

Catholics for Peace and Justice

January 2009 Newsletter

Grace and peace to you in the coming New Year –

In the forthcoming months the CPJ prayer and education groups are combining efforts to present a series of speakers on issues of social justice in combination with our monthly prayer services.

On **January 13** we begin with the topic of **peace and sustaining God's creation with environmentalist and author Margaret Swedish**. In response to feedback from the fall conference, we will endeavor to provide not only an expansion of information on social justice issues, but also more information on opportunities for each of us who are called to create and be change.

Our monthly prayer services also will continue to be a time of recognizing and energizing God's Spirit within us – a time of sharing in prayer and community to enliven us in the work we are called to do.

In this spirit, on **February 12**, we will hold a **Taizé prayer service for peace** with members of the Marquette Liturgical Choir at Calvary Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee. Taizé is a style of music rooted in the Taizé Community of brothers that come from different Christian traditions and from over twenty-five different countries, who make a life commitment to live together in joy, simplicity, and mercy as a "parable of community,"

As always – all people are invited. We ask that you spread the word to your parish, other congregations, friends and family to join us.

Let us be “signs of the presence of Christ among [people], and bearers of joy.”



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January CPJ Prayer Service with Margaret Swedish – Jan 13

On **Tuesday, January 13, 2009** Catholics for Peace and Justice will be hosting a prayer service for peace with **Speaker, Environmentalist and Author Margaret Swedish.**

Margaret will speak to us about the spiritual meaning of the ecological crises that now faces our precious Earth in a consumer-oriented post-industrial society, where the changes required to save humanity from disaster are particularly profound. In the face of global warming and climate change, human consumption of the Earth's resources beyond our ability to sustain future generations, peak oil, war and violence – what values will shape our future? What spirituality and way of life will carry us through? What kind of world will we leave to our children? What concrete action can we take?

This service is the first in presenting a series of speakers in follow up to our fall conference on “Advocating for Social Justice” and will serve as an excellent introduction and meditation for those attending the St. Sebastian book discussion on Margaret’s most recent work “Living Beyond the End of the World: A Spirituality of Hope.”
[\[See Information Below\]](#)

All are invited.

Date: Tuesday, January 13

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Blessed Trinity Catholic Church – 4717 N. 38th St., Milwaukee – One block south of Hampton at 38th and Courtland.

Flyer: <http://catholicsforpeaceandjustice.org/doc/090113PrayerServFlyer.pdf>

“Living Beyond the End of the World: A Spirituality of Hope”

From the Publisher

In this bracing lamentation, Margaret Swedish outlines a series of interrelated forces that could well undermine the fabric of life as we know it: global warming and climate change; the depletion of petroleum sources; overpopulation and the exhaustion of natural resources; the collapse of a debtor economy; and the escalation of global violence. Letting these pending threats speak for themselves, Swedish poses a challenge to people of faith: What kind of human beings will we be as we approach this difficult period in human history? Finally, she outlines the values, the vision, and the spiritual resources that might nurture a new human community and thus ensure a future for coming generations

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February Prayer Service - Taizé Prayer for Peace – Feb 12

On **Thursday February 12th 7:00 P.M.** Catholics for Peace and Justice will host a **Taizé Prayer for Peace at Calvary Presbyterian Church** - 935 W. Wisconsin Avenue

Service Music provided by members of the Marquette University Liturgical Choir.

Flyer: <http://catholicsforpeaceandjustice.org/doc/febTaizePrayer.pdf>

Please come.

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Middle East Violence – Israel and Palestine – Please Take Action

From Debra Schneider

On Tuesday it was reported that U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon demanded an immediate cease-fire in Gaza and urged Mideast and world leaders to do more to help end the Israeli-Hamas conflict and promote political dialogue. He urged Arab foreign ministers "to act swiftly and decisively to bring an early end to this impasse." To date, Israeli and Hamas bombings have killed 374 Palestinians — including 62 women and children and wounded some 1,400 others. Four Israelis were also killed. Escalating Israeli airstrikes have sent the people of densely populated Gaza desperately searching for safety within their blockaded territory. Also destroyed by Israeli bombing were some 40 tunnels that connected Gaza with a life line of supplies. Humanitarian assistance is desperately needed.

Both European and Arab leaders have stepped up their efforts to broker a cease fire. Late Tuesday the U.S. after initially standing by Israel's retaliatory bombing joined the European Union, Russia and the United Nations in the call for a cease fire.

As Pax Christi points out "Israel's attacks on the Gaza Strip are being carried out with F16 fighter jets, Apache helicopters, and naval gunboats all given to Israel by the United States with our tax dollars."

Once again US policy of refusal to engage in diplomacy with "the enemy" has failed all hope for peace on both sides. Those of us who believe that the end of the Bush administration and entrance of Obama will change things should take heed as the President-elect [as of this writing] has yet to take a position on Israel's refusal to end the bombing - deferring to the current administration. .

We may believe that between our current so called "Lame-Duck President" and the President Elect who is "Not Yet" that any effort to alter US policy is in limbo and useless; but, as Christian peacemakers we cannot standby, do nothing, and defer to those who condone violence as a solution for peace.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION

Contact the White House to protest the attack and demand an immediate cease-fire. Call 202-456-1111 or send an email to comments@whitehouse.gov.

Contact the State Department at 202-647-6575 or send an email by [clicking here](#).

Contact Barak Obama through his Transition Team at <http://change.gov/page/content/contact/> to promote and demand an immediate and ongoing policy of diplomacy for peace in the Middle East.

Sign a petition at http://act.credoaction.com/campaign/un_gaza/?r_by=2028-1280007-YGQ.Udx&rc=paste

More...

Want Another [and Interesting] Perspective on Iran and Diplomacy in the Middle East? Read “The Devil We Know: Dealing with the New Iranian Superpower” by Robert Baer or listen to an interview of Robert Baer on NPRs Fresh Air at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=95285396>

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Help Needed for Summer Youth Jobs Program – Common Ground

Last month we reported that the City of Milwaukee Common Council invested an additional \$250,000 for Summer Youth Jobs in 2009. Common Ground is continuing to work with the Milwaukee Workforce Investment Board [MAWIB] and Greater Milwaukee Committee [GMC] of businesses to bring the goal of 3000 youth jobs to fruition this summer.

WE NEED YOUR HELP IN TWO POSSIBLE WAYS

First: If you are affiliated with a non-profit organization or business organization that would be willing to provide 1 or more jobs for youth this summer, please contact Debra Schneider at djschneider@wi.rr.com. If you desire, simply provide us with the name of the organization, a contact name and phone number and we will follow up. Funding may be provided for non-profit organizations.

Second: We are looking for individuals with HS teaching experience or Human Resources experience to help provide Job Readiness Training for youth applying for summer jobs. The curriculum is provided by MAWIB. Facilitators are needed this Spring [March through May] for after school and Saturday sessions of 2-3 hours each. Number of sessions facilitated and when is flexible. For more information contact Debra Schneider at djschneider@wi.rr.com

More on Common Ground of Southeastern Wisconsin <http://www.commongroundwi.org/>

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Iraq Refugees – Forgotten People

It is easy to forget, as we face of our own economic crises and the silence of the media on Iraq, that millions of Iraqi people continue to be displaced by the war, have been reduced to poverty and have no where to go. The following websites tell a powerful story of the humanitarian crises that needs to be addressed now and in conjunction with U.S. withdrawal. Share this information with others and contact your legislators to insure that we – the U.S. engages in appropriate humanitarian aid.

Iraqi Refugee Voices: The Impossibility of Return – Refugees International
<http://www.refugeesinternational.org/blog/refugee-story/iraqi-refugee-voices-impossibility-return>

Iraqi refugees facing desperate situation – Amnesty International - <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/iraqi-refugees-facing-desperate-situation-20080615>

Stories from Iraq – Catholic Relief Services - <http://crs.org/iraq/stories/>

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Human Concerns Book Discussion - St. Sebastian Parish – Thursday, Jan 8

From Dorothy Bunke

Be part of an engaging discussion. On Thursday, January 8th we will begin discussing the introduction and first two chapters of “Living Beyond the End of the World: A Spirituality of Hope” by Margaret Swedish. Swedish outlines the interrelated forces that are threatening the fabric of life as we know it: climate change, dwindling oil, collapsing economy and escalating global violence. But then she considers the spiritual resources that will nurture the human community and ensure a future for coming generations." "Our Way of Life is dying, or rather, it is killing us and the planet. But we can and must craft a spirituality for a new way of living on earth.

This is the stark but critically important message of Margaret Swedish's "Living Beyond the 'End of the World.'"

Carol Waskovich will lead the discussion on this book.

The author has agreed to come to one of our discussions.

Meeting dates: Thursdays, Jan. 8 & 22, Feb. 5 & 19 and March 12.

Location - St. Sebastian Parish, 5400 W. Washington Blvd. (enter 54th St. Entrance) Multipurpose Room,

Time - 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Need more information, call Dorothy at 414-771-2972.

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Ignatius/Lincoln Debate Forum on Hosting Military Training on Campus

From Bob Graf

In the spirit of the Lincoln-Douglas debates — focusing mainly on slavery — and Ignatian Discernment — focusing on making a choice — this Debate Forum is presented at

<http://www.nonviolentworm.org/Main/DebateForum>

The question is: Is it moral or ethical for Marquette University to host military training on campus?

Last summer Fr. Wild S.J. wrote me of Marquette's institutional support for military training on campus and said he would not personally debate the issue. However he added: " I don't mind others debating the question, either here at the university or elsewhere..".

Since that time I have been trying, to no avail, to promote and open and free debate on this moral issue on campus. I received some vague promise of a future 'dialog' that would not involve persons of the MU Peace movement. However, more and more Marquette students are starting "to think about it" and want to see an open debate on this issue. Thus the debate forum is at www.nonviolentworm.org/Main/DebateForum

Over forty years ago I joined 13 other persons in the Milwaukee 14 Action to say No the Selective Service System that was putting young persons in the position to "kill or be killed." The government has abandoned the selective service system but has embedded military values, "to kill or be killed" in our society from video games to military training programs on a Catholic campus that teaches values contrary to Gospel values. Many universities from Harvard and Columbia to UWM here in Milwaukee have taken the position of permitting students to participate in ROTC at nearby military centers but do NOT host ROTC or military training on campus.

You may see reasons to say Yes to this moral question or to say No or perhaps reasons for Yes and No. However, you answer this question, yes, no, yes and no, please do not ignore it.. "The life you save may be your own." As they say at Marquette: "Be the Difference." Some Marquette students, faculty, alumni and other concerned persons are planning nonviolent actions around Marquette Being Faithful to the Gospel Values by No Longer Hosting Military Training on Campus. If you would like to join this movement write an email to MUPeace@nonviolentworm.org .

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Faith and Sustainability

From Carol Waskovich

Polar bears are drowning because the ice they depend on is disappearing. Inuit villages in Alaska are in danger of slipping off into the ocean because of the melting permafrost. Small islands in the Pacific are

growing smaller as the sea comes higher onto the land that at its highest is about six feet above sea level. In Venice people are walking through knee high water. The list goes on with drought and floods, famine and fires.

And closer to home, remember Katrina and New Orleans?

So what? You say. What has any of that got to do with me with all my worries about the economy and if I'll have a job tomorrow?

These events and others have plenty to do with us despite our personal concerns and worries. These events, the results of Global Climate Change, have everything to do with us because they challenge how we live our Christian spirituality in our lifestyle and day-to-day decisions, and our care for the common good..

This crisis of nature is a result of our choices; our choices do affect the web of life. "For the land and the people are victims together of the same materialistic consumer society, which promotes the culture of death. It does this by undermining all community, by frequently treating people and the rest of nature as if they were useless waste from the throw-away consumer society" (Pastoral, At Home in the Web of Life).

Against this culture of death, and in the name of the culture of life, we Christians must see that all people and all of creation form but a single and precious ecosystem, created by the God in whom "we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

In the Book of Deuteronomy, God proclaims: "I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live" (30:19). In response to this ancient message, we are called to protect the Earth and the dignity of each person. We can learn from the wisdom of Mother Earth and her people how to live sustainably, and to care for God's single web of life.

This is the challenge to our Christian faith. Do we see the earth as a living entity? Do we see ourselves as dependent on the health and well-being of this entity? Do we see ourselves as an earth community, as part of the web of life? Do we see ourselves as responsible for the common good? Do we recognize each person throughout the world as our family?

We, Catholics for Peace and Justice, have we taken this for our mission in our striving for peace and justice?

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The Marquette Center for Peacemaking Is Celebrating Its First Anniversary!

From Fr. Simon Harak

The Marquette Center for Peacemaking is having an "open house" from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 15, 2009, Martin Luther King's Birthday. Do please come! And, if you want to, bring a "peace offering" – the same as at our official opening last year: Books, journal articles, DVDs, poetry, essays, chocolate - anything you think will help advance the cause of peace at our Center – please do that too!. For our part, we promise to have coffee and herb tea available all day, and of course chocolate, too.

The Marquette Center for Peacemaking is located on the Marquette Campus in the Academic Support Facility Building, Room 201 at 735 N. 17th St.

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Thank you for Supporting Fair Trade

From Mike Howden

"Thank you for supporting Fair Trade and especially Four Corners of the World during 2008. Shopping Fair Trade is an essential way of working for Peace by achieving Justice."

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Migration Policy Institute: State Legislation Database

The Migration Policy Institute web site has a State Legislation Database that is free, searchable and designed "to generate information about all immigration-related bills and resolutions introduced in state legislatures." The information is classified by state, region, subject area, legislative type, and bill status, and visitors can search through all of the data via their specialized search engine. The database contains data from 2001 to 2007 and can be accessed at http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/statelaws_home.cfm

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Prayer Request for a Peacemaker

Our friend Dismas Becker is contending with significant health issues. All of you who come in contact with Dismas know that he has a long history of working for peace and social justice in our city. He's has been instrumental in the emergence of Catholics for Peace and Justice and served on our Leadership Council. Please keep Dismas and his family in your prayers.

“Day by Day” [from the Musical “Godspell”] *

Day by day
Day by day
Oh Dear Lord
Three things I pray
To see thee more clearly
Love thee more dearly
Follow thee more nearly
Day by day

Day by day by day by day...

* In honor of Fr. Art Heinze's 40 years of priestly ministry.

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