

Pax Christi USA

NATIONAL CATHOLIC PEACE MOVEMENT

(continued from p. 1)

President Obama recently concluded a follow-on treaty to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with Russia. Public opinion will be crucial if START or the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaties are to have any chance at ratification in the U.S. Senate this year. Included in this newsletter are resources for you to use to build public awareness and support in your community. With the currently polarized political climate we face a huge challenge to move the nuclear abolition agenda forward. Every op-ed, letter to the editor, letter to Senators, or public forum that we can organize across the nation will help move our nation closer to the nuclear weapons free future for which we have long struggled.

Challenging times require strong leadership. Included in this mailing is the 2010 Ballot for Pax Christi USA's National Council. Please take some time to prayerfully review the excellent choices and cast your vote. **Return it to the Pax Christi USA national office by June 11.**

Also included in this mailing is the registration brochure for Pax Christi USA's 2010 National Conference on Catholic Peacemaking, "Know Justice, Know Peace: Ending the Wars at Home and Abroad." The conference features a keynote by Fr. Bryan Massingale, STD, and includes specially designed tracks on the spirituality of nonviolence, the racism driving today's wars, student and young adult organizing, and parish-based peacemaking. Reservations for the Rosemont Hotel at the Pax Christi USA discounted rate must be made directly with the hotel. Details and contact info are included in the brochure. We look forward to seeing you in Chicago this summer.

The past few months have been an energizing period as we began our national internship program in Washington, DC. This year-long program fosters the professional development and faith formation of young adults who commit to living simply in a praying community while offering their service to Pax Christi USA's program department. Pax Christi USA is currently accepting applications for the Fall 2010 class. Visit our Website or contact Sr. Dianna Ortiz, OSU, at the PCUSA Washington Office for more information and application materials.

In April, the war in Afghanistan will become the

longest war in U.S. history, and there is no end in sight. In a few short months, the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq is scheduled to be completed as per the Status of Forces Agreement reached with the Iraqi government. Yet the Pentagon is already wavering, requesting more time. Violent incidents directed against members of Congress who supported health care reform are increasing. Millions of immigrant U.S. citizens and millions of undocumented workers are being subjected to demonization and racist attacks as the effort to reform U.S. immigration policy moves up the legislative ladder. The voice and witness of Pax Christi USA is so crucial at this moment. To continue to grow our movement, resource our members, and bring our perspective to the public and policy debates, we need your help. So I ask you to prayerfully consider an additional gift to Pax Christi USA beyond your regular membership dues. Simply send your check in the enclosed Be Not Afraid Fund envelope to the national office. Or, consider joining our Sustainers program to have a regular monthly contribution deducted from your credit card or bank account. You can do this for as little as \$10 a month, and you can stop it at anytime.

Eastertide is a period of celebration of life, peace, justice, and community in faith. As a Pax Christi USA member, your efforts are joined with thousands of others across our nation in service to the vision of right relationship that is at the very heart of the Paschal Mystery. We are a community of peacemakers who, like Bishop Matt, are willing to take great risks for peace and conscience. As we reflect on the witness of Bishop Matt, we should all take some time to reflect on and take great joy in our own faith and witness to peace. Pope John Paul II said of Pax Christi that "movements like yours are precious." Each and every Pax Christi USA member like you is indeed precious. I thank you for your ongoing witness, your commitment to building the Peace of Christ, and your support of Pax Christi USA.

In peace,

Dave Robinson
Executive Director, Pax Christi USA



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PEACEMAKING: Day by Day

Unless we get rid of nuclear weapons, we probably won't survive. It seems such a pity. It's taken billions of years for us to evolve, and we're capable of such love and fantastic relationships and great creativity and fantastic art. We're a magnificent species. Yet we've learned how to wipe out the whole of life on earth. And we seem to be heading in that direction. . . .

- Dr. Helen Caldicott

Greetings of peace in this Eastertide! As we celebrate the joyful resurrection, let us all recommit to the work of peace and the struggle for justice. Many challenges face us today, not the least of which is the increasing polarization in our Church and in our politics. Labels are hurled like stones at those considered "other." Violent imagery and messaging is employed with an irresponsible disregard for the violent acts such language can incite. Catholics committed to the Church's social teachings are regularly condemned. We must not let any one faction define our Catholicism or diminish our faith in the truth that justice and peace are at the core of Jesus' call to discipleship.

One man who defined what a prophetic Catholic posture toward public policy should look like was our own Bishop Leroy Matthiesen, retired Bishop of Amarillo, Texas, and Pax Christi USA's reigning Teacher of Peace. Bishop Matt passed away on March 22nd at the age of 88. At the height of the Reagan Administration's nuclear weapons buildup, Bishop Matt denounced the idolatry of war and nuclear weapons and called upon the faithful of his diocese to do the same. Many worked at the Pantex Plant in Amarillo, the final assembly point for U.S. nuclear warheads. Bishop Matt urged workers at the plant to leave their jobs and backed up that call with diocesan funds to assist those who took that risk for the sake of conscience and left their jobs at the plant. He was vilified across the planet for that stand by the powers that rely on war and weapons of mass destruction. He was an inspiration and a light to

all who seek an authentic Catholic witness and a life in service to the sanctity of life. Bishop Matt will be missed. But we can honor his witness and emulate his courage with each and every action we take.

Bishop Matt's consistent call for nuclear abolition lives on. From April 30-May 1 hundreds of national and international organizations, including Pax Christi USA, will host an international peace conference, as well as a rally, march, and festival in New York City. These events will bring together thousands of nuclear disarmament activists from around the world to demand that the NPT (nuclear non-proliferation treaty) Review Conference conclude with a commitment to negotiations for a nuclear weapons abolition treaty. In addition to the thousands of U.S. people who will participate, 2,000 Japanese activists, including more than 60 *Hibakusha* (A- and H- Bomb survivors), as well as delegations from around the world will be there, too. Over four million petition signatures from Japan and around the world will be turned into the UN and the White House during the first week of the NPT Review Conference. Pax Christi USA has joined with the Muslim American Society to present a panel program at the United Nations during the final week of the NPT Review entitled "An Interfaith View on the NPT." This panel is the only panel being offered at the United Nations that features a Muslim perspective on nuclear abolition. Watch our Website for reports from the NPT Review Conference and consider participating in the conference, rally, and festival April 30-May 1.

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Contact Information:

Pax Christi USA
532 West Eighth Street
Erie, PA 16502
814-453-4955
info@paxchristiusa.org
www.paxchristiusa.org

LOCAL GROUPS

Contact: Johnny Zokovitch
Phone: 352-219-8419
Email: johnnypcusa@yahoo.com

Visit www.paxchristiusa.org for more educational and spiritual resources for peace.

PAX CHRISTI USA

**PAX CHRISTI FLORIDA MEMBER
CHALLENGES STATE'S DEATH PENALTY SYSTEM**

In February, the state of Florida executed its 69th person since the reinstatement of the death penalty in 1979. In early March, Nancy O'Byrne, Pax Christi Northeast Florida member, wrote a column published in the *St. Augustine Record*. "We were there because we believe killing the killers does not solve the problems of violence in our culture. We were there because we believe that the Florida death penalty is a broken system that is discriminatory against the poor and minorities; it does not bring the closure that it promises to the victim's families; and it costs the citizens of Florida \$51 million more each year as opposed to life sentences without parole." Pax Christi Florida members have consistently witnessed around the state on the days of executions as well as at the state prison in Starke.

**PAX CHRISTI NEW JERSEY HONORS
COLLEGE PROFESSOR FROM ST. PETER'S**

At their annual assembly, Pax Christi New Jersey honored St. Peter's College Professor Anna Brown. Brown, chair of the college's Social Justice Department, was recognized with the Dorothy Day Peacemaker of the Year Award. The assembly also featured a primary focus on Haiti and a keynote presentation from Pax Christi International Co-President Marie Dennis.

**PAX CHRISTI USA SIGNS
LETTER ASKING FOR SUS-
PENSION OF IMMIGRA-
TION ENFORCEMENT**

Pax Christi USA joined the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (www.nnirr.org) in signing a letter to President Obama asking that immigration enforcement be suspended during the 2010 Census. The



Dialogue on Overcoming Fear,
PCUSA Young Adult Retreat, March 2010

letter stated, "We are concerned that a climate of fear and distrust within immigrant communities due to immigration raids and other enforcement actions will deter immigrant households from returning the Census surveys and from cooperating in further Census outreach efforts." The letter was signed by 200 organizations and also directed to Secretary Janet Napolitano of the Department of Homeland Security.

**PAX CHRISTI STUDENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS
GATHER IN FLORIDA**

Pax Christi USA hosted its first winter retreat for students and young adults in five years during the first weekend of March. Students and young adults from across the nation gathered in Florida to listen to retreat facilitators Jean Stokan and Scott Wright, who used the anniversary of Archbishop Oscar Romero's martyrdom as well as the season of Lent as contexts for the retreat. The group was also addressed by Pax Christi Anti-Racism Team member Isaac Chandler and PCUSA Program Associate Amy Watts. The retreat will again be offered annually during February or March.

**PAX CHRISTI INTERNATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS THE
DESPERATE SITUATION OF IRAQ'S MINORITIES**

Pax Christi International submitted a written intervention for the 13th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva in early March, highlighting the desperate situation of Iraq's minorities who are in danger of being wiped out. The submission stated: "Pax Christi International would like to draw the attention of the Human Rights Council to the gross and systematic human rights violations of the minorities in Iraq.

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Updates, continued; New Staff Member

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Iraq's minorities—including Yazidis, Shabaks, Turkoman and Assyrian Christians—are facing a human rights catastrophe. These groups have been systematically targeted, including by Sunni insur-

gents who regard them as 'crusaders' and 'infidels.'" The submission went on to ask that the international community and the Human Rights Council intervene to alleviate the violence.

PAX CHRISTI USA WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBER RONALDO CRUZ!

Ronaldo Cruz, the former executive director of the USCCB Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs, has joined Pax Christi USA as the new Director of Development. Cruz will be involved in creating and managing Pax Christi USA's development programs, cultivating collaborative relationships within the faith-based peace and justice movement, and promoting Pax Christi USA at the national level.

"We are very excited to have Ronaldo Cruz join Pax Christi USA's national staff. He brings years of experience and knowledge to our team," stated Dave Robinson, Executive Director of Pax Christi USA. "His dedication to social justice will be a wonderful asset to us."

Cruz served for over twenty years at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in Washington, D.C. as the executive director of the Secretariat for Hispanic Affairs. His many achievements include the development of organizational strategies for Small Christian Communities, the organization of Encuentro 2000, the development of an HIV/AIDS ministry model for the education of Hispanic/Latino Catholics, and collaboration with Latino/Hispanic communities in the United States in the areas of youth and young adult ministry, pastoral ministry, women in the church, and justice and peace.

Sr. Dianna Ortiz, OSU, Director of Pax Christi USA's D.C. Office, stated, "I am elated that Ronaldo Cruz has boarded the Pax Christi USA train. He brings a wealth of experience, a taste of cultural diversity, and a faith rooted in the Gospels. I am looking forward to working alongside him and there is no doubt in my mind that he will be a great leader and teacher for all at Pax Christi USA."

Cruz has experience and background in community organizing, education, mental health and social services, immigration, and leadership development. He has operated in lay ministry at every level in the Catholic Church, from diocesan to the international.

"As a person of faith I am pleased to join the national staff of Pax Christi USA. People of all ages—including many who are young, brilliant, passionate and hopeful—are involved in building communities for the common good and to advocate for the most vulnerable among us," Cruz stated. "I am excited to become professionally involved in this ministry and activism for justice and peace."

Notes of welcome to Ron Cruz can be sent to info@paxchristiusa.org.



Can we remain indifferent before the problems associated with such realities as climate change, desertification, the deterioration and loss of productivity in vast agricultural areas, the pollution of rivers and aquifers, the loss of biodiversity, the increase of natural catastrophes and the deforestation of equatorial and tropical regions? Can we disregard the growing phenomenon of “environmental refugees”, people who are forced by the degradation of their natural habitat to forsake it—and often their possessions as well—in order to face the dangers and uncertainties of forced displacement? Can we remain impassive in the face of actual and potential conflicts involving access to natural resources?

~ Pope Benedict XVI, World Peace Day Message, 2010

Through prayer and study in parishes and groups, and through action in their communities and in halls of government, Pax Christi members throughout the world have followed their commitment to building a just world so that peace on Earth may someday prevail. Pope Benedict’s words require an even greater commitment to include care for creation as a fundamental grounding for our work of peace through justice.

And such commitment is needed now more than ever, as the science of global climate change is derided by those who would have us believe that continued reliance on non-renewable resources makes more sense than simplifying our lives, buying local, taking only what we need, and supporting initiatives to share our bounty with those who have little. Throughout the world, wars result from disputes over resources—oil, water, land, minerals—with human greed as a catalyst. Only by modeling right relationship and educating others to care for creation for global restoration can we divert our resources from war to the needs of people and the planet.

We on the PCUSA Global Restoration committee believe that concerted care for creation can ultimately prevent war and even deter the use of nuclear weapons. When we work to slow the effects of global climate change, we may prevent or reduce the wars that result from overconsuming resources and the harmful effects of environmental degradation.

“Still in the Shadow of Nuclear Weapons” (www.fcnl.org/pdfs/shadow_nucs_bklt.pdf) provides background and action steps that can give powerful voice to our concerns. In the first session of the Pax Christi USA resource, “Listening to Earth,” we are reminded that all creation is bound together in God and through Earth’s web of life. May we honor our place in this spiritual web through the work of our hands and heart.

~ Pax Christi USA Global Restoration Committee

PLEASE NOTE

In 2009, Pax Christi USA partnered with Heartbeats, a ministry of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, to provide order fulfillment for our prayer, study, and action sales materials. The Sisters have made the difficult decision to close this ministry. Pax Christi USA has thus suspended our sales. We apologize for any inconvenience and invite you to visit our sales table at the National Conference in July for wonderful prayer, study, and action materials and to look for our Web store to reopen in August.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: A History and Guide to the Essentials of the NPT

□ President Harry S. Truman ordered the drop of the nuclear weapon “Little Boy” on the city of Hiroshima on Monday, August 6, 1945. The detonation of “Fat Man” took place over Nagasaki on August 9. These are the only attacks with nuclear weapons in the history of warfare. This fact has placed a special moral weight on the shoulders of the United States to bring about the elimination of nuclear weapons. President Barack Obama stated at his 2009 speech in Prague, “And as nuclear power—as a nuclear power, as the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act.”

□ The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was negotiated between 1957 and 1968, opened for signature July 1, 1968, and entered into force on March 5, 1970.

□ The context for the NPT was the fragile state of affairs between the United States and the USSR during the Cold War and the choice of nuclear weapons as the “buffer” between these two nations through a policy of “deterrence” and “Mutually Assured Destruction” (MAD). The NPT process was initiated by Frank Aiken, Irish Minister for External Affairs, in 1958.

□ The purpose of the NPT is to limit the number of nuclear weapons states (thereby reducing the risk of the use of nuclear weapons) and to stop the development and spread of nuclear weapons with the goal of the eventual, timely elimination of these weapons through “good faith” negotiations. The treaty also aims to allow for the promotion of the peaceful application of nuclear power and technology for purposes that include medicine, energy, and industry.

□ The treaty was originally conceived with a limited duration of twenty-five years. The signing parties decided by consensus to extend the treaty indefinitely and without conditions during the Review Conference in New York City on May 11, 1995. Since its establishment, the treaty has had a review conference every five years to reevaluate it and to assess the progress that member nations have made in their obligations under the treaty. The next NPT Review Conference will take place during May 2010.

□ The NPT has three main pillars: 1. non-proliferation, 2. disarmament, and 3. peaceful use. It also contains eleven articles. The treaty defines two groups within the treaty: Nuclear Weapons States and Non-Nuclear Weapons States.

□ During the 2000 NPT review conference, thirteen practical steps were laid out for the achievement of complete nuclear disarmament underneath the NPT. These were: 1. Signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); 2. Stopping Testing; 3. Negotiation on Fissile Materials; 4. Negotiation on Disarmament; 5. No Going Back (Irreversibility); 6. Abolishing Nukes; 7. Upholding Existing Treaties; 8. Implementing Existing Treaties; 9. Step by Step for States with Nuclear Weapons; 10. Excess Fissile Materials under IAEA Control; 11. General and Complete Disarmament; 12. Reporting; 13. Verifying.

For further information on the NPT (nuclear non-proliferation treaty) and the next NPT Review Conference in May 2010, visit Reaching Critical Will at www.reachingcriticalwill.org/legal/npt/nptindex1.html and the Peace and Justice Now Campaign at <http://peaceandjusticenow.org/wordpress/>.

Recent Developments in Catholic Social Teaching on the Deterrence of Nuclear Weapons

The Vatican has chosen to use the United Nations as a primary forum for articulating its ongoing discernment on the morality of nuclear deterrence and calls for abolition.

□ In 1997, the Holy See's Permanent Representative at the United Nations, Archbishop Renato Martino, told the U.N. Committee on Disarmament: *"Nuclear weapons are incompatible with the peace we seek for the 21st century. They cannot be justified. They deserve condemnation. The preservation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty demands an unequivocal commitment to their abolition."* He also said, *"The work that this committee (1st Committee of the United Nations) has done in calling for negotiations leading to a nuclear weapons convention must be increased. Those nuclear weapons states resisting such negotiations must be challenged, for in clinging to their outmoded rationales for nuclear deterrence they are denying the most ardent aspirations of humanity as well as the opinion of the highest legal authority in the world. The gravest consequences for humankind lie ahead if the world is to be ruled by the militarism represented by nuclear weapons rather than the humanitarian law espoused by the International Court of Justice."*

□ The Vatican again addressed the continued reliance on nuclear deterrence in 2005. In his address to the delegates at the NPT Review Conference, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Vatican U.N. ambassador, condemned the ongoing investments to maintain and upgrade the nuclear weapons states' nuclear deterrents, saying, *"When the Holy See expressed its limited acceptance of nuclear deterrence during the Cold War, it was with the clearly stated condition that deterrence was only a step on the way toward progressive nuclear disarmament. The Holy See has never countenanced nuclear deterrence as a permanent measure, nor does it today when it is evident that nuclear deterrence drives the development of ever newer nuclear arms, thus preventing genuine nuclear disarmament."*

Catholic Letter to President Obama on the Nuclear Posture Review

As the Obama Administration was finalizing its Nuclear Posture Review (the NPR, the congressionally mandated articulation of the role nuclear weapons play in U.S. defense strategy, the numbers of weapons needed, and whether new weapons will be developed), Pax Christi USA learned that the President had rejected the draft given him by the National Security Council, wanting instead, an NPR more consistent with the vision of a nuclear weapons-free world he set forth last year in Prague. Pax Christi USA then circulated a letter (excerpted on p. 5 of this newsletter) to Catholic leaders and presented it to the White House in a March meeting with senior Administration officials involved in writing the document. The meeting at the White House included representatives from Pax Christi USA, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, and the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.

Dear Mr. President. . . .

As moral leaders and particularly as Catholic leaders, we have worked for decades to end the wasteful policies that place nuclear weapons at the center of our national security strategy. Over \$50 billion are spent each and every year on maintaining and deploying our nuclear deterrent. We are deeply concerned over your Administration's request to increase spending on preserving our ability to use these horrendous weapons.

Rather, **we urge you to move our nation beyond indefinite deterrence and embrace elimination as the fundamental posture of U.S. nuclear weapons policy.** Such a transformational shift would set our nation on a course to lead the very effort you spoke of in Prague. . . .

A shift away from indefinite deterrence is exactly what our tradition seeks. The Holy See expressed this in unequivocal terms at the 2005 Review Conference of the Nonproliferation Treaty. . . .

We recognize that embracing a policy of elimination is only the first step on the long road to outlawing these weapons under an international treaty with robust verification measures. However, **we believe that the time has come for the United States to bring its nuclear policy in line with its existing commitments under the Nonproliferation Treaty.** The World Court has been clear that under the NPT "there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control." The NPR can signal to the world that the United States takes seriously its commitments under international law and is prepared to lead a genuine international effort to fulfill its NPT obligations.

We further recognize that while such a process is underway, the United States will retain a nuclear deterrent. **During this interim period it is essential that the role that these weapons serve be strictly limited to deterring the use of nuclear weapons against the United States or its allies.** From our moral perspective, coupling such a declaration with a clear policy of elimination is the only possible way of maintaining any legitimacy under international law. . . . An unambiguous policy that strictly limits the role of these weapons while your

Administration leads an international effort to eliminate them is crucial if the United States is to convince would-be proliferators that nuclear weapons offer them no utility or security in the 21st century.

Similarly, **the NPR can strengthen the United States' efforts to lead the world in eliminating nuclear weapons by ending the deployment of its remaining tactical nuclear weapons from Europe.** Our NATO allies are asking for precisely such a step. . . . Removing these unnecessary weapons is a small but crucial step in fulfilling the vision set forth in Prague and we urge you to do so without delay.

Finally, and in keeping with the spirit of your Prague vision, **we urge you to end the most dangerous aspect of our current nuclear posture: the maintaining of these weapons on hair-trigger alert.** No single action taken today can better enhance our security and move the world in the direction of the nuclear weapons free future you envision than to end the Cold War posture of our nuclear arsenal. The threat of accidental launch or misinterpreted radar data can have devastating consequences, particularly given the decayed state of Russian early warning systems. Committing the U.S. to de-alerting its arsenal and negotiating reciprocity from Russia under a new START will remove the nuclear sword of Damocles that has hung over our nation for half a century.

Mr. President, we share your vision for a world without nuclear weapons and you may be assured of our support in all your efforts to make that vision a reality. We know it will not be easy and there are countless barriers to achieving it. Nonetheless, we believe that the vision you set forth is the right one and we will work with you as long as it takes to achieve it. Your Administration has taken seriously its commitment to transparency. **In closing we ask you to break from the past and make the Nuclear Posture Review public.** The world is ready to follow the leadership you offered in Prague. We urge you to begin to exercise that leadership by embracing a fundamental reorientation of our nuclear posture away from indefinite deterrence and toward elimination and to make that the public policy of the United States.