

Testimony

A Pamphlet from Pax Christi San Antonio

Anticipating July 7, 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, the Liturgical Reading reflections are based on readings for the Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time. Tom Keene's poem is *Forces*. For more of Tom's poems, see <http://www.tomkeeneandthemuse.com/index.php>. Following the poem is a brief press release from Pax Christi International about the conferral of the 2019 Peace Award. The work of the awardee organization, European Lawyers in Lesvos, reminds us that our refugee crisis at the southern border is not the only one in the world. Finally, Tom Keene brings an internet post to our attention on nuclear weapons.

Calendar

In Austin

Sunday July 7 (3rd Sunday of the month), 7:00pm, Pax Christi Austin meeting. Fr. Payne House, St. Ignatius Church, 126 Oltorf St.

In Dallas/Fort Worth

Saturday September 14, 8:00am-4:00pm, conference, "Compassion in Action: Applications in Today's Times." For information see <https://compassionconference2019.simpletix.com/SimpleTixExpress/Events/EventsSectionDetail.aspx?Showid=41594&EventTimeld=10124#ShowDetails>. First United Methodist Church, 503 N. Central Expressway, Richardson, TX 75180. \$55.00 to \$65.00.

In El Paso

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

In San Antonio

Wednesday July 10, 6:00pm-7:30pm, film, *In the Light of Reverence* (about sacred spaces of Native Americans). Sinkin Eco Centro, 1802 N. Main.

Saturday August 3, 10:00am, Pax Christi San Antonio meeting. Residence of Tom Wakely, 16406 Ledge Point St.

Second Reading (Galatians 6:14-18)

After Paul had dictated his *Letter to the Galatians* to a scribe, he took up the manuscript to write some last words in his own hand: “Look with what large letters I write by hand” (Galatians 6:11). Then he questions the motives behind making a physical, visible show of religion, as with Torah observances. In the reading for today, he goes on to endorse aiming higher, even for himself: “but may it not happen that I boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus, Messiah, by which the world was crucified to me and I to the world.” He himself had endured physical violence for arguing against external religiosity: “Let no one cause me beatings for anything else, for I have the wound scars of Jesus on my body” (Galatians 6:17).

Third Reading (Luke 10.1-12, 17-20)

Jesus “commissioned seventy-two others, and he sent them up two by two before his face into all the cities and places where he was about to go. And he was saying to them, ‘The harvest is great but the workers few; so ask the lord of the harvest to send workers into his harvest.’” Later the text adds, “...the worker is deserving of his wages.” Centuries of preaching have applied these sayings to specifically church callings, and there is certainly nothing amiss in that. But these were sayings that Jesus accepted first, prior to including them in his commissioning of the seventy-two.

And it is probably a historical fact that Jesus himself used these sayings; they appear in both the *Gospel of Luke* and the *Gospel of Matthew*—what exegetes call “Q” or “source” material—and the one about asking the lord to send workers also appears in an independent ancient Coptic-language collection of Jesus sayings called the *Gospel of Thomas*.

Are there modern adages about treasuring workers? The very thought brings to mind the contested questions of minimum wage legislation and living wages. In Catholic teaching, an income from one wage earner should be enough to support a family; such a living wage is a family issue. Somehow people forget that. Clergy rarely preach on it.

I was once presenting this Catholic teaching in a church-hall class, citing papal encyclicals and assuming the principle would be uncontested even if the particulars of its implementation could be controversial. To my surprise, someone accused me of having a malcontent disposition for presenting such an idea. Malcontent—should I have been? Is displeasure inherent in the doctrine? Should we be malcontent? Anyway, my accuser continued, declaring angrily that welfare give-aways are bad for people’s souls. Is a living wage a give-away? The Lukan reading reminds us that the worker is deserving.

We live in a world of warped values, where management is valued more than productivity. For sure, management is something necessary; its very existence is a social necessity, similar to taxation. However, we live in houses that workers built and eat food that workers grew, gathered, delivered, and made delicious. Productivity is

essential and merits being honored; those who produce deserve respect. Moreover, those who produce and are paid a living wage neither need, seek, or accept giveaways.

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Poem

Forces

Our Ancients saw them as four:
air, water, earth, fire
and a fifth beyond naming,
a quintessence,

leaving us Moderns
who put them to misuse:
 life-giving air and water,
 to lift planes and drones to kill,
 to float navies to conquer,
 earth, to be owned by the few,
 worked by the many,
 fire for Hiroshima and Bagdad,

leaving us poets, artists, dancers,
music makers and story tellers
to work with Essence Number Five,

that fused Singularity,
Pervader of Truths,
with which we
transform ourselves
and our world.

Tom Keene
August 26, 2017

Pax Christi International announces the European Lawyers in Lesvos as recipient of the 2019 Peace Award

May 28, 2019

Pax Christi International is pleased to announce that the European Lawyers in Lesvos (ELIL), based in Greece, is the recipient of the 2019 Pax Christi International Peace Award. The award ceremony will be held in Brussels on 26 June.

“European Lawyers in Lesvos (ELIL) is delighted and honoured to have been chosen to receive the 2019 Pax Christi International Peace Prize,” said ELIL’s managing director Philip Worthington. “We are very grateful that our work to uphold the rule of law, protect human rights and ensure meaningful access to justice for refugees on Lesvos has been recognised in this way and hope that it will help raise awareness of the critical importance of ensuring that refugees have access to legal assistance throughout their asylum procedure.”

One of the very few providers of legal assistance on the Greek island of Lesvos (also known as Lesbos, a focal point of mass immigration into Europe), ELIL was founded in June 2016 by the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) and the German Bar Association (DAV). These organisations represent the bars and law societies of 32 member countries and 13 further associate and observer countries across Europe, and through them more than one million European lawyers. Since that time, along with a small permanent staff, almost 150 volunteer asylum lawyers from 17 countries have provided free legal assistance to more than 9,000 people, most of whom are from Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan. ELIL is the largest provider of legal assistance to asylum seekers on Lesvos and is the primary provider of legal assistance to unaccompanied minors who have been incorrectly registered as adults (over 500 cases in total) and asylum seekers in detention (almost 200 cases in total). In addition to other services, ELIL also helps reunite families by assisting with family reunification applications under the Dublin Regulation.

“ELIL is engaged in relevant and critical peace and justice activism,” said Greet Vanaerschot, secretary general of Pax Christi International. “Here in Europe, we have been shocked to witness a political debate that is demonising migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, contrary to the vision of a Europe which respects human dignity and fundamental rights. It is gratifying and inspirational to see the number of lives ELIL has touched in such a short time and the number of voluntary hours they give. As people of faith, Pax Christi members believe we have a responsibility to welcome, care and advocate for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers; we celebrate ELIL and its profoundly important work.”

Established in 1988, the Pax Christi International Peace Award is funded by the Cardinal Bernardus Alfrink Peace Fund and honours contemporary individuals and organisations who make a stand for peace, justice and nonviolence in different parts of the world.



Forwarded Post on Nuclear Weapons from Tom Keene

July 7, 2017 was our global liberation day when 122 (of 195) countries of the UN voted to abolish nuclear weapons. Religious leaders have called for abolition of city destroying weapons since Pope John XXIII did so in 1965.

Admiral Noel Gailer (1914- 2011) spent 45 years on active duty in the US Navy. Gailer was foremost among several military US nuclear abolitionists who spoke at Haverford College on Hiroshima Memorial day August 6, 1982: "The day we dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima we made ourselves completely defenseless. The day we detonated a hydrogen bomb we made ourselves 1000 times more defenseless. The only defense against nuclear weapons is to stop building them!" The entire audience of hundreds stood for a thundering three minute applause.

Admiral Gailer continued his campaign against nuclear weapons until his 90's.

Ironically, the number of nations voting for abolition of weapons capable of incinerating entire cities is nearly the same as the 123 critical burn units in the US.

Tiny Henry, LA was one of the top ten targets of the KGB in Cold War days. One surgical strike on Henry would cut off energy for the upper forty eight states. Nearby Lourdes Medical Center in Lafayette has the only burn unit for southwest Louisiana.

The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists "Doomsday Clock" on every cover has the minute hand at two minutes before midnight – our hour of nuclear conflagration. 11:58 is the closest in modern history.

Will all nuclear countries soon respect the UN vote of July 7, 2017? President Kennedy called the third use of such weapons "our final mistake." Over 7000 Mayors

for Peace.org in 163 countries invite other mayors to support abolition. 11:58 means our time for wisdom is growing short.

Vic Hummert, retired Lafayette jail chaplain (337-235-9939)

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/