

# Review of: "Active Peacebuilding as a Challenging Task of the Catholic Social Ethics"

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**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

Dear Editors,

Thanks again for giving me the opportunity to review the article entitled "Active Peacebuilding as a Challenging Task of the Catholic Social Ethics" written by Inocent-Mária V. Szaniszló.

I enjoyed reading this article, but I think there are some aspects that can be improved. In what follows, I provide some constructive feedback that, I hope, the author will find helpful.

Structure:

Having read the article, I am wondering what exactly the purpose of the article is supposed to be. Is the author seeking to provide an overview of the development of CST from more traditional just war thinking toward active peacebuilding? If that is his intention, it would help the reader if the article would be clear on this. In other words, the article would benefit from an outline that clearly states the aim of the article.

Argument:

I very much enjoyed the personal reflection with which the author kicks off the article. In terms of the substantive engagement with the development of Catholic thinking on war and peace there are a few imprecisions and mistakes that need correcting. For example, the author refers to "negative peace" as a concept of theology. Given that he is writing on the RC tradition, I think it would be better to use the Vatican II distinction between "peace of a sort" and "genuine peace." Moreover, he refers to Vitoria as a Jesuit, although he was a Dominican. These are just two examples. There are further instances of such minor issues.

In addition, the section on the just war ideas of Augustine and Aquinas are so short that they do not do justice to the complexity of their arguments. I would encourage the author to expand these sections. A related point I would like to make is that the author concentrates mainly on central European authors and UK/US scholarship does not receive much attention. The article would especially benefit from engaging with the historical work of authors like James Turner Johnson and Gregory Reichberg.

Furthermore, the argument does not consider ongoing important developments in Catholic thinking on war and peace. The emerging "just peace" approach is not getting any attention. I would encourage the author to consult the excellent work of

Lisa Sowle Cahill on just peace. Additionally, Pope Francis's recent change of position on nuclear ethics is not mentioned. Neither is the war in Ukraine and its impact on Catholic thinking being discussed.

All in all, I think that there is potential in this article but it should be clearer about what it seeks to achieve. Following from that, the article needs to go into more detail and engage with ongoing debates in Catholic thinking on war and peace.