

Catholics for Peace and Justice

January 2010 Newsletter

Greeting and blessings for the New Year!

We begin the New Year by **preparing for the national discussion on immigration. Join us on Wednesday January 13, 7 pm at Blessed Trinity Parish** as **speaker Tim Muth** uncovers the **Faces of Immigrants**. Hear about the reality of immigrants in the US and Pray for peace for our neighbors who have migrated to this country, our legislators who will be enacting laws, and ourselves who are seeking peace, justice and human dignity for all.

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

In 2010 – Work for Peace - Be Peace.

Blessings on your ministry

Christian nonviolence is not built on a presupposed division, but on the basic unity of humans. It is not out for the conversion of the wicked to the ideas of the good, but for the healing and reconciliation of humans with themselves and the human family. For this very reason, as Gandhi saw, the consistent practice of nonviolence demands a solid metaphysical and religious basis both in being and in God. This comes before subjective good intentions and sincerity . . . for the Christian, the basis of nonviolence is the Gospel message of salvation for all and of the Kingdom of God to which all are summoned.

Words of Thomas Merton from "Blessed Are the Meek: The Christian Roots of Nonviolence" (1967)



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Prayer Service for Peace: Faces of Immigrants – Wednesday, January 13 – 7 pm

Immigrants of every generation have experienced discrimination and intolerance at the hands of those who arrived before them. In the 1600s and 1700s some Catholics were denied the right to vote, hold office and celebrate mass in a church. “No Irish Need Apply” was a staple of employment ads in the 19th and 20th centuries. Descendants of enslaved Africans continue to suffer the after effects of slavery and segregation. Today, like their immigrant predecessors, Latinos, Arabs, Asians, and others are the objects of suspicion, intolerance and discrimination.

As Catholics and Christians we are called to support all our neighbors so they can support themselves and their families under good working conditions, maintain family unity – parents with children, husbands and wives – and experience protection of their human dignity and human rights. Concern for family unity and the dignity of all God's children should underlie our moral thinking as Catholic Christians.

As we prepare ourselves for a national discussion on immigration we ask that you join us on Wednesday January 13, 7 pm at Blessed Trinity Parish as speaker Tim Muth uncovers the Faces of Immigrants. Pray with us for peace for our neighbors who have migrated to this country, our legislators who will be enacting laws, and ourselves who are seeking peace, justice and human dignity for all. **All are welcome. Please invite your friends to attend and advertise in your parish bulletin.**

Blessed Trinity parish is located at 4717 N. 38th St., Milwaukee [MAP to BLESSED TRINITY](#)

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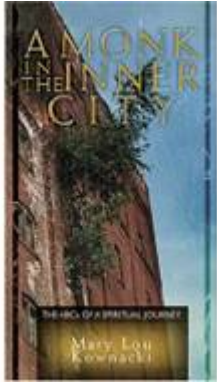
JUST Books – A Monk in the Inner City

From Jim Gill

[Coming Soon – the Just Books Blog Discussion Site](#)

[A Monk in the Inner City, by Mary Lou Kownacki OSB](#)

Many centuries ago the ancient Desert Fathers and Mothers moved into the wilderness, leaving behind the compulsions of the world in order to draw near to God. For Mary Lou Kownacki, a Benedictine nun and long-time peacemaker, her wilderness is the inner city of Erie, Pennsylvania, surrounded by poor families trying to survive and keep hope alive amidst drugs, violence, and despair. From this outpost on the margins, she observes the world in poetic meditations, written with the passion of a prophet and the heart of a mystic. "I write about days when spiritual security, not fear, was a neighborhood's gift to children. It is one way of trying to stretch my monk's robe until it embraces the suffering world."



These searing, insightful, and painfully honest meditations by an urban monk allow each of us to look more deeply into our own hearts and experiences.

--Paul Wilkes, author, of *Beyond the Walls: Monastic Wisdom for Everyday Life*

What is “JUST” BOOKS?

JUST Books is a book discussion group focusing on social justice themes and spirituality based on the successful “Seattle Reads” or “Oprah’s Book Club”, where large numbers of people read the same book at the same time, followed by optional one-time group discussions and **soon we will introduce a new format for discussion and comments the JUST Books blog discussion site**. CPJ has started its own similar club to get a large number of folks reading a peace/justice related book in order to raise consciousness on the topic. Our hope is that these discussions will offer all of us an avenue to share and learn from each other and in the process be re-energized for our mission.

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Justice for Immigrants Campaign

On December 15, 2009, Rep. Gutierrez from Illinois along with 90 co-sponsors introduced [HR 4321](#) to the House of Representatives. Sen. Charles Schumer of New York is expected to introduce his bill to the Senate in early February. The Milwaukee Archdiocese in collaboration with the US Conference of Catholic Bishops [USCCB] will be ramping up its efforts and on January 6 will be re-launching a national campaign to support comprehensive immigration reform. This effort is designed to educate and engage Catholics around the country on this critical issue. For this campaign to be successful, **we need representatives in every parish to help educate members of their parish and to assist in organizing advocacy for reform**. Materials are being prepared, but representatives from each parish are needed to implement the campaign. Please contact S. Josephe Marie Flynn, SSND jflynn@ssnd-milw.org or Rob Shelledy at ShelledyR@archmil.org to Get Involved Now.

Begin your involvement by promoting some of the events on immigration that are listed in this months CPJ newsletter at your parish. [Why Catholics should get involved with Immigration Reform](#)

[Gutierrez Press Release on Immigration 12/15/2009](#)

[H. R. 4321: “To provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes”](#)

Resources for Immigration

www.justiceforimmigrants.org

www.catholicsforpeaceandjustice.org Menu item “Immigration”

http://www.catholicsforpeaceandjustice.org/immigration_33.html

www.reformimmigrationforamerica.org .

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Update on Common Ground Campaigns

For more information on Common Ground of Southeastern WI go to www.commongroundwi.org .

Synopsis of current campaigns and efforts

- The next Youth Jobs team meeting is Thursday, January 14 at 7:00 pm at Progressive Baptist Church, 8324 W. Keefe Ave., Milwaukee. New participants are welcome to join.

- A Kickoff for the Foreclosed Homes Campaign will be held on January 25. Go to www.commongroundwi.org to learn more about the campaign.
- A series of listening sessions at various congregations continue in Waukesha County. The next CG member information session is scheduled for February.
- Health Care Coop for small businesses in Wisconsin is "on hold". The CG team is monitoring the outcome of federal healthcare legislation

Catholics for Peace and Justice is a member of Common Ground. Want to get involved with a particular campaign Foreclosed Homes – Youth Jobs – Health Care Coop - Crime? Contact Debra Schneider at djschneider@wi.rr.com

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Middle East Committee of Peace Action Wisconsin – Funding Request for Ads

From S. Virgine Lawinger

Dear Friends of Palestine: The Middle East Committee of [Peace Action Wisconsin](#) is planning to place an ad in as many papers as possible in the next month, to educate the general public about the facts on the ground in the Occupied Territories, in Israel, and in the Palestinian refugee camps. [The ad can be viewed here](#). The extent of the distribution will depend on the amount of money we can raise. We currently have pledges of approximately \$1200. We are writing to ask if you would be willing to help fund this project. Any amount will be appreciated.

To contribute you may

- Use a credit card by calling Peace Action (414-964-5158) or stopping in the office (1001 E. Keefe Ave.) stating the donation is a donation to Peace Action for the Middle East Committee Ad;
- Write a check to Peace Action and write "For Middle East Committee Ad" in the memo line;
- Pay by cash at the Peace Action Office stating the donation is for Peace Action for the Middle East Committee Ad.

We ask you to make your donation to [Peace Action WI](#). Your donation is not tax deductible.

As you know, there is increased interest in the Palestinian crisis since the assault on Gaza and the refusal of Israel to respond positively to any requests of President Obama and the U.S. government to suspend settlement development. We continue to send enormous amounts of military aid, \$7+ million/day, and have protected Israel from calls for accountability by dismissing the Goldstone Report as "unbalanced." Now is the time for presenting the truth that seldom appears in major media outlets. We hope that you will help us in this effort to move a bit closer to a just peace for all. If you have any questions do not hesitate to call. Contact S. Virgine Lawinger at svirgine@earthlink.net or Peace Action at 414-964-5158.

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Rethink Afghanistan House Parties

Did you want to view the film, but didn't have time? Host a Rethink Afghanistan House Party. CPJ has copies of the film available for viewing in your home with friends and family. Contact Debra Schneider at djschneider@wi.rr.com to obtain a copy of the DVD for home viewing. The film provides excellent background in particular on the issues of cost of the war, culture, and the role of India and Pakistan.

Rethink Afghanistan is a ground-breaking documentary in 6 parts focusing on the key issues surrounding the war - What military escalation will achieve, The effect on the stability of Pakistan, Cost of the war, Civilian Casualties and US Airstrikes, The impact on women, and a discussion by former CIA agents on victory in Afghanistan. The war in Afghanistan is at a critical juncture. It is important that we educate ourselves on the issues and direct our opinions and the facts to the policy makers of our country. October marks the 8th year of war.

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To Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation (Based on Catholic Coalition on Climate Change)

From Carol Waskovich

“Respect for creation is of immense consequence, not least because creation is the beginning and foundation of God’s works, and its preservation has now become essential for the peaceful coexistence of humankind,” writes Benedict XVI.

Continuing the tradition of the Word Day of Peace message, Benedict XVI links peace with creation care and the church’s long tradition of social justice. He affirms that environmental degradation is “a wide-ranging social problem which concerns the entire human family” (#3). Some of his main ideas are summarized below. The full text of the message can be found at www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/index_en.htm

- Creation helps us to recognize our human dignity and God’s love. “Contemplating the beauty of creation inspires us to recognize the love of the Creator” (#2). Nature is the first scripture revealing the presence of the Divine.
- We have failed to carry out our role as steward. The command in Genesis is to care for creation, to be a steward, taking responsibility for the gift of nature.
- We have misused the earth’s resources and broken the covenant. “Man’s inhumanity to man has given rise to numerous threats to peace and development” as well as the neglect and misuse of the earth (#1).
- Our choices have impacted our brothers and sisters across the globe. Because of our negligence and lack of responsible stewardship of the environment, many people in different areas of the planet are experiencing increased hardship (#7).
- There is an urgent moral need for solidarity with creation and those affected by climate change. Here Benedict confronts us with our obligations as Christians to act in the face of the realities of climate change: desertification, deterioration and loss of productivity in vast agricultural areas; the growing numbers of “environmental refugees; and actual and potential conflicts involving access to natural resources (#4).
- We have a responsibility to future generations. What will we say to our grandchildren if we do not act?
- What kind of world are we going to leave them? (#8).
- Our current model of development must be re-evaluated. The world we find ourselves in with its economic, food-related, environmental and social crises are moral crises. All of them are interrelated. What are we doing about them? (#5). The pope calls for a change of life-style, on the promotion and sharing of the common good, and on our responsibility in creation care as a means to world peace (#9).
- We must develop cleaner technologies and assist developing countries in utilizing them. We must stop the exploitation of non-renewable resources and involve poor countries in the process (#8).
- Individuals, families, communities, and the Church have a role to play. Education for peace must include the realization of the far-reaching affects on the poor by our decisions (#11).”Protecting the natural environment in order to build a world of peace is thus a duty incumbent upon each and all (#14)k.
- The international community and nations have a duty to act (#7).

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Thank You for Purchasing Fair Trade Gifts

From Mike Howden

Many thanks to those of you who purchased Fair Trade gifts for the Holidays. In an effort to assist you in continuing to do this type of conscious purchasing to make a justice difference throughout the year, watch for the new Directory of Fair Trade vendors in southeastern Wisconsin which will be available in 2010.

In solidarity, Mike Howden, Four Corners of the World

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Our New War President by John Dear SJ

National Catholic Reporter

Created Dec 08, 2009

Last week at West Point, President Obama cited his reasons for sending more troops to Afghanistan. Obama spoke eloquently. He insisted our cause is just. It is necessary, it is crucial. Killing Afghans is the way to peace. The oxymorons rolled off his tongue.

Apparently, it does not matter that wars are bankrupting us. Or sending our young to die. Or leaving them psychologically impaired. Or degrading the environment. Or, bitterest of ironies, breeding a new generation of terrorists.

It doesn't seem to matter that most Americans want the war to stop, that most Afghans want us out. It doesn't even matter that only a hundred Al Qaeda members remain in Afghanistan. The rest have taken refuge in Pakistan. Our new war president says the war must continue.

"You would think that we don't have enough to do here at home," Ohio Congressman Dennis Kucinich said this week.

You would think that we don't have 47 million Americans who go to bed hungry, 47 million Americans who don't have any health care, 15 million Americans who are out of work, another 10 million Americans whose homes are threatened with foreclosure, people going bankrupt, and business failures. All these things are happening in our country and we're acting like a latter-day version of the Roman Empire, reaching for empire while inside we rot. We have to challenge this because our future as a nation is at stake. If we continue to militarize, we lose our civil liberties, we lose our capacity to meet our needs here at home. [Read More](#)

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Immigration Reform: A Faith Mandate – January 12

Panelists: Edward Fallon, Assoc. Professor at Marquette Law School will provide an overall picture of the current immigration system and why it needs reform. Rachel Ida Buff Associate Professor of History and Coordinator Of Comparative Ethnic Studies at UWM will provide an historical overview of immigration in the U.S. **Date:** Tuesday, January 12, 7 pm to 8:30 pm. **Location:** St. Mary's Church, Room 312, 9520 W. Forest Home Avenue, Hales Corners

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Dead Man Walking -- the Journey Continues with Sr. Helen Prejean – January 14

From Rob Shelledy

National Cathedral Ministry Conference at The Pfister Hotel and the Cathedral.

Thursday, January 14, 2010. The Keynote Address: Dead Man Walking -- the Journey Continues, by Sr. Helen Prejean, CSJ at the National Cathedral Ministry Conference will be open to those in the Archdiocese involved in Human Concerns and Social Justice ministries, or pursuing an education in those areas. The talk is from 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (including a round table discussion with Q&A) at The Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee (7th Floor, Imperial Ball Room). The talk is followed by a book signing until 12:30 PM. The cost is \$10 per person. Reservations required -- RSVP by January 7, 2010 by calling Barbara Kowalewski (St John Cathedral) at 414-276-9814.

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Hope in a Broken World: The Spiritual Meaning of the Ecological Crisis – January 16

Saturday, January 16, 2010, 9 am to 3:30 pm at the St. Joseph Center-1501 S. Layton Blvd., Milwaukee. Presented in Collaboration with Casa Romero Renewal Center

Join us as we explore and reflect on the broken state of the world and the human spirit within that world. Led by Margaret Swedish, an advocate for the Earth and its people and the author of Living Beyond the End of the World, A Spirituality of Hope, we will articulate together a spirituality of hope that can help us live as healing presence with the Earth. Cost of the program is \$55 which includes lunch. Registration is required by Monday, January 11. Partial scholarship assistance is available. For a more detailed description of this program or to register, go to [The Center to BE website](#) Questions? Contact [The Center to BE](#) at 414-672-5932 or mwilbur.centertobe@sbcglobal.net or [Casa Romero](#) at 414-224-7564 or casaromero@wi.rr.com

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Politics, Policy and Reality: What's Really Going on in Washington – February 4

Nieman Symposium and Lecture Series at Marquette University, Milwaukee. Lecture presented by Gwen Ifill, journalist, television newscaster, author, managing editor and moderator for Washington Week (PBS) and senior correspondent for The NewsHour.

Thursday, February 4, 2010 at Marquette University Weasler Auditorium, 4 p.m.

About the Nieman Symposium: The Lucius W. Nieman Symposium, named after the founder of The Milwaukee Journal, Lucius W. Nieman, is an annual event sponsored by the J. William and Mary Diederich College of Communication. In addition to presenting a public address, the Nieman Lecturers meet with Marquette University students and faculty. This year's symposium will feature a plethora of speakers discussing Media, War and Conflict.

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Prayer Reflection

Prayer to Become Stewards of God's Creation

Creator God,

As we feast our eyes on autumn reds and yellows,
we sense your creative power.

As we marvel at the uniqueness of each winter flake,
we rejoice that you know us each by name.

As we hear the songs of birds of spring,
we yearn to sing your praises.

As we breathe the delicious scents of summer flowers,
our souls rest in your love.

Forgiving God,

We have not lived out our responsibility to be faithful
stewards of creation.

For this, we seek your pardon.

Our over-consumption has impacted the poorest
members of our human family most of all.

For this, we ask your mercy.

Our actions have endangered both the loves of our
children today as well as those yet to be born.

For this, we seek your forgiveness.

Living God,

As we meet you in nature,
inspire us to see anew our place in the web of life.

In our daily lives,
help us to make daily choices that reflect global
solidarity.

As we reflect on the teaching of our faith,
equip us to advocate for laws and policies that
reflect your call to faithful stewardship.

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Catholics for Peace and Justice
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