

Testimony

A Pamphlet from Pax Christi San Antonio

Anticipating April 29, 2018

Pax Christi San Antonio does not solicit donations; however, anyone wishing to join should make a donation to Pax Christi U.S.A. and notify Maria Tobin, matob@aol.com, to receive email messages sent to members. Pax Christi International was founded in 1945 with the encouragement of Bishop Pierre Marie Théas of Montauban, France, by Marthe Dortel Claudot, as a Christian lay organization dedicated to preventing a repetition of the savagery of the twentieth century's world wars.

Please do not respond to this newsletter's address; but send comments on the newsletter to J6anthonyblasi@yahoo.com.

Editorial

After the calendar, the *Third Reading* commentary is based on the gospel reading for the Fifth Sunday of Easter. Tom Keene poem is *Unity?* See <http://www.tomkeeneandthemuse.com/index.php> for more of Tom's poems. A March 30 press release from Human Rights First (a non-profit, nonpartisan international human rights organization based in New York, Washington D.C., Houston, and Los Angeles), summarizes an amicus curiae brief sent to the U.S. Supreme Court by retired U.S. generals and admirals, criticizing the Trump administration's "Muslim ban." The press release follows the poem.

Calendar

In Austin

Tuesday April 24, 6:00pm-7:00pm, environmental justice panel with professional activists. Moody Hall 204, St. Edward's University, 3001 S. Congress. Parking permit needed:

<https://stedwards.nupark.com/events/Events/Register/5ae3492b-01c4-467c-9163-d21288b4982a>

Tuesday April 24, 6:30pm-8:30pm, film by Martin Doblmeier, "An American Conscience: The Reinhold Niebuhr Story." Prothro Theatre, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas Austin.

Wednesday April 25, 9:30am-5:00pm, live streaming conference "Redemption and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Restorative Justice, Washington, DC (8:30am-5:00pm Eastern Time Zone). To register to view the live stream:

<https://catholicismobilizing.org/event/rj-conference>. Scroll down on the site to a form.

Wednesday April 25, 6:00pm-7:00pm, Diverse Voices of Immigration: Panel Discussion (Syrian, Turkish, Latinx). Campus Minsitry Bldg., CSC Community Room, St. Edward's University, 3001 S. Congress. Parking permit needed:

<https://stedwards.nupark.com/events/Events/Register/5ae3492b-01c4-467c-9163-d21288b4982a>

For Trinity U. Alumni: Wednesday April 25, 6:00pm-8:00pm, An Evening Championing Diversity and Inclusion, with Dr. Tiffany Puett and Allison Roman, MSW. WeWork Domain, 11801 Domain Blvd., 3rd floor

Monday April 30, 10:00pm, scheduled broadcast on PBS of the documentary, *True Convictions*, highlighting people who have been falsely prosecuted, convicted, and imprisoned.

In Dallas

Wednesday April 25, 9:30am-5:00pm, live streaming conference "Redemption and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Restorative Justice, Washington, DC (8:30am-5:00pm Eastern Time Zone). To register to view the live stream:

<https://catholicismobilizing.org/event/rj-conference>. Scroll down on the site to a form.

Thursday April 26, 12:00pm, Raj M. Desai, "Is a Growing Middle Class Good for the Poor? Social Policy Reform in a Time of Globalization." Tower Center Boardroom, Carr Collins Hall #227, Southern Methodist University, 3300 University Blvd. RSVP:

<http://whoozin.com/EFH-4TD-KEMW/RSVP>.

Info: blaci@smu.edu.

Monday April 30, 10:00pm, scheduled broadcast on PBS of the documentary, *True Convictions*, highlighting people who have been falsely prosecuted, convicted, and imprisoned.

In Houston

Wednesday April 25, 9:30am-5:00pm, live streaming conference "Redemption and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Restorative Justice, Washington, DC (8:30am-5:00pm Eastern Time Zone). To register to view the live stream:

<https://catholicismobilizing.org/event/rj-conference>. Scroll down on the site to a form.

Monday April 30, 12:00pm, "Where Does Interfaith Dialogue Fit?" Esther's Room, Cohen House (Faculty Club), College Way, Rice University. Register at https://events.rice.edu/#!/view/event/date/20180430/event_id/7422

Monday April 30, 10:00pm, scheduled broadcast on PBS of the documentary, *True Convictions*, highlighting people who have been falsely prosecuted, convicted, and imprisoned.

Sunday May 13, 9:30am, George Tallichet and Al Kahn, "Americans United for Separation of Church and State: A presentation on the Johnson Amendment." St. Philip Presbyterian Church, Room 201, 4807 San Felipe.

Wednesday May 23, 8:00am, to **Thursday May 24**, 2:00pm, “Drawing the Line: Ethical, Political and Scientific Perspectives on U.S. Embryo Research.” James A. Baker III Hall, Baker Institute, Rice University, 6100 Main.

In San Antonio

Tuesday April 24, 5:00pm-7:00pm, Jannique Stewart of the Life Training Institute, “The Truth about Human Life Dignity and Value.” Moody Life Sciences Center, classroom 102. St. Mary’s University, One Camino Santa Maria.

Tuesday April 24, 6:00pm-9:00pm, Arte y Pasion—Sanctorum, a flamenco and Spanish dance project, opening ceremony of the Multicultural Conference of San Antonio College. Scobee Educational Center, 1819 N. Main. Information: <http://www.arte-y-pasion.com>

Tuesday April 24, 7:00pm-9:00pm, Sarwat Hussain, “Causes and Implications of Rohingya Genocide.” SoL Center, University Presbyterian Church, 300 Bushnell (park off Shook). \$20; register before April 17 at www.upcsa.org/registration.

Wednesday April 25, 9:30am-5:00pm, live streaming conference “Redemption and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Restorative Justice, Washington, DC (8:30am-5:00pm Eastern Time Zone). To register to view the live stream: <https://catholicismobilizing.org/event/rj-conference>. Scroll down on the site to a form.

Wednesday April 25, 12:00pm-1:00pm, demonstration against the death penalty, occasioned by the scheduled execution of Erik Davila. Across the street from the Bexar County Courthouse, 100 Dolorosa. Sponsored by the Texas Coalition against the Death Penalty.

Monday April 30, 10:00pm, scheduled broadcast on PBS of the documentary, *True Convictions*, highlighting people who have been falsely prosecuted, convicted, and imprisoned.

Thursday May 3, 2:30pm-3:15pm, Ecumenical Prayer Service: National Day of Prayer. Missions Flag Pole, University of the Incarnate Word, 4301 Broadway.

Thursdays May 8 and 15, 7:00pm-9:00pm, movie screenings and discussion series on religion and government. May 8: *Trembling Before G-d*, on experiences of Orthodox Jews who are homosexual. Discussion led by Rabbi Samuel Stahl. May 15: *Theologians under Hitler*. Discussion led by Dhawn Martin, Ph.D. SoL Center, University Presbyterian Church, 300 Bushnell (park off Shook). \$15. Register by April 24: www.upcsa.org/registration.

Monday June 18, 4:30pm to **Wednesday June 20**, 8:30pm, Summer Institute: Downward Mobility. Presentations by Shane Claiborne, Robert Elsberg, David Haas, and Sue Mosteller. Oblate School of Theology, 285 Oblate dr. \$85 registration; meal

plan and lodging available. For information: <https://ost.edu/continuing-education/>, or (210) 341-1366 X 406.

Third Reading (John 15:1-8)

The *Johannine Gospel* presents more than one version of a farewell discourse by Jesus. The reading for this Sunday is the beginning of one of the versions. It consists of the familiar similitude of the vine and the branches. It should be noted that while there is only one vine, there are nevertheless multiple branches. It is not only unity that is important, but plurality as well. "Unity without uniformity" as a phrase captures part of the message, but a plurality of "branches" depicts separateness as well, separateness without separation or distantiation. The "trunk" that keeps the separate branches from being separated off is Jesus himself, not some doctrine or organizational structure.

The very idea of a human son of the transcendent God implies that no human connection can exhaust the possible avenues toward divinity. There are always more ways than one's own way. This implication highlights the value of faithfulness and loyalty to the way by which one has come to trust in God (adherence to the true vine), but also of interest in, appreciation of, even fascination with the ways through which others come to such a trust. Exploration of the separate others stimulates and enriches an exploration and understanding of one's own faith experience and the ways in which it can grow.

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Poem

Unity?

Is it really all one anyway?
That up and down
are somehow the same?
Also, right and left,
crazy and sane,
evil and good?
That in the end,
and even now,
the dualities dissolve back
to Unity?

Will murderers and their victims
each understand self and other
enough to embrace?

Will war makers and peacemakers
come to terms as illusions
of otherness terminate,
and the truths of being One begin?

Is Adonai echad, the Lord our God is One,
our first, last and ultimate prayer?

Some Great Spirit within us
that leaks truth,
arouses love,
inspires courage,

that connects our separations,
completes our accord with
all that was, is now,
and will become?

Some Creator of all
abiding in all creation?

Some One Source
from which we come,
to Whom we all return?

Tom Keene January 19, 2008

Retired Generals and Admirals File Amicus Briefing Challenging National Security Merits of Muslim Ban

Washington, D.C.—Today a group of 26 retired generals and admirals filed an amicus brief in the United States Supreme Court case of Trump v. Hawaii, which challenges the administration's discriminatory Muslim ban, enacted to ostensibly protect U.S. national security. The brief argues that the ban in fact compromises national security by perpetuating the image of the United States as hostile to Muslims and Muslim-majority nations, fraying relationships with foreign countries and local nationals, undermining U.S. military operations abroad, and serving as a propaganda tool for the United States' enemies. Human Rights First and pro bono counsel Debevoise & Plimpton LLP prepared the brief for the retired military leaders.

"Because it encourages the perception that the United States is pursuing an anti-Muslim foreign policy, EO-3 [the Muslim ban] jeopardizes the stability of the support that the United States receives from its allies, erodes essential goodwill, makes it more difficult for the United States to win hearts and minds abroad, and otherwise

undermines the ability of the United States to pursue strategic partnerships and objectives,” wrote the retired generals and admirals in today’s brief.

The first two iterations of the Muslim ban included travel restrictions on citizens of many Muslim-majority countries as well as suspending refugee resettlement. The administration issued the third iteration of the ban in two stages. On September 24, 2017, President Trump issued a presidential proclamation, placing indefinite travel restrictions on citizens from six Muslim-majority countries—Chad, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen—as well as restrictions on North Korea and some Venezuelan government officials. Second, on October 24, President Trump signed an executive order and government agencies issued a memorandum that together imposed another 90-day suspension of refugee resettlement for citizens of eleven countries, of which nine are Muslim majority. Though the 90-day ban has since expired and is therefore not directly at issue this court challenge, heightened vetting requirements remain for individuals from some Muslim-majority countries.

Hawaii’s merits brief cites as support the arguments of the retired generals and admirals. The Supreme Court will hear oral argument in the case on April 25.

“Ideals and norms of nondiscrimination have long been enshrined in our Constitution as well as in human rights treaties to which the United States is a party. When the United States is viewed as breaking with its own norms and fundamental international principles... enemies of the United States are encouraged to do the same. Further, the perception that the United States is unwilling to abide by the international norms it espouses fuels recruitment of individuals by U.S. enemies,” added the retired generals and admirals.

For more information or to speak with any of the signatories of today’s amicus brief contact Corinne Duffy at DuffyC@humanrightsfirst.org or 202-370-3319.

Links

Pax Christi International
<http://www.paxchristi.net/>

Pax Christi U.S.A.
<http://www.paxchristiusa.org>

Pax Christi Texas
<http://www.paxchristitexas.org>

Pax Christi Dallas
<http://www.Paxchristidallastx.org>

Pax Christi San Antonio
<http://www.paxchristisa.org>

Marianist Social Justice Collaborative
www.msjc.net

Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, International JPIC Committee
<http://saccvi.blogspot.com/>

San Antonio Peace Center
<http://www.sanantoniopace.center>

Interfaith Radio, (*Interfaith Voices*)
<http://www.interfaithradio.org/>

Texas Catholic Campaign to End the Death Penalty
www.txccedp.org

Dialogue Institute of San Antonio
www.thedialoginstitute.org/san-antonio/

Climate Change
www.creation-care.com