

CONTENT AND CONTEXT IN THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

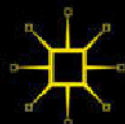


# JUSTICE AND PEACE IN A RENEWED CARIBBEAN

Contemporary Catholic Reflections



*Edited by*  
**Anna Kasafi Perkins,  
Donald Chambers,  
and Jacqueline Porter**



**Palgrave Macmillan's**  
**Content and Context in Theological Ethics**

Content and Context in Theological Ethics offers ethics done from theological and religious perspectives rooted in the particular contexts and lived experience of real people in history, in the present, and looking with hope toward the future. The series raises the contexts or cultures out of which an increasing number of scholars do their thinking and research regarding the influence of those contexts on the content of ethics and how that content has been applied historically, traditionally, and/or subversively by members of the context or community or culture under scrutiny or raised as paradigmatic or as a novel or passing fad. The series explores normative claims about right and wrong, human flourishing or failing, virtues and vices—the fundamental bases and questions of ethics—within the context, culture, or community identified and in correlation with norms inherited from or imposed by colonizing/dominant forces or ideologies while recognizing new voices and/or new understandings of theologically and/or religiously inspired concerns in response to knowledge uncovered by other disciplines which impact ethical reflection on the content explored.

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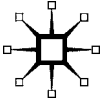
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REFLECTIONS

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For

**Sr. Diane Jagdeo, OP, PhD (1948–2008), Trinidad and Tobago**

“Contemplation is a commitment to presence. It calls for an inner mode of presence that enables us to live the contemplative spirit so that its fruit can be tasted by all who come into contact with us—whatever may be our apostolic action.”

**Mr. Petrus Gerardus Maria Sjak Shie (1941–2009), Suriname**

... [T]he schools in their different contexts, reflect constantly on their concrete situation, in the light of the Catholic-Christian tradition, cultivating the two basic values in that tradition: love of one’s neighbor and renunciation of every desire to gain status. With all this, the school is aware of the sacramentality of reality . . . and is creative in finding symbols and rituals . . . inspired by the Catholic tradition and whatever religion which is represented by our children at school . . .

**Monsignor Gladstone Orlando Stanislaus Wilson  
(1906–1974), Jamaica**

“What does this condition present to the mind of thinking people?

It presents this: We have to break away from a pessimistic leaving of our development to chance . . . [T]hought must precede action. To leave matters to chance is to express a faith, not in God but in fate, in a blind destiny, and nothing that man has ever achieved has ever been achieved by resigning himself to fate or destiny.”

**Most Reverend Samuel Emmanuel Carter, SJ, CD, LLD  
(1919–2003), Jamaica**

“I appeal to all the unions . . . to organize, educate, train and develop yourselves . . . in your knowledge of history, economics, negotiating, labour law and, above all the precepts of Social justice. I remind you of a rich heritage from the Churches of all denominations who have played a wide role in trade union history. I remind you of the wisdom of the letters of the Popes since the letter of 1891 and carrying on up to the present time.”

**Most Reverend Gordon Anthony Pantin (1929–2001), Trinidad and  
Tobago**

“Let us be strong supporters of human life and not become sharers in the culture of death.”

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# ANTILLES EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE STATEMENTS (1969–2011)

- Catholic Education in the Territories of the Antilles Episcopal Conference* (2011)
- The Gift of Life: We Are Called to Proclaim Celebrate and Serve* (2008)
- Common Norms for Diocesan Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests and Deacons* (2007)
- Caring for the Earth—Our Responsibility: An Invitation to Reflection* (2005)
- A Statement of the Antilles Episcopal Conference on HIV-AIDS* (2005)
- Guidelines for Catechesis* (2004)
- Stewardship and the Revitalisation of Parish Life in the Caribbean* (2003)
- Crime and Violence: Justice and Peace Shall Embrace* (2003)
- Statement on Homosexuality and Homosexual Behaviour* (2001)
- Plutonium Shipment through the Caribbean Region* (2001)
- Capital Punishment* (2000)
- On the Ministry of Catechesis* (2000)
- Evangelising Family Life for a New Caribbean* (1994)
- To Build a Common Destiny, to Foster Political Growth* (1993)
- Evangelization for a New Caribbean: On the Observance of the Quincentenary 1492–1992* (1992)
- True Freedom and Development in the Caribbean: A Christian Perspective* (1982)
- Justice and Peace in a New Caribbean* (1975)
- Antilles Bishops Speak on Black Power* (1969)

## SERIES EDITOR'S PREFACE

*Content and Context in Theological Ethics*, as a new series in the Palgrave Macmillan titles in religion, offers a fresh look at the millennia-old tradition of ethics engaging religions, their scriptures and revered texts, and their theological reflections on what matters and why. The series is first and foremost focused on ethics, done from theological and religious perspectives, and rooted in the particular contexts and lived experience of real people in history, in the present, and hoped for in the future. While engaged by diverse contexts, themes that are emerging in the series span the gamut of research in ethics that provoke theological and/or religious concerns, for example: anthropology, sexuality, authority, sacramentality, health (and reproduction, aging, demise), beauty, faith commitments, liberation, virtue, individual and common good, metaphysics, and the "oppressions" of racism, sexism, heterosexism, xenophobia, imperialism, colonialism, militarism, ableism, and dogmatism. The difference this series presents, however, is "difference." That is, contemporary work in ethics is increasingly context-driven and thereby characterized by diversity; this series brings the new trends raised by contextual theological and religious ethics to bear on the content of the discipline.

Published by Palgrave Macmillan, *Justice and Peace in a Renewed Caribbean: Contemporary Catholic Reflections* inaugurates a series that brings new insight to inherited traditions through detailed analysis of the concrete/context-laden lived experience of the people the traditions claim as their own and critical reflection on what was the past for them and/or what could be for the future. The series is intended to provide scholars books of interest on a broad range of subjects in ethics identified with a particular community whose voice and experience is underrepresented in ethics, theology, religious studies, and related disciplines.

I am privileged to launch the series with this collection of essays by Catholic theologians and pastors serving the English-speaking Caribbean Church. I am not aware of any other text that comes close

to introducing and exploring the thinking on why a particular faith tradition matters for a particular (and somewhat isolated on account of its island make-up) geographic place. In a relatively short period of time, the Caribbean Bishops of the Catholic Church have produced fifteen pastoral letters (a common teaching instrument used through the conferences of bishops throughout the worldwide Roman Catholic Church). The collection provides context-specific theological reflections on their importance. To these scholars' delight, their bishops have given them much rich and challenging material for their work and the communities they serve.

The Caribbean is replete with indigenous, colonial, and migrant cultures and the authors here represent just some of that diversity—from Curaçao to Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago—as they locate the concerns of the pastorals considered in their land and their culture(s). Since many of these nations are geographically small and often limited to their tourist value, it is refreshing to read about the real joys and struggles that the peoples themselves experience behind the vacation attractions. The reader will find it also of interest that the bishops have not shied away from the hard questions of crime, punishment, and capitalist colonialism.

Readers, welcome to the series and . . . enjoy!

MARY JO IOZZIO

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge with gratitude the peoples of the Caribbean region whose persistent struggle for justice and peace continues to inspire theological reflection and praxis. Theirs is the struggle that has inspired the bishops of the Antilles Episcopal Conference to reflect seriously on the call for justice and peace in the changing circumstances of our lives.

We acknowledge the work of our fellow contributors who made time to reflect on the contemporary conditions of the Caribbean people in light of the Catholic faith. Several other persons in big and small ways helped this volume to come to light by willingly sharing their time and talents with us: Rohan Butler whose creative skill contributed to the cover design; Calvin Bryan whose photographic skill captures William Jordan's inspiring painting, "Fish," used on the cover. The beauty and complexity of Jordan's oil painting reflects the essence of the Caribbean region and its people.

June Wheatley of the Office of the Board for Undergraduate Studies, University of the West Indies, Mona, contributed her research and editing skills to finalizing this manuscript. We are truly in your debt, June. We are also grateful to the administrative staff of Holy Cross Church for their human and material resources. Michael Burke, thanks for your keen historical memory; Raymond Syms from the *Catholic News* in Trinidad and Paul Tjon Kiem Sang from Suriname—thanks for assistance in research. No help was too small.

Our work communities offered varying degrees of support to the completion of this process: The Office of the Board for Undergraduate Studies, University of the West Indies, Mona; Holy Cross Catholic Church, and St Joseph's Teachers College. To all those who contributed in any way to the completion of this project, we are indeed grateful.

ANNA KASAFI PERKINS  
DONALD CHAMBERS  
JACQUELINE PORTER

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACP	African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries
AEC	Antilles Episcopal Conference
ALBA	Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas
CADEC	Christian Action for Development in the (Eastern) Caribbean
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market
CCC	Caribbean Conference of Churches
CCNA	Caribbean Catholics of North America
CELAM	Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano (Latin American Episcopal Conference)
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSAEC	<i>Child Sexual Abuse in the Eastern Caribbean</i>
CST	Catholic Social Teaching
EFL	<i>Evangelising Family Life for a New Caribbean</i>
EU	European Union
EV	<i>Evangelii Nuntiandi</i>
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICT	Information and Communications Technologies
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JPNC	<i>Justice and Peace in a New Caribbean</i>
NFP	Natural Family Planning
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSA	<i>Common Norms for Diocesan Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priest and Deacons</i>
OAS	Organization of American States
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OMC	<i>On the Ministry of Catechesis</i>
para.	paragraph
RM	<i>Redemptoris Missio</i>
SHHB	<i>Statement on Homosexuality and Homosexual Behaviour</i>
SIDS	Small Island Development States Network