

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: *This six-ten session prototype unit has been developed by Pace e Bene Australia (Brendan McKeague and Michael Wood) in collaboration with teachers within the Peace Education Project in Australia. It is intended to build on the introductory work contained in the initial ten session Unit, [The Theology and Practice of Peace and Nonviolence](#), previously developed in 2018-19 (one page [overview](#))*

TEACHING THE UNIT: *It is recommended that staff teaching this unit undertake the associated one-day professional learning program provided by Pace e Bene Australia or one of the other co-Sponsors of the Peace Education Project. Contact [Brendan McKeague \(0429 448090\)](#) or [Michael Wood \(0435 065326\)](#) for further details.*

SCHOOL-BASED CURRICULUM CREATION: *Lesson Plans and resources lists are quite detailed and extensive to enable guidance and input for those who may have minimal background knowledge on this topic. It is essential therefore that educators review and carefully select activities and resources appropriate to their context, learning intentions, program rationale and time available. For example: appropriate revision and links to the Introductory unit; designing assessment tasks; discerning the suitability of suggested resources; building in time for personal reflection; opportunities for deeper inquiry and discussion.*

RATIONALE

The main purpose of this unit is to provide a hope-filled, faith-based alternative to the dominant cultural patterns of war and destructive, violent conflict. There is an assumption that students will already have completed all, or part of, the introductory Unit referred to above, which highlights the sacred and transformative power of nonviolence modelled by Jesus. It will introduce and broaden students' knowledge and understanding of the theology and practice of war, peace and nonviolence. It will enable students to explore, gain knowledge and develop an informed view of their own. It will also encourage them to explore personal, faith, societal and global perspectives and to apply new skills to particular issues. Students will look at the scriptural basis for a theological (Christian) foundation for peace and nonviolence and consider both individual and organised Christian responses to injustice, war and destructive conflict. The witness of Jesus, together with Church teachings and peacebuilding skills, provide multiple signs of New Creation in times of war.

Key Questions

- What do we mean by war?
- What are the differences between: peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding?
- What is the 'business of war' and the 'business of peace'?
- What are some examples of **'the price and profits of war'** and the **'price and prophets of peace'**?
- What is the biblical foundation for a peaceful/nonviolent approach to conflict and injustice?
- How did Jesus teach peace and role model nonviolence?
- What is meant by the 'just war doctrine'? Is it still relevant today?
- Who are some of the practitioners, and what are some of the practices, of nonviolent peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding?
- How can individuals and organisations (eg churches, schools etc) pursue a nonviolent approach to peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding?

Key Concepts, Knowledge and Understanding

- War is perpetuated through ideologies, theologies and cultural conditioning patterns that justify violence.
- War is a big business and generates substantial profits for many corporations and individuals.
- Nonviolence is the use of peaceful means (not violence) to bring about personal, social and political change. It is active not passive.
- Nonviolence is a creative, powerful and effective process for addressing and resolving the conflicts in our lives and in the world.
- Scapegoating as a practice has roots in ancient society and is still prevalent today. It helps perpetuate the myth of redemptive violence.
- The Biblical solution to scapegoating and justifying violence is to love your enemies instead of killing them.
- Jesus modelled and taught nonviolence as a spiritual and practical response to injustice and conflict.
- Jesus referred to the 'Kingdom of God' being here, but not yet in full. We can experience elements of it in our lives and in the lives of others.
- The transitions from war to peace, the transitions from violence to less violence, to nonviolence, are complex, imaginable and exploratory.
- The 'just war doctrine' has provided guidance for centuries to help decide if war is justified. It is now being challenged as obsolete.
- The 'just peace theology' is a growing movement to expand the effective use of nonviolence and peacebuilding as a replacement for war.
- Nonviolent practitioners are active in the world today and are providing hope-filled alternatives to violence in areas of destructive conflict.

Attitudes and Values

Jesus identified key values such as **forgiveness, reconciliation, mercy, justice, truth, love and compassion**, and invited his followers to adopt the same. Church and school communities can practise these key values and reach out to help other people to understand and uphold them.

Lesson Themes: *lessons can be extended over more than one week, or across curriculum areas*

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| Lesson 1 | Reality review: <i>introducing the language/vocabulary/meaning/examples of war, peace, violence and nonviolence;</i> |
| Lesson 2 | Historical and Contemporary Wars and Ways of Killing: <i>justifications of war today; current weapons of war; current and emerging ways of killing; profitability of war; costs and legacy of war on people and planet</i> |
| Lesson 3 | Theology and Practice of Nonviolence: <i>Jesus modelled and taught nonviolence as both a spiritual and a practical response to injustice and conflict; the origins and issues of 'just war theology and doctrine'; examples of people, past and present, witnessing/modelling nonviolent peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding;</i> |
| Lesson 4 | Case Studies and research: <i>explore, in part, Australia's role, past and present, in military models of war and peace (within Australia, in Timor-Leste, in Afghanistan, in the commercial manufacturing of weapons)</i> |
| Lesson 5 | Nonviolent alternatives to the violence of war: <i>nonviolent practitioners are active and making a difference in the world today, even in the midst of extreme violence and war</i> |
| Lesson 6 | Review and Reflection: <i>making sense of the information gathered; constructing a personal position; invitation to engage with active peacebuilding at personal/interpersonal/community/global levels</i> |
| Lessons 7-10 | Extensions to any of the above lesson themes....to be inserted as appropriate. <i>There are enough resources/activities included to expand Sessions 2-5 into longer lessons (for example, viewing longer segments of videos such as Soldiers of Peace/Pray the Devil Back to Hell/A Force More Powerful)</i> |