



## Coordinator's Corner

By Pat Ferrone

To the Editor:

The season of Advent is a time of waiting in expectant hope that this year's birthing of the Servant Savior Jesus into our world might bring forth glimmers of the "peace on earth" for which we yearn. This year, noting one of the myriad sources of un-peace that trouble our world, St. Susanna Parish's Pax Christi group decided to draw attention to the unresolved immigrant/refugee issue. Our hope was to initiate fruitful discussion about how we might relieve some of the suffering of those who, like Jesus, long to be welcomed.

Picture our large outdoor manger, adorned with a ribboned wreath and a painted sign with the words, "Peace on Earth?" prominently displayed. Inside, amidst the straw, see the beautiful figures of Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and wise men, a few sweet animals and baby Jesus. All eyes are on the child. But note that Jesus is separated from his parents by the cage in which he is held, and the wise men have been deported behind a "wall," unable to draw near the holy presence of the babe. Things are not as they should be. Certainly, the peace we've idealized is impeded by the visual

image of the hard steel of the cage and the impenetrable wall of division. This is no false representation, but present-day reality for many.

Using your imagination, consider that it should not be an affront to our sensibilities, or a desecration of faith or symbols, to thus insert into our beloved ideal of Christmas peace the reminder of the harsh cruelty of current international policies - some perhaps due to the overwhelming numbers of refugees and the stress on an



St. Susanna crèche Christmas 2018  
(photo courtesy of Linda Bates)

individual country's resources to respond to their needs; but many a result of cold-hearted policies tinged with a racist overlay. Increasingly, border walls and restrictions are thwarting efforts for asylum. (It is reported that in Europe, 15 countries had border walls in 1990; by early 2016, there were nearly 70.) Also, realize that war and persecution, human rights

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## An Encounter at the Border

By Linda Bessom, SND

On November 16-18, 2018, I joined Pax Christi Beverly member Jeanne Gallo and fellow local human rights activist Sunny Robinson, with about 400 other participants, in Nogales, AZ and Nogales, MX for the third annual Border Encuentro sponsored by School of the Americas Watch. Next year it will return to Fort Benning, Georgia. There I witnessed the systemic racism of the US Border Patrol as well as border militarization.

The School of the Americas, founded in 1946, and renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) in 2001, is a US military training school currently based in Fort Benning, Georgia, which trains military leaders from the Americas to: monitor activities, torture, and kill "subversives" in their own country. For 28 years, SOA Watch has denounced these illegal, violent interventions, and

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**NOTE: To promote a greener future with a leaner budget, print copies of this newsletter are mailed only to our readers who have no access to email.**

## Coordinator's Corner...

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violations, as well as increasing environmental degradation, are fueling the massive refugee crisis. For these, we are responsible.

Consider these facts from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR): 65.8 million people (85% of whom are in developing countries) have been forcibly displaced world-wide. Of these, 40 million are internally displaced, 3.1 million are asylum seekers, and of the 25.4 million refugees, 1/2 of them are children. These numbers do not include 5.4 million Palestinian refugees. All endure precarious lives unmoored from a sense of hope and stability, all are desperate to regain some degree of normalcy. It is not a stretch to see them as “caged” in untenable circumstances, unfree and suffering, with little assurance that their plight will be recognized and relieved.

Though the over-all picture is dire, and it is impossible to compassionately hold such huge numbers without being overwhelmed, it is incumbent on us to rouse ourselves to respond where, and when, we can. To this end, three faith communities in Dedham - St. Susanna Parish, Allin Congregational Church and St. Paul's Episcopal, worked together as the Dedham Refugee Collaborative, for nearly 15 months to prepare ourselves to accept a refugee family into our community under the auspices of Catholic Charities. As of September 25, we have been blessed to assist a family of 5 from Burundi, via Congo and (for the

past 14 years) Uganda, settle in Dedham. It is difficult to say who is more grateful for this experience, but there is no question that coming to know one another - so that there is no “other,” is part of the equation.

It is our hope, during this season of goodwill, that we will stretch ourselves to resist with love the attitudes and policies that “cage” us all. We remember that we are called to “welcome the stranger” (Matthew 25) and “treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and love him as yourself.” (Leviticus)

*[Editor's Note: this letter was published in the Dedham Times issue of December 5, 2018.]*



*Pope Francis meeting refugees in Lampedusa (www.guardian.com)*

I wrote the above Letter to the Editor in December at the request of the Dedham Times. It was meant to articulate the thinking behind the St. Susanna Parish creche. The focus on immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers, a theme carefully chosen by the parish Pax Christi group, generated both push-back and thoughtful consideration far beyond our expectations. The sign on the banner above the creche read “Peace on Earth?” - its question mark challenged the usual associations made about the traditional Christmas display.

Soon after the assembly of the creche, camera crews and reporters arrived for interviews, TV and radio talk show hosts prodded guests for reactions, and the telephone rang off the hook at the rectory - sometimes with irate messages insisting that baby Jesus be removed from the cage and the wall separating the Wise Men, pulled down. And yet, what was perceived by some as unnecessarily provocative, for others became a catalyst for reflecting on the relationship between faith and governmental policies that perpetrate cruel injustice. For the Pax Christi group, it seemed clear that the intentional creation of insurmountable barriers to people fleeing fearful and desperate situations violates the foundational ethics of our country, and undermines the gospel mandate to “welcome the stranger” and “love your neighbor as yourself.”

Recently, in my search for analysis and insights about the ongoing global tragedy of millions of refugees and migrants seeking welcome in safe countries, I came across an excellent research paper by Paulina Guzik of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, Poland. It appeared in the journal, *Church, Communication and Culture*, and is entitled “Communicating Migration - Pope Francis' Strategy of Reframing Refugee Issues.”\* In it, the author examines 12 fundamental addresses by the pontiff, starting with his Apostolic visit to the Italian island of Lampedusa in 2013, and including his homily at a mass on Migrants and Refugees World Day in 2018.

Guzik points out the symbolic significance of the Pope's decision

to go to Lampedusa as a way to highlight a prominent concern of his papacy - that of waking the world to the tragedy of asylum seekers. His hope is to replace a narrative of numbers with a moral lens in order to build consensus for achieving the goal of a “just and stable solution for migrants and refugees worldwide.” Currently, 258 million “brothers and sisters” are living outside their country of birth. It was at Lampedusa that the Pope memorialized the more than 20,000 people who sought safe haven in Europe, but drowned in Mediterranean waters instead - tossed to their watery graves from boats that became “vehicles of death.” Sadly, the names of only 1000 people are known. The unnamed “others” are simply referred to as “Anonymous,” the stories of their lives a sorrowful mystery; their deaths only statistics



*Pope Francis laying a wreath in Lampedusa (www.vaticannews.va)*

to be tallied. By laying a wreath on the troubled waters, Francis acknowledged their precious lives and lamented the “globalization of indifference” which “has taken from us the ability to weep” at their loss. In bearing witness to the deaths, I believe he was saying “Presente” - you are here among us still, and we remember.

Guzik shows the ingenuity of the Pope’s strategy for reframing the issue by his use of all the communication tools available in the 21st century. Speaking, writing, showing up at significant sites of distress (Lampedusa, Lesbos and Bangladesh), even “tweeting” to an enormous  
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following, he is an “agenda setter” who draws attention to what Catholics and the global community “should be thinking about.” He speaks often, wedding the call of the gospel to the needs of the Christs before us, and mirrors in his words and presence responses based on empathy and universally recognized human rights. He also speaks about refugees in terms of the gifts and talents they bring, dispelling the idea that their presence brings danger and disruption to society.

Guzik notes that in his messages, the Pope chooses words which emphasize his commitment to the ongoing reality of human displacement: he mentions “migrants, refugees and migration” over 200 times, and “humans, brothers, sisters, people” 172 times in the 12 speeches analyzed, to connect our relationships and responsibility with the cultivation of kinship. He differentiates a gospel-oriented vision based on inclusion, from current policies of exclusion and racism.

“Encounter, welcome, love” are used 132 times as our spiritual platform for action, and “God, Christ and Church” are heard 114 times, enfolding us in a faith-based mission. Francis’ deepest yearning seems to be disarming clenched hearts and minds so that a groundswell of support and compassion for the dispossessed, initiated within the Church by bishops, clergy, religious and Catholic faithful, will influence elected leaders to create moral and compassionate legislative policies.

I think, too, of “bearing witness” here at home as an incompetent, dangerous president tries to lead us further “down the rabbit hole” with lies and distortions about the supposed nefarious intentions of our southern neighbors. In order to preserve sanity and a modicum of

hope, I find myself calling to mind the living Cloud of Witnesses - those who protest, and demand mercy and justice; those who minister at the borders; those who live to tell their scorching tales of walking the deadly desert miles. Instead of finding sustaining jugs of water left by “No More Deaths” volunteers, they find empty containers, the water poured out by border patrol agents (U.S. Customs and Border Protection report that between 1998 and 2017, a total of 7,217 people have died trying to cross the vast, arid desert).



*Water jugs and NMD volunteers in Arizona (@NoMoreDeaths)*

And, there are those who travel to the borders to see what’s going on, and to expose the caging of children and the agonizing separation of families. Recently, Jeanne Gallo, Sunny Robinson, and Sr. Linda Bessom of Pax Christi joined the School of the Americas Watch at the Nogales AZ/Nogales Mexico border, to observe the effects of current policies, and to hear the distraught stories of migrants first-hand. Upon return, they persistently share their knowledge and passion for action with faith groups throughout the Boston area, and provide petitions to be signed, actions to take and the names of organizations providing hospitality, like Annunciation House: [www.annunciationhouse.org](http://www.annunciationhouse.org)  
*[Editor’s Note: See Sr. Linda’s related article on page 1]*

And still, the situation worsens as President Trump declares an emergency need for building a

border wall, even as he admits that “I didn’t need to do this.” With a unilateral fiat that disregards counsel, and the decisions of the legislature, and flies in the face of rational or compassionate decision making, billions of dollars may be spent on an edifice that will come to be seen as a hollow monument to a “leader” who, as Francis might say, has “lost his bearings” and refuses the grace that might possibly free his mind and spirit to envision just solutions.

In conclusion, I must say that I still cling to a generative hope which rises up out of prayer, community, and persistent acts of love and resistance on behalf of real people. After just 5 months, our refugee family of 5 from Burundi are happy and safe, and on their way to building rich lives. For all of us involved in their support - a “village” of gifted and committed people - it is often possible to nourish a vision of a world held in the arms of Love. Perhaps it’s so because we, and they, actually experience its embrace in the mutuality of giving and receiving the giftedness of one another.

Please continue to resist the “galvanization of fear among U.S. citizens” by the political climate. Do mercy and love peace. Speak truth to lies. Insist on “compassion, justice and the protection of vulnerable people” (from a Pax Christi Statement on The Real National Emergency...). Finally, hear these “tweeted” words: “I invite you not to build walls but bridges, to conquer evil with good, offense with forgiveness, to live in peace with everyone.” Pope Francis

*Pat Ferrone is co-coordinator, with Fr. Rocco Puopolo, of Pax Christi Massachusetts.*

## An Encounter at the Border

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demanding an end to racist systems that criminalize and kill migrants, refugees (for more information go to: [www.soawatch.org](http://www.soawatch.org) ).



*SOA Watch Border Encuentro poster 2018 (www.soaw.org)*

Hearing the testimony of Ms. Taide Elena, about her grandson, José Antonio Elena Rodríguez, during a vigil near the border wall where he was murdered, was heartbreaking. On October 10, 2012, US Border Patrol Agent Lonnie Swartz shot 16-year-old José Antonio, 10 times in the back and head from the U.S. side of the militarized border through the wall into Nogales, Sonora, Mexico.



*Painting of Jose Antonio Elena Rodriguez (www.teenvogue.com)*

Unarmed, José Antonio was walking to meet his brother with plans to play basketball. The Agent assumed he was one of a group who had earlier thrown rocks and attempted to scale the wall. On November 21, 2018, after his second federal re-trial in Tucson, AZ, a hung jury rendered a not guilty verdict for Involuntary

Manslaughter. And Arizona only allows two re-trials.

Nogales, AZ, a major port of entry for agricultural products from Mexico, was again in the news, as residents protested their border wall’s “new look,” as the Customs Border Patrol (CBP) have added top-to-bottom concertina wiring. Residents claim this is driving businesses, vacationers, and travelers away. Imagine how children of the community must feel as they pass by this border wall while being transported to their school each day.



*School bus passing border wall, Nogales, AZ (www.startribune.com)*

In light of these recent events, let us join the Nogales community in demanding an end to the apparent right of Border Patrol agents to kill with impunity, and an end to border wall funding, by contacting our US Congressional delegation.

Jeanne, Sunny and I are now traveling around the state to give an up-to-date two-hour power point presentation on our border experience, with a discussion of current US immigration policy, reports with human rights workers, families of the disappeared, and DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) youth. We will use the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, signed 70 years ago, as the framework for how US immigration policy ought to be shaped, and suggest concrete current advocacy actions.

Participants can also sign up to receive follow-up advocacy alerts. A Free-Will Offering goes to Annunciation House in El Paso, TX, one of the many shelters for hundreds of immigrants and refugees who come through daily seeking asylum in our country.

To schedule a presentation, please contact Sister Linda Bessom, SND at [bessom@sndden.org](mailto:bessom@sndden.org) or Sunny Robinson at [sunbeams1965@gmail.com](mailto:sunbeams1965@gmail.com).

*-Sister Linda is a Pax Christi MA board member from Beverly.*

## From Pax Christi Beverly: Hearts Without Borders

Peter Stewart, Pax Christi Beverly member, has recently produced a new YouTube video, "Hearts without Borders," which can be accessed at this link:

<https://youtu.be/NJIZIgL65U>

The 12-minute documentary offers a chance for much self-reflection on the discrimination we have in our own hearts. Sister Linda Bessom's new song "The Sun of Justice/Courage Will Rise on You" is used throughout the video. To contact Peter for a presentation, please email him at: [peterpeacemusic@gmail.com](mailto:peterpeacemusic@gmail.com).

## Grants from PCMA to Local PC Groups

Local groups may apply for grants of up to \$250 to support projects which are in keeping with Pax Christi's mission by contacting PCMA treasurer Charle Gobron for an application form: 6 Bolser Avenue, Natick, MA 01760; or [cgobron@aol.com](mailto:cgobron@aol.com)

Winter-Spring 2019

## A View from the Capital

By Brian Ashmankas

*[Editor's note: This is the second in an annual series of columns by "our man in Washington."]*

Last year I wrote of the many opportunities for activism in Washington and the powerful witness of those honored in the city's museums and monuments. Today these opportunities and witnesses still stand, and the experience is still one of great joy.

In January I was able to attend both the March for Life and the Women's March, seeking to unite these two worthy causes of nonviolence that complement each other, even while partisanship on both sides corrupts each and turns them against each other. However, in my two years I have also witnessed the dark side of the nation's capital.



*Providence Hospital, Washington, DC (www.bizjournals.com)*

Donald Trump has been president during my entire tenure in Washington, and I hope we both leave Washington in 2021, me for ordination, him in electoral defeat. At times his policies can bring a sense of despair or, worse, numbness to the long train of tragedies, especially those affecting immigrants, stoking division, and tearing apart peace.

This year I have been serving as a chaplain at Providence Hospital, a Catholic hospital which serves

several impoverished neighborhoods in the city. Tragically, the national organization that runs Providence Hospital is closing its doors in April, apparently leaving the people without many of the basic health services they need. The cry for justice from the patients is loud, but seemingly unheard. It has been an honor to walk with and share in the suffering of these patients in this difficult time, but I am deeply aware that I get to return to my comfortable life when it is over and they do not.

Finally, the scandal that rocked the Catholic Church this summer hit Washington DC especially hard. The now infamous Theodore McCarrick was the former archbishop here, and the list of failures of church leadership to prevent his serial abuse is long.

In the midst of these three situations, it is difficult to see the goodness and value in the Catholic Church. Frequently, its members see no contradiction between supporting the president and following Jesus, often its institutions seem unbound by its own social teaching, and some of its leaders have failed to protect and welcome the most vulnerable. However, I came to see that this aspect of the Catholic Church is so upsetting not because it lies at the core of what it is, but because it does not adhere to its deepest and truest reality, what it is constantly becoming.

The Catholic Church is actually a corporeal organism, given breath by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is always heightening it so it is tall enough not only to call for but to effect justice, deepening it so it is deep enough to draw up from its deposit of faith rich theology that envisions a better world rooted in the Gospel, such as Catholic Social Teaching, and widening it so it is

wide enough to encompass and welcome the whole diversity of people. In this way it is, and is always being built into, the Body of Christ.

When we as Church fail to confront evil, fail to live Catholic Social Teaching, and fail to value and include all people, we corrupt and shrink it, but the Spirit ultimately continues to purify and grow it into what it truly is, the Body of Christ.

Pax Christi exists in a unique position. As a social justice and peace organization within the Catholic Church, it both points the way and is a living example of the reality of the Catholic Church amidst all that obscures that reality. In both the struggles and triumphs of this past year, I have gained a greater appreciation for the powerful role it has played in my life's journey.

It was the recognition of the nonviolent Jesus that led me back to faith in college. It was prison ministry through Pax Christi that led to my entry into seminary. Pax Christi was the context through which I made a number of the friends who served as my support network at St. John's seminary. I will be the best man in the wedding of one of these friends in May.

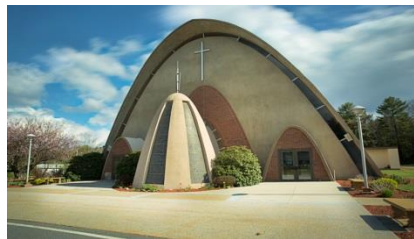
Pax Christi was even the family waiting for me when I left home for Washington; their national offices are located in the same building as the seminary. In a few words, Pax Christi is the reason I am able to see the reality of the Catholic Church amidst trials and challenges that would obscure it.

*Brian is a longtime member of the Pax Christi MA board of directors.*

## RJ and RP: A New Model of Justice

*By Nancy Carapezza*

The Pax Christi Massachusetts annual fall assembly for 2018 was held on Saturday, October 20, at St. Malachy Parish in Burlington and focused on "Restorative Justice 101: An Alternative That Works!" Although it attracted fewer than 30 participants, this low number appeared to reflect the many other events competing for attendees at this busy time of year than the wide interest of the subject or the high quality of the presentations.



*St. Malachy Parish, Burlington  
([www.saint-malachy.org](http://www.saint-malachy.org))*

Erin Freeborn, Executive Director of C4RJ (Communities for Restorative Justice), headquartered in Concord, presented an overview of restorative justice practices and recent legislation in Massachusetts. MGL Ch. 276B (An Act Promoting Restorative Justice Practices) creates an option for juvenile and adult referrals to a community-based restorative justice program in lieu of or alongside use of the court system. Referral may be made at any stage of a case: pre-complaint, pre-arraignment, or at sentencing.

Erin discussed in general and specifically what is included in the legislation, and the status of its implementation. Dedicated work is needed throughout what C4RJ calls the "circle" process, but high satisfaction rates, lowered

recidivism, and cost effectiveness have proven that RJ works. The 15-minute film "Finding Courage," which C4RJ produced several years ago, and which is available on their web site (see below), gave Assembly participants a clear and moving introduction to RJ.

C4RJ trainer Candace Julyan, who works mainly with schools, shared her experiences of restorative practice before the criminal justice system gets involved. She described traditional school discipline vs. a restorative approach. Candace has worked in the Malden Public Schools using Restorative Practices (RP), and she also presented examples of other ways to bring RP into schools.

The relevance of RJ and RP for a Pax Christi audience was clear and compelling: offenders take responsibility for the harm they've done; victims collaborate with them in designing a means of restitution; and right relations are restored through forgiveness. It is a process in which, as Candace noted, "punishment is beside the point."



*Phil Harak, Candace, and Erin  
(photo by Fr. Rocco Puopolo)*

This year's assembly followed the same format we initiated last year, beginning with a light lunch and social time at 11:00 am, followed by the keynote at 12:30 pm. Lunch featured a delicious selection of food and drink from a local caterer, and the modern, fully equipped kitchen at St. Malachy's

came in handy for organization, distribution, and cleanup.

The annual PCMA business meeting included brief and positive reports from board secretary Jeanne Allen, treasurer Charles Gobron, and co-coordinators Pat Ferrone and Fr. Rocco Puopolo, as well as the reappointment of all current board members and officers for another year.



*Nancy Carapezza, Irene Desharnais, and Jeanne Allen enjoy lunch (photo by Fr. Rocco Puopolo)*

The final portion of the assembly was a discussion of action items. Information about C4RJ and their affiliate organization, Pathways to Restorative Communities, was distributed. The assembly was challenged to go back to our communities and talk about RJ and RP. We can each start to build partnerships of influence through the local channels where we're already involved. We were also encouraged to "find the open doors" and to be creative about how we bring these practices into our home environments. For more information go to [www.c4rj.org](http://www.c4rj.org)

By scheduling this assembly at a site which had hosted no prior Pax Christi events, the PCMA board hoped to broaden participation in our activities. If anyone would like to host a future assembly or retreat, please contact a board member (see page 11).

*-Nancy is a PCMA board member from Wayland. Mike Moran also contributed to this article.*

## Steadfast Peace and MetroWest Pax Christi

*By Jan Leary*

In November and December 2018, MetroWest Pax Christi facilitated three discussion meetings around the book *Steadfast Hope: The Palestinian Quest for Just Peace*, at the Xaverian Community and Our Lady of Fatima Shrine in Holliston. We are grateful to Rocco for arranging this event. The series was co-sponsored with MetroWest Peace Action, a local branch of Massachusetts Peace Action.

The book *Steadfast Hope* is researched and published by Episcopalian and Presbyterian peace fellowships, and it presents both a clear history and the current "facts on the ground" regarding the practices of apartheid and genocide against the Palestinian people. U.S. media, both TV and print, offer minimal information about the Mideast conflict, with the result that most people in the U.S. are misinformed about that conflict.

For example, very few Americans know that their taxpayer dollars are being handed over to parties who are against the Palestinian people, in the amount of \$10 Million dollars per day. And that money is being used to buy armaments back from the U.S. to kill Palestinian children, women, and men - with American tax dollars.

It is a difficult truth, but each of us is complicit in supporting those deaths. Pressure can eventually be brought by our government to stop those payments, but only when the majority of U.S. citizens learn about the tragic truths happening every day against Palestinians.

Most pro-Palestinian experts have acknowledged that once these truths are public knowledge, then the state-with-all-the-power in this conflict will finally agree to a true negotiated peace.

For a copy of *Steadfast Hope* or to host a "Steadfast Hope" workshop, please contact Jan Leary at: [metrowestpaxchristi@comcast.net](mailto:metrowestpaxchristi@comcast.net)



*Steadfast Hope discussion in Holliston (photo from Jan Leary)*

In January 2019, MetroWest Pax Christi chose to begin the new year by focusing on issues pertaining to racism, with the book *The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks About Race*, a collection of essays compiled and edited by Jesmyn Ward (the National Book Award winning author of *Salvage the Bones*).

During our reading and discussions, we have found that *The Fire This Time* offers extraordinary insights into how racism feels. The authors of the various chapters bring a multitude of experiences into the lives of readers, in profound ways. Obviously, we'd recommend this book to other Pax Christi members!

And as always, our group is open to new members. Happy St. Patrick's Day!

*-Jan Leary is a member of MetroWest Pax Christi from Natick.*

# The Annunciation

By G. Simon Harak, S.J.

[Editor's Note: Thanks to Phil Harak for permission to publish this sermon by his brother, who has led several PCMA retreats.]

The story of the annunciation has always bothered me. Why? Because it's an annunciation. I mean, the angel, the voice of God, is not really *asking* Mary anything. The angel is *telling* Mary --- announcing: "Listen, you're going to conceive in your womb and bear a son and call his name Jesus, and) There's no request there. There's an announcement. Mary is not being asked, "Would you like to?" "By your leave" She's being told quite directly what's going to happen: "And now, you will conceive in your womb" (Lk 1:31).

So I'm troubled: what happened to free will? Does Mary's single question, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" sufficiently honor her sacred choice (Lk 1:34)? And what kind of a *God* is portrayed here? It cannot be that God simply shows up and says, "Hi, you're going to bear my Son." That scenario, that understanding diminishes the dignity of both God and Mary. So what's going on in this annunciation? I'm convinced that God has always honored our free will—reverenced it greatly. Even to the point of allowing us to sin against him and our sisters and brothers if we so choose. So God must have the same reverence for Mary's free will here—especially in the coming of his Son Jesus, the Liberator.

I see something else, too: that God created marriage to honor both women and men in their union—as a security for them and for the children they would bring into the

world. So this must be true: that the God who created marriage and delights in the fruits of marriage must himself have been wedded to Mary in a way that I can hardly begin to guess at. That there must have been a union, an espousal, even a marriage between Mary and God the Father so deep that even the greatest mystics could only barely fathom it. It must have begun from the moment of her conception. Out of that union, that weddedness of Mary and God, Jesus was born.



(photo of Simon courtesy of Phil)

I think of a human marriage where there is great love between the spouses. One day, when the wife becomes pregnant, she comes to her husband. She announces to him, "We're going to have a baby." She doesn't ask, because deep in her heart she knows already that this is the natural and desired fruit of their love for one another. She doesn't ask; she announces. The same must be true here in this passage, this Annunciation. Except in a role reversal typical of God, it is God who does the announcing to the woman to whom he is so wonderfully wedded: *we're going to have a baby.*

And just as the pregnant wife looks into the eyes of her husband to see how he will receive this announcement, hoping that it will

be with joy, so God looked into Mary's eyes and rejoiced to hear her response. *Yes. Yes, let this joyful thing happen. Yes, let's explore together this new avenue of our love. I'm so glad you've brought me this good news. Yes.*

Now, this annunciation to Mary is important for two other reasons that I can see. Others more reflective than I will probably see more. The first is, that most of the time, life doesn't ask us. Life announces. The good things that make us glad and the difficult things that challenge us, life announces. We're not asked. We're told. The joyful annunciations: *You're going to have a baby. You've been selected out of so many candidates for this job. Peace has been made where there was once war. This state has joined the many other states which have chosen not to inflict the death penalty.* Joyful annunciations.

And then the difficult annunciations: *I'm calling to tell you that unfortunately, your father has died. Your friend was in a car accident. Our military has invaded another country and there will be more war. The government has just cut funds for the poor so that we can give more money to the rich, more money to war.* These are announcements, not requests. Not "by your leave," or "if you'd like." They are annunciations to us.

But then, the story of the annunciation tells us that God is counting on the deep, personal relationship he has with each of us—God's weddedness to our souls—to enable us to walk together with God through these times, these annunciations, into an even deeper relationship, just as he walked and had always walked

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# Pax Christi Spring Retreat



**Saturday April 13, 2019**  
**Our Lady of Fatima Shrine, Xavier Hall**  
101 Summer Street, Holliston MA

**Registration begins at 9:30am**  
**Program 10:00 am to 3:30 pm**  
(4:00pm Mass at Conforti Chapel for those who wish to stay)

***“It is only with the heart  
that one sees rightly.”*** — Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

**CREATING THE CONTEMPLATIVE SPACE THAT GROUNDS US.**

This year's retreat leader is **Sr. Teresita Weind SNDdeN**, Congregational Leader for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur world wide. Teresita began ministry in health care as a nurse, but served as pastoral minister and liturgical educator in Archdiocese of Chicago and director of a house of prayer in Saginaw MI. She has been congregational leader on a local and now general level since 2005. It has taken her literally around the world and she will gift that experience with us!

This year's retreat theme will further develop and help us internalize in prayer challenges and responses found in the recent Pastoral Letter on Racism. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/upload/open-wide-our-hearts.pdf>. You are welcome to give it a read before that day.

## Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Donation\* \$35.00 before March 29nd. \$40.00 after and at door. High School and College Students with ID Free

I would like to be a Retreat Sponsor and will donate an additional tax-deductible gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help defray the cost of the Retreat.

Mail Registration and check, made out to "Pax Christi MA" to:

**Charles Gobron, 6 Bolser Avenue Natick, MA 01760**

\*Scholarships available

[www.paxchristima.org](http://www.paxchristima.org)

For information: [paxchristima@gmail.com](mailto:paxchristima@gmail.com)

**2019 Pax Christi Massachusetts Peacemaker Award Nomination**  
*To be awarded at the annual Pax Christi Massachusetts Assembly Fall 2019*

This award is given to an outstanding peacemaker who embodies the ideals of Pax Christi. She or he need not be a member of Pax Christi and may be a person as young as 16, or older. Nominations may be submitted by PC-MA members, teachers, campus ministers, parish pastoral leaders, youth ministers, family members or friends who have been inspired by the nominee.

**DEADLINE:** Nominations must be received by September 1, 2019.  
**SEND TO:** Mike Moran, 135 Shearer Street, Palmer, MA 01069 (or email to: moran3@comcast.net)

Nominee's name/s \_\_\_\_\_  
School, if applicable \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Social justice & peacemaking activities, volunteer involvement, etc. (attach, as needed)  
Your name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to nominee \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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**2019 Pax Christi Massachusetts John Leary Youth Peacemaker Award Nomination**  
*To be awarded at the annual Pax Christi Massachusetts Assembly Fall 2019*

This award is given to an outstanding young peacemaker who embodies the ideals of Pax Christi, as John Leary lived them. John was a Harvard University graduate who worked with PC Massachusetts co-founder Gordon Zahn at the Pax Christi Center on Conscience and War in Cambridge and died at age 24 while jogging to Haley House, a Catholic Worker House in Boston, during the summer of 1982.

Nominees for the John Leary Award need not be members of Pax Christi but should be no older than 24. Nominations may be submitted by PC-MA members, teachers, campus ministers, parish pastoral leaders, youth ministers, family members or friends who have been inspired by the nominee.

**DEADLINE:** Nominations must be received by September 1, 2019.  
**SEND TO:** Mike Moran, 135 Shearer Street, Palmer, MA 01069 (or email to: moran3@comcast.net)

Nominee's name/s \_\_\_\_\_  
School, if applicable \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Social justice & peacemaking activities, volunteer involvement, etc. (attach, as needed)  
Your name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to nominee \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

# The Annunciation

*Continued from page 8*

with Mary. We disciples may not think we had such love in the depth of our souls, but these events say otherwise. The depth of the joy—and the depth of the sorrow—of our annunciations reveals how deeply God has espoused himself to our souls, and how much more profoundly he wants us to bring forth his Word into the world. The moment of our hearing should be (would that it were for me!) the moment of our knowing how much God trusts us to embrace the joyful annunciations that bring forth life, and to mourn and resist the sorrowful annunciations of the violence that leads to death.

One more thing I would like to reflect upon that happened this day: how did we get here—I mean, in the flesh? We took this flesh, every one of us, from our moms. And that’s how Jesus got here, too. Jesus took his flesh from his mom, beginning on this day. Beginning with this annunciation, Mary presented her body to God so that the Word could begin to become flesh in her. When I look at it that way, we could say that Jesus was not the first to say, “This is my body,” and so present the Body of Christ to us (Matt 26:26). We could say that 33 years--and 9 months--earlier, *Mary* first said to God, “This is my body,” and so brought the body of Christ to the world. Because of Mary, “the Word became flesh and pitched his tent among us” (Jn 1:14).

And another question: if it was right and fitting in the eyes of God the Father that a woman could say, “This is my body” and so bring Christ in the flesh to the world, would it not also be right and fitting for us in the Catholic Church that a woman would stand at this altar and say, “This is my Body,” and again bring the body of Christ to the world? If it was good and even wonderful for God, I wonder why is it?

## Agape Voices for Racial Justice

*By Mike Moran, Editor*

Agape’s 36th anniversary Francis Day program on Saturday, October 6, 2018, addressed the theme “Voices for Racial Justice.” The day’s convener was longtime Pax



*Professor Bracey (umass.edu)*

Christi priest Fr. Warren Savage, and the morning keynote was delivered by UMass Amherst faculty member, Dr. John H. Bracey, Jr. After focusing on the formative influence of his mother and of Rev. Howard Thurman on his life and thinking, he concluded that to realize the “beloved community” of Rev. Martin

Luther King, Jr., people of all racial heritages must simply “love one another.”

Eric and Brenda Cussen Anglada of the St. Isidore Catholic Worker farm in Wisconsin presented a helpful lunchtime workshop on reducing racism by improving our listening and other communication skills. An afternoon panel discussion moderated by Chicopee attorney Tahirah Amatul-Wadud included particularly moving stories from Maritza Cruz of the Central Massachusetts YWCA about her work with Black and Latinx immigrants.

The day concluded with the ceremonial planting of a cherry tree on the Agape grounds to end all systemic racism, led by local Native American leaders. Attendees left inspired to spread this message in their own lives and communities.

## Pax Christi MA Board of Directors 2018-2019

<u>Co-Coordinator:</u> Pat Ferrone 238 Harris Avenue Needham MA 02492 781-449-3890 <a href="mailto:patferrone@rcm.org">patferrone@rcm.org</a>	<u>Secretary:</u> Jeanne Allen 10 Sutton Place Easthampton MA 01027 413-527-0037 (email page 12)
<u>Treasurer:</u> Charles Gobron 6 Bolser Avenue Natick, MA 01760 774-270-2442 <a href="mailto:cgobron@aol.com">cgobron@aol.com</a>	<u>Newsletter Editor:</u> Mike Moran 135 Shearer Street Palmer, MA 01069 413-283-5716 (email page 12)

**OTHER BOARD MEMBERS:** Brian Ashmankas (Millbury); Nancy Carapezza (Wayland); Irene Desharnais (Jamaica Plain); Phil Harak (Southampton); Sue Malone (Westborough); Sally Markey (Springfield); John Monaco (Boston); Rose Morrissey (Westborough); Father Rocco Puopolo, s.x. (Holliston), Co-Coordinator (see contact info under Fatima on page 12). Quarterly Board meetings are held in the Hogan Campus Center at Holy Cross College in Worcester at 10 AM and are open to all PCMA members. The next meetings will be held on March 9 and June 8, 2019.

## Local Groups

### **Berkshire P.C.**

Carolyn Zabloutny  
P.O. Box 14  
Mill River, MA 01244  
[berkshire.pax.christi@gmail.com](mailto:berkshire.pax.christi@gmail.com)  
Contact for meeting info

### **Beverly P.C.**

Karen Watkins  
(978) 524-0029  
[bluelight-1@live.com](mailto:bluelight-1@live.com)  
Sr. Linda Bessom, SND  
(857) 236-1370  
[linda.bessom@sndden.org](mailto:linda.bessom@sndden.org)  
Mtgs 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 7:00 PM  
St. Mary's Convent

### **Boston (Citywide) P.C.**

Christina Abbey  
Paulist Center, 5 Park St  
Boston, MA  
(781) 286-5004  
[LNCabbey2004@yahoo.com](mailto:LNCabbey2004@yahoo.com)  
Mtgs 1st Monday, 2:00 PM

### **Cape Cod P.C.**

Edouard & Francoise Rocher  
77 Old Post Road  
Centerville, MA 02632  
(508) 771-6737  
[paxchristi-cc@comcast.net](mailto:paxchristi-cc@comcast.net)  
Our Lady of Victory  
Centerville, MA 02632  
Contact for meeting info

### **Central Mass P.C./Our Lady of Guadalupe P.C. (MCI Shirley prison chapter)**

Roger & Charlotte Stanley  
55 Pleasant Street  
Berlin, MA 01503-1610  
[cstanley041258@verizon.net](mailto:cstanley041258@verizon.net)

St. Rose of Lima Parish  
Northborough, MA 01532  
Contact for meeting info

### **Fatima Shrine P.C.**

Fr. Rocco Puopolo, s.x.  
101 Summer Street  
Holliston, MA 01746  
(508) 429-2144  
[frrocco@xaverianmissionaries.org](mailto:frrocco@xaverianmissionaries.org)  
Mtgs 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday, 4:00 PM  
Upper Room

### **Holy Cross College P.C.**

1 College St, Box 16-A  
Worcester, MA 01610  
Marty Kelly  
(508) 793-2617  
[mkelly@holycross.edu](mailto:mkelly@holycross.edu)  
Meetings and activities geared to  
college calendar

### **Holy Cross Parish P.C.**

221 Plumtree Road  
Springfield, MA 01118  
Marilyn Paul-Lewis  
(413)739-3278  
[parishsocialministry@gmail.com](mailto:parishsocialministry@gmail.com)  
Mtgs 1<sup>st</sup> Monday, 6:30 PM

### **Metro West P.C.**

Membership info: Faith  
[fmadzar@gmail.com](mailto:fmadzar@gmail.com)  
Steadfast Hope info: Jan  
[peacejpl@comcast.net](mailto:peacejpl@comcast.net)  
Mtgs 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday, 1:00 PM  
Natick Public Library

### **National Shrine of Our Lady of La Salette P.C.**

Sheila Matthews  
199 Maple Street  
Somerset, MA 02726  
508-674-8220

[sheilmatthews@aol.com](mailto:sheilmatthews@aol.com)  
Mtgs 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, 7:15  
Chapel of Reconciliation

### **Rhode Island P.C.**

Bill Waters  
(401) 438-6612  
[wjtwj157@gmail.com](mailto:wjtwj157@gmail.com)  
Fr. Ray Tetrault  
(401) 374-5036  
St. Peter's Church  
Lower level  
350 Fair Street  
Warwick, RI 02888  
Mtgs last Sunday, 6:00 PM

### **St. John's Prep P.C.**

St. John's Preparatory School  
72 Spring Street  
Danvers, MA 01923  
Bill Mackinson  
978-774-1057  
[wmackinson@stjohnsprep.org](mailto:wmackinson@stjohnsprep.org)  
Prayer for Peace, Tuesday  
mornings, 7:45-8:00 AM

### **St. Susanna Parish P.C.**

Pat Ferrone  
262 Needham Street  
Dedham, MA 02026  
781-449-3890  
[parferrone@rcm.com](mailto:parferrone@rcm.com)  
Contact for meeting info

### **Western Mass P.C.**

Jeanne Allen  
10 Sutton Place  
Easthampton, MA 01027  
(413) 527-0037  
[jeanne.allen@hhcinc.org](mailto:jeanne.allen@hhcinc.org)  
Mtgs 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday, 7:00 PM  
Elms College, Chicopee

*If you belong to a Pax Christi group that is not listed above, please let us know so we can add it to our list. If any information above is incorrect, or if you would like to be added to a list of Pax Christi "friends" and receive current messages from the Board, please email changes or additions to Mike Moran: [moran3@comcast.net](mailto:moran3@comcast.net)*

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[www.paxchristima.org](http://www.paxchristima.org)