



Discipleship of Nonviolence

What the Small Communities Need to Know

1. The small communities need to grow in their understanding that nonviolence *begins at home*. Small communities should be encouraged to begin by looking at issues of violence where they live. They should receive support and guidance from the larger parish community in taking action.
2. Violent attitudes and actions permeate our society. Small communities need to link this societal awareness with the importance of creating a countercultural attitude of nonviolence in our own hearts, our parish community, our neighborhood, and our world.
3. At the heart of nonviolence is a profound respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people and of all creation. Catholic social teaching offers a wealth of material on all aspects of life issues, which can provide meaningful discussion and reflection for the group and the larger parish community.
4. Further areas of growth in nonviolence include: (a) imagining a culture of nonviolence in order to have a positive, gospel-based alternative to the culture of violence surrounding us; (b) exploring the evolution of Christian nonviolence in order to see nonviolence in the context of gospel-based values integral to our Christian vocation; and (c) studying models of creative nonviolence, to assist our own struggle in creating a culture of nonviolence.
5. It will be very helpful to talk with parish and/or diocesan/archdiocesan staff for additional ideas on the topic.
6. The journey into nonviolence is the work of a lifetime, and that work can best be sustained in community. So, in approaching nonviolence, the Core should emphasize the importance of a framework for reflection and faith sharing. One very effective way to do this is to use the following RENEW materials: *IMPACT* series (see <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/faithshare.html>; to order, phone: 1-888-433-3221; fax: 1-908-769-5660; Web site: www.renewintl.org; e-mail: Resources@renewintl.org) and the downloadable workshop at www.ParishLife.com. Such a framework provides a focus and direction to communal reflection and encourages action flowing from the reflection.