

Testimony

A Pamphlet from Pax Christi Texas

Anticipating January 17, 2021

Communications with the editor should be sent to j6anthonyblasi@yahoo.com. 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.

Editorial

After the calendar, the Sunday Liturgical Reading reflections are based on readings for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time. Tom Keene's poem is *What Makes It More?* After the poem is a commentary by Pax Christi San Antonio member Sr. Martha Ann Kirk, on the treaty outlawing nuclear weapons which was ratified by many nations, including the Vatican. The commentary first appeared in the December 31, 2020, San Antonio *Express News*.

Calendar

[Times are given for the Central Time Zone]

Monday January 11-Thursday January 14, 6:30pm (7:30pm ET)-9:00pm (10:00pm ET), students only (undergraduate & graduate): online seminar: Creating a World Free of Nuclear Weapons: Developing the Next Generation of Specialists & Activists of the Catholic Community; Drew Christianson, S.J. (Georgetown University), George A. Lopez (University of Notre Dame), Maryann Cusimano Love (Catholic University of America), Gerald Powers (University of Notre Dame), and others, hosted by the Kroc Institute, University of Notre Dame. To register, contact Hannah Heinzkehr (hheinzek@nd.edu), Lisa Gallagher (lgalleg3@nd.edu), or aortega@nd.edu.

Tuesday January 12, 7:00pm, online "Pursuing Justice: Racial and Social Justice in Our Time," Eric Ward (Western States Center, ADL), sponsored by Anti-Defamation League Southwest. Register at: <https://www.bookpeople.com/event/virtual-event-maurice-chammah-let-lord-sort-them>

Tuesday January 12, 7:00pm-8:00pm, online book discussion, “*Something in the Water: A 21st Century Odyssey*, on racial justice in America,” Michael W. Waters (author and faith leader) and Beto O’Rourke (Texas political figure and friend of the author). Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/something-in-the-water-free-event-with-michael-w-waters-beto-orourke-tickets-133014912183?aff=erelexpmlt>

Wednesday January 13, 11:00am-12:15pm (12:00pm-1:15pm ET), webinar “A Policy Playbook on Nonproliferation Sanctions,” Linda Gerber (Fourth Freedom Forum), Trita Parsi (Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft), Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins (Women of Color Advancing Peace, security and Conflict Transformation), and George A. Lopez (University of Notre Dame), moderated by Maura Policelli (University of Notre Dame). Register at: https://notredame.zoom.us/webinar/register/1116079731340/WN_xAiXJjyGRUqZ6lzbrrGnng?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Register%20Now&utm_campaign=Washington

Wednesday January 13, 7:30pm, Texas Coalition for Abolishing the Death Penalty book group discusses *Infinite Hope: How Wrongful Conviction, Solitary Confinement, and 12 Years on Death Row Failed to Kill My Soul*, by Anthony Graves. Register at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScWORN7DdsUiXJlgb_Eyq9G0JF8uMn5JVuS9ix3wV1ihtk1_w/viewform

Sunday January 17, 4:00pm-5:00pm, online, 34th annual San Antonio MLK Interfaith Worship Service. Link: <https://www.sanantonio.gov/tvsa> ; or Catholic Television of San Antonio.

Monday January 18, 6:00pm (7:00pm ET), online, “The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,” Vicki Vernon Lott (Pax Christi USA Anti-Racism Team; Holy Cross Church, Austin), sponsored by the Greater Springfield Campaign Nonviolence and the Center for Social Justice at Western New England University Law School. Register at: https://wne-edu.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwtfuippjMiG9ZJ_7p6rR6BUazd_rS3Mefh

Wednesday January 20, 7:00pm-9:00pm, online, Dream Week: “Listen for a Change,” on racial reconciliation; Jen Hatmaker (author, founder of Legacy

Collective), Kimiya Denise (Black Freedom Factor), and Dorian Williams (physiologist, founder Reach SA, Texas Christian Fellowship, San Antonio Area Foundation). Access at: facebook.com/pubtheologysa/live

Thursday January 21, 6:30pm-8:30pm, online Courageous Conversation on Racism, Holy Cross Church, Austin, discussion of recent incidents at the Capitol in Washington. Access:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87053993004?pwd=TmtQNk5YSUtXQUUzSFoycEZzOGxLZz09>

Thursday January 21, 7:00pm-9:00pm, and **Thursday January 28**, 7:00pm-9:00pm, online workshop, “Am I My Brothers’ Keeper: The Racialization of America,” Joyce Jones (Archdiocese of St. Louis), and Jeff Schulenburg (Sacred Heart Parish, valley Park, Missouri, Peace & Justice Commission). Sponsored by West County Collaborative and Justice 4 All Team. Information and links for the two dates at:
<https://files.constantcontact.com/bbbab666001/9d56db3b-a392-4d63-bac3-99e4f4d42ac3.pdf>

Sunday January 24, 9:30am, online “Immigration Update—It’s still a Mess...But Is There Hope?” Nancy Kral (prof. retired, Lone Star College). Access at
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86564638381?pwd=MTBtSFl6eVhoTUF3SXJ2VIBWd0N2QT09#success>

Wednesday January 27, 7:00pm, Maurice Chammah (Marshall Project) will discuss his book, *Let the Lord Sort Them: The Rise and Fall of the Death Penalty*, moderated by Pamela Colloff (ProPublica). Hosted by Austin’s independent bookstore, Book People. Register and/or order the book at:
<https://www.bookpeople.com/event/virtual-event-maurice-chammah-let-lord-sort-them>

Notices

Anti-Nuclear Weapons Banners: Please take a look at the picture of the banner in the attachment. It refers to an international treaty that the Holy See has ratified. Pax Christi Dallas is working with the Nuclear Free World committee for the Dallas Peace and Justice Center to find good places in Texas to put them for the month of January--high traffic areas near a traffic light or stop sign where cars have to stop so then the drivers will have a chance to read them. In the bottom corners

you will see the website link to ICAN (www.icanw.org) so that folks can go there and find lots of information. ICAN is the International Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons and won the Nobel Peace Prize about a year ago. For a banner, contact Joyce Hall: hallmj@sbcglobal.net



Online Resource for families or small groups: If you're needing some social interaction with depth, more than just listening to zoom webinars, longing for the social time that used to happen before and after Mass, consider using the *Maryknoll Weekly Reflection Guides*. Gather as family or small group and use these guides in Facetime, Skype, Zoom etc. This an easy online structure with prayer, an introductory theme, a link to the Sunday Readings and some reflection questions to guide group conversation. Using the SeeJudgeAct methodology, you will be led as a group to consider where, in light of the shared reflection, the Spirit is calling you this week. The Global Solidarity charism of the Maryknoll family will feed you spiritually for these challenging times. Find the Guides in both Spanish and English at:

<https://mission.maryknoll.us/reflection-guides-ordinary-time>

Second Reading (1 Cor 6:13c-15a, 17-20)

St. Paul speaks of the individual Christian's body as a member of the collective Christian church, of the body of the Messiah, and therefore, along with the church, the Christian's body is a temple or sanctuary in which the Holy Spirit

dwells. He uses this teaching as a reason not to unite oneself sexually with a prostitute. The editors of the Lectionary delete the specific reference to prostitution from the reading.

One can read the passage as presupposing the Second Table of the Law, where adultery is prohibited. However, Paul is not insisting on law. What he is insisting on is a unity of spirit among the Christians, a unity that expresses respect bodily.

Third Reading (John 1:35-42)

This Sunday's reading is one where we find a passage from the *Johannine Gospel* rather than the *Gospel of Mark*, since the latter is rather short. The *Johannine Gospel* frequently features as a type a person named in the legends about Jesus. The featured individual here is Andrew, one of two disciples of John the Baptizer who follow Jesus after the Baptizer points Jesus out as God's lamb. The narrative points to Andrew by not even giving a name for the disciple who was with him.

The Baptizer's words, "Look! The Lamb of God!" hearken back to the time of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. Moses had told the elders to slay a Passover lamb, the sprinkled blood of which would be a sign for the angels of death to spare their households (Exodus 12:21-23). Andrew and the unnamed disciple were seekers for the household of Jesus; Andrew, however, does not stop at joining the household of Jesus but goes to get his brother Simon to join too.

A second named individual who becomes a type is Simon. What type Simon comes to represent is not fleshed out in this part of the narrative. The passage provides only a clue by telling us that Jesus gives Simon the nickname *Kephas*, which the evangelist translates not as *rock (petra)* but *Rocky (Petros)*. A possible implication of the name is that this Simon Johnson needed to be worked on, hewn.

We tend to think of an evangelist as a single person, but the *Johannine Gospel*, called that because of its association with the letters of John, appears to be the work of a team, a school of Christians who collected narratives and worked them together over several decades. Their typological strategy invites us to find ourselves in the quest of Andrew and in the continuous learning and self-revising of Rocky.

Poem

What Makes It More?

*“As he looked up he saw rich people putting in their offerings; then he happened to notice a poverty-stricken widow putting in two small coins, and he said, **“I tell you truly, this poor widow has put in more than any of them....”** Luke 21: 1-3.*

What is it that makes it more?
Not the stock market,
nor the banks or Federal Reserve.
Not the faith we have in money.

It is the kindness we show to a child,
the room we share with one homeless,
the pain we feel in the hurt of another,
deciding to live without being owned by what we own.

Tom Keene and Muse
December 29, 2020

Commentary: The choice: Life or nuclear weapons?

Sister Martha Ann Kirk

San Antonio *Express-News* Dec. 31, 2020

“Choose life that you and your descendants may live,” proclaims Deuteronomy.

In 2020, the news has been dominated by the efforts to save life from the deadly coronavirus. An amazing thing is happening: The greater threat to life is being noticed by entire countries. They have gotten prompts from faith leaders, feminist leaders, and growing movements of common sense and compassion.

On March 23, U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres appealed to warring parties “to lay down their weapons.” He said, “It is time to put armed conflict on lockdown and focus together on the true fight of our lives.”

Pope Francis said: “I associate myself with all those who have accepted the appeal, and I invite all (parties in conflicts) to follow up on the appeal by stopping every form of warlike hostilities.”

By June, 170 countries of the world had signed on to the appeal for a global cease-fire from the U.N. secretary general.

Much of the global family had not been paying attention to the fact that all life on the planet could be destroyed almost instantly by the human species through the use of nuclear weapons. Is there will and a critical mass of people to make deliberate efforts to prevent this?

Most nations adopted an agreement to ban nuclear weapons — the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons — on July 7, 2017. When at least 50 sovereign nations ratify a treaty, 90 days later the treaty goes into effect.

For 75 years, the human family has watched as more and more essential resources needed for it to flourish have been offered to the idols of control, power and greed. The tools needed for life were being used for death. Global citizens recognized the destruction of the environment, the womb in which we live.

People in pandemic vulnerability listened to the cries echoing and re-echoing since August 1945 in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. When faced with thousands of pandemic deaths, a will for life began to prevail around the globe, and more and more countries ratified the treaty. In late October, Honduras ratified right after Jamaica and Nauru.

What life tools do I have in my toolbox? Needles for sewing together, saws for cutting apart, spoons for mixing, hammers for forcing, megaphones for sharing, gags for silencing?

Our country was challenged because in our toolbox we had a gigantic number of bombs, but we could not bomb the virus away. We lacked the tools we needed.

May this be a year of my searching for the right tools and developing my skills using them. May this be the year of our country selecting the right tools and developing skills using them.

On Jan. 22, nuclear weapons become illegal under international law. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons bans the development, testing, production, manufacture, acquisition, possession or stockpiling, transfer, control or receipt, use of threat to use, stationing or deployment of nuclear weapons.

Banners are going up that proclaim that. Do you want one? Go to www.icanw.org.

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.sanantoniopeace.center>

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

Catholic Books Review

<http://catholicbooksreview.org>