

Testimony

A Pamphlet from Pax Christi San Antonio

Anticipating March 17, 2019

Pax Christi San Antonio does not solicit donations. Thoughtful comments, however, may be sent to the editor at j6anthonyblasi@yahoo.com, with the understanding that permission to publish them is implied. 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 section, the Sunday reading reflections are based on the lectionary selections for the Second Sunday in Lent. At some masses, the readings may be taken from Year A rather than those referenced below, which are from Year C. The Year A readings are coordinated with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Note that a commentary on the gospel reading for Year A Second Sunday of Lent can be found in the archived file of Gospel commentaries and essays that is posted on the Pax Christi San Antonio website (see below, at the end of this issue).

Tom Keene's poem is *We See at Last*. For more of Tom's poems, see <http://www.tomkeeneandthemuse.com/index.php>.

Last month Pax Christi USA issued a statement on President Trump's declaration of a national emergency, which would circumvent the refusal of congress to fund the construction of a wall on the southern border in the amount of over 5 billion dollars. Since then the House of Representatives has voted to nullify the declaration, and the Senate is likely to do so as well. The president says he will veto the nullification. The Pax Christi USA statement is brief and to the point, and it follows the poem below.

Finally, I have come upon an excellent lecture on the contemporary mission of the Franciscan tradition by Joseph Chinnici, ofm: "Cultural Openings—The Franciscan Intellectual and Educational Mission." You can access it at <https://www.faithandreason.com/2018/06/fr-joseph-chinnici-cultural-openings-franciscan-intellectual-educational-mission/>.

Calendar

In Austin

Wednesday March 13, 5:00pm, Michael E. Lee (Fordham University), Revolutionary Faith: Oscar Romero as a Model for Christianity Today. Jones Global Event Center, Ragsdale Center. St. Edward's University, 3001 S. Congress. Parking permit: <https://www.stedwards.edu/contact-us/main-campus-united-states>

Monday March 25, 6:30pm, lecture by Rev. John Floberg, who organized the national call that drew over 500 interfaith clergy to Standing Rock in November 2016 (the Dakota

Access Pipeline protest). Weeks Campus Center, Episcopal Seminary of the South West, 501 E. 32nd St.

Tuesday March 26, 12:00pm-1:00pm, Deliberative Dialogue, "What Should We Do About the Opioid Epidemic?" Fleck Hall 305, St. Edward's University, 3001 S. Congress. Parking permit: <https://www.stedwards.edu/contact-us/main-campus-united-states>

In Beaumont

Friday March 29, 6:00pm-Saturday March 30, 4:30pm, Sr. Patty Chappelle, SNDdeN (Pax Christi USA), Catholic Social Teaching Workshop. St. Jude Thaddeus Catholic Church, 6825 Gladys Avenue, Beaumont, TX. Information: LaWanna 409-924-4333. Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/two-feet-of-love-faith-in-action-tickets-56579275135>

In Dallas

Wednesday March 27, 12:00pm-1:30pm, Mark Chancey (Southern Methodist University), Policy, Politics & the Bible in Public Schools: Is There a Space for Religious Literacy? Hughes-Trigg Forum, Southern Methodist University, 3140 Dyer St. RSVP by March 24: <https://whoozin.com/NFC-JVW-MGTE>. Information: Bora Laci, blaci@smu.edu

Thursday April 4, 6:00pm-8:00pm, "Gun Violence: A Right to Life Issue." Panel discussion, including a trauma surgeon, a representative from the SMU Black Students Association, and a representative from Moms Demand Action. Sponsored by the Catholic Community at SMU, SMU Office of the Chaplain and Religious Life, the Catholic Diocese of Dallas, Texas GunSense, the Dallas Peace and Justice Center, and the SMU Embrey Human Rights Program. Information: Sheila@Levatino.net. SMU McCord Auditorium, 306 Dallas Hall, 3225 University Blvd.

Thursday April 18, 12:30pm-2:00pm, Elzbieta Gozdziat, "Global Migration and Human Trafficking." Room 106, Florence Hall, Dedman School of Law, Southern Methodist University, 3330 University Blvd. Register by April 15, <https://whoozim.com/43P-944-NH6M>. Information: Bora Lacy, tower@smu.edu.

In El Paso

Fridays, 12:00pm-1:00pm, Pax Christi joins Border Peace Presence in front of the Federal Courthouse (corner of Campbell and San Antonio).

Tuesday March 12, 6:45pm, Pax Christi El Paso meeting. Centro Mujeres de la Esperanza, 1101 Birch St. Information: (915): 740-3962.

Saturday March 23, 9:00am, The Migrant Way of the Cross, conducted by Bishop Seitz. Modesto Gomez Park, 4600 Edna St.; entrance across from Boys and Girls Clubs off Delta St.

Thursday March 28, 12:00pm-1:00pm, execution vigil, in front of El Paso County Courthouse.

Sunday March 31, 12:00pm-5:00pm, Cesar Chavez Day celebration. Farm Worker Center, corner of Ninth and Oregon. Information: (915) 873-8933, or cmarentess@gmail.com.

In Houston

Sunday March 17, 9:30am, Sondee Hatcher (SEARCH Homeless Services), "For a Houston without Homelessness." St. Philip Presbyterian Church 201, 4807 San Felipe.

Tuesday March 19, 12:15pm-1:30pm, Deborah Carr (Boston University), "Golden Years? Social Inequalities in Late Life." Kyle Morrow Room Fondren Library, Rice University. Information: Shirley Tapscott, shtz@rice.edu.

Wednesday March 20, 11:00am, Sharan Mehta thesis defense, "Negotiating Race in a Climate of Islamophobia: How Muslim and Sikh Americans Perceive Discrimination and Construct Racialized Religious Identities." Sewall Hall 250, Rice University.

Thursday March 21, 12:00pm, Scott Hanson (University of Pennsylvania), lecture on the interplay of religious freedom, immigration, and pluralism. Meyer Conference Room, RMC/Ley Student Center, Rice University. Register on the Rice Events Calendar (<https://events.rice.edu/>) page for March 21. Information: tolerance@rice.edu.

Sunday March 24, 9:30am, Elena Korbut (Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston), "Refugee Resettlement: Local Solutions to a Global Crisis." St. Philip's Church, room 201, 4807 San Felipe.

Monday March 25, 6:00pm-8:00pm, Anita Hill (Brandeis University), "From Social Movement to Social Impact: Putting an End to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace." Baker Hall, Dore Commons, Rice University. RSVP at rsvpcswgs@rice.edu.

In San Antonio

Wednesday March 13, 6:00pm-8:30pm, "Interfaith Dialogue with Children: Teaching Tolerance, Compassion and Understanding." The program will include educators from Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan. Sponsored by the Interreligious Council of San Antonio. Raindrop Turkish House, 4337 Vance Jackson Rd. (just north of I-410, behind the huge Car Wash sign).

Tuesday March 19, 7:00pm-9:00pm, Green Sacred Texts (environmental passages from diverse traditions). \$10. SoL Center, University Presbyterian Church, 300 Bushnell (park off Shook). Register at <https://www.upcsa.org/registration/>

Tuesday March 19, 7:30, talk by Eva Schloss, step sister of Anne Frank. \$20 if ticket purchased at Laurie Auditorium box office (M-F, 10:00am-2:00p), or \$30 through Ticketmaster. Laurie Auditorium, Trinity University, 1 Trinity Place.

Wednesday March 20, 6:30pm-8:00pm, “Women, War & Peace II Preview,” film preview and discussion. Free, but tickets are required: <https://www.tobincenter.org/box-office/2019-03/women-war-and-pece-ii>

Thursday March 21, 1:30pm-2:45pm, Rev. Helen T. Boursier, Ph.D., “The Ethics of Hospitality: An Interfaith Response to U.S. Immigration Policies.” Mabee Library Special Collections Room, University of the Incarnate Word, 4301 Broadway.

Wednesday March 27, 7:30pm, Dorothy Kearns Goodwin, “Leadership in Turbulent Times.” Laurie Auditorium, Trinity University, One Trinity Place.

Wednesday April 3, 6:30pm-8:00pm, Erica Schommer, J.D., “Representing Migrants in Texas.” Fiesta Room, Coates Student Center 111, Trinity University, One Trinity Place.

Saturday April 6, 10:00am, Pax Christi San Antonio meeting, residence of Maria Tobin, 8715 Starcrest Dr., #27. Information: matob@aol.com.

Tuesday April 9, 7:00pm-9:00pm, screening of “Lindy Lou, Juror Number 2,” documentary on a juror in a capital punishment case. Discussion led by Kristin Houle and Sam Millsap. SoL Center, University Presbyterian Church, 300 Bushnell (park off Shook). Free, register at <https://www.upcsasorg/r, 7:30pm, egistration/>

Second Reading (Philippians 3:17-4:1)

In this brief passage, Paul presents himself as a type or example—though not an example of someone great but someone generally lacking good repute. He had been expelled from communities and arrested by authorities, as well as facing opposition even within the Christian movement. This is to lead up to a critique of Christians who sought the easy life: “Their destiny is destruction, their god is the belly, and their glory is in their shame, those thinking on earthly things.” He refers to them as “enemies of the cross.”

Third Reading (Luke 9:28-36)

The narrative has long mystified commentators: Jesus had advised his followers of his impending arrest and undignified execution, and then, taking a few of the followers up a mountain, is transformed before them in a glorious vision. Moses and Elijah appear too, but when Peter suggests something of a shrine for all three, Luke indicates editorially that Peter didn’t know what he was talking about. Then a voice—clearly a theophany—says, “This is my chosen son; he is the one to heed.”

Luke helps us out by giving us an interpretive key; he says that Moses and Elijah were talking with Jesus “...about his exodus, which he was about to bring to an end in Jerusalem.” God had spoken to Moses in ancient times during the Exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt, giving the Law in a tremendous theophany of thunder claps and lightning. God had spoken in a quieter, more intimate way to Elijah, after the prophet had traveled forty days and forty nights after his exodus from the court of Ahab and Jezebel. Peter wanted to capture and hold onto the

thunder claps that came with Moses and the mystical intimacy that came to Elijah, but he did not know what he was talking about. Jesus all alone—as when he was executed in the manner of a slave—was the one to heed. No thunderous glory, no prayerful repose—these were mere packaging.

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Poem

We see at last
(Peter muses: Luke:9:28-43)

On ascending,
we sit in a circle.
We see ourselves brilliant,
a gazing into sun without going blind.

Elijah, Moses, Jesus, John, James, me.
Hard to tell us apart,
blurring bleeding into one corona,
where notions of each other
make sense no more.

On descending,
we find the man,
screaming blather,
flailing futility,
begging to burst his prison.

Our common gut
seized by a loathing,
a panic to flee, to cast out.
Then, as in a sudden dawn,
he's struck with calm.

We see at last,
from heady highs
to feet-in-the-dirt hurt,
the Healing Wholeness.

Tom Keene



Photo by John Dauer

Statement: The Real National Emergency Is the Continued Hatred and Scapegoating of Migrants
Pax Christi USA

There is currently a national emergency in the US, but it is not at the border...it is in the executive order that has just come from the White House. Through this executive order desperate women, children, and men fleeing violence, fear, and hatred in their home countries continue to be demonized and slandered by the president. This galvanization of fear among U.S. citizens and the allocation of billions of dollars to build a wall to keep out people who have been forced to migrate to the U.S. is as spiritually toxic as it is irrational.

Eight billion dollars could contribute greatly to programs of aid and creating systems that ensure the health and well-being of U.S. citizens as well as migrants. Clearly, the well-being of humans is not the priority of President Trump as he continues to scapegoat migrants and feed the narrative that immigrants are the reason for any political or economic issues in the U.S.

“The declaration of an emergency by President Trump in order to move forward with building a border wall does not reflect the values of compassion, justice, and protection of vulnerable people upon which this country was founded,” Sr. Patricia Chappell, Executive Director of Pax Christi USA said.

We continue to call on Catholic social teaching, and the Gospel message to give us hearts and inspire policies that welcome and unite rather than scapegoat and separate, for fear and separation only lead to injustice and war. “A country’s regulation of borders and control of immigration must be governed by concern for all people and by mercy and justice. A nation may not simply decide that it wants to provide for its own people and no others. A sincere commitment to the needs of all must prevail” (Resource by Fr. Thomas Betz, OFC).

February 15, 2019

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>

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

NowCastSA

www.nowcastsa.com/