



Muslims, Jews, and Catholics: Standing Together Against Climate Change

by Sr. Carol DeAngelo, SC

The invitation to be part of a panel, *Muslims, Jews, and Catholics: Standing Together Against Climate Change* and the actual day itself came long before the season of Advent. But as I respond to Rosemarie's request to write something about that evening on the campus of Queens College, I do so in light of Advent hope with its themes of a people walking in darkness who have seen a great light, of waiting in hope, of calling on Emmanuel (God with us) – themes so present in Pope Francis's encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care For Our Common Home*, and to me, also present in the energies and hopes of those gathered on November 11. My role in the panel was to speak from the Catholic perspective, especially to the core of the message of *Laudato Si'*. Two other panelists, Rabbi Lawrence Troster and Daisy Khan, represented the Jewish and Muslim faiths respectively. It turned out to be a moving, inspiring evening. The panel was part of a much larger event, CERRU's 4th Annual Innovation Exchange, planned by The Center for Ethnic, Racial, and Religious Understanding (CERRU); the Central Queens Y (CQY); and the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding (FFEU). What made the evening so special for me was the intergenerational participation from a broad spectrum of participants: students, faculty, faith leaders and people from the community. Dr. Stephen Pekar, a geology professor at Queens College, presented the science of climate change. Following the panel discussion, audience participants gathered in breakout groups, brainstorming specific actions we can all take now. Some of the ideas that emerged included cultivating a greater connection with the natural world, in order to foster a sense of awe, as well as taking steps to raise public awareness to the urgency of climate change.

Each panelist spoke to how his or her faith tradition calls us to care for creation and actions to ensure a future for our children and future generations. Daisy

Khan, Executive Director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement, spoke passionately about the devastating impact of climate change and the particular vulnerability of the world's poorest nations. Rabbi Lawrence Troster, Co-founder of the GreenFaith Fellowship Program, spoke powerfully of the threat from climate change to civilization itself—a threat that is unprecedented in human history. All panelists emphasized that people of faith need to call on their leaders to speak out on behalf of our common home, planet Earth and her people, to hear the cry of Earth and the cry of the poor who are most impacted by the effects of climate change. At the December Paris UN Climate Talks faith groups are petitioning world leaders for a strong, just international climate treaty.

Asked to speak to the heart of Pope Francis's message, I explained that Pope Francis calls us to action, to a new way of thinking and being ... in care of Earth and Creation; to personal, communal and societal conversion and transformation; to live ecologically responsible lifestyles; to an ecological spirituality/a global spirituality of solidarity; to an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically; and to live out of that universal communion and reality that shows us just "how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace" (*Laudato Si'* #10).

Sophia McGee, Acting Director of CERRU, highlighted the purpose of the evening, "In this highly innovative Encyclical on Climate Change, Pope Francis asks individuals of all faiths, races, and cultures to come together to reverse the wounds that we have inflicted upon our earth. We are pleased to be answering the call with this first discussion on positive steps that we, as a community, can take to combat climate change."

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Jihad and Just War

by Rosemarie Pace

This year, PCMNY's Fall Assembly met in a new location, Immaculate Conception in the Bronx. Pastor Fr. Frank Skelly was our gracious host. Over 30 people came to hear the latest about Pax Christi and to hear Fr. Patrick Ryan, SJ, enlighten us on the topic of Jihad and Just War.

Our morning meeting was a little different from past Assemblies in that we put more focus on our link to Pax Christi International (PCI) than usual. Since PCI just celebrated its 70th anniversary, we wanted to give a bit of history, and since the anniversary celebration took place in Bethlehem, Palestine, we wanted to talk a bit about that experience. Both Abigail Metzger and I were in Bethlehem for the PCI gathering, but others in attendance also had experience in Palestine and so were able to supplement our reports about the difficult lives Palestinians have to lead under Israeli occupation. Additional Pax Christi information was available in hand-outs.

After a delicious lunch catered by Fr. Francis Gargani, Fr. Ryan presented his paper on Jihad and Just War interspersed with personal comments, sometimes humorous, but always informative. Fr. Ryan is a scholar of comparative history of religion, specializing in Arabic and Islamic studies. He also has life experience living in Africa and working among Muslims and Christians.

To put the topic in context, Fr. Ryan began with some historical background on not just Christianity and Islam, but on Judaism as well. He noted that no religion has a market on war, just or unjust.

He then elaborated on Christianity, noting that Christians had little to do with war for the first three centuries. It was when St. Augustine came on the scene that the whole notion of just war was developed. Several centuries later, St. Thomas Aquinas refined the theory, but both Augustine and Thomas were working from subjective perspectives according to Fr. Ryan. In short they were men of their time and culture, not objective truths grounded in faith (if that ever existed).

Fr. Ryan went on to address jihad, making it absolutely clear that jihad does *not* mean holy war; it means struggle. A different word, *harb*, means war and gen-

erally unholy war. As for jihad, there are two types, the greater is the one against one's own vices; the lesser is the external struggle for an Islamic cause. Unfortunately, like Just War Theory, jihad can be and has been misused to mask unholy pursuits. This is what Fr. Ryan describes as happening today in Syria and Iraq with ISIS and their western oil merchant supporters.

What we need is greater knowledge and understanding of our own faith's teachings on this subject and less ignorance and misunderstanding about others'. With open minds, we will also be more likely to open our hearts to those who are victims of unjust and unholy wars. We will be better able to join our voices with those of several Catholic organizations that sent a letter to Congress (see below) in support of welcoming and aiding Syrian refugees.



Letter from Catholic Communities on Syrian Refugees

Nov. 19, 2015

Dear Congressperson,

As national Catholic organizations advocating for justice and peace, we speak from the experience of our members who serve on the ground around the world with those who are suffering, including refugees fleeing from violent conflict. We know their stories, their heartbreak, their fear, and their persistent efforts to survive, even flourish.

We repudiate the recent attacks in Beirut, Paris, Baghdad, Raqqa and in too many other places around the world. We know families and communities are suffering and our prayers are with them. We deeply believe that violence will not prevail and that the memories of those who have been killed will inspire sustainable solutions to such horrific violence.

We cannot, however, let our grief and fear blind us to the desperation and despair of another group of victims: the millions and millions of refugees fleeing for safety from Syria. For many years, people in Syria and Iraq have been inundated with violence in their home countries and fleeing from the same type of violence we saw in Beirut and Paris. The world watched with

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horror as the body of a three year old Syrian boy washed onto Turkey's shore, yet families continue to lose their lives daily as leaders debate how to respond.

Pope Francis proclaimed that "refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity. They are children, women, and men who leave or who are forced to leave their homes...the flesh of Christ is in the flesh of the refugees: their flesh is the flesh of Christ."

That many governors and presidential candidates would have the United States stop accepting Syrian refugees or accept only Christians is both deplorable and a form of structural violence. The faithful response is to open our hearts and our homes to Syrians of all faiths in recognition of our sacred call to protect and nourish life.

To reject Syrian refugees out of fear would be wrong. The U.S. government handpicks and thoroughly vets the refugees who resettle here. All refugees resettled in the United States undergo rigorous security screenings by the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, the Department of Defense and multiple intelligence agencies; these include biometric checks, forensic testing, medical screenings and in-person interviews.

This is not an either/or situation. The United States can continue to welcome refugees while also continuing to provide an environment of safety. We must do both.

Further, we strongly urge your support for the diplomatic efforts being made in Vienna to de-escalate the violence in Syria, which will be a significant step to mitigating the refugee crisis.

In sum, it is precisely the willingness to welcome the other, i.e. the virtue of hospitality, and the practice of inclusion, that groups like ISIS oppose. If we refuse to welcome refugees in urgent need, we risk becoming like those we claim to deplore. We pray that in your discernment, compassion for the plight of refugees will touch your hearts.

Sincerely,

This letter was signed by Pax Christi USA, Pax Christi International and several other Catholics organizations. For a complete list of signatories go to: <http://maryknollogc.org/statements/catholic-groups-send-letter-congress-welcoming-syrian-refugees>.

(Climate change, continued from page 1...)

Laudato Si', in its call to integral ecology, takes us to the heart of what it means to be human. To be open to awe, wonder, beauty and gratitude leads us to praise and communion. We are one, brother and sister to each other, to all life. Let us build the movement of peace and harmony through the dialogue to which Pope Francis calls us. Let us invite conversation among ourselves and those outside our usual circles. May our choices, actions, and lifestyles reduce our carbon footprint. May we live simply so that others may simply live.

Pope Francis reminds us that no action is too small: "We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. Gen 2:7); our very bodies are made up of the elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters" (*Laudato Si'* #2). We also remember that the "Spirit, infinite bond of love, is intimately present at the very heart of the universe, inspiring and bringing new pathways" (*Laudato Si'* #238). Let us walk in light and hope, as people of faith, as members of Pax Christi Metro New York, as citizens of the world. May we help each other exercise leadership in ways unique to our gifts and for the common good.

Sr. Carol DeAngelo is the Director of the Office of Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation for the Sisters of Charity of New York.

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2016 Winter

"Kerux" is the Greek word meaning "herald". As the name of our newsletter, it reminds us that we are to be heralds of God's nonviolent love. We welcome letters, articles and reviews.

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A Pax Christi International Gathering

by Rosemarie Pace

Actually, there were two Pax Christi International (PCI) gatherings in New York City in October. One was a lovely luncheon at a midtown restaurant and the other a house reception in Greenwich Village hosted by Dr. Matthew Ferguson.

What a joy to be with our PCI co-president, South African Bishop Kevin Dowling, C.S.S.R., and Secretary-General José Henriquez, since neither made it to the 70th anniversary celebration in Bethlehem in May! Bishop Dowling wasn't well enough to travel, and Israel wouldn't allow José into Palestine for its own discriminatory reasons. It was also a pleasure to be with co-president Marie Dennis.

Both get-togethers nourished us with good company, good food, and good information about the great work that PCI is doing around the world, work that addresses such global concerns as the refugee crisis caused by ISIS, the Israel-Palestine conflict, biological and nuclear weapons, the Iran Deal, Ukraine, and climate change. The voice of Pax Christi on the international stage is an invaluable one for the faith base it brings to the issues, as well as the feet-on-the-ground that provide it with knowledge and experience that surpasses mere ideology. With members and affiliates in approximately 60 countries on six continents, there is a global perspective that insures that one critical matter does not overshadow another and leave it forgotten or neglected.

Try to make it a habit to visit the PCI website to keep abreast of its work. Sign on for e-mail updates. For a sample, read the Statement issued prior to the Global Climate Change conference in Paris (An excerpt is below. Find the full statement at: <http://www.paxchristi.net/news/peaceful-future-depends-climate-justice-now/5280#sthash.aSqPOxeK.dpbs.>) For more, go to www.paxchristi.net.

A peaceful future depends on climate justice now Pax Christi International statement on COP21

Thousands of people from government, industry, intergovernmental organisations and civil society are expected to attend meetings and activities during the UN climate change conference (COP21), to be held 30 November–11 December 2015 in Paris.

The Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM), of which Pax Christi International is a member, has collected more than 800,000 signatures on its Catholic Climate Petition, to be delivered on 28 November to world leaders attending COP21. The petition, inspired by the words of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*, urges leaders to drastically cut carbon emissions.

Pax Christi International and its member organisations strongly believe gross misuse of natural resources and environmental degradation significantly contributes to instability and conflict around the world. In that light, we want COP21 to be treated as a peace conference; if strong and effective decisions are made in Paris, a more peaceful future is possible. [1]

Marches in support of definitive and strong results from COP21 have been scheduled to be held on 29 November in more than 2,000 cities around the world. Regrettably, the Paris march, which was supposed to be the

ISN'T THIS ENOUGH?

Shaken - overwhelmed
"I am with you"
Present
In the midst of the messiness,
in the pain, in the joy,
in the hope, in the fear.

I am never alone
Look who's with me!
Love's caring Presence
"oozing" out of every creature,
every event, pain and joy.
Isn't this enough?
For what more can I ask?
Look, look on Life!
"sacramental beholding"
See, hear, touch
Love "oozing" forth.

Elizabeth Proefriedt CSJ 2014

largest one, was cancelled by the French government after the November 13 terrorist attacks.

We cannot allow terror to change the subject of COP21. With resource wars AND climate instability both driving migration, the goal of the summit *must* be creating the conditions for lasting peace. Delegates must agree on legally enforceable commitments to keep fossil-fuel reserves in the ground; poorer countries must receive funding to deal with climate change; and those who are migrating due to climate change must have their rights respected. [2]

Pax Christi International believes that the Green Climate Fund (GCF) can be a significant support to many countries which lack the resources to engage in a low-emission and climate-resilient development. However, despite wealthy nations agreeing to give the GCF USD\$100 billion per year by 2020, the current giving level is only USD\$1.5 billion per year. Compare this with more than USD\$1 trillion that is spent on weapon systems and military might in one year [3] – the contrast in priorities is devastating.

Pax Christi International recognises the concern around large public gatherings at this time; even though millions of people around the world live in areas of active war and insecurity, much more attention is given when violent attacks occur in what up until then had been “safe” spaces. But is it possible for decision makers at COP21 to hear, recognize and respond to the emphatic demands of civil society, if the most vibrant expression of civil society is silenced?

With civil society prohibited from demonstrating in the streets of Paris, other efforts to raise awareness and demand results must be intensified; our voices must become louder. The chance for a peaceful future depends on climate justice now.

27 November 2015

[1] Cf. Michael Klare, “[Are Resource Wars Our Future?](#)”, November 3.

[2] Cf. Jason Box and Naomi Klein “[Why a Climate Deal Is the Best Hope for Peace](#)”, November 18.

[3] [International Institute for Strategic Studies](#)



Parishes for Peace

Last year PCMNY started a new initiative, Parishes for Peace. We started small, sending invitations to only about 40 parishes in our region, parishes where we had some sort of relationship. Quoting Pope Francis in *The Joy of the Gospel*, we wrote:

By preaching Jesus Christ, who is himself peace (cf. Eph 2:14), the new evangelization calls on every baptized person to be a peacemaker and a credible witness to a reconciled life. (239).

Thus we invited the parishes to join the Pax Christi community to help “spread the peace of Christ.” We also offered a variety of services to them from workshops to Sunday bulletin inserts to prayer services to leaflets like our anti-war toy flier. Six responded positively.

This year we extended the invitation to several more parishes and put a new emphasis on hosting a Peace Mass some time during the course of the year. We also now provide a special logo for parish bulletins, so parishioners can see that their parish is a Parish for Peace.

In light of this effort, we wish to highlight the very good work of Pax Christi Hudson Valley and Pax Christi Downtown Brooklyn for the many Peace Masses they have helped plan and host. These Masses are a wonderful way to reach out to the general congregation, to introduce them to our Catholic call to peacemaking and to the Catholic peace movement.

Please encourage your parish to become a Parish for Peace, and feel free to contact the PCMNY office to learn more.

Report from PC Hudson Valley

by Madeline Labriola

Pax Christi Hudson Valley sponsored the 9th Annual Mass for Peace on Saturday, October 3, 2015 at St. Joseph’s Church, New Paltz, NY at 9:00 AM. The theme for the Mass was the environmental encyclical *Laudato Si’*, written by Pope Francis.

Responding to the “call for open dialogue and honest debate” on these grave environmental issues Tom Brinkmann, Executive Director of Capuchin

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Youth and Family Ministries, and Madeline Labriola, Pax Christi Hudson Valley Coordinator and Green-Faith Fellow, moderated an overview of the encyclical after Mass in the Church Center. The initial meeting was followed by three Thursday night discussion groups which averaged 15 people each time.

The series of discussions were divided into chapters and although participants were encouraged to read each chapter before the meeting, Tom and Madeline presented a summary of each chapter and had a multimedia presentation that included music, prayer, video, and open dialogue on the main points of the encyclical. Encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment of those in attendance, an interfaith council was formed. This interfaith group plans to harness the moral and ethical leadership of faith communities in bringing information to the public and in inspiring urgent public response to climate change.



In Our Son's Name

On Sunday, September 13th, in honor of both 9/11 and the UN International Peace Day, Pax Christi Metro New York hosted a showing of the film, *In Our Son's Name*, about the transformative experience of Phyllis and Orlando Rodriguez after their son, Gregory, was killed in the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001. Rather than revenge, they chose reconciliation. This decision thrust them reluctantly into the public eye as they spoke out against war in Iraq and Afghanistan, opposed the death penalty for 9/11 conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui, befriended his mother, and reached out to men incarcerated for violent crimes.

After the film, Phyllis and Orlando engaged in discussion with our audience of 25 people. Their ability to empathize with Aicha Moussaoui, Zacarias's mother, had a profound effect on everyone, as did their overall sense of mercy and commitment to nonviolence. It was an inspiring afternoon and a film everyone should see. You can borrow it from the PCMNY office or purchase your own copy by visiting <http://inoursonsname.com/>

A Tisket, a Tasket, A Pax Christi Basket!



Remember the wonderful baskets created by some of you last year for the Peacemaker Awards Reception? We would love if you could tap your creativity again and design one for our 2016 Reception.

The basket can contain something you made, you have but haven't used, or something you bought. The value should be somewhere in the vicinity of \$50.

Baskets usually have a theme, e.g. games, books, jewelry, wine and cheese, picnic items, Christmas items (yes even in May!), baking supplies, etc. Any creative idea that will inspire people to take a chance on a basket and support Pax Christi is welcome.

Once you've decided, just bring your completed basket to the Peacemaker Reception on Sunday, May 15th, by 2:30 PM. No urgency and no need for advance delivery. But DO let us know no later than May 6th what you'll be bringing, so we can be prepared for the display and raffle.

Thanks for your help.
Think baskets, think Spring...think Benefit!

A Gift of Peace has been given in honor of:

Sr. Joseph Miriam Blackwell, MSBT
Jackie Stewart Flanagan
Phyllis & Milt Jepson
Eleanor McCoy



Marisol Berrios McLeod
John Monteserrato
Sr. Cecilia Palange
Marina Pichardo

Mary Tavana
Joan & Ron Wernau
John A. Yelenick
Eleanor Zablotny

Please remember them in prayer.

Announcements

Peacemaking through the Arts: To celebrate the closing of the Merton Centenary, Kathleen Deignan, CND, Beth Bradley and her consort, Gadelica, will offer a concert to honor Thomas Merton's Celtic spirit. In word and song, this ensemble will offer selections from their new CD, "*Aisling*" (ash-ling), a collection of sung visions and poems by Sister Kathleen - many texts drawn from the old collection called "The Carmina Gadelica" and realized in concert with an extraordinary troupe of musicians. Join us for this wonderful afternoon of song on Sunday, January 31, 2016, at 2:30 PM at Saint Joseph's Church in Greenwich Village, Sixth Avenue at Washington Place - it just happens to be Merton's 101st birthday! All seats are \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door for adults and \$15 with a student ID. Reserve now at www.nycharities.org, info@nypaxchristi.org, or 212-420-0250.

Ash Wednesday: We'll be leafletting outside St. Patrick's Cathedral on Ash Wednesday, February 10th, at noon with a message of reconciliation and peace. Help us spread the message to the faithful as Lent begins.

Retreat 2016: Hold February 26th to 28th for our 2016 retreat on the theme of "The Quest for World Peace Begins Within," at St. Joseph's Renewal Center in Brentwood, Long Island. Dave and Carol Powell, noted authors (look for them in *The Tablet*, *America*, and *Emmanuel* periodicals) and religious educators, will be facilitating the weekend. Carol is also a spiritual director and guide to centering prayer.

Good Friday: Be part of PCMNY's 34th consecutive Good Friday Way of the Cross/Way of Peace across Manhattan March 25th starting at 8:30 AM at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza. In the Year of Mercy, join in prayer as we walk with Jesus, extending mercy for the suffering that continues to plague our world.

Peacemakers Awards Reception: Help us celebrate our 2016 Peacemakers on Sunday, May 15th, in Casserly Hall, St. Joseph's Greenwich Village Church from 3 to 6 PM. We'll be honoring Orlando and Phyllis Rodriguez of September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows; Sr. Evelyn Lamoureux, D.W., Human Service Coordinator at St. Boniface Parish in Elmont, Long Island; and Fr. Francis Gargani, PCMNY Board

Member extraordinaire. We'll also be honoring Maloof Family Young Peacebuilders. Come for the fun, the food, and the festivities (and the baskets). More details to come.

Annual Appeal: If you haven't already done so, please reflect on the many reasons you value PCMNY and respond as generously as possible to the 2015-2016 Annual Appeal. If you did respond, THANK YOU!

Other Ways to Support Your Pax Christi Region:

Support us by searching the Internet with GoodSearch.com (powered by Yahoo) or shopping online with GoodShop.com. Just indicate Pax Christi Metro New York as your charity. You can also turn your online shopping and searching into much-needed donations at:

www.iGive.com/PaxChristiMetroNewYork and <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/13-3424349>.

"Gifts of Peace": Donate to PCMNY in honor of those you love, whether they're celebrating a special holiday or a birthday, are in need of encouragement, or mourning a loss. Cards are available from the PCMNY office for a recommended donation of \$5 each.

Pennies for Peace: On your own or with others, collect pennies throughout the year. Convert them to dollars and send them to PCMNY as a year-end gift.

Matching Gifts: Ask your company if it will match your gift to PCMNY.

Bequests: Please remember PCMNY in your will. Our legal name is Pax Christi Metro New York and our tax ID number is 13-3424349.



Upcoming Events

- Jan. 7th: Board Meeting/Epiphany Party, St. Joseph's Parish House, 6:30 PM
- Jan. 13th: Retreat Mailing, PCMNY office
- Jan. 31st: Peacemaking through the Arts, St. Joseph's Greenwich Village Church, 2:30-4:30 PM
- Feb. 10th: Ash Wednesday Leafleting, St. Patrick's Cathedral, noon-1 PM
- Feb. 11th: Good Friday Mailing, PCMNY office
- Feb. 26th- Retreat with Dave and Carol Powell, "The Quest for Peace Begins Within,"
Feb. 28th: St. Joseph's Renewal Center, Brentwood, Long Island
- Mar. 3rd: Board Meeting, St. Joseph's Parish House, 6:30 PM
- Mar. 25th: Good Friday Way of the Cross, starting at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, 8:30 AM
- Mar. 30th: Peacemaker Awards Reception Mailing, PCMNY office
- Apr. 1st: *Kerux* Deadline
- May 15th: Peacemaker Awards Reception, Casserly Hall, St. Joseph's Church, 3:00-6:00 PM

Contact the office for updated information on all events:
info@nypaxchristi.org, 212-420-0250, or www.nypaxchristi.org.
Also visit us on Facebook.

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