise and clear on the principle of life, opposing the culture of death: at the questioning of the Pharisees concerning the issue of divorce (Mk 10: 1-9), the question of Sabbath observance (Lk 14: 1-6), etc. In all these teachings certain characteristic traits of Jesus in establishing peace stand out, namely, His truthfulness to the divine design, faithfulness to His messianic mission and the newness of His Spirit-filled consciousness. Jesus was always particular in discovering, deciding for and defending the truth, goodness and beauty housed in the covenantal code prevalent at His time. He was enthusiastic to give a personal touch in interpreting the ethos to which He belonged, taking into consideration His special mission entrusted to Him by God the Father. Along with these characteristics, Jesus, charged with the anointing of the Spirit, was spontaneous to usher in freshness in His commentary to the covenantal code of conduct.

The mission manifesto of Jesus (Lk 4: 14-16) delineates His priorities and programme in bringing about peace on earth. Indeed, it is promising life and its celebration. As the parable of the grain of wheat (Jn 12: 24) symbolises the life of Jesus, it also reveals the central teaching of Jesus concerning the path of peace, the need to undergo an experience of kenosis: the passage from death to life without any compromise with the culture of death. The death of Jesus on the cross is the supreme living witness to the path of peace and testimony against the use of violence.

The above reflections help us to see the person of Jesus and watch His way. Though very brief, the above passages depict the priorities and programme of Jesus in establishing peace on earth, as the purpose of the divine becoming human. They make it abundantly clear that Jesus was the peacemaker, the Son of God and they demonstrate His way as the path of peace. Thus, we get to see Jesus and His way of peace.

At this juncture it is important to see whether the path of peace was faithfully continued in the Church. So the importance in surveying the way of the Church.

1. 2. The Way of the Church:

The directive of Jesus regarding the path of peace is loud and clear. However, the mandate is to be translated into the different historic-socio-political contexts. In the light of the emerging religio-political changes of the post-Constantine era, many Christians began to interpret and delimit the directives of Jesus.⁶

The early Christians believed and waited for the imminent return of the Lord. "The first Christian community lived its life in the expectation that at any moment God's kingdom would break into their world and bring it and them to their fulfilment with God."⁷ Belief in the imminent second coming of the Lord might have created in the early Christians a distance and distaste in the significance of social institutions and the affairs of the larger community around them. On account of their preoccupation to prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord, Christians paid little attention to the affairs of the state or empire. Hence, there was no question of joining in the military or waging war, exceptions being a few soldiers who converted to Christianity.

As the years passed by there was a great following to Christianity, from all walks of life. The Church went on insisting on the pacifistic perspective, not to kill, though they served in the army. It was considered to be a primary concern of the Church to walk the way of peace, to follow the footsteps of her Master. There are indications of Church efforts to discourage Christians from participating in army service. *The Apostolic Tradition* attributed to Hippolytus of Rome and dating from the early decades of the third century states in Canon 15:

A soldier in the lower ranks shall kill no one. If ordered to do so, he shall not obey, and he shall not take an oath. If he does not want to comply with this directive, let him be dismissed (i.e. from the Church). If anyone exercises the power of sword or is a civil magistrate who wears the purple, let him give up the office or be dismissed. A Catechumen or a member of the faithful who wants to

⁶*Ibid.*, 13.

⁷Thomas A. Shannon, *What Are They Saying About Peace and War?* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 9.

join the army should be dismissed because he has shown contempt for God.⁸

Ronald Bainton states that "From the end of the New Testament period to the decade A.D. 170-180 there is no evidence whatever of Christians in the army."⁹ It might be interesting to investigate into the reasons for such an absence of Christians in the army. Different reasons are proposed. Along with others, Thomas A. Shannon alludes to the rigorist morality of the Church as one of the reasons for the situation. He holds that "The Christians were attempting to live out the love ethic of Jesus and such an ethic would, at least, *prima facie*, rule out the shedding of blood."¹⁰

The delay in the second coming of the Lord meant, "If Christians were to survive personally and socially, they could no longer remain exclusively within the confines of their community."¹¹ Therefore, they turned outward to the world instead of being focused only on the heavens for the return of Jesus. Christians began working in various capacities in the empire. The scenario changed in the post-Constantine era. The protection of the empire was understood to be the protection of Christianity. But this development caused tension in the early Christian attitude to war as well, "On the one hand, there was a recognition that killing was at least, if not incompatible with Christianity, very difficult to justify. On the other hand, it became a growing practice for Christians to serve in the army."¹²

John Cadoux makes the following observation regarding the early Christian attitude to war in comparison with the post-Constantine era, "In view of all that we have just seen of the pre-Constantine times and in view of the subsequent history of Europe, it is difficult to resist the impression

⁸Quoted in B. Johnston, *Peace and War*, 23.

⁹Ronald Bainton, *Christian Attitude Towards War and Peace* (New York: Abington, 1960), 67-68.

¹⁰T. A. Shannon, *What Are They Saying*, 11.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 10.

¹²*Ibid.*, 11.

that the Church took a false step when she abandoned her earlier and more rigorous principles."¹³

B. Johnston outlines the basic argument of the pacifist perspective. The witness of the early Church is normative for the Church of subsequent ages. The reason would seem to be that, being closer to Jesus himself and his disciples, the early Church is more likely to get it right than Christians who are further removed from the fountain head. Therefore, if, at a subsequent stage, the Church departs from the normative witness of the early Church such a departure is a deviation and distortion of fact.

However, it may be wrong to conclude that there existed one and only one approach is not true to the historical development. Though the pacifist position is the most articulated and typical response to the question of war, the unarticulated arguments of non-pacifists began to be spelled out in greater detail. Louis Swift offers a "contextual" explanation for this shift, where the key feature is the change of atmosphere after the victory of Constantine. Swift argues:

In sum, it seems simplistic to speak of the Church's corrupting the evangelical principles of peace during the Constantine era. A more accurate assessment would be that Christians were now wrestling with those principles in a new context and coming up with new answers. The whole process is perhaps one more illustration of the fact the meaning of the New Testament is, to some degree at least, not the same for every age, and that it cannot be reduced to a single equation.¹⁴

There are evidences supporting the view that joining in the military and participating in war was made a rule of the community, as far as the perspective on war is concerned. For example, Canon 3 of the Synod of Arles promulgated in 314 reads, "Those who throw down their arms in time of peace are to be separated from community." This canon makes the use of arms by Christians something obligatory.

¹³Cadoux C. John, *The Early Christian Attitude to War*, (New York: Seabury, 1982). Quoted in *Ibid.* 14 .

¹⁴Quoted in B. Johnstone, *Peace and War*, 29-30.

But we notice that the Church never abandoned the pacifist, non-violent tradition. It carried on this tradition as well. Hence the injunction is found that monks, clergy and dedicated individuals shall not use arms or participate in war.

Responding to the diverse developments in the Church a theory on war was taking shape, which came to be known as the just war theory. St. Ambrose articulated his Christian ethics of war from two sources, i.e., Jewish Scriptures and Stoic ethic. He adopted the major elements of the theory of Cicero on war.

- The only reason for going to war was that we might live unharmed in a time of peace
- When the victory was won, mercy should be shown to those who had lost
- No war should be entered into unless there had been a formal declaration made
- War could be entered into to preserve the safety of a city
- To protect the innocent
- To avenge wrongs
- To honour pledges made to allies
- Clerics should not participate in war

St. Augustine took the theory of just war to new heights, which his master had initiated. The socio-political situation of Augustine might have coloured the shaping of his approach to war.

- War is justified only by the injustice of an aggressor
- It was to be waged only under the authority of the ruler
- The conduct of war must be just
- The clergy could not participate in war

In *Summa Theologica*, St. Thomas Aquinas presents a summary of his teaching on war. Aquinas also prohibits bishops and clergy from participating in war because their ministry is directed to the service of God. He presents three conditions for waging a war:¹⁵

- The authority of the sovereign by whose command the war is to be waged

¹⁵St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* IIa IIe, XI, 1

- Hostility should begin because of some crime on the part of the enemy
- A rightful intention, i.e., the advancement of good or the avoidance of evil

Thus we notice the theory of a just war in the making and the basic criteria for conducting a just war, which in fact are an application and elaboration of the principle of double effect, are the following:

1. War must be declared by the authority of the state
2. There must be a just cause
3. The intention must be just
4. War must be the last resort
5. Only right means may be employed in the conduct of war
6. There must be a reasonable hope of victory
7. The good to be achieved must outweigh the evils of war

In the course of historical development in the Church, the just war theory became the dominant ethic with respect to war. As a result, the pacifist perspective was perceived to be a counsel of the Gospel. And the practice of the Gospel values of not involving in the war was reserved to the clergy and the religious orders. Thomas A. Shannon indicates the trend of the Church concerning the path of peace, "while pacifism remained a modest option, the dominant and received tradition is that of sanctioning the participation of Christians in war."¹⁶

1.3. The Way of Peace in Contemporary Papal Teachings

The warning of Pius XII, "Nothing is lost by peace; everything may be lost by war"¹⁷ is ever more significant. *Pacem in Terris* of Pope John XXIII, written in 1963 was a milestone in the rediscovery of the path of peace in and for our times. In order to bring about "peace on earth," the Pontiff makes two important points in the third section of the encyclical. At the very outset of this section, the Pope attracts attention to the guiding and governing principles concerning the relations between states, namely, "their relationships also must be harmonised in truth, in justice, in a

¹⁶T. A. Shannon, *What Are They Saying*, 16.

¹⁷Radio Message, August 24, 1939, AAS XXXI, 1939: 334.

working solidarity, in liberty."¹⁸ In promoting mutual relations among nations, John XIII suggested that they should be "regulated by the norm of truth and justice."¹⁹ According to the Pontiff the responsibility of civil authorities is "to protect, above all else, the common good of that particular civil society, which certainly cannot be divorced from the common good of the entire human family"²⁰

Reflecting on the enormous stocks of armaments by the economically developed countries, John XXIII discloses the false myth and aftermath behind the theory of deterrence:

The production of arms is allegedly justified on the grounds that in present-day conditions peace cannot be preserved without an equal balance of armaments. And so, if one country increases its armaments, others feel the need to do the same; and if one country is equipped with nuclear weapons, other countries must produce their own, equally destructive.²¹

Pacem in Terris rightly points out the constant fear that might occupy the minds of people because of the impending dreadful violence and total obliteration of people and land resulting from a nuclear war. Concerning the continuance of nuclear tests, the encyclical focused on the danger and death of various kinds of life on earth. John XXIII calls for a paradigm shift to banish the anxious fear and the threat of war with which men are oppressed:

If this is to come about the fundamental principle on which our present peace depends, must be replaced by another, which declares that the true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone.²² In support of this paradigm, the encyclical highlights three arguments: one, it is an objective demanded by reason; two, it is an objective earnestly to be desired in itself; three, it is an objective fruitful

¹⁸*Pacem in Terris*, no. 80.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, no. 98.

²⁰*Ibid.*

²¹*Ibid.*, no. 110.

²²*Ibid.*, no. 113.

source of many benefits. The Pope writes unequivocally, "no doubt that relations between states, as individuals, should be regulated not by the force of arms but by the light of reason, by the rule, that is, of truth, of justice and of active and sincere cooperation."²³ What we notice in *Pacem in Terris* is the rediscovery of the way of peace. It exhorts categorically that "it is not fear that should reign but love, a love which tends to express itself in a collaboration that is loyal, manifold in form and productive of many benefits"²⁴

Pope Paul VI taught in continuity to his predecessor. His encyclical *Populorum Progressio* addressed the matter of war and violence.

We know, however, that a revolutionary uprising – save where there is manifest, long-standing tyranny which would do great damage to fundamental personal rights and dangerous harm to the common good of the country – produces new injustices, throws more elements out of balance and brings on new disasters. A real evil should not be fought against at the cost of greater misery.²⁵

Pope John Paul II is a strong advocate of peace. In his encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*, the Pope makes a moving humanitarian appeal to all people of good will, to lead people to real progress and not threat:

We all know well that the areas of misery and hunger on our globe could have been made fertile in a short time if the gigantic investments for armaments at the service of war and destruction had been changed into investments for food at the service of life.

The Church, however, which has no weapons at her disposal apart from those of the spirit, of the world and of love, cannot renounce her proclamation of "the world . . . in season and out of season." For this reason the Church does not cease to implore each side of the two and to beg everybody in the name of God and in the name of man: do not kill! Do not prepare destruction and extermination for man! Think of your brothers and sisters who are suffering hunger and misery! Respect each

²³Ibid., no. 114.

²⁴Ibid., no. 129.

²⁵*Populorum Progressio*, no. 31.

one's dignity and freedom!²⁶ Recently John Paul II formulated a principle for the path of peace, "There is no peace without justice, and no justice without forgiveness."²⁷

In this exhortation John Paul II revisited and revitalised the path of peace. He chalked out a programme for establishing peace on earth, founded on truth and justice. The removal of hunger and misery is of vital importance in establishing peace. This amounts to say that truth and justice should prevail in the national and international arena, keeping in view the human destiny and dignity. This is what guarantees peace on earth and hope to human beings.

2. Making the Way of Peace

Seeing the way of peace marks the beginning of the process. Seeing the way might initiate a liking for the same. In our ordinary experience we like things or persons, because they appeal to our senses. The seeing of the way of peace should, naturally, lead people to the liking. Many are they who see the way of peace, but a few are attracted. Many are they like the way of peace, but a few make it.

In this section I wish to present two leaders of international reputation i) Mahatma Gandhi and ii) Martin Luther King Jr., who liked the way of peace and were passionately committed to make the path for peace.

2.1. Mahatma Gandhi

Gandhi organised his ethics and spirituality around the three interrelated key themes: brahmacharya, satyagraha, and *ahimsa*. They constituted a methodology to combat opponents of any kind everywhere. It proved to be a very viable and successful approach, which was instrumental in the independence of India from colonialism.

Brahmachari is one who seeks God, walks and trusts in Him. Brahmacharya is the state of being a brahmachari. It endows the person with an openness and compassion for all beings. It liberates persons from

²⁶*Redemptor Hominis*, no. 16.

²⁷John Paul II, "Global Mobilization of Consciences": 3.

their ego-centeredness. This requires the practice of self-sacrifice and self-discipline. For Gandhi, "religion and politics became one through the practice of brahmacharya: for only selfless compassion for the well-being of others can inspire the trust that makes political leadership possible. Brahmacharya, as the commitment to celibacy, was for him the beginning of such a life lived for others"²⁸

Satyagraha is the desire for and decision in favour of truth. Truth has claims, so also existence. The truth of the truth or existence is its oneness and interrelatedness. It was in South Africa that Gandhi experimented with the link between *brahmacharya* and *satyagraha*. For him, truth is God. Therefore, the connection between the two is obvious, so also the link between religion and politics, both having an ethical import. This is operational through spiritual rather than physical force. According to Gandhi, "Truth can never be coerced, it must win our minds and hearts on its own merit."²⁹ The principle of *satyagraha* is founded on the notion that self-sacrifice is redemptive and transformative. It touches not only the mind, but also the heart of the opponents.

Ahimsa is non-violence. It was another characteristic feature of the spirituality of Gandhi. According to him, truth can only be known through *ahimsa*. "As soon as truth needs violence to protect it, it has become a lie."³⁰ It involves sacrifice. There is no craving for power. It is the way of self-discipline and mastery. The political impact of the path of *ahimsa*, hence, is greater and compelling. *Ahimsa* means facing violence with non-violence, hatred with love. There is no competition, but only cooperation. Such an attitude and approach of *ahimsa* will touch the heart of the opponent. Gandhi was of strong view that "responding to violence with violence only escalates violence."³¹

²⁸Darrell J. Fasching & Dell Dechant, *Comparative Religious Ethics. A Narrative Approach* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 125.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

Gandhi taught and fought the battle of violence with the weapon of non-violence, while always being committed to truth, which he considered as God. He proved that the way of peace is practical and successful.

2.2. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a man who was committed to the cause of integrating the peoples of America, descendents of many nations, colours and creeds into one American society, by doing away with segregation. He was a man of courage and conviction. He had a dream for his people. Day and night he worked for the realization of that dream. In his march towards freedom, he had a few models that inspired and motivated him:

Like Socrates, one of his heroes in the tradition of civil disobedience, he understood that in order to do the good one must overcome the fear of death. Like Moses, he himself as prophet who would help his people enter the promised land even if he would not enter it himself. And like Jesus, he embraced the way of the cross, the way of redemptive suffering that proves love is stronger than death.³²

King's way was the way of the cross. He said, "The cross was "God's way of saying, 'no' to segregation and 'yes' to integration" – it expressed "the length to which God is willing to go to restore broken communities."³³ King was convinced of the way of Jesus in establishing peace:

One cannot build the kingdom of God; one cannot build the beloved community, on violence. The means and the ends of one's actions must be commensurate. Therefore, one cannot create a community of reconciliation through coercion; one must rather win hearts and minds through a willingness to turn the other cheek while never backing away from the demands for justice. The way to the resurrection is through the crucifixion.³⁴

³²Ibid., 218.

³³Ibid., 219.

³⁴Ibid.

King was influenced by Gandhi's non-violent warfare in the form of civil disobedience. He saw that the approach of Gandhi was a workable method in restraining evil and transforming the evildoer. On the one hand, Christ furnished the spirit and motivation to King, and Gandhi furnished the method, on the other. King insisted that the goal is not humiliating or defeating the enemy but to win them over and bring about not only justice but reconciliation. He said that the goal was to attack the evil in systems, not to attack persons.

King was a staunch supporter of the way of peace, through the means of non-violence. He argued that the choice today is no longer between violence and non-violence. It is either non-violence or non-existence. Rooted in the biblical tradition, Darrell J. Fasching and Dell Dechant paint a captivating imagery of King's march towards peace:

His was the journey of one who had been to the mountaintop of unfulfilled aspiration with Moses and the mountaintop of crucifixion with Jesus – both of whom gave their lives for the salvation of others.³⁵

King anchored his life on the way of the cross. He trusted that God could make a way out of no way – the mystery of the way of the cross. This firm belief in God gave him tremendous ethical courage to face all trails and tribulations. He articulated an ethic of audacity. King saw that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. He was calling the Church back to its vocation to be a holy community committed to audacity on behalf of the stranger. King was committed to his dream while following the way of the cross.

In seeing and making the way of peace, people celebrated their life, amidst struggles and tribulations. At the end the aspiration for peace triumphs. To keep the path of peace focused, celebrations pave the way.

3. Celebrating the Way of Peace

In the light of our seeing and making the way of peace, it is important to trace ways and means of celebrating the way, because celebration sets the mind and the trend. Celebrating the way of peace

³⁵Ibid., 221.

embraces walking the way as well. In every celebration there is a walking-coming-going. Such action or motion is an essential component of any celebration. Depending on the sincerity, intensity and solidarity of the action, celebrations become channels of change and transformation.

In what follows, an attempt will be made to rediscover the celebration of the way of peace, which can accelerate the walking on way of peace. i) Mystical celebration; ii) global celebration; and iii) liturgical celebration

3.1. Mystical Celebration

To get in touch with the rhythm and order of the universe, one has to have a sense of mysticism – the power to see everything in the One and the One in everything. “He who sees all beings in the Self itself, and the Self in all beings, feels no hatred by virtue of that realization.”³⁶ This calls forth a sense of contemplation and wonder. It is these capabilities in humans, which can disclose the order of the universe and live in harmony with it. A mystic sees the truth, goodness and beauty permeating and pervading the universe. A mystic is endowed with a vision of interrelatedness and interdependence of everybody in the universe. “All this – whatsoever moves on the earth – is covered by the Lord. Protect your self through detachment. Do not covet anybody’s wealth.”³⁷ Mystics are gifted to see that when something happens to whatever, wherever, whenever, whomever, and however affects something, somewhere, sometime, someone and somehow. This ability enables them to be agents of harmony, peace, happiness, holiness and wholeness.

In this connection I wish to present two hymns attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi. A very popular hymn attributed to the Saint is “Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace,” which strikes at the root and sets the right note in establishing peace on earth.

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is discord, harmony;
Where there is injury, pardon;

³⁶*Isa Upanisad*, no. 6.

³⁷*Ibid.*, no. 1.

Where there is error, truth
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy;

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek:
To be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love.
For, it is in giving, that we receive;
It is in forgetting self, that we find ourselves;
It is in pardoning, that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying, that we are born to eternal life.³⁸

It is a hymn of peace, which is a challenge for all people of every time. This hymn outlines some of the important steps in proposing the path of peace, which we do not want to elaborate here. A person dedicated to following the path of the hymn is certainly a peace-lover and peacemaker. Another hymn of Francis of Assisi is his *Canticle of the Creatures*. This is yet another piece, which depicts the basics of peace, in the sense that it invites the reader to contemplate the relationship, rhythm, order and harmony that human beings have with the universe. To quote a portion of the hymn is in order here to have a taste of the mystic:

To you be praise through all that you have done –
Through creatures all, and first through Brother Sun!
Of you he is a symbol, beauteous, bright;
He makes the day and gives us warmth and light.
Praise too through Sister Moon and every Star
Which you have made to shine in Heaven afar!
Through Brothers Wind and Clouds, Blue Firmament,
Through Rain and Sunshine, giving nourishment!³⁹

³⁸Marion A. Habig, *Francis of Assisi: Writer* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1981), 32-33.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 24.

This hymn reiterates the interconnectivity of everybody in the world. A mystic starts looking at it, liking it, loving it and living it slowly, spontaneously and steadily. People of mystic mindset can definitely give a lead in this march. The truth is this: everyone is mystic at heart. It is enough to awaken this latent mystic in each one to tread the path of peace.

Without such mystic vision and mission, the process of peace will not make any progress. It is this vision of cohesion and connection, which prepares, proposes, promotes people to be committed to the cause of peace.

3. 2. Global Celebration

Amidst the growing unrest and warlike situations in different regions of our globe, the attempt to establish peace is visible and global. For example, the international celebration of the World Day of Peace is remarkable. A day in the calendar year is set apart to recognise, respect and respond to the fundamental craving of humankind for peace. It reminds us of the deep-seated aspiration of human beings for peace. It acknowledges the need for peace. It postulates the ways and means to go about establishing peace on earth. It evaluates the events of the past and present in view of the future. It suggests measures to deal with the problem of war. It challenges people of good will, especially political leaders, to adopt adequate steps for peace and harmony. It enables leaders of every walk of life to come together and chalk out programmes of joint venture towards the prosperity of the world and human dignity. It promotes the work for peace. While the celebration of the World Day of Peace is a response to the inner thirst of all people for peace, it abhors war and violence.

Another international institution recognising the efforts made by the peacemakers is, The Nobel Prize for peace. Unequivocally it announces that peace is worthy of human dignity; the worthiness of human beings consists not in killing but living and letting others live. It denounces war and weaponry. Such a celebration reiterates that every invention or discovery should propose and promote life, life in its fullness and abundance.

In India, Peace Day is celebrated on 30 January, which is also very significant. It was on this day Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of our Nation, who is a champion of peace and non-violence, was assassinated. On that day, the country rededicates herself to the values of the Mahatma, i.e., the way of peace and non-violence. Though Gandhi was killed, his spirit and vision of peace surpasses the limits of space and time.

Such global celebration of the World Day of Peace is a fitting occasion to educate people and students regarding the urgency of peace and non-violence founded on truth, goodness, justice and for all round development of all in the world. This kind of education will foster the original and ideal spirit of co-existence and co-operation among peoples of every creed, race, gender, language, nationality, etc. Such celebrations transmit lively the values and vision of peace for the transformation of people.

3. 3. Liturgical Celebration

In celebrating the way of peace, the liturgical celebration is of great significance, because it not only sketches the mental framework for peace, but also gives training in the art of peace through a corporeal and corporate action.

To demonstrate the efficiency and effectiveness of the liturgical celebration in programming, preserving and promoting peace on earth, we shall focus on a few important actions or events in the liturgical celebration of the Eucharist of the Syro-Malabar Church of St. Thomas Christians of India.

First of all, we focus on the angelic hymn sung at the introductory rite of the Eucharist (Qurbana). This is the hymn with which the celebration of the Qurbana commences, immediately after the exchange of consensus for the celebration according to the command of Christ. The text of the angelic hymn found in the celebration of the Qurbana⁴⁰ is as follows:

C. Glory to God in the highest

⁴⁰*The Syro-Malabar Qurbana. The Order of the Raza* (Trivandrum: Syro-Malabar Bishop's Conference, 1989), 1.

- R. Amen
C. Glory to God in the highest
R. Amen
C. Glory to God in the highest
R. Amen
C. And on earth, peace and firm hope to men in all time forever
and ever.
R. Amen.

Through the singing of the angelic hymn, the re-enactment of the mystery of Christ and the history of salvation is remembered and celebrated. At the very outset, this hymn summarises the content of the mystery of the Incarnation. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us in order to bring reconciliation through redemption.

As per the hymn such a reconciliation has three inseparable and interrelated aspects. First, reconciliation is through giving glory to God or the glorification of God. It is recognised beyond doubt that the reconciliation or salvation is a gift from above, a gift of God. Second, the reconciliation is through establishing peace on earth. Jesus came to give us peace. He made us the children of God. And Jesus told us, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." In the light of this charter of Christian life, it is imperative on the part of Christians to be peacemakers on earth to be called children of God. Hence, it is in working for or establishing peace on earth that Christians, for that matter any human being, become children of God. Third, this reconciliation leads to hopefulness for human beings. Reconciliation offers a blessed hope. This is particularly true in the case of the mystery of the Incarnation. Wounded humanity was in despair and in dire need of hope. Disclosing the true image of human beings in His person, Jesus restored hope for human beings, putting on our humanity in order to vivify it by His divinity.

These three aspects of the reconciliation are closely and neatly knit in such a way that one affects the other. That is to say the glorification of God essentially depends on the establishing of peace on earth and rendering hope to human beings. In other words, if peace is to be established on earth, the other two dimensions of the reconciliation, namely, glorifying God and giving hope, are prerequisite. In the absence of human relationship with God and neighbours, there is no prospect for

peace on earth. It simply means that to establish peace on earth, there is the need for orientation towards God and relatedness with fellow human beings. This is what is implied in the angelic hymn. It expresses the theo-anthropo-cosmic relationship. Hence, the hymn indirectly indicates the necessity of having a vertical orientation towards God, a horizontal relatedness with neighbour and a radical rootedness in creation. This is the idea that the hymn communicates and in the person of Jesus there is the flowering of all these dimensions in their fullness. The cross of Jesus also depicts the same mystery and reality in a sublime way.⁴¹

The faithful celebrating the Qurbana is introduced to an immediate experience and a spontaneous expression regarding the truth of the hymn – the significance of believers being united with God and related with fellow beings in order to celebrate peace on earth or walking the way of peace. The hymn not only visually presents the three-dimensional relationships, which ought to be present in the faithful, but also enables the congregation to accede vocally. This, in a way, helps the celebrants to see the way of peace, to make the way of peace and to walk the way of peace. Evaluating the importance of the hymn from the perspective of peace, it is fitting to state that when peace flourishes on earth, it is a sure sign that God is glorified and humankind is sustained in hope. From the very beginning of the Qurbana, there is the celebration of the way of peace. If the “Amen” of the believers to the peace proposals made in the angelic hymn is translated into action, peace on earth will be possible and sustainable. The celebration of the Qurbana is intended to shape and nurture attitudes and aptitudes, in the present case, to see, to make and walk the way of peace.

Another act, which I wish to focus on, is the exchange of peace in the celebration of the Qurbana, “C. Peace be with you. R. And with you and with your spirit.”⁴² There are other moments⁴³ in the celebration where the same text is used to exchange peace. As we have already noted earlier, the risen Lord greeted His disciples with the salutation, “Peace be with you!” (Jn. 20: 19.) Thus, this formula for the exchange of peace has a

⁴¹See Paulachan Kochappilly, “The Cross and Christian Ethics” in *The Folly of the Cross* (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2000), 194-199.

⁴²*The Syro-Malabar Qurbana*, 20.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 35, 53.

direct connection with the post resurrection account in the gospel. Jesus Christ is our peace. Peace in the biblical tradition is comprehensive and all-embracing reality, "Peace is, therefore, something already present here and now, namely, it is an essential concomitant of the Kingdom of God and is grounded in righteousness and wholeness (Rom 14: 17; 1 Cor 7: 15; Eph 4: 3; 2 Tim 2: 22; Jam 3: 18).⁴⁴ This exchange of peace makes the peace of Christ present to the worshipping community for their immediate experience. The peace of Christ fills the assembly through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Consequently the peace of Christ must flow down in all directions. This is the precise reason why the deacon invites the community to "give peace to one another in the love of Christ."⁴⁵ Once the faithful is filled with the peace of Christ, it should find expression in the community; it should hand it over to all. The gesture of exchanging peace by the assembly following the direction of the deacon is a beautiful and meaningful celebration of the way of peace. There they learn to forgive the offences of others and reconcile with each other in wholeness and holiness. Hence, in and through the celebration of the Qurbana, the community is endowed with the peace of Christ and empowered to share it with others. The gesture of peace practised during the celebration should guide and govern every step in the daily life of the faithful. In this manner, the celebration of the Eucharist becomes a school for Christian living and walking the way of peace.

It may be interesting to note some of the relevant *karozutha* prayers led by the deacon in connection with the celebration of the way of peace, wherein we get to know the mindset and the cherished desire of the community.

D. For the peace, harmony and stability of the whole world and of all the churches we beseech you. R. Have mercy on us, O Lord. D. For our country and for all countries and for the faithful that dwell therein we beseech you. R. Have mercy on us, O Lord. D. For a temperate climate, for a good harvest and an abundance of fruits, and

⁴⁴Varghese Pathikulangara, *Resurrection, Life and Renewal* (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1982), 188.

⁴⁵*The Syro-Malabar Qurbana*, 35.

for the prosperity of the whole world, we beseech you. R. Have mercy on us, O Lord.⁴⁶

These prayerful proclamations of the worshipping congregation reveal the spirit of the faithful concerning peace. It is not mere eschatological peace that the community aims at, but also temporal. A holistic approach to peace is found reverberating in these prayers, always loyal to the biblical tradition. They eloquently communicate the priority of the community and the path for peace. There is no competition or aggressiveness, but they paint a picture of co-existence and co-operation. Prayer springing from one's heart shapes the person and creates corresponding attitudes and dispositions, in this case, the disposition for walking the way of peace.

Conclusion

Walking the way of peace is the need of the hour. It is a challenge to walk before God-neighbour-nature blamelessly. It is the state of walking wakefully, responsibly, and wholly and holy.

Walking presupposes seeing the way. Seeing calls forth light. It is in the light that we get to see the direction and orientation. Making our way becomes possible in the presence of light and in seeing the goal set. Every step forward towards our destiny is a celebration of having attained the end, though not fully.

Though we cannot totally rule out some of the achievements of the principles of just war theory, it has become increasingly difficult to identify the measures of a just war. Besides, the damage and destruction that a war thrust upon people and the ecology is irremediable and colossal in measure.

In order to walk the way of peace, an attempt was made to see the way of peace – the Christian way of peace and non-violence, which is at the core of Jesus' teaching and life. Thereafter, we took a quick look of two world leaders who adopted the way of peace and non-violence with audacity for the liberation of people from unjust structures of the world. Finally, different ways of celebrating the way of peace are presented.

⁴⁶Ibid., 21-22.

The closer we see the way of peace, the better we make and walk the way of peace. The way of Jesus is the way of peace and non-violence. His way of peace is the way of the cross: the way of kenosis, loving kindness, forgiveness, fullness, wholeness, holiness and life in abundance. There is no other way to establish peace on earth. It is becoming increasingly difficult to apply the theory of just war in our times. Peace established on the foundations of truth and justice will last forever. Other ways of peace will perish tomorrow, if not today. Walking the way of peace is never passive, but ever active. It is a march towards truth and justice with audacity till the end, but peacefully and non-violently. Where there is the celebration of the way of peace, one gets to see, make and walk the way of peace.

"Let us pray. Peace be with us!"