



A Buddhist Priest Recalls Hiroshima and Nagasaki

By Rev. Jenny Henderson

[Rev. Henderson delivered these remarks at a commemoration in Springfield's Court Square of the 76th anniversary of the US bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that was co-sponsored by Greater Springfield Campaign Nonviolence, Pax Christi Western MA, JustFaith Ministries, and the Agape Community on August 6, 2021; they are reprinted here by permission of the author. -Ed.]

Seventy-six years ago today, our atomic bomb obliterated the city of Hiroshima, the blast stretching a mile radius from the hypocenter, killing at least 70,000 people instantly and at least 60,000 others over the next few days, weeks and months. That statistic doesn't include the significant number of people who died from various radiation-related illnesses in subsequent years. It doesn't take into account the trauma, grief, and ostracism suffered by survivors. The bomb dropped three days later in Nagasaki led to similar casualties.

Today we try to come to terms with the legacy of that bombing. We share the collective human burden of having invented a

weapon that can reduce entire cities to rubble, devastate ecosystems, and vaporize life in an instant. We now have more than 13,000 nuclear weapons in the world, most of them more powerful than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. More than enough to destroy our planet. We share the collective human responsibility of examining how the cause and effect of the 1945 bombings stretches through time and intersects with our lives today. We share the collective human imperative to ensure that something like this never happens again.



Utsunomiya Heiwa Kannon, Japan (photo courtesy Rev. Henderson)

The story of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings isn't a story about heroes and villains. It's a story of how aggression, nationalism, exceptionalism, and righteousness can gain momentum in our hearts and in our society. It's a story of the tragedies that can result when we allow that to

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Co-Coordinator's: Column: "Only Musings"

By Pat Ferrone

Summer-time solace, sometimes: Earth's blooming beauty, gardens alive with seed-rendered veggies for the taking. High sun, soft breezes, flapping sandals as I do my "walk-about" and pick blueberries or saunter the dirt roads, looking and listening. In some ways, this respite is other-worldly, a temporary escape clause from the year's intense immersion in the 'troubles' that haunt our days. But, if I consider Richard Rohr's words, this "looking and listening" is also an invitation to silence, awe, and a "wider field of perception" - a state of openness to the wonder of God's gratuity, and our role as co-creators/co-healers of earth and one another.

In these "lookings," there is the hint of consolation and hope regarding the fate of the earth. I look upon the thousands of trees within view - the towering pines and stalwart oaks, the swaying

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Co-Coordinator's Column...

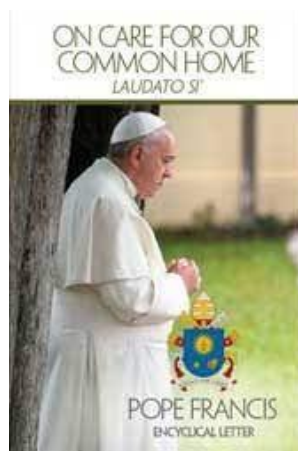
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poplars and the fruit-laden black walnut. They are beautiful, and most efficient shade givers, nutrient sharers, and “carbon sinks.” Rooted deeply in the earth, they absorb some of the CO2 emissions from the cutting and mowing of fields, and from the occasional military jet runs from Fort Drum, an hour away. Mary Oliver, in her inimitable way, captures another essence: “When I am among the trees, Especially the willows and the honey locust, Equally the beech, the oaks and the pines, They give off such hints of gladness. I would almost say that they save me, and daily.”

They remind me, too, of the people organized around the world to resist the exploitation of land, and to replant deforested regions before it's too late: “Plant for the Planet,” “One Tree Planted,” and Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai's “Green Belt Movement” in Kenya - all of which are land guardians, worthy of support. (There are many others, of course.) Some have received donations from the Voluntary Carbon Witness initiated by St. Susanna Pax Christi more than two years ago to support grassroots efforts designed to mitigate earth damage, increase access to water sources, or support alternative energy projects.

Locally, the Boston Catholic Climate Movement (associated with the Global Catholic Climate Movement, recently renamed the “Laudato Si Movement”) provides spiritually guided education and

action focusing on Pope Francis' “Laudato Si.” Cardinal Michael Czerny said “...for the Laudato Si Movement to name itself as a prayer is to tell the truth that we are not going to be able to implement “Laudato Si”...to care for our common home, unless we do it together, as “Fratelli Tutti” teaches us, as whole persons, not only environmental persons, but also spiritual persons.” He adds, “The word ‘movement’ is very important to get across the idea that we are not trying to build something stable - we're trying to get going...trying to move...to improve...to survive - as a human family and a planetary home.”



(uscbb.org)

It never ends, does it - this longing to make sense of a world under siege - and our sometimes disordered psyches, pulled this way and that, pummeled with the news and aches of the day: the brutality of violence somewhere (everywhere) - the weaponized drones and weapons of mass destruction; the dwindling-to-extinction of species; the domestic landscape of racism's dirty deeds. Ordinary human needs go unmet due to the hyper-funding of the military; mass shootings continue, and we have an eerie sense of déjà vu as “Delta” reminds us of the

Covid pandemic's beginnings. We mourn the 4.4 million kin who have died worldwide, to date.

As I write, the withdrawal from Afghanistan and the terror of the Taliban takeover consume us. As we voice our fears about what's unfolding, we watch and wait and wonder what it is we can do. A recent commentary by Kathy Kelly struck the right chord, written as it was in sorrow and lament for the Afghan people, and as a plea for repentance and restoration by our government for its role in the suffering. It seems nearly impossible to imagine a way out of this human-made morass after twenty years of brutality. It's hard to dream new ways forward with the old tools of enemy making.

In a recent radio interview, Kathy and Medea Benjamin of CODEPINK plead for a turnaround in thinking and practice in this “teachable moment.” Kathy asked, “How many more colossal failures and enormous mistakes must the US public be asked to pay for...before we say it's time to dismantle this exceedingly dangerous military-industrial complex?,” then softly added, “The generals pop out their chests, but I just want to know where their hearts are.” In the meantime, there's the opportunity to support Afghan women through <https://www.codepink.org/>

In “A Just Peace Ethic Primer,” Eli McCarthy explores the possibility of encouraging nonviolent transformation through “virtue ethics.” “Oriented by the gospels...a virtue-based approach (to conflict) can help us focus on developing the character, healthy habits, virtue, and corresponding practices of a just peace ethic...”

which can help us “creatively imagine nonviolent ways to transform conflict.”

And yet, borrowing an oft-used political mantra reclaimed from a place of lamentation and sprinkled with hope, “Still We Persist,” listening to the young who are alive with new energy and new ideas to build sustainable peace and break cycles of violence, and to the elder peacemakers, whose wisdom and lifelong commitment can support and inform them.

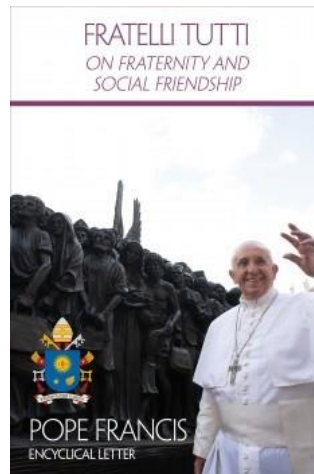
A bow and acknowledgement to Pax Christi USA is in order for their extraordinary National Conference on July 30-31. The intermingling of young and elder voices made our spirits soar. (It’s not too late to ‘attend’ the recorded presentations at paxchristiusa.org. Look for Olga Segura, Fr. Bryan Massingale, the breakout sessions, and the Mass and homily by Bishop John Stowe: the spirituality of Jesus’ nonviolent love, which extends to all people.)
[see also pages 10-11 –Ed.]

Throughout the summer, a subgroup of Pax Christi board members has been Zooming our way through “Fratelli Tutti” - sharing with one another the insights, especially in regard to war and nuclear weapons, racism and the climate catastrophe, that pop up as we prepare for our annual fall assembly, scheduled for December 4, with Professor Eli McCarthy of Georgetown University, and a member of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative.

Pope Francis’s language is at once incisive and unflinching in its assessments of the global crises we face, and it has a prophetic pull that resonates both spiritually and intellectually. Considering current issues, the encyclical offers a “better kind of politics,” focused on the common and universal
Summer-Fall 2021

good; it pleads for an end to war, the embrace of “universal fraternity,” and the rejection of an economic model that “does not hesitate to exploit, discard, and even kill human beings.”

Not to detract from the power of the document, I mention an opinion by Phyllis Zagano, an admirer of Pope Francis, who yet points out what she considers the unfortunate title of “Fratelli Tutti” and its frequent use of “fraternity” (distinctly male words) as problematic, maintaining the male perspective as normative. This, she suggests, particularly endangers



(uscbb.org)

women in cultures where women (half the world, mind you!) continue to be demeaned and often brutalized. It also marginalizes women’s authentic voices within Church “clerical circles.” Zagano offers a couple of suggestions, one being that “the Pope hire a few women to help write and review his documents.” Good idea:
<https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/just-catholic/fratelli-tutti-does-not-include-women-and-neither-does-fraternity>

I have one other observation regarding “Fratelli Tutti.” This summer’s reading has put me back in touch with the 15th century “Doctrine of Discovery,” in which Pope Nicholas V promulgated the

Papal Bull “Dum Diversas” in 1452. Other reinforcing edicts had preceded and followed, justifying the theft of non-Christian lands, and blessing the right (and duty) of Christians, servants of God, to conquer, subdue, and enslave people under the guise of civilizing and Christianizing “barbarous nations.”

The history of the doctrine’s permutations and applications is long, and its practices of “expansion and possession” were eventually codified into law by the United States, and other countries. Its inherent racism and white supremacy resulted in the genocide of Native Americans. Its logic of power and entitlement has wreaked havoc world-wide ever since. The subjugation by law of Indigenous and other marginalized peoples continues as a litany of sorrow.

After reading both “Fratelli Tutti” and “Laudato Si,” with their expansive embrace and profound reverence for the ‘all of it’ - this God-given earth, its creatures and its peoples - I see the need for the Catholic Church to formally accept its culpability, repent, and redress entrenched historical and contemporary societal sins spawned by the Doctrine...

Perhaps the time is **now** to unequivocally denounce the Doctrine of Discovery, joining with the many other faith communities who have already done this. Pope Francis’s goodness and disposition toward truth-telling and sensitivity to the profound evils of our day - modern slavery, war and nuclear weapons, the plight of immigrants and refugees, global poverty and economic inequality - confers the burden and responsibility of prophesy and action upon his papacy. It seems that refuting a doctrine which is contrary to the spirit and way of the nonviolent Jesus, might initiate

a humble acknowledgement of culpability to the Indigenous communities who continue to suffer, and show a desire for repentance and accountability.

Other faith communities have issued formal denunciations of the Doctrine of Discovery (including the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Quakers, and the Episcopal Church), and there is growing conversation in the Catholic peace community about this crippling remnant of historical and theological hubris. In fact, Bishop Douglas Lucia, of the Catholic Diocese of Syracuse, New York, has denounced the Doctrine and tried to draw attention to it by speaking to fellow Bishops this past spring, connecting the egregious revelations about some Catholic-operated Indian Residential schools in Canada (open until 1997) and the discovery of unmarked graves. There was no reaction from his fellow bishops.

Bishop Lucia hopes to ask Pope Francis to “repudiate theological teachings used for centuries to justify the subjugation of indigenous people.” Let us pray that he succeeds.

-Pat Ferrone is co-coordinator, with Fr. Rocco Puopolo, of the Pax Christi MA board of directors.

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 requesting an application form from: Pax Christi MA, 6 Bolser Avenue, Natick, MA 01760; paxchristima@gmail.com

A Buddhist Priest...

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happen. Yet, when we can see the seeds of violence in others and in ourselves, we can work to replace them with seeds of peace. I invite you now to hear some names and memories from the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings and from the years of violence that preceded those events. As you listen to these names and stories, focus on where you see their shared suffering. Rather than distinguishing between good and evil, meditate on the internal and external roots of their pain. With each breath you take, call up understanding and compassion within yourself.



Rev. Henderson speaks at Court Square (photo by Jeanne Allen)

Let us pause now to remember...

Takeo Teramae was a 15-year-old student on August 6, 1945. While she was working, she suddenly heard the noise of the blast and felt the walls of the building collapse around her. Surrounded by darkness, and vomiting from the toxic smoke, she heard the voice of her teacher, **Chiyoko Wakita**, calling out words of encouragement to her students above the noise. Teramae escaped the building by jumping out of a second story window and climbing down a telephone pole. Her teacher found her outside,

helped her swim across the river to safety, and then returned to help other students. Teramae survived, but Wakita died from related injuries three weeks later.

Suburo Nishida, a parish priest, was heading into the Urakami Cathedral in Nagasaki to receive the sacrament when the bomb fell. He and several other church members are assumed to have died instantly.

Major Claude Robert Eatherly, an American soldier who flew the weather reconnaissance plane on the Hiroshima mission. For years he would wake up screaming, haunted by images of cities burning, buildings tumbling, and people running.

Captain Robert A Lewis, co-pilot of the Enola Gay, the plane that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima. Horrified at the time of the bombing, he remained convinced throughout his life that the bombs ultimately saved more lives than they took by forcing Japan’s surrender.

Haruyo Nihei, an 8-year-old girl living in the northwest part of Tokyo with her family during the catastrophic Tokyo Firebombing five months before Hiroshima. When the bombs began to fall, her family fled through the burning city. Nihei was eventually separated from her family, and she took shelter behind a wall while a stream of other refugees piled on top of her. The next morning, her father found her and pulled her out from a pile of corpses, still alive.

Second Lieutenant Jim Marich, a 20-year-old US airman who dropped fire bombs over Tokyo during that March 10, 1945 raid. He said, “We hated what we were doing, but we thought we had to do

it. We thought that raid might cause the Japanese to surrender.” He recalls how terrifying the event was and recalls the smell of burning flesh.

Takehiko Ena, a 20-year-old university student, he was drafted to be a Japanese kamikaze pilot. He managed to escape death on three missions in a row: each time his plane suffered mechanical problems. Years after the war he said, “On the surface, we were doing it for our country. We made ourselves believe that we had been chosen to make this sacrifice. I just wanted to protect the father and mother I loved. And we were all scared.”

Paul J. Cascio, an American soldier captured in June of 1943 by the Japanese army and sent to work as a smelter in a prisoner-of-war camp near Tokyo. He suffered extreme hunger, malnutrition, and physically grueling work conditions during the two years he was imprisoned.

Aiko Yoshinaga, a Japanese-American 12th grader living in the Los Angeles area in 1941. She was denied her high school diploma because the Japanese army had bombed Pearl Harbor. She was imprisoned at the Manzanar Internment camp until the end of the war. She was one of 120,000 Japanese-Americans (mostly citizens) incarcerated in internment camps during those years.

Yong Soo Lee, a young factory worker in Taegu, Korea, was abducted by the Japanese military in 1944. She was raped, beaten, and tortured by her captors and eventually forced to work as a military sex slave in Japanese-occupied Taiwan. She was one of up to 200,000 women, mostly Koreans, who suffered a similar trauma.

Mr. Tse. While walking near a park in Nanjing China in 1937, he heard the noise of a truck behind him and turned to look. When he accidentally made eye contact with the Japanese soldiers driving the truck, they tied him up, forced him to kneel on the ground, and beheaded him. The aggression and violence he suffered was not unique. Somewhere between 40,000 and 300,000 Chinese civilians and surrendered soldiers were killed by Japanese soldiers in the 1937 Nanjing Massacre.

When we can see the seeds of violence in others and in ourselves, we can work to replace them with seeds of peace.



“Original Child Bomb” at Court Square (photo by Jeanne Allen)

These are the stories of ordinary people who are linked together by the karma of violence. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was not a singular instance of violence. It was embedded in the context of wartime aggression. When we look at the bombing as just one event, we risk seeing it only as something that happened in the past and might, if we aren’t careful, happen again in the future. We overlook the now.

When we recognize it as a result of multiple violent actions committed by multiple people over time, we begin to understand the importance of paying attention to every moment. While we share in grieving the catastrophic actions

that hold our collective attention, we should give equal attention to the more mundane acts of violence we might witness or commit ourselves daily. It’s these smaller acts that accrue over time, building up, leading to the larger ones.

I’m here today to offer a Buddhist perspective on cultivating peace, but I can’t talk about peace without also talking about karma. I often hear the word karma used in a vernacular sense to mean “fate” or to express a conviction that a person deserved what they got. But from a Buddhist perspective this is actually an incorrect understanding of karma. What karma really means is cause. Multiple causes come together in any given moment and lead to multiple effects which then become causes of future effects. Every action we take every day sets karma in motion. The more we engage in one particular kind of action, the easier it is to engage in that same kind of action in the future. We tend to form habits of violence or habits of nonviolence.

We can trace the collective karma that manifested in the atomic bombing back through the years. There is a link between the atomic bombs and the Tokyo fire bombings, where the American military killed 100,000 Japanese civilians in one attack. That links back to the hundreds of thousands of Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean civilians abused and killed by Japanese soldiers as they sought to create a Japanese-led Asian empire, in competition with the European powers, throughout the fifteen years war.

That unchecked violence and aggression might link back to the WWI peace negotiations in Versailles when the Japanese government called for racial equality to be part of the founding covenant of the League of Nations,

but President Wilson and the other allied leaders refused. We could go back further and further and see how actions led by desire, fear, and delusion tend to give rise to more of the same. All these actions were carried out by individual people. Along the way, there were countless opportunities for politicians, soldiers, and citizens to act individually and collectively in a different way and give rise to different karma.

Those same harmful seeds that gave rise to the Hiroshima bombing have also been planted in our society today. The seeds of violence show up as religious intolerance, ethnic hatred, family abuse, racism, and exploitation of the world's resources. They show up when we absolutize our own experience and perspective, seeing our way as THE truth rather than as a perspective shaped by our years of experience and social conditioning. They show up when we set ourselves apart from others, seeking kinship with only those who share our same outlook on the world.

The same potential to cultivate peace instead of violence that existed during the years leading up to the Hiroshima bombing is here with us today as well. We see this in acts of kindness to strangers. We see it in moments when, filled with a wave of annoyance or frustration about someone's words or actions, instead of acting on our emotion, we focus on developing an understanding of the roots of that other person's perspective. We work on generating compassion for their situation.

Within Buddhist teachings reality is shaped by what we see, hear, and take in through our other senses. It's shaped by our past experiences and by our ancestors'

past experiences. What we take in conditions us to see the world in a particular way. This gives rise to our thoughts, speech, and actions. We tend to move through the world steeped in our own habits, often with a lack of intentionality. To practice peace from a Buddhist perspective requires us to recognize that our reality is actually a filter through which we understand the world. We must take moments to pause, to recognize how our perspective is being conditioned by our past experiences. We take a breath and notice the sensations, emotions and thoughts that are arising. We examine whether those thoughts trace back to a harmful or helpful root. We put some space between the thought and action to ensure we are fostering peace and compassion.



Rev. Henderson in Court Square audience (photo by Jeanne Allen)

From a Buddhist perspective, the external peace we are seeking, the peace that will ensure we never see the use of another atomic weapon, can only be achieved if we are working to develop internal peace. The two are inseparable. The more we cultivate peace within ourselves, the more likely we are to see peace take shape in people and society around us. The more we work toward promoting safety, freedom, and justice for others, the more we'll experience an internal sense of peace. True peace is the cultivation of understanding,

insight, and compassion, combined with action. It is not an end state, but an active process that requires ongoing practice.

We live now in a nation that has become accustomed to being a global superpower. It's possible that dropping the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki reinforced our sense of moral authority over other nations. We should stay aware of how this sense of righteousness shows up within us as individuals. Are there times when we stay fixed in our views, unwilling to listen to others? How much time do we spend on social media amplifying our own message rather than forming genuine connections with those from different backgrounds in order to expand our understanding?

Our world today has become increasingly polarized. We get caught by our cultural values, our political ideologies, our religious doctrine, and our moral and ethical norms. We increasingly set ourselves above and apart from those who are different from us. As we've moved into the pandemic during the past year and a half, our physical separation has also reduced the frequency of any "chance" interactions with those who are different from us. This has exacerbated our sense of "rightness" and our negation of differences.

To truly achieve peace, we need to transcend the issues that are currently dividing us. One way to do this is through compassionate dialogue. We need to cultivate the ability to pause. To take a breath. To put space between the habitual thoughts and reactions that arise when we encounter difference and work to develop an awareness of our shared humanity.

If we are truly committed to shedding the aggression, nationalism, exceptionalism, and righteousness that survived the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings and continue to shape our world today, we should seek to listen more than we talk. We must reach out to those with different experiences and different views and listen to each other with openness, humility, and compassion. The work of cultivating peace is right in front of us, moment to moment and day to day. May we all have the strength and determination to practice.

-Rev. Shingaku Jenny Henderson leads the Winding Path Buddhist Sangha community in Springfield.

Spring Retreat on Building Resilience

By Jeanne Allen

On the overcast morning of April 17, 2021, 47 peace seekers zoomed together for this year's Pax Christi Massachusetts-Agape Community-Boston Catholic Climate Movement co-sponsored Spring Retreat led by Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, Episcopal priest and Missioner for Creation Care in the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts and the Southern New England Conference, United Church of Christ.

Starting with a photographic centering piece, breathing exercises, mediation and prayer, the morning focused on "Building Emotional and Spiritual Resilience" in the face of converging social and ecological crises. The key, says Bullitt-Jonas, is recognizing and embracing the awakened heart, the broken heart and the radiant heart within.

Throughout the retreat, she blended teaching, tactile experience (candles, memory objects of love and loss), quotes from poets and other spiritual thinkers, reflection time, small group sharing and prayer.

The awakened heart knows it is deeply touched by love, recognizes the gift of being alive, and leads to wonder, gratefulness and awe. We nourish it by recalling those we love, going outdoors to the natural world to appreciate it anew, practicing both gratitude and mindfulness. We need to **cultivate** the awakened heart.



Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas (revivingcreation.org)

The broken heart is where we feel grief, which we *need* to feel. But how do we pray our grief without drowning in it? We grieve, not alone but "in the embrace of love." Go to the Cross. This is where all our grief, anger, outrage, sadness and shame is perpetually met by the stalwart love of God. We're still angry, sad, etc., but that's okay because we know we are loved by God. Seek new images of God to help bring ourselves to prayer, such as Psalm 131, wherein God cradles us as our loving Mother. Accompany each other in our grief, which reminds us that God is there. We **accept** our broken heart.

Finally, the radiant heart realizes the boundless love that will never let us go. It is resurrection: love and life will have the last word. The radiant heart is what we *do*—

how we act, eat, heat our homes, drive, dress—to manifest God's love in the moment-by-moment. Not actions for busyness' sake, to "earn" love or escape feelings, but actions as a spiritual practice which springs from love. It is how we put our bodies on the line. We tap into the community of truth and justice to make personal changes and systemic change. We **manifest** the radiant heart.

These are not chronological stages, Bullitt-Jonas emphasized, but an ongoing, blended experience throughout our lives.

Our 2.5 hours together passed rapidly, ending as the sun struggled to emerge from the clouds. We signed off Zoom and went about our days, continuing our struggle to protect the web of life and create a more just society. Amen, alleluia!

-Jeanne is secretary of the Pax Christi MA board of directors.

Virtual Lenten Retreat with Fr. John Dear

By Nancy Carapezza & Philip Harak

Lenten retreats are a practice appreciated each spring as we prepare to celebrate the Pascal Mystery of Easter. In 2020, our normal routines were drastically altered. Although only 18 months ago, who can remember that Lenten season? In 2021, we are still managing pandemic protocols, but with the expansion of a new virtual world, there are many opportunities that we might never have imagined. A few of us Pax Christi board members participated with challenging and thought-provoking Scriptural reflections by one of the foremost apologists for Christian nonviolence.

Fr. John Dear presented a Zoom Lenten retreat based on his book *Transfiguration* that gathered over 80 people each week from across the U.S. and abroad. It began on February 22 and ended on Easter Monday. The retreat was offered through The Beatitudes Center for the Nonviolent Jesus. Author of over 30 books and emissary of nonviolence to Pope Francis, John opened the Center shortly after leaving Pace e Bene last year. This retreat and his Center focus on the Beatitudes because he is firmly convinced that they present Jesus's clear and unequivocal teachings about how disciples are to enter into God's Kingdom.



Fr. John Dear (beatitudescenter.org)

Using his knowledge of Greek and Aramaic to interpret the original language of the Scriptures more fully, John passionately preached a Jesus who is totally nonviolent and demonstrated that God calls all His followers to act like Jesus in resisting evil with boundless love and compassion. And like Jesus and so many of his followers, disciples are to expect resistance and persecution from existing powers and people who are threatened by the power of nonviolent action.

As Easter celebrates Jesus's Resurrection from and defeat of death, John's reflections on the Resurrection were especially impactful. He noted that the original ending of Mark's Gospel had the angel telling the women to go forth and tell Peter and the others that Jesus had risen. The

story is left open-ended, which John saw as a brilliant literary device that places responsibility on each of us, who must transition from disciple, or student, to apostle, or messenger. Like the women at the empty tomb, we are commissioned to "walk forth" and spread the message of God's nonviolent love and power, regardless of personal cost. We can be assured that we will have the Advocate to help us through any trials. The Beatitudes teach us that when we are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, we will inherit God's Kingdom.

John believes that God has a mission for each of us to do some specific work. He said that in following Jesus, who is the embodiment of love, the Incarnation of the Divine, we carry on Jesus's mission of love and peace. Those actions complete our spiritual journey.

We recommend perusing the varied written material and multimedia content at the web site: <https://beatitudescenter.org>.

-Nancy Carapezza and Philip Harak are PCMA board members.

A Historian Reflects on "Catholic Social Teaching"

By David O'Brien

At a recent gathering I shared three thoughts about our continuing efforts to make Catholic Christian reflections on public policy better known and more effective.

(1) *Catholic Thought and Imagination Rather than Catholic Social Teaching and Catholic Social Doctrine*: Teaching/doctrine misses the fact that content arises

from the Christian community's ongoing experience. It encourages priests and bishops to see themselves as teachers of handed down ideas rather than pastors helping us to form our consciences on shared public responsibilities. And we have learned that top-down pedagogy in church and in public is usually counter-productive—it does not work.

(2) *Consider Catholic Thought and Imagination on War and Violence Since 1965*: We have gone from 1965, when pacifism and conscientious objection were allowed while just war remained our central "teaching," to the present location of nonviolence at the center of Catholic thought and imagination while just war is a rare and carefully circumscribed exception. We might anticipate similar moves on other social / political issues like abortion and economic justice, with the center grounded in scripture (as in Pope



David O'Brien (holycross.edu)

Benedict's "economy of gift") while affirming the need for complex choices in our shared responsibility for social, political and economic life. Catholic practice might learn from African Americans to imagine the promised beloved community as the goal of social relationships, shaping personal, ecclesial, and public thought and practices amid division and some disappointment.

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Pax Christi 2021 State Assembly

by Zoom!

Remembering, Repenting, Restoring:

Mining the wisdom of Pope Francis as we confront the challenges of Racism, Climate Change and Nuclear Weapons/War through his writings in Fratelli Tutti and Laudato Si



Saturday December 4, 2021

9:30am to 1:30pm

Via Zoom

Engaging Pax Christi MA in active reflection on Pope Francis' writings on racism, climate change and nuclear weapons/war through a process of sharing various prompts of the documents which point to these challenges followed by discussion and practical next steps.

Our sharing will be directed by introductory presentation from Eli McCarthy as well as on each particular issue by local activists with allied organizations.

Eli McCarthy is a professor at Georgetown University in justice and peace studies, steering committee member of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, a project of Pax Christi International, and the director of the DC Peace Team. His recent book is a *Just Peace Ethic Primer: Building Sustainable Peace and Breaking Cycles of Violence* (Georgetown University Press, 2020).

Program: Opening Prayer and Introductions, Eli's presentation, Presentations on Nuclear Weapons/War, Racism and Climate change, Break out sessions, Questions and discussion

Pax Christi Business meeting, peacemaker award, concluding remarks and prayer

Co-sponsored by the *Agape Community* & *St Susanna Parish, Dedham*

Registration is free. Email Paxchristima@gmail.com by November 19th and we will send you the link and password inviting you into the meeting. For those who wish to offer a donation, you can make the check out to Pax Christi MA and mail it to

Pax Christi MA 6 Bolser Avenue Natick, MA 01760

www.paxchristima.org

For information: paxchristima@gmail.com

(3) *Consistent Ethic of Life vs. Abortion as “Preeminent Priority.”* Debate about this issue is a persistent obstacle to our Catholic efforts to enrich our world. Pro-life and Pro-Choice extremism in the public debates about abortion deeply divide the country, poisoning civic life, and we Catholics share responsibility for these divisions. Inability to dialogue about differences within our own community prevents pastoral work as “communities of conscience.”

Extreme arguments have been more postures than policies until recently, when one side now seems actually ready to ban all abortions and limit access to contraception and the other is prepared to remove all limits and reviews up to birth, on both ends with little if any concern for the consequences.

The choice between mothers and babies is intellectually dishonest and morally dangerous. One should be pro-life (pro baby) and pro-choice (pro mom), recognizing the

Agape will hold a virtual Francis Day on Saturday, October 2, 2021, 1-5:15 pm. The theme will be “Love and Fear in the Era of COVID.” Endorsed by Suzanne and Brayton and facilitated by members of Agape’s rising generations, it will feature talks and discussion on how climate change, racism, and kindness to neighbor have been impacted by the pandemic. Registration will be at www.agapecommunity.org or, on Agape’s Facebook page www.facebook.com/agapecommunity

existence of difficult decisions in which the public role should be accompaniment and support for both babies and mothers.

Peace movement participants have learned the need both to embrace the ideal of solidarity in nonviolent witness and to share in the daily work of accompaniment and negotiation which is essential to serious peacebuilding. That hard won experience is an invaluable resource as our Christian communities try to recover the mutual loving respect for one another that can enable us, together, to be a sacrament of the solidarity, love for all God’s people and our common home, made central to our mission by Pope Francis.

-David O’Brien is a Holy Cross College Professor Emeritus of History and PCMA co-founder.

Pax Christi USA National July 2021 Conference

[Three members of Pax Christi MA – Jeanne Allen, Mike Moran, and Jane Morrissey, SSJ – share highlights from the Saturday breakout groups.-Ed.]

1) Breaking the Idols: This exchange, which positioned nuclear arms in the contexts of economic, environmental, and racial justice, quite literally “blew my mind.” What can I do? It convinced me that we cannot ignore these intersections in our pursuit of justice and building of “the beloved community.” Panelists included our old friend from Connecticut, Art Laffin, Pax Christi USA

Teacher of Peace and long-time Catholic Worker; professor and author Vincent Intondi, and Vicki Elson, creative director for <https://www.nuclearban.us/> It was moderated by Nick Mele, Pax Christi USA Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament coordinator. Their presentations were scholarly, riveting, and grounded in the imperative to act for the abolition of nuclear weapons and to believe, as the acronym states, “I/CAN” at least do my part. -JM

2) Dream of Tomorrow: Pax Christi USA National Field Organizer Lauren Bailey moderated this inspiring multigenerational conversation with PCUSA Ambassador of Peace and former Pax Christi Anti-Racism Team member, Beatrice Parwatikar, former PCUSA National Council chair and coordinator of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, Judy Coode, and former Franciscan lay missionary in Bolivia and recently elected National Council member Jeff Sved. As the eldest, Bea’s sage advice to “practice humility,” engage with “opposite” thinkers to find common ground, and “be secure in your truth” was echoed and embraced by Judy (who also noted the “critical” importance of working in “community” and amid “diversity”) and Jeff (who added the need for “self-care” and reinforced Bea’s call for grounding in prayer). -MM

3) Shaken Awake: “Taking on Pope Francis’s Challenge to Cultivate ‘Antibodies of Justice, Charity and Solidarity’ after the pandemic, three young adult panelists offered many insights. Adrienne Alexander, a union organizer, drew hope and joy

from small personal interactions and connections during the pandemic: “Nothing is promised,” so relish and cherish these moments. Elizabeth Garlow, Co-Convenor, U.S. Economy of Francesco, said this movement aims for a new moral economy, a “solidarity economy,” which centers on the dignity of the person. She urged us to channel investments into climate and racial justice. Luis Marchese, a Sunrise Movement grassroots organizer, urged using our “people power” [climate science believers, for example] to create political power, building relationships to elect candidates with like views, with the pressure politics of demonstrations and protests. Discussion addressed the challenges of bringing “Catholic Social Teaching” to “the people in the pews” and of bringing “our Catholic selves” to politics; and how we must take time for rejuvenation and hospitality. I thought of Galatians 6:9—“Do not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart.” -JA

4) Pax Christi, a Catholic Movement for Peace: Does Our Reality Match Our Tagline? – Three members of the Pax Christi Anti-Racism Team led this discussion of how far Pax Christi has moved toward becoming a truly multicultural and antiracist movement since 2021 Teacher of Peace Fr. Brian Massingale raised three questions in 2013 which participants were invited to answer in a shared Google document. Vicki Lott was especially powerful in contrasting Angela Davis’s

concept of American “racial capitalism” (white profit from exploitation of black labor) with a more Christian vision of egalitarianism (Acts 4: 34-35), in describing the countless microaggressions that people of color encounter in daily life (she recommended and showed a scene from “Cracking the Codes”), and suggesting that in his own time and place Jesus may have looked more brown or black than white. -MM

5) We Tell Our Own Stories: Peruvian-born, Quechua-descended Executive Director of Migrant Roots Media (an independent digital platform) and Pax Christi USA Program Director Roxana Bendezú moderated a moving discussion with Palestinian-born scholar Nahida Halaby Gordon, who described her early childhood experience of the 1948 Nakba (“catastrophe” in Arabic) that exiled 800,000+ Palestinians from their former homes in the new state of Israel, and El Salvador-born Fordham professor Leo Guardado, who recalled his wartime migration to the U.S. from his homeland at age 10 in 1991 with his family. “Discernment” by our local parish and other communities appeared as the best hope to resolve such persistent issues as the Palestinian “right of return” and sanctuary for Central American refugees. -MM

6) Why Do You Look for the Living among the Dead? With the pandemic we sometimes feel that we’ve been in a tomb. Yet, resurrection begins in a tomb. Resurrection is a reality already in our lives, at least in bits and

pieces. Led by Pax Christi Teacher of Peace Megan McKenna through story [Turtle and Eagle, from the Native American tradition] and scripture [Luke 24:1-11], we explored what it means to experience death and resurrection. Themes were: (1) In proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus, expect to be ignored, not to be believed; (2) We can’t go it alone – a group of women went together to prepare the body; (3) Doing the corporal works of mercy is HARD—those linens, spices and myrrh would have weighed 120-150 pounds!; and (4) “Remember everything he told you” - we’ve got to keep re-centering on Jesus and the Word. She ended with a dream she had in which Jesus led her out of a tomb. “I am alive,” he said. “You are alive. Peace be with you. Go in peace..Catch ya later, luv.” -JA

Pax Christi MA Board of Directors 2020-2021

<u>Co-Coordinator:</u> Pat Ferrone 238 Harris Avenue Needham MA 02492 781-752-9722 patferrone@gmail.org	<u>Secretary:</u> Jeanne Allen 10 Sutton Place Easthampton MA 01027 413-270-5880 (email page 12)
<u>Treasurer:</u> Charles Gobron 6 Bolser Avenue Natick, MA 01760 774-270-2442 cgobron@aol.com	<u>Newsletter Editor:</u> Mike Moran 135 Shearer Street Palmer, MA 01069 413-283-5716 (email page 12)

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS: Brian Ashmankas (Douglas); Sr.Linda Bessom (Somerville); Nancy Carapezza (Wayland); Irene Desharnais (Jamaica Plain); Phil Harak (Southampton); Sally Markey (Springfield); Rose Morrissey (Westborough); Father Rocco Puopolo, s.x. (Holliston), Co-Coordinator (see contact info under Fatima on page 12). **QUARTERLY BOARD MEETINGS** are held virtually at 9:30 AM and are open to all PCMA members. The next two meetings are: September 11, and December 11, 2021.

Local Groups

Berkshire P.C.

Carolyn Zablonty
P.O. Box 14
Mill River, MA 01244
berkshire.pax.christi@gmail.com
Contact for meeting info

Beverly P.C.

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

Boston (Citywide) P.C.

Irene Desharnais
Paulist Center, 5 Park St
Boston, MA
iredesharnais@comcast.net
Contact for meeting info

Cape Cod P.C.

Edouard & Francoise Rocher
77 Old Post Road
Centerville, MA 02632
(508) 771-6737
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
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
(202) 997-8049
rndpsx@hotmail.com
Mtgs 2nd 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
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
Contact for meeting info

Metro West P.C.

Membership info: Faith
fmadzar@gmail.com
Steadfast Hope info: Jan
peacejpl@comcast.net
Mtgs 3rd 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
sheilmathews@aol.com
Mtgs 3rd Tuesday, 7:00 PM

Chapel of Reconciliation

Rhode Island P.C.

Margo Murphy
(401) 861-6988
margomurph@aol.com
Madeline Labriola
(845) 691-8015
mlabriola@mac.com
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
Prayer for Peace, Tuesday
mornings, 7:45-8:00 AM

St. Susanna Parish P.C.

Pat Ferrone
262 Needham Street
Dedham, MA 02026
(781) 752-9722
parferrone@gmail.com
Contact for meeting info

Western Mass P.C.

Jeanne Allen
10 Sutton Place
Easthampton, MA 01027
(413) 270-5880
jeanne.allen@hhcinc.org
Mtgs 2nd Friday, 7:00 PM
Elms College, Chicopee

*(NOTE: Most meetings of all
groups are virtual during Covid)*

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

Pax Christi Massachusetts
6 Bolser Avenue
Natick, MA 01760
paxchristima@gmail.com
www.paxchristima.org