

# Pax Christi Massachusetts Newsletter



Violence Ends Where Love Begins

Volume 27, Number 1, Summer-Fall 2020

## Co-Coordinator's Column: Musings for a Dystopic Time

By Pat Ferrone

*"Let my heart be broken by the things that break God's heart."*

-Bob Pierce

Though I sit alone at my computer, tap, tap, tapping on the keyboard, a community of others and the anxious news of the world are with me, too. The summer months find me in a rural setting, a place of quiet, natural beauty. All that I see from the porch is either blooming, rippling, swaying, or, as with the birds, singing and soaring. It's a "Hallelujah Chorus" of sights and sounds, a healing place where "for a time I rest in the grace of the world..." (Wendell Berry)

But despite the beauty - which I do not belittle - I am upended by the distressing realities that reach me via reading, radio or TV coverage: the deceptions of power and the assaults of a new disease seen against a backdrop of pervasive racism - its dark hold on the American psyche playing out in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic: "I can't breathe" repeated again and again in one form or another - on our streets as black men are wrestled to the ground and asphyxiated, from the hospital beds of vented patients, or

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as breathless, outraged responses to the harsh actions and policies of authoritarian, divisive leadership.

Michael Gerson, in a Washington Post online Opinion piece, articulates the failure of a leader who "to a grieving nation, has been stingy with comfort; to a confused nation, has spread misinformation and false hope; and to a nation in need of stability...has been a cyclone of chaos." The Washington Post reports that so far Trump's lies clock in at more than 20,000.



Bishop Stowe ([ncronline.org](http://ncronline.org))

Fr. John Stowe, Bishop President of Pax Christi USA, perhaps as a challenge to the endearments and support some bishops have granted Trump, says, "For this president to call himself pro-life, and for anybody to back him because of claims of being pro-life, is almost willful ignorance. He is so much anti-life because he is only

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## Salud y Amistad (& Covid-19)

By Jeanne Allen

**October 1998.** Hurricane Mitch hit and stalled over Honduras for three days. Thousands died, and nearly one fifth the population of 6 million were displaced. In response to requests for help from Jesuits I had known from living there in the 1980s, a group of six nurse practitioners and friends from western Massachusetts gathered medication and equipment and traveled down in January 1999 to do what we could.

The devastation was amazing. Mud still 6" deep in a barrio chapel; houses buried almost to the roofs in sand where a river had undercut the banks, tumbling many city blocks into the water and down to the sea; people living in all sorts of "housing" - a dozen families in a different barrio's chapel; several crammed into the classrooms of school, social clubs, sheds...anywhere with a roof! Hundreds of people living under the meager protection of a plastic

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

## Co-Coordinator's Column...

*Continued from page 1*

concerned about himself, and he gives every, every indication of that.”

Recently, I have been re-reading George Orwell's 1949 book *1984*, a jarring dystopic novel prescient in its description of current national and world-wide “Big Brother” political structures. One does not have to delve too deeply into the novel to find likenesses. There's the use of “doublespeak” - “language used to deceive, usually through concealment or misrepresentation of truth,” and “Newspeak”, the lingua franca of Oceania. Its intent was to diminish the range of thought for the “minions” by eliminating ‘useless’ words for expression.



*George Orwell (bl.uk)*

“Hate Week” is a popular event in the novel, updated today in political rallies calculated to manipulate base emotions and foment hatred toward a growing list of State enemies. Overt crackdowns on nonviolent protesters by federal agents have become common, and are “actions that often precede broader uses of violence against domestic opposition,” according to Kyle Murphy, a former Senior Intelligence Official who resigned his post in protest of the “continuous slide toward authoritarianism.”

None of us can truly be assured when, how, or if life, especially for those under the heel of oppression and great insecurity, will improve. We can't help but hope that a “changing of the guard” at the national level will, at least, bring a measure of stability long enough for all of us to catch our breath and create an atmosphere that makes it possible to backtrack on some of the most egregious violations by the present administration.

Our spirits are badly wounded, and we are exhausted by the chaos and suffering of our time. And yet, Pema Chodron, a Buddhist nun and wisdom woman, writes in *Comfortable with Uncertainty*, “instead of transcending the suffering of all creatures, we move toward turbulence and doubt however we can. We explore the reality and unpredictability of insecurity and pain, and we try not to push it away.”

If there is a saving grace in these times of turmoil and doubt, perhaps we'll find it in the strength that seems to come when we clasp hands with one another to pray and work as disciples of God's peace, simply doing what we can to salve the suffering and repair the injustice we see. We pay attention to the distress. We write and stand and speak and heal in whatever ways our gifts lead us. We nourish the connections with other like-minded souls and support one another's visions and longings for peace. We do not remain silent.

An example comes from a recent ZOOM presentation where Kathy Kelly, with deep reverence and love, moved toward the pain of present suffering in Yemen, and talked of the diabolical nature of continued arms sales to Saudi

Arabia by the U.S., and the sanctions imposed by Saudi Arabia, the combination of which may well cause the death of 23,500 Yemeni children by the end of 2020. I mention this because Kathy goes into the heart of darkness, articulates the madness, but seems to resist the temptation to despair. Instead, she awakens conscience, expecting that with hearts stretched to embrace a little more of the world's pain, we will access the divine spark of love and turn the tables on the violence that threatens to overtake the children.



*Yemeni children 2020 (unicef.org)*

I think, too, of the recent efforts to pay homage to the horrific suffering in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Throughout the country, there were thoughtful rituals, focused on the details of the events of 75 years ago when the first atomic bombs, “Little Boy” (called “Original Child Bomb” by the Japanese), and “Fat Man” rained death on thousands of Japanese on August 6 and 9.

At St. Susanna's, after the reading of Thomas Merton's “Original Child Bomb” on August 6, a beautiful peace crane structure, created by the Pax Christi group, served as a lofted symbol of hope at the August 9th mass. Fr. Steve Josoma's homily and my post-communion reflection reiterated the historical events, while urging our community to see the disconnect between even the

possession of these weapons of mass destruction and the message of Jesus' gospel of nonviolence and love of enemies. The repentant words of Fr. George Zabelka, Catholic chaplain to the bombing crew, were heard: "All I can say today is that I was wrong. Christ would not be the instrument to unleash such horror on his people. Therefore, no follower of Christ can legitimately unleash the horror of war on God's people. Excuses and self-justifying explanations are without merit."



Fr. George Zabelka  
(*transcend.org*)

It was our way of moving into the "turbulence," with, as St. Paul says, "... great sorrow and constant anguish in our hearts." It seemed that the acknowledgement of the evil done was the door into new possibilities of hope and resistance. Though I don't always see the contours of that hope, I know it has everything to do with love of God and with building loving relationships that nurture the "good trouble" of resistance to, and transformation of, all that thwarts the coming of the Kingdom, I feel it rise in me.

Fr. Joe Nangle, of the Assisi community in D.C. and an Ambassador of Peace for Pax Christi, suggests another possibility: "If there is any ray of hope in this dire scenario, it might be paradoxically in the global experience of a deadly virus from which no human being is exempt and which no military weaponry

can destroy. Coronavirus just might turn humanity to an entirely new way of living on Earth. Could the virus demonstrate the sadness of humans killing each other in large and small wars when all of us are being equally attacked? Could we act universally on the truth that science and cooperation with science, not guns, is the only hope against the horrors of Coronavirus?" And, in light of these reflections, could we face up to the fact that our world is headed inexorably toward that which Pope Francis calls, "the end of the created order itself?"

And yet, as we struggle along, we need words of comfort when we are weary and discouraged and find it hard to keep going. Brother James Koester, SSJE, mentions a helpful quote he once found - "the true pilgrim who has found the way says in his thankful heart, I will run when I can, when I cannot run I will go, and when I cannot go I will creep." He then writes: "However it is that you are facing the challenges of these days, even if you are creeping through them one step, one moment at a time, remember that as you creep, you are not alone. The One who promised to be with us, even to the end of the age is with us still, whether we are running, or going, or creeping."

Pax Christi. Amen.

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

**"The use of atomic energy for purposes of war is immoral, just as the possessing of nuclear weapons is immoral."**

*-Pope Francis, August 6, 2020*

## Salud y Amistad...

*Continued from page 1*

tablecloth strung on a makeshift clothesline along the highway, or huddled in the town plaza.

The parish had a great system set up. We were divided into two groups, each living with a different host family in different areas of town. We self-divided into those with boots (to the muddier sector) and those without (to the drier area). We went separately to the barrios some days and worked together in the city center on others. Each team had a "guide," a local youth who took us around, arranged food with a family, etc. The lead contact at the parish also made sure we met with people in their other ministries, and saw how this relief work fit into the overall mission of the church: liturgical, education, legal advocacy, prison ministry, etc.



*Flooded street, El Progreso, Yoro, Honduras (photo from Jeanne)*

We saw literally hundreds of patients a day among the four professionals (as a reality check for those not in health care, 25 a day is a heavy load). Some we could help with antifungal creams, antibiotics, pain medications, etc. Some we could refer for services (although there was minimal availability). Others ... not so much. One woman stands out. She had lost several family members—just washed down the river—and all her possessions. Her surviving parent was dying. What could we



offer her? My colleague Jan explained we had nothing to solve her problems but asked if she would like to pray together? So they prayed. A few days later she returned and told Jan that although she was still grieving, she had regained a sense of purpose in her life. She said the fact that “the gringas” had taken time out from their (our) lives meant she was important.

Tears your heart out, right? At the end of our ten days there, we reflected together with our hosts and local co-workers on what we had seen and been through, and what it meant to each of us. The consensus was that we were not the only ones giving, that the relationships established were the core of our work. We asked if they felt it had been worth their efforts to have us, and they answered an enthusiastic “yes!” and invited us back the following year.

And so it’s gone ever since. Over time our work morphed from acute relief to case finding, prevention (teaching and fluoride treatment), distribution of vitamins and antiparasitic medications, and episodic care. We met a 10-year old boy with a severe heart defect which generally gets repaired by age 2 here in the States but which was not available at all in Honduras.

One of our volunteers that year was an internet whiz and found an organization to sponsor him for surgery in the States. Not only was he able to come and have surgery, but due to a last-minute glitch he had it in Albany, NY instead of Texas, so we were able to be with his mother during surgery and provide support during their ordeal (and their first real winter ever!).

When we’ve found someone requiring more care than we can give or ongoing care, we have a local doctor to refer to, or we try to get them follow-up in the public health system.

The volunteers have changed over the years, some coming once and others many times. We’ve had middle school, high school, and college students, several who have gone into the health professions. Teachers (our own Sister Irene Comeau, SSJ), lawyers, and just interested friends have joined us. All have said their experiences have changed them.



*Jeanne (second from right) with local friends (photo from Jeanne)*

We’ve found that the “Amistad” (friendship) part of the project has been as important as the “Salud” (health) part. Over the years we have been close to our host families—sharing births, deaths, fear for a child attempting to cross into the US “mojado” and not heard from for weeks, and, most recently, a wedding. And they keep asking us back.

**March 2020.** So here we are. This year we arrived to a new emergency: Covid-19. The same heat, dust, humidity, and poverty, but with a twist. At the time we arrived, there were two cases in the entire country, but the schools were already closed. The airports shut down a mere 12 hours after we arrived, with no targeted date

to reopen. Each day society contracted: first, no bus service, meetings of over 25 people, restaurants or shops; then no taxis, or take-out service. The city we were in closed its borders with other towns, stationing armed guards at the bridge connecting it to the next town. A night-time curfew was imposed, which became a 24-hour restriction to remain in one’s barrio (ours was 1 block x 8 blocks).

Pharmacies ran out of many supplies, then were closed to patients—they would accept phone orders & deliver only. [After we left access to the market was restricted to 1 day/week, depending on the last digit of your national ID card; the borders to other countries are still closed]. In the meantime, you were all experiencing the same changes in social distancing, school and business closures, etc.

Although 75% of the newspaper is devoted to Covid-19, accurate news was scarce, and rumors abounded. My two favorite ads were in the “Keep Calm and…” mode: “Keep calm and avoid false news;” and “Keep calm and wash your hands.” And full-page ads of “#HondurasStayHome.”

We spend hours on the phone trying to confirm when the airport will reopen. Flights are confirmed, then cancelled, rebooked and cancelled again. We register with the US consulate, then the embassy, who tell us they know nothing and to “be patient.” Thank God for smart phones and our host’s Wi-Fi! We inform families and bosses of ever-changing plans, cancelling appointments at home, checking in with families. Henry’s elderly grandfather is diagnosed with Covid-19; we learn of a friend who has it and is on a ventilator. I

ran out of my routine medications and couldn't find most of them in the five pharmacies we were able to check before they were shut down. This morning an earthquake hit; minor, but we were at the epicenter. "What next?" we think.

So what do we offer in this case? We can't help in their hospital, and our clinics were cancelled after the first few days. So we start to clear out a vacant lot, clear the garbage from the street. Trash is there again the next day. There is a shop on the corner, and Sly convinces the owner to leave a can for trash by the order window. How long will that last? Our host families are so generous with their time and homes. They truly mean "mi casa es tu casa." It is an exercise in humility.

With nothing but worry and wondering to fill our time, what to do? Clearly we are learning that we are NOT in control: "Man (sic) proposes, God disposes," for sure! I keep trying to hold on to the words of Saints Teresa of Avila and Julian of Norwich: "Let nothing disturb you, nothing alarm you ... Who has God lacks nothing. God alone suffices." "All shall be well, all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well." But boredom and concern creep in.

As I write, I still have NO idea what's to come. What strengthens me is the relationships we've built over the years, and the gift of more time for prayer.

**July 2020.** I wrote most of this article in the midst of maximum unknowing. In a way, we are all still there. I finally made it home, did my 14 days of self-quarantine, and am in the brave new world of telehealth visits, internet Mass, social distancing, and who knows what's around the corner?! The world keeps turning, the virus  
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spreads, inequities and violence rage. I need to continually put myself/family/patients/friends in God's hands, because I've got nothing to fix this situation. Here's a virtual hug to all who gave me so much support while stranded, and I can't wait to see you face-to-face!

*-Jeanne Allen is secretary of the PCMA board of directors and a nurse practitioner.*

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## My Brother's Keeper

*By Philip J. Harak, Ed.D.*

I hope all of us can relate to the uplifting experience of feeling closely connected with Jesus. That connection is enhanced when shared with another or within a community. Sometimes we are galvanized in spirit by homilies or Scriptural reflections that help us see God in a brighter light.



*Phil (left) and G. Simon Harak, SJ (photo from Phil)*

I was blessed to enjoy *both* of those experiences with my brother in blood and brother in Christ, G. Simon Harak SJ. God called him Home last November 3rd. One of the ways that I have remained close to my lifelong best friend is by continuing our conversation with others about Jesus and the Kingdom of God through the written versions of many of his powerful homilies. A Biblical and Classics Scholar, Simon's immersion into companionship with Jesus produced deeply

moving and imaginative offerings.

For the past year or so, I have been leading discussions on Scriptural stories with my local Pax Christi group, and earlier this year, with an enthusiastic faith group at St. Susanna Parish. Our groups have found the homilies and prayerful discussions fruitful means to deepen our relationship with Jesus and God's creation.

My brother and my interpretations assert Jesus as being unequivocally nonviolent and boundlessly loving. Our small community discussions have been challenging, encouraging, eye-opening, and affirming that the architecture of the Kingdom Jesus proclaimed remains in stark contrast with the division and violence embedded in today's kingdoms.

I recently completed a study guide and personal response to each of Simon's homilies. While awaiting its publication, I look forward to continuing to share our reflections within faith-based workshops both in person and online.

*Phil Harak is a member of the PCMA board of directors and the Western MA local PC group.*

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**Black Lives Matter**  
**Ahmaud Arbery...Sandra Bland...Rayshard Brooks**  
**.....Michael Brown.....**  
**.....Philandro Castile.....**  
**Amadou Diallo...George Floyd...Eric Garner.....**  
**Freddie Gray...Atatiana Jefferson.....Laquan McDonald.....Trayvon Martin.....Tamir Rice.....**  
**Walter Scott.....Alton Sterling...Breonna Taylor**

# LaSalette Pax Christi Update

By Jane Griffin

Given recent tensions between the US and Iran, and knowing that conflict could erupt at any time, our Pax Christi group at the National Shrine of LaSalette decided to study Iran during the spring and summer of 2020. We are using materials from the



Jane with peace ribbons at LaSalette Shrine (photo from Jane)

Catalyst Project, available on the Pax Christi USA web site: “No War-No Sanctions: a study group curriculum to support action to stop war on Iran.”

We are educating ourselves about Iranian history and culture, the covert involvement of the US in Iran (including the 1953 overthrow of their elected leader Mossadegh) and the current situation there. This understanding will inform our communications with elected officials urging relief of sanctions and renegotiation.

We have drafted and sent letters to the editor from our group regarding gun control. We have also written to Members of Congress concerning gun control

and nuclear disarmament. One of our members (Sheila) gathered donations from her parish and sent them to assist immigrant families at our southern border. We have advocated with local elected officials for the Safe Communities Act. We started collaborating with the Attleboro chapter of St. Vincent de Paul Voice of the Poor.

We have been assessing our individual carbon footprints and reflecting on changes we can make, along with increasing awareness in our parishes. Racism is another subject to which we will devote time in the coming months.

During the weekend of August 8-9, we collaborated with the LaSalette Shrine to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the US bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. People were invited to make Peace Ribbons for display at the Shrine, with the theme “What I cannot bear to think of as lost forever...”

Masses that weekend included prayers for all victims of war. Those attending Mass were encouraged to add their thoughts on smaller ribbons which were added to the display. Many noted that they could not bear to lose family members down to great grandchildren; other responses included “forests, mountains and streams,” “home, where memories live,” “all the calm and quiet afternoons spent in love.” People could reflect on the ongoing threat of nuclear conflict and learn about Pax Christi’s mission.

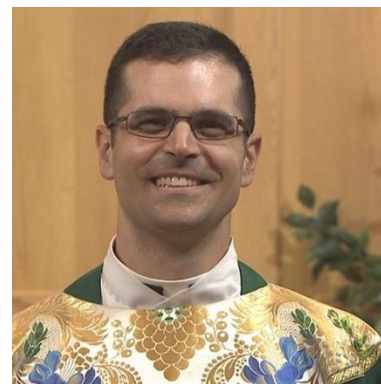
Our group would be happy to welcome new members from Southeastern MA. If interested, email Elaine L’Etoile at [Leawoodstar@aol.com](mailto:Leawoodstar@aol.com).

*-Jane Griffin is a member of the Pax Christi at LaSalette group.*

# Honoring Franz and Franziska Jagerstatter

*Rev. David Aufiero, pastor of Holy Name Parish in Springfield, celebrated the annual Mass sponsored by Pax Christi Western MA in honor of Blessed Franz and Franziska Jagerstatter for broadcast on the local NBC affiliate’s “The Chalice of Salvation” on August 9, 2020 and delivered this homily.*

In the gospel today, we see our Lord walking toward the apostles on the sea. When Peter recognizes that this is Jesus, he is willing to jump out of the boat and meet Jesus in the middle of the sea. He started out fine and walked on the water for a few steps, but when he took his focus off of Jesus, this is where he started to think about the waves, and the problems became the focus as opposed to Jesus. He sank, and Jesus pulled him out, saying, “why did you doubt?”



(photo from “Fr. Dave”)

There is a lesson here, indicating to us that we need to stay focused on Christ when the waves come crashing down on us. And these are the waves that come in the wake of a post-Covid world, including a hurting economy and racial tensions.



We certainly have had our share of difficulties coming out of quarantine and opening things back up. In late May, we have had the racial tension hit in the unwarranted death of George Floyd. This was heard around the world, and there are so many reactions to this. It provokes feelings of anger, rage, and a spirit of revenge can creep in, for some. For others these reactions are scary. These are representative of some of the waves that we would be feeling during these times, and it can feel like we ourselves, or our country, could sink in the midst of so great a trial and difficulty.

But the Lord picks us up and carries us out of these difficulties. We need to focus on Him and ask for His grace and His support constantly through prayer, of course, and ask for the grace of humility and truth. Humility helps us to get out of our own way and see things for what they are and respond to truth. We embrace this constant struggle and challenge in our Catholic lives. We may be tempted to say this challenge is too difficult and there is nowhere to turn. Or to wish we were born in a different time where they had it easier. Well, brothers and sisters, I have never believed that the grass is greener on the other side.

Today, I am joined by members of Pax Christi, and this Mass is being celebrated in memory of Blessed Franz Jägerstätter and his wife, Franziska. And while we cannot travel back to a time when it was easier to live our Catholic faith in a world marked by sin, we can learn from the past. From saints and blessed men and women who lived their Catholic faith heroically during times of difficulty.

Blessed Franz was born on May 20, 1907 in St. Radegund, in upper Austria, to his unmarried mother,

Rosalia Huber, and Franz Bachmeier, who was killed during World War I. After the death of his natural father, Rosalia married Heinrich Jägerstätter, who adopted Franz and gave him his last name in 1917. Franz was known as a **humble** Catholic man who did not draw attention to himself. After his marriage to Franziska in 1936, they spent their honeymoon in Rome, and he grew in extreme piety. He was a daily communicant and served at funerals.



*At their wedding in 1936  
(denvercatholic.org)*

In the mid to late 1930s, as much of Austria followed the tide of Nazism, Franz became more rooted in his Catholic faith. While he was a devoted husband and father, he started to think deeply about obedience to legitimate authority and obedience to God, about moral life and eternal life, and about Jesus's suffering and Passion. He was neither a revolutionary nor belonged to a political group. He was drafted into the Wehrmacht for military service in 1940. After weeks of basic training, he was exempted from military duty due to being "indispensable" on his farm. He then became convinced that participation in the war was a serious sin and decided that any future call-up had to be met with his refusal to fight.

Jägerstätter was at peace with himself not to fight, but back then, many people **knelt** when Hitler made his entrance into Vienna.

Catholic Churches were **forced** to fly the swastika flags and were subjected to other abusive laws.

In February of 1943, Franz was called to fight but refused. He was held in custody and was sentenced to death for sedition. On August 9, he was executed. He wrote, "If I must write... with my hands in chains. I find that much better than if my will were in chains." He never wanted to offend God. He was called to serve a higher order through his death.

I find this man's life incredibly fascinating, and there are parallels to what we face today. In a world marked with sin, we demand justice, and some go about it the wrong way. Some may force you into one narrative as to the proper response to racism. For example, some believe that flipping over statues, rewriting history, and vandalizing churches is the way to promote peace and justice.

In the quest for racial equality, especially, may we look to Blessed Franz, who fought the good fight using his quiet example, and appealing to his well-formed, Christocentric conscience. In the end, the greater purpose was to show that Nazism was unjust. Without humility and a well-formed conscience, history has an uncanny ability to repeat itself if we are not careful. During this time, although it is a time of confusion, despair, frustration, anger, we need to always form our conscience like blessed Franz.

God is so powerful. He speaks to us in the silence and forms us in prayer. In the first reading, God's voice did not come to Elijah through a strong and heavy wind or the earthquake or the fire. But it came through a gentle whispering sound, which Elijah recognized. This is our approach to prayer.

Before we act, may we be men and women of prayer, form our conscience before our triune God, seek the truth with humility on all subjects, and allow God himself to move and act, and continue to grace us with altering the course of our country and human history for the better. Blessed Franz Jagerstätter, pray for us.

## The Letters and Diaries of Etty Hillesum

By Kathleen Schatzberg

I knew Etty Hillesum only in that quotes from her would show up in the spiritual books and web sites I consume. Then I read her diaries and letters while I was living in Israel/Palestine in 2018. They were heartbreaking.

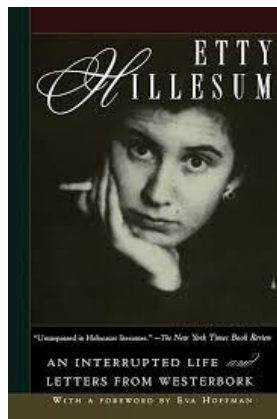
She was a young Dutch scholar, a Jew, headed for a brilliant academic career, when the Nazis occupied the Netherlands. She is sometimes compared to Anne Frank, but Etty was not a child flowering into adolescence, but rather a young woman, unafraid to explore her sexuality as well as all the great philosophical questions of her day.

Her diaries reveal a devotion to contemplative prayer, and as time went on, her growing alarm as the Nazis tightened their grip on Dutch Jews:

*The threat grows ever greater, and terror increases from day to day. I draw prayer round me like a dark protective wall, withdraw inside it as one might into a convent cell and then step outside again...That inner concentration erects high walls around me within which I can*

*find my way back to myself, gather myself together into one whole, away from all distractions. I can imagine times to come when I shall stay on my knees for days on end waiting until the protective walls are strong enough to prevent my going to pieces altogether, my being lost and utterly devastated.*

That she could maintain a prayer life in the midst of such chaos and fear is amazing and beyond my ability to understand. That is the main reason I now try to find wisdom in her words about prayer and life.



(amazon.com)

Eventually the Nazis began rounding up Jews and deporting them to Westerbork, a camp that was really a staging ground for the "final journey." She continued to write letters to her friends back in Amsterdam. Eventually she, too, was put on one of the weekly trains that departed Westerbork for Auschwitz, where she perished. Her parents and her brother (a gifted musician) also perished, though they were all sent separately to their deaths.

Like many others, she knew - via horrifying rumor and speculation - what her fate would be. She and many others wrote letters and

notes, and dropped them from the trains, a last, excruciatingly sad attempt to leave their voices behind. Some of Etty's writings were recovered from grounds near railroad tracks, but most from what she wrote in Amsterdam, and letters to her friends there from Westerbork.

As a model of sustaining a prayer life and a spiritual quest even under such dire circumstances, Etty Hillesum is a model for me. If she could do it, how could I do less? She is also a window into the horrifying Nazi Machine that was the Holocaust. The story of Etty is just one of six million, all with their own stories.

This kind of reading, I think, is vital if we humans are to evolve so that such barbarism becomes permanently a thing of the past. Yet it has happened, multiple times since the Holocaust - perhaps less shocking because lower in numbers, or perhaps because we have grown accustomed to such atrocities. But each of these individual stories is a tragedy beyond comprehension.

As a human race, we must own this history, and reading about it can only help. If these questions interest you, it's worth the time to read one or more collections of Etty Hillesum's writings:

\**An interrupted Life: The Diaries of Etty Hillesum, 1941-1943*

\**Etty Hillesum: An Interrupted Life the Diaries, 1941-1943, and Letters from Westerbork*

\**Etty Hillesum: Essential Writings (Modern Spiritual Masters)*

-Pax Christi member Kathleen Schatzberg is former president of Cape Cod Community College.





## *Pax Christi 2020 State Assembly*

*By Zoom!*

*Resilience and Hope in a Time of Chaos:*

*Pax Christi engaged!*



**Saturday October 10, 2020**

**11:00am to 12:30pm**

**Via Zoom**

For this year's Pax Christi Massachusetts Assembly we have invited the National Pax Christi Executive Director, Mr. Johnny Zokovitch to be with us. Due to the pandemic it will be a virtual meeting. Johnny has been a member of both the national and the international Pax Christi leadership teams for a number of years. He has worked with the grass root organizers as well as witnessed some of the major peace initiatives which Pax Christi has been in the forefront of through these years. Johnny will reflect on those past and present initiatives and share with us some of the great engagements that Pax Christi groups have been doing around our nation and beyond. And we will have the opportunity to share with him initiatives that we here in Massachusetts are engaged in. Together we will enjoy a day that will help us rediscover the resilience and hope that strengthens us in this time of chaos.

Program: Opening Prayer and Introductions, Johnny's presentation, Questions and discussion  
Pax Christi Business meeting, concluding remarks and prayer

Co-sponsored by the



**Registration is free. Email Fr. Rocco Puopolo at [frocco@gmail.com](mailto:frocco@gmail.com) by October 8th and he will send you the link with password inviting you into the meeting.**

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

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

## Book Reviews

By Mike Moran

*Blessed Are the Peacemakers* (Fortress Press, 2019) is less a revision of Lisa Sowle Cahill's *Love Your Enemies*, published in 1994, than a comprehensive rethink of the earlier book by the J. Donald Monan Professor of Christian Ethics at Boston College.

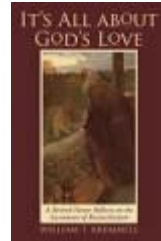
Readers may recall the 2017 PCMA assembly, when Professor Cahill memorably addressed the topic "From Just War to Just Peace" and her role as one of 80 worldwide participants in the 2016 Rome conference "On Violence and Just Peace," co-sponsored by the Vatican and Pax Christi International.

As she notes in her preface: "...three of the chapters (1, 2, and 10) are entirely new, while four more are so extensively rewritten as to constitute a new argument (4-6, and especially 9). The remaining three chapters (3,7, 8) are significantly updated, and the theses have been adapted to accommodate my new interest in moral dilemmas."

Chapter 1 reviews the just war theory, pacifism, and peacebuilding as the three major ways in which the Church has historically grappled with the problem of war, all with a "shared presumption" against it. Citing research by Erika Chenoweth, Maria Stephan, and the late Cambridge-based scholar Gene Sharp, Professor Cahill defines peacebuilding as nonviolent direct action which "seeks a long-term and sustainable peace that depends on addressing the root causes of conflict" at multiple levels, from

grassroots to international. Chapter 2 explores the life and work of Jesus, focusing on the Sermon on the Mount as the heart of his nonviolent message.

Succeeding chapters summarize the contributions of Tertullian, Origen, and the historic peace churches to the pacifist tradition, of Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin to just war theory, and of the Crusaders and Joan of Arc to the extreme position of "holy war," which the author calls "the nadir of Christian advocacy of violence and bloodshed." She devotes more attention in this book than before to the real world conditions in which all these figures struggled to apply their beliefs.



Chapter 9 shows how Reinhold Niebuhr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Dorothy Day, and Catholic popes since Vatican II "prepare the way for the Christian and political priority of peacebuilding" by the end of the twentieth century. Chapter 10 concludes the book with an inspiring survey of contemporary peacebuilders, from the broad-based Black Lives Matter movement in the United States to the "essential" leadership role of women in reconciliation campaigns abroad in Burundi, the Philippines, and the former Yugoslavia.

Professor Cahill emphasizes that what sets peacebuilding apart from the relative abstractions of the just war theory and pacifism is the

willingness of peacebuilders to undertake nonviolent resistance "despite the existentially and morally ambiguous conditions in which [their] mission must be embodied." Pax Christi and Marie Dennis are acknowledged as inclusive global peacebuilders, whose "practical strategy of hope" should engage all readers of this review.

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Fr. William Kremmell has had a long and distinguished career as a parish priest in the Boston archdiocese. And *It's All About God's Love* (WestBow Press, 2019) exudes the same down-to-earth personality, informal style, and relentless positivity that many readers will recognize in its author, the founding coordinator and a longtime board member of Pax Christi Massachusetts.

Its primary focus is indicated in its subtitle: "A Retired Pastor Reflects on the Sacrament of Reconciliation." Grounding practical suggestions in his lived parish experience, from the "top ten reasons" why many Catholics resist confession to "the value of a communal reconciliation service," Fr. Kremmell shows how the Sacrament prepares us for "the ministry of all Christians as instruments of mercy and reconciliation" in the world.

His reminder, invoking the work of Sr. Helen Prejean and the case of Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokar Tsarnaev, that we should always witness to the "all-embracing, unconditional love" of Jesus will resonate with many Pax Christi readers of this uplifting call to deepen our spiritual life.

-Mike edits this newsletter.

## PCMA Peacemaker Award Winners

Jeanne Allen (2000)...Carlos & Melida Arredondo (2007)...Lisa Cahill (2019)...Families for Peaceful Tomorrows (2011)... Marian Frazier (1998)...Joe Gillis (1999)...Lynsey Heffernan (2000\*)...Marion Higgins (2000)...Amy Katuska (2013\*) Fr. William Kremmell (1993)... Leadership Council of Women Religious, Region One (2010)... Fr. Emmanuel Charles McCarthy (2004)...Sue Malone (2019 – Lifetime Achievement Award)...Stacey Maslowsky (2000\*)...Isaura Mendes (2016) Sr. Jane Morrissey (1994)... Michael Palumbo (1998\*)...Pax Community, Holy Cross College (1996\*)...Kay Pfeiffer (2011) Sheila Provencher (2007)... Alice & Charlie Pugh (1997) Alicen Roberts (2016\*)... Edouard & Francoise Rocher (2007)...Deacon Arthur Rodgers (2015)...Rick Saunders (1999\*)... John & Carrie Schuchardt (2012) Brayton & Suzanne Shanley (2005)...Nancy Small (2013) John Stella (1999)...Greta Thunberg, for youth world climate activism (2019\*)...Jeffrey Timberlake (1993\*)...Bill Toller (2017)...Laura Truxler (1999\*) Anita Villafane (1996)...Jeanelle Wheeler (2012\*)

\*John Leary Award (> age 24)  
Please send corrections, errors, or omissions to Mike Moran:  
[moran3@comcast.net](mailto:moran3@comcast.net).

**Agape's plans for a virtual Francis Day on October 3 (likely shorter than the usual full day) are still pending. Check their web site for the most current information: [www.agapecommunity.org](http://www.agapecommunity.org)**

## The Agape Story

By Mike Moran

Agape's chilly 30th Francis Day on October 5, 2019, was the first designed not by Agape co-founders Suzanne and Brayton Shanley but by younger Agape Community members to honor 30 years of Francis Day and 40 years of the Agape story.

Bright sunshine and personal warmth from emcee Edgar Hayes, former Agape intern and co-founder (with his wife, Ann Rader) of the Freedom Farm Community in Middletown, NY insured the comfort and enthusiasm of the capacity multigenerational crowd.



*Frida & Liz at Agape (Agape)*

A true blueblood of the peace movement, keynote speaker Frida Berrigan is the older daughter of Liz McAlister and Phil Berrigan, and her husband, Patrick Sheehan-Gaumer, is the son of longtime War Resisters League activists Joanne Sheehan and Rich Gaumer.

Berrigan described the “rootedness” of her family in New London, CT, and the nonviolent parenting skills that she and Patrick practice with their three children “one tomato at a time.” These include teaching them some “bloody

local history” of violence against Native American Pequots and living “pared down and unsentimental” values of respect for life and nature.

Her mother, Liz McAlister, next received a hero's welcome after her surprise release days earlier from a Georgia prison several weeks before she and six other Catholic peace activists would be convicted of multiple charges for their anti-nuclear weapons protest at Kings Bay Naval Base in Georgia on April 5, 2018. She radiated good health and high spirits a month before turning 80 in a brief statement of determination to keep on.

By the end of the day, a diverse group of afternoon speakers had shown that even as Agape's co-founders are reaching the status of beloved elders, the future of what they built is in good hands.

## Pax Christi MA Board of Directors 2019-2020

<u>Co-Coordinator:</u>	<u>Secretary:</u>
Pat Ferrone 238 Harris Avenue Needham MA 02492 781-752-9722 <a href="mailto:patferrone@rcm.org">patferrone@rcm.org</a>	Jeanne Allen 10 Sutton Place Easthampton MA 01027 413-270-5880 (email page 12)
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<u>OTHER BOARD MEMBERS:</u>	
Brian Ashmankas (Millbury); Nancy Carapezza (Wayland); Irene Desharnais (Jamaica Plain); Phil Harak (Southampton); Sue Malone Westborough); 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 during Covid at 10 AM and are open to all PCMA members. The next meetings are on Sep 12 and Dec 12., 2020.	



## Local Groups

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

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

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

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

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

Christina Abbey  
Paulist Center, 5 Park St  
Boston, MA  
(781) 286-5004  
[LNCabbey2004@yahoo.com](mailto:LNCabbey2004@yahoo.com)  
Mtgs 1st Wednesday, 1-3 PM

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

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

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

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

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

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

Fr. Rocco Puopolo, s.x.  
101 Summer Street  
Holliston, MA 01746  
(202) 997-8049  
[frrocco@xaverianmissionaries.org](mailto:frrocco@xaverianmissionaries.org)  
Mtgs 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday, 4:00 PM  
Upper Room

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

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

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

221 Plumtree Road  
Springfield, MA 01118  
Marilyn Paul-Lewis  
(413)739-3278  
[parishsocialministry@gmail.com](mailto:parishsocialministry@gmail.com)  
Contact for meeting info

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

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

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

Sheila Matthews  
199 Maple Street  
Somerset, MA 02726  
508-674-8220  
[sheilamatthews@aol.com](mailto:sheilamatthews@aol.com)

Mtgs 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 7:00 PM  
Chapel of Reconciliation

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

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

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

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

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

Pat Ferrone  
262 Needham Street  
Dedham, MA 02026  
781-752-9722  
[parferrone@rcm.com](mailto:parferrone@rcm.com)  
Contact for meeting info

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

Jeanne Allen  
10 Sutton Place  
Easthampton, MA 01027  
(413) 270-5880  
[jeanne.allen@hhcinc.org](mailto:jeanne.allen@hhcinc.org)  
Mtgs 2<sup>nd</sup> 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*

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