

PRAY Jesus, you teach us to do to others what we would have them do to us. You challenge us to turn the other cheek, to forgive harm, to do good to our enemies. Wow, in our world, you expect the impossible! Help us learn your heart. Amen.

SPIRIT

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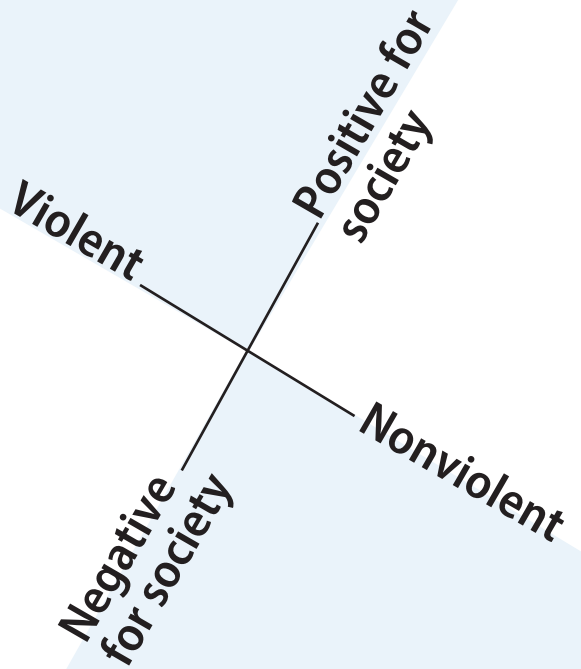
NON violence

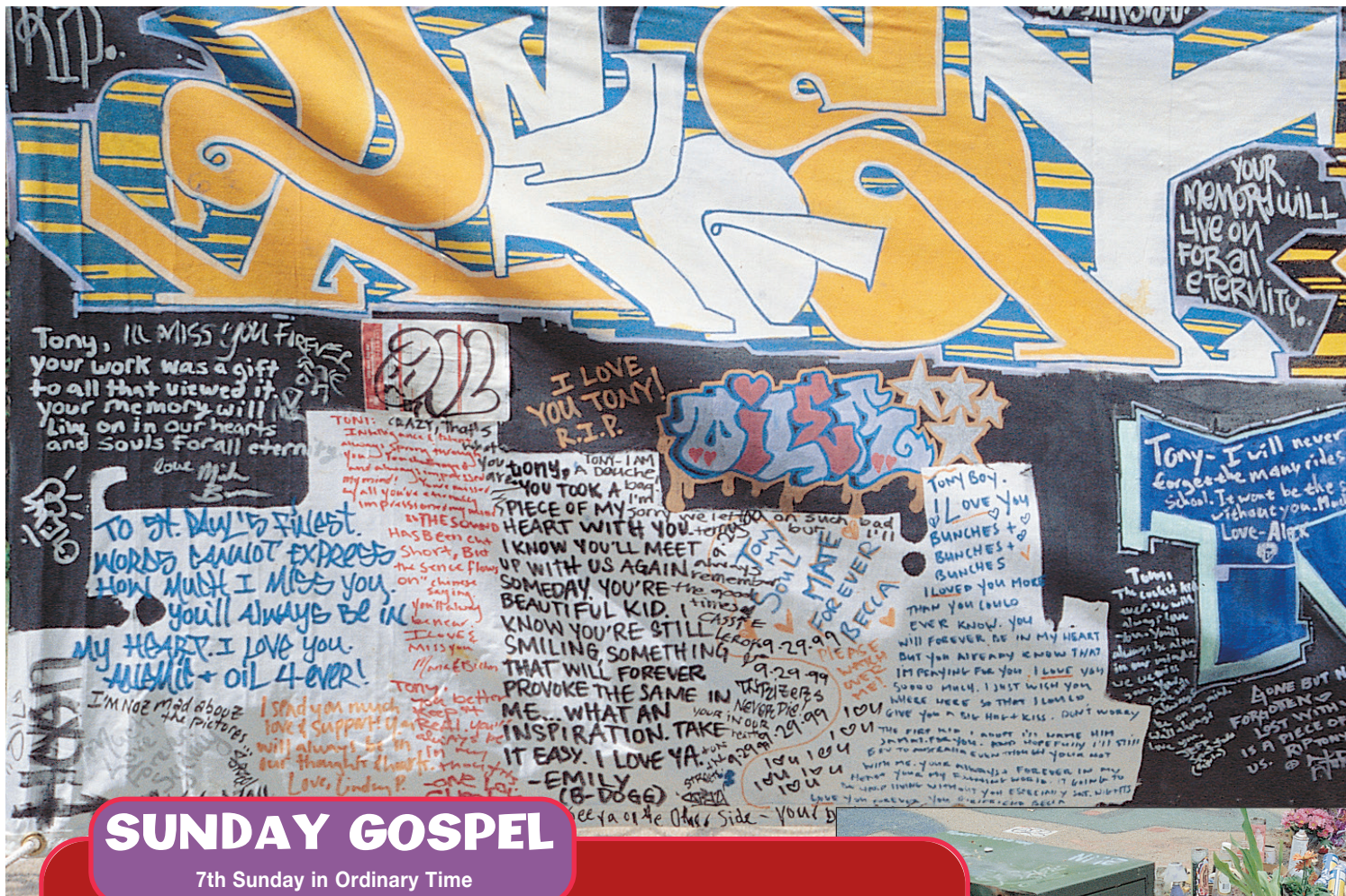
Make a grid on the floor by crisscrossing a piece of rope or tape. Place the words violent and nonviolent at opposite ends of one axis; place the words positive for society and negative for society at opposite ends of the other axis.

Place yourself on the grid according to how violent or nonviolent and how positive or negative for society you think each of the following activities are. Discuss differences on where you and your classmates stand on each activity. Add activities.

- Driving a car
- Playing football or hockey
- Cheating on a test
- Dominating a conversation
- Bombing a country
- Stereotyping people
- Writing graffiti
- Aborting a fetus

- Recycling
- Hitting a child
- Watching TV
- Using the death penalty
- Genetically altering seeds
- Advertising in schools
- Buying sweatshop-made clothes
- Suicide missions





SUNDAY GOSPEL

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jesus values compassion.

NARRATOR: Jesus spoke to his disciples.

JESUS 1: To you who hear me, I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you and pray for those who insult you.

JESUS 2: When people slap you on one cheek, turn and give them your other cheek. When people want your coat, give them your shirt, too. When someone takes what is yours, do not ask for it back.

JESUS 3: Do to others what you would have them do to you. If you love those who love you, what thanks should you get? Even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks should you get? Sinners do the same.

JESUS 4: If you lend to those whom you expect to repay you, what thanks is there to you? Sinners lend to sinners, because they will be repaid.

JESUS 1: Love your enemy and do good; lend without expecting anything in return.

Then will your reward be great. You will be children of the Most High because God is kind to the ungrateful and evil.

JESUS 2: Be compassionate, as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged.

JESUS 3: Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Pardon, and you shall be pardoned. Give, and it shall be given to you.

JESUS 4: Good measure pressed down, shaken together, running over will they give to you. For the measure you measure with will be measured back to you.

Luke 6.28-38

QUESTIONS 1

- How do Tony's friends cope with his murder?
- 2 Why is killing so wrong?
- 3 What violence have you experienced in your life?
- 4 What kind of communities will Jesus' teachings create?
- 5 How do you practice loving your enemies or turning the other cheek?
- 6 How can we make our communities safe?





On April 26, 2000 Tony Basta, 17, was bicycling south in the bike lane of a boulevard near his home. At about 10:30 P.M. Dale Stewart, 20, shot him in the back with a 9 millimeter semi-automatic handgun. Jonathan McNeil, 19, drove the car; Daniel Angus, 19, allegedly provided the weapon. The three had been looking for someone to kill. Tony died on the spot.

Tony attended an arts high school. His friends honored him using creativity like his own in creating a graffiti banner at the spot where he died. They brought gifts symbolizing Tony and expressing their grief. They spray-painted three questions on the bike path to protest his violent and senseless death: Who? What? Why?

Stewart was convicted of premeditated first degree murder and sentenced to life in prison on October 31, 2000.

OUR CATHOLIC FAITH:

The SPIRIT speaks in our lives.

God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 5.5

The story of God's love for us begins with creation and continues in Jesus. But God is more than the Creator, ancient, infinite, and beyond us. God is more than the Son who became one of us in Jesus in order that we might become one with God. God is also Spirit, continuously present within us and around us, at work urging us to build community, to push back boundaries, make friends of enemies.

The Spirit inspires, prompts, urges, drives, and impels us from within and calls, challenges, excites us from

outside ourselves. The Spirit is the giver of our lives today. The Spirit moves in experiences of grief and outrage, of success and joy. The Spirit speaks to us within our deepest selves and summons us to risk going out and beyond ourselves in friendship, love, and community.

The Holy Spirit coexists with our spirit. Our human spirit can help us recognize and respond to the nudging of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

What is spirit? The word means to breathe or move like wind.

Breathing is what animates or gives life to physical beings. The air we breathe that fuels our blood with oxygen is invisible. In one of the Old Testament creation stories, Creator God shapes mud into a human form and breathes the breath of life into

the nose. As a result, the human—in Hebrew, the *adam*—becomes a living being (Genesis 2.7).

At Pentecost the Spirit comes upon Jesus' followers as wind and sets their tongues on fire with the good news of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

Spirit is also a word that we use to name our tendencies and moods. A person with high spirits is exciting, energetic, and unstoppable. A person or group that is dispirited has a low morale and little enthusiasm. A person or even a group or class might be mean-spirited, looking to get even or cause trouble.

Students live and breathe school spirit as they do air. Like air that is sometimes light and sometimes full of dust or pollutants, school spirit rises and falls in a student body. Elections for class officers or student councils usually elevates it. Sports playoffs stir it up. The marching band displays it. School colors, emblems, and letter jackets identify belonging. Exam week creates a wide-spread spirit of anxiety and prayer.

Spirit also describes the intelligent or knowing characteristic of human beings. My human spirit knows my past and dreams my future. It is a word close to meaning my deepest and best self.

The spiritual practices among Jesuit priests, the followers of St. Ignatius, include discerning spirits. This discerning means weighing our feelings and dreams, sorting out our selfish and unselfish motives, testing dreams against Jesus' teaching in the gospels. To discern is to judge, to decide which courses of action give life and which destroy or erode our best selves.

The word *spirit* names what lasts in a person. Her opponents burned Joan of Arc at the stake but her courageous spirit survived the ashes. She is a saint and heroine to us today.

The Spirit moves and speaks in such experiences as those in the list below. Describe to a partner a time you have experienced the Holy Spirit.

- In a moment of wonder in nature
- In outrage at teens' violence toward one another
- In a desire to be somebody
- In doubts about the meaning/purpose of my life
- In discovering I have a creative talent
- In amazement at a friend's loyalty
- In the deep hurt of a friend's betrayal
- In daring to stand up for a friend
- In stopping a rumor
- In jogging and wanting to go on forever
- In admitting I've done someone wrong
- In staying in school against all odds
- In struggling to decide on college or a career
- In weighing what's right and wrong
- In struggling with the suicide of a classmate or friend
- In mourning the loss of a parent
- In the enthusiasm of youth rallies or rock concerts
- In helping others rebuild after a tragedy



Andreas Glöckner from Pixabay

Archbishop Oscar Romero knew that his preaching to end the violence in El Salvador made enemies. He reflected that if he was killed his spirit would rise in the Salvadoran people. He was killed while celebrating Eucharist but lives as a hero saint of the people today.

In the *Nicene Creed*, we call the Holy Spirit "the giver of life." The Holy Spirit is with us not only when we are morally good but in every moment of our lives—in our sorrow and moments of awe, in our breakups and breakthroughs, in anger at injustice and delight in sharing.

The Spirit, being the Spirit of love and communion within the Trinity, desires to break down walls and boundaries among us. The Spirit moves in us and acts through us to break stereotypes and to see one another in God's image as equals. The human person is sacred, alive in the Spirit.

FAITH in ACTION

- 1** What stirrings of the Spirit do you sense in your group? What needs do see among young people in your parish or school?
- 2** Consider building community by creating a Wall of Hope that celebrates nonviolent events and leaders throughout history. Involve people throughout your parish or school in finding or drawing pictures and writing up leaders and events. Begin with the midwives who resisted Pharaoh's order to kill newborn Hebrew boys in 1250 BC (Exodus 1.15-22). Include prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, Amos, who urged justice for the poor. Include Jesus, who taught compassion and nonviolence. Research saints such as Francis of Assisi and Martin of Tours, who were committed to nonviolence. Add recent leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day, Rosa Parks; Nobel Peace Prize winners such as Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Wangari Maathai, and Jimmy Carter; and people and events in your area.