



Christmas at the IMAX

by RoseAnne Cleary

If there is ever a time when the most hardened among us become as mushy as marshmallows on hot cocoa, it's Christmas. Or so they say.

But something is off. I just don't feel up to twinkling lights and tinted-sugar cookies. And I'm almost afraid of hearing the first strains of my favorite carols.

I noticed it on the way home from a dear friend's funeral last week: we'd been close for decades and seen each other's children grow. After days of sorrow, I wasn't ready to see the first of holiday decorations in our neighborhood. Alongside the lit-up trees down the street, my mind ran the film, over and over, of her husband standing by her deathbed, holding her hand. It transitioned to the solemn image of him standing in disbelief by the casket: he was facing the first Christmas in over 60 years without her.

The wounds of family conflicts always bleed more profusely around Christmas. Healing can sometimes give way and old sadness can return like a ghost revived. And so, yet another screen shows a father alone because his sons are at odds, and newly-divorced millennials struggling to learn the art of blending a family.

Yearning for the awful weight to be lifted off my heart, I felt myself responding to scenes of colorfully lit houses with decorated wreaths on the doors – classic images of the season. My long-time favorite from the musical, *Mame*, “We Need A Little Christmas” began to play and I could see myself indulging in retail therapy, effortlessly wrapping piles of gifts that I'd had fun choosing, tying big bows of red satin ribbons. I thought I even heard myself say “I can't wait for Christmas.” Maybe I was feeling better.

The same words were posted under a young friend's video of her giggling, toddling son. She is

looking through fresher, more joyful eyes than mine to mornings with him and his Dad under the tree, with toys and tricycles, and laughter, and surprises.

Other videos are being projected onto the massive screen, competing for my vision. Here, shoppers line up at department store cashiers; there, tie-ups and slow-downs near malls block intersections everywhere. I fall even more behind schedule than usual, (and even more impatient.)

Finally, as at the end of the Radio City Christmas Show: the Nativity. Many famous masterpieces are familiar but my portrayal of preference is a simple one of Mary resting, alternately comfortable and not, peacefully breast-feeding her infant and responding gratefully to Joseph's loving offers of simple nourishment, modest rations brought with them in their donkey's saddlebags.

I'm almost starting to absorb these mixed images as a collage of our human Christmas experience, when the central screen fills with tired, frightened mothers and fathers, and their hungry children. They have been walking for weeks to escape what few of us will ever know and will forever be changed by their journey even till now. Their faces reveal what they've encountered: walls. Physical walls, US combatant walls, “legal” walls. The term “ASYLUM,” accepted around the world, is not spoken here. Restraints, indignities, cruelty, and absence of disregard for even basic decency might seem to describe the bottom and the end. But no. Now they have been attacked with tear gas by United States troops.

I want to escape back into my happy place of shiny ornaments and the smell of cookies baking, and block the living images I've just seen. But, like the slaughter of the innocents, the fact can never change. How can I celebrate Christmas when families are separated, when children go to bed crying every night, or worse yet, when their lives have

(continued on page 2)

(Christmas, from page 1)

been rendered so chaotic that they are truly lost, even to themselves. Dead or alive scarcely makes a difference because they can have no tomorrow without hope. Technically killed or not, their blood is on us.

Elsewhere, I see Christmas offered differently, like a drug: I can get stoned on it; shop till I forget the cruelty; deck the halls to drown out the screams of separations; and bake to block out the egos of Herod and his modern-day counterparts.

I – and you – have another option: if we comprehend Christmas to mean embracing those suffering families, we'll join every effort to change those conditions. We can never undo the damage, but we can stop doing it. Take the pledge:

<https://paxchristiusa.org/2018/11/28/take-the-pledge-to-stand-in-solidarity-with-people-seeking-asylum/>.

That IMAX screen isn't playing different, contradictory movies simultaneously. It's playing one story, one truth, one Christmas story.

RoseAnne Cleary is a member of Pax Christi Metro New York living in Queens, a wife, mother, grandmother, and retired primary-grade educator.

Into this world,
this demented inn,
in which there is no room
For him at all,
Christ has come uninvited.
But because he cannot
be at home in it,
because he is
Out of place in it,...
His place is with those
who do not belong,
Who are rejected
by power because
they are regarded as weak,
those who are discredited,
who are denied
the status of persons,
tortured and exterminated.
With those for whom
there is no room,
Christ is present in this world.
He is mysteriously present
in those for whom
there seems to be nothing
but the world at its worst.



Thomas Merton

International Physicians Urge U.S. and Russia to Preserve INF Treaty, Begin Negotiations for Nuclear Abolition

Boston, MA – *Donald Trump announced on Saturday, October 20th, that the United States will withdraw from the 1987 Treaty on Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF), a decision confirmed by national security adviser John Bolton early the next week. The following is the response of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), winner of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize.*

In a world already nervous about the intentions of the nuclear-armed states and their continued modernization of nuclear weapons, the Trump Administration's announcement that it will withdraw from the historic INF Treaty is grave and unwelcome news.

“It is very disturbing that yet another hard-won achievement to restrain nuclear arms deployments—a treaty that marked the beginning of the end of the Cold War and for which IPPNW campaigned throughout the 1980s—may be tossed aside by President Trump at the same time that the US is officially leaving the Iran nuclear deal,” said IPPNW board chair Dr. Bjorn Hilt of Norway.

The big loser in the new East-West confrontation could be Europe. Before the conclusion of the INF treaty thirty years ago, there was an uncontrolled arms race between the major powers. If nuclear war had broken out, either by intention or accident, it likely would have begun in Europe and would have obliterated the nations in its front lines. The signing of the historic INF treaty in 1987 by President Reagan and Secretary Gorbachev relieved some of the immediate danger. Its impending demise threatens a relapse into a new Cold War, with Europe again at ground zero.

“Both the US and Russia own a share of the blame for this situation, with each accusing the other of breaking the treaty,” said Dr. Alex Rosen, chairman of IPPNW Germany. “The recent modernizations of the nuclear arsenals on both sides, especially the development of medium-range cruise missiles, but also the establishment of a missile defense system by the United States in Romania and Poland and the Russian deployment of short-range missiles in Kalinin-grad clearly contradict the spirit of the INF agree-

ment. It is time to settle these questions at the negotiating table."

Citing both President Putin's and President Trump's expressed desire at different points in their careers to negotiate the total abolition of nuclear weapons, IPPNW called upon the two leaders to begin a wider discussion of their nuclear arsenals, rather than ending an iconic nuclear weapons limitation treaty.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), adopted at the United Nations last year by a vote of 122-1-1, should provide the starting point for such discussions. The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), co-founded by IPPNW in 2007, received the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for its work in promoting the TPNW, through which a majority of nations have demanded the total abolition of nuclear weapons.

"These nations and the people of the world are sending a clear signal to the nuclear weapons states to pay heed to their obligation to completely disarm under the 50-year old Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)," said IPPNW co-President Dr. Ira Helfand. "The ['Back from the Brink' Campaign](#) in the US outlines steps that could be taken by Congress and the US President, if they wish to be true leaders in avoiding nuclear war. This should not be a partisan issue. As President Reagan famously said, 'nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.' At a time when we desperately need steps forward toward disarmament, withdrawing from the INF treaty would be major step backward."

For media inquiries, contact: Charles Johnson (503) 777-2794; Michael Christ (781) 521-5183. Also, see

<https://peaceandhealthblog.com/2018/10/24/inf-treaty/#more-4772>.

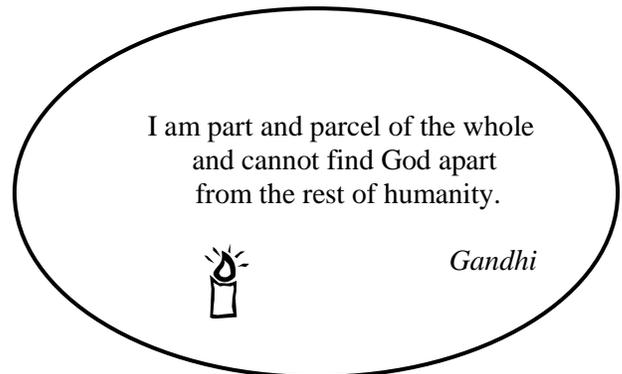
Action Alert: Protest Trump's Intention to Withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty

Pax Christi USA encourages you to express your opposition to U.S. withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty to the White House, your Senators, and your Representative. Pax Christi USA opposes withdrawal because:

- Pope Francis has condemned the possession, manufacture, and development of nuclear weapons, and withdrawal from the INF Treaty is likely to spark a renewed nuclear arms race.
- Russia is suspected of violating the terms of the INF Treaty; if this is verified, the treaty itself is the best instrument for stopping Russia's deployment

and development of intermediate nuclear weapons. U.S. withdrawal from the INF Treaty will encourage, not prevent, Russian violations of the treaty.

- In 2017, the United Nations General Assembly approved a comprehensive treaty to prohibit all development, deployment, or use of nuclear weapons. Pax Christi International, as a member of the International Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, participated in the movement to draft and approve this treaty.



Kerux No. 119

2019 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.

Kerux: 371 Sixth Avenue
New York, NY 10014
Tel. 212-420-0250 Fax 212-420-1628
info@nypaxchristi.org
www.nypaxchristi.org

PCMNY Board:

Fr. Francis Gargani, President
Sr. Virginia Dorgan, RSHM
Terry Febles
John Kemp
Joe McDonough

Director:
Rosemarie Pace

Editor:
Anne Bjornson

Anti-Nuclear Plowshares Activists Await Decision After Court Hearing in Georgia

**PRESS RELEASE: Monday, November 26,
2018**

BRUNSWICK, GA – The Kings Bay Plowshares evidentiary hearing regarding the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) has concluded after a second full day of testimony November 19. Five of the seven defendants testified at the federal court hearing. The activists are facing three felony charges and one misdemeanor charge with a possible 25-year sentence. They were arrested April 5 at Naval Station Kings Bay on the Florida border after their non-violent symbolic disarmament action of Trident submarines and the D5 missiles they carry.

The seven Plowshares activists are asking the court to dismiss or reduce their charges because the government failed to offer the least-restrictive means of resolving the charges against them. Magistrate Judge Benjamin Cheesbro is expected to rule on the motion in several weeks after additional written argument. If he recommends against it then a trial date will be set.

The hearing was the conclusion of two days of testimony regarding the RFRA. The defendants explained their “deeply held religious beliefs,” and how their practice of their religion has been burdened by the government’s response to their actions. The RFRA requires the government to take claims of sincere religious exercise seriously.

Defendants Fr. Steven Kelly, S.J. and Clare Grady testified Nov. 7 which included testimony given by Catholic expert witnesses and theologians, Fordham University Prof. Jeannine Hill Fletcher and Bishop Joseph Kopacz, of Jackson, MS. In addition to the remaining five co-defendants testifying Nov. 19, the prosecution called its second of two witnesses, a civilian communications official for the base.

After the testimonies, Judge Cheesbro denied motions from several co-defendants requesting a lessening of their bond restrictions, including removal of ankle monitors for the five defendants who are released on bond. They challenged the government’s contention that the five are a “danger to community safety.” Fr. Steve Kelly and Elizabeth McAlister remain incarcerated in the Glynn County Detention Center.

In their testimonies throughout the day several defendants said the real sin present at Naval Station Kings Bay are the Trident II D-5 nuclear missiles on the Ohio-class submarines for which the base serves as the home port and that Trident’s omnicidal nuclear weapons are the greatest threat to all of God’s creation.

Press Release printed with permission. For more information, visit: kingsbayplowshares7.org

Plowshares voices:

Elizabeth McAlister, the 79-year-old widow of Phil Berrigan, from Baltimore, recounted her testimony in the trial of the 1983 Griffiss Plowshares action, “The government has set up a religion of nuclearism. It is terrifying and dead, dead wrong. It is a form of idolatry in this culture, spoken about with a sense of awe. It’s a total contradiction to our faith. It puts trust in weapons, not trust in God. God is our strength,” McAlister said, quoting scripture: “Be still and know that I am God.”

Carmen Trotta, from the NY Catholic Worker, said that the government’s possession of nuclear weapons imposes a burden on all religious faith. He quoted the Catholic Church’s Vatican II documents: “The arms race is a treacherous trap for humanity. Nations should mature to take care of one another. Nuclear weapons prevent us from having mutual cooperation with each other rather than mutual destruction.”

Patrick O’Neill, from Garner, NC Catholic Worker, said that the defendants and the prosecution truly shared a compelling interest to prevent nuclear war. “It is our universal burden,” he said. “We can’t separate our religion and our faith from our lives, they are the same thing. Our Catholic faith calls us to uphold the sanctity of life and to preserve creation.”

Martha Hennessy, granddaughter of Dorothy Day, the co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, spoke of the formation of her faith. Hennessy said when she was young, she learned that nuclear weapons threaten all of God’s creation, and are directly opposed to her religious beliefs. “I’m a grandmother, as a few of us are here,” Hennessy said. “I don’t care just for my children, but all the children in the world.”

Mark Colville, of New Haven, CT Catholic Worker, testified his Catholic faith forms the foundation of his conscience. “It’s the rudder of the ship of my life,” he said. Colville spoke of what the Plowshares were trying to do in community with an image

(continued on page 5)

(Plowshares, from page 4)

former CIA officer, Ray McGovern, visualized about the cathedral near the World War II concentration camp at Buchenwald. "The incense of the ceremonial prayers within the church outside Buchenwald, rising upward to God as our prayers," he said, "and over the wall just beyond the smoke from the chimneys of the death camps, the ashes of our brothers and sisters rising upward... and the two streams of smoke mixing above. Whose prayers are being answered by God?" Colville said, "Kings Bay Naval Base is labeled as a death camp for the entire world in the waiting. What I'm charged with just seems so very petty compared to nuclear annihilation," Colville said. "Yes, we went in the night and cut through the fence. We're called to go into the darkness, to bring into light, to expose what is hidden."

"The victory of the day," said Patrick O'Neill after the hearing, "was that truth was spoken by all defendants. It is clear that is the threat."

The Plowshares movement began in the early 1980s and advocates active resistance to war usually involving symbolic protest including hammering on weapons and damaging military property following the exhortation of the prophet Isaiah, "To beat swords into plowshares." There have been about 100 Plowshares protests worldwide.

Contacts:

Defendant; Mark Colville(203)
415-5896 amistadcwh@yahoo.com
Defendant; Clare Grady
(607) 279-7187
claretgrady@gmail.com
Defendant; Martha Hennessy
(802) 230-6328
marthahennessy@gmail.com
Defendant; Patrick O'Neill
(919) 624-5245
pmtoneill@aol.com
Defendant; Carmen Trotta
(347) 898-2217
trottacarmen@yahoo.com
Attorney; Bill Quigley
(504) 710-3074
quigley77@gmail.com



Prayers for a Peace Planet

Rampant violence and
unbridled power are
ravaging lives and nations.
We must stop...awaken...and act.

We are asking,
May
Peace
flourish on Earth.



When we understand that
we are woven in a sacred web,
vibrating with intricate threads
of beauty, communion, and love,
we will cease to harm another.

We are asking,
May
Communion
flourish on Earth.



As we ponder in silence the power
of Light in the darkness,
Surprise us, O Great Awakener,
With peace, love and wisdom.

We are asking,
May
Wisdom
flourish on Earth.

From *Peace Planet Light for Our World*,
Nan Merrill and Barbara Taylor

Book Review

Mary Robinson. *Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience, and the Fight for a Sustainable Future.* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018). 147 pp. \$26 hardback; \$16 eBook.

In his 2015 encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis clearly links the damage we are doing to the earth with harm to the poor, especially those in the Global South. In her new book, *Climate Justice*, Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland and UN Special Envoy for Climate Change, takes that message a galvanizing step forward, telling the stories of some of those global poor and how they are fighting back. These stories draw in the reader in just the way our times demand. Indeed, for Robinson, story-telling is a climate-action strategy.

Robinson begins her book-long network of stories with the birth of her grandson, Rory, in 2003, and her deep concern about the hazards he would likely face by the time he turns 50: nine billion people battling for food, water, and living space.

She goes on to tell eleven other stories, bringing to life some of the world's most devastating problems. First we meet Constance Okollett, a small-scale farmer from Uganda whose village had been devastated by drought, flash flooding, and extreme variations of the seasons, an embodiment of scientific warnings that Africa will suffer the worst consequences of global warming.

Another absorbing story is that of Sharon Hanshaw, an African American hair-dresser from Mississippi whose experience of Hurricane Katrina led her to or-

ganize Coastal Women for Change, a climate justice group to confront the racially-linked federal failures to respond adequately to the hurricane. Then there is Australian Natalie Isaacs who was forced by outbreaks of bush-fires near her home to rethink her leadership of a cosmetics company based in the use of plastic container and to found an on-line organization, 1 Million Women, that helps women around the world monitor and reduce their carbon emissions.

Stories of eight other grassroots leaders, from Alaska, to New Brunswick, Canada, to Vietnam to the Pacific island nation of Kitibati, are threaded throughout *Climate Justice*. And all but two of Robinson's stories are about women grassroots climate change leaders, because "It is women who bear the brunt of climate change." Another great strength of the book is its emphasis on the pivotal role played by indigenous communities in the struggle for climate justice.

Given the dire report from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) last October, that our planetary debt is going to come due far sooner than previously predicted unless we massively reduce our greenhouse emissions, it's not easy to feel hopeful. And although her book was published before the IPCC report, Robinson doesn't pull her punches about many aspects of the current situation, for example, that a billion acres of tropical forests have been razed since 1975 for timber, mining, and development, when such razing releases six times as much carbon dioxide into the atmosphere as fossil fuel emissions. Robinson also notes the enormous harm done to the environment by military violence, for example, the four thousand square miles of forests destroyed by defoliants used by the US military during the Vietnam War. Conflict between nations over the climate refugee crisis is another serious concern.

Yet for all the sobering information it conveys about the impacts of climate change, the primary effect of *Creation Justice*, as its subtitle suggests, is to inspire hope. And even for a cynic like me, who does not share Robinson's optimism that markets will cushion the essential replacement of fossil fuels with renewable energy, her absorbing narrative of grassroots, for the most part women, activists leading the climate liberation front around the world gives me great hope. I suspect it will do so for you as well.

Marian Ronan, Ph.D. is Research Professor of Catholic Studies at New York Theological Seminary in New York City, and co-author of *Women of Vision: Sixteen Founders of the International Grail Movement* (Apocryphile Press, 2017).

A Gift of Peace has been given in memory of:

Flavia Alesci + Laura Cabrera + Rev. John Dorgan
Aileen Gianelli + Botham Shem Jean
Jay Patrick Kennedy + Ann Kreizel
Margaret Meehan + Lydia Rios
Sr. Catherine Ryan, F.S.P.
Maria Sary Sanchez, BTMI
Marie Sanetra
Mary Ann Scarna
Lyn Scheuring
Marie Colette Sorenson
George Storz + Lillian Wall
Franz Michael Walter



**Please remember them
in prayer.**

Announcements:

Peacemaking through the Arts

This year's winter concert, *Make Them Hear You*, will feature renowned, award-winning cabaret singers: Karen Akers, Anna Bergman, Celia Berk, Joshua Lance Dixon, Nick Foster, Jeff Harnar, Karen Mason, Sally Mayes, Sidney Myers, and more... (subject to change); Lawrence Yurman, accompanist; and Alex Rybeck, director. They will be offering a production of show tunes and other popular music to lift your spirits and tug at your hearts. Join us on Sunday, February 10th, 2019 from 4 to 5:30 PM at St. John Lutheran Church, 81 Christopher Street, Manhattan to be entertained and to support PCMNY's work building peace and promoting social justice. Registration begins late December.

Ash Wednesday

Our tradition on Ash Wednesday is to offer a Lenten Reflection to the faithful outside St. Patrick's Cathedral. Join us on March 6th, 2019 at noon to help spread our message of peace and reconciliation.

Retreat 2019

Be sure to hold the weekend of March 8-10 for our annual retreat. We'll be returning to the Maryknoll Sisters Center where Sr. Anne McCarthy, OSB, will help us grow in the Spirituality of Nonviolence. Details to come in the new year.

Good Friday Way of the Cross

PCMNY is probably best known for its Good Friday Way of the Cross, which was its founding event. Commemorating Jesus' suffering in His own life and in the lives of people throughout the world today, hundreds process together, praying for change in ourselves and a society marred by such sins as poverty, racism, bullying and gun violence, human trafficking, and war. Concluding with a 15th Station, we are reminded that we are a Resurrection people in a Good Friday world. Good Friday will be April 19th in 2019. Please join us at 8:30 AM at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza (E. 47th Street between First & Second Avenues)—or whenever and wherever you can join along the route of 42nd Street from Second to Eighth Avenues.

Peacemaker Awards Reception

Our honorees have been chosen and we're very excited to be able to name them: Anthony Donovan and Mary Yelenick, Fr. Ray Roden and Edith Newman. Join us to celebrate them and our still-to-be-named Maloof Family Young Peacebuilders on Sunday afternoon, June 2nd, location to be determined.

Winter Appeal

If you haven't already done so, please reflect on the many reasons you value PCMNY, especially in the current political climate, and respond as generously as possible to our winter 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, a birthday, anniversary, jubilee, or new baby, 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

- Dec. 19th: Peacemaking through the Arts Mailing, PCMNY office
Jan. 12th: Board Meeting/Epiphany Party, Redemptorist Guest House, 11:00 AM-2:00 PM
Jan. 22nd: Retreat Mailing, PCMNY office
Feb. 10th: Peacemaking through the Arts, St. John Lutheran Church, 4:00-5:30 PM
Mar. 5th: Good Friday Mailing, PCMNY office
Mar. 6th: Ash Wednesday Leafletting, St. Patrick's Cathedral, noon-1:00 PM
Mar. 8th
-10th: Retreat with Sr. Anne McCarthy, OSB, Maryknoll Sisters Center, Maryknoll, NY
Mar. 26th: Board Meeting, PCMNY office, 6:30 PM
April 1st: *Kerux* Deadline
April 13th: Signs of Holiness Day of Reflection, Fordham Rose Hill Campus, 9:30 AM-5:00 PM
April 16th: Peacemaker Reception Mailing, PCMNY office
April 19th: Good Friday Way of the Cross, starting at Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, 8:30 AM
May 21st: Board Meeting, PCMNY office, 6:30 PM
June 2nd: Peacemaker Awards Reception, Place TBA, 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 and Twitter.

Pax Christi Metro New York
371 Sixth Avenue New York, NY 10014