

Pax Christi Maine Newsletter

Spring, 2009

PCM Bringing Restorative Justice Model to Southern Maine June 6th

The Restorative Justice Project of the Midcoast brings together of-fenders, victims, and citizens in a town or city to address non-violent crime and to advocate for a resolution that can prevent further crimes.

In Maine, as in other states, the jail population has steadily grown in recent years; too many offenders return to jail, and the expense of incarceration and building a new state prison has been great. Now, when state and city budgets are suffering deep cuts, alternatives like Restorative Justice are badly needed.

Rev. Richard Snyder, former dean of the NY Theological Seminary, has created a successful model of such a program, one that holds offenders accountable, whether in or out of jail; provides mentoring to those who commit crimes; creates awareness of how illegal acts affect both victims and a community, and trains community mentors who work with offenders and law enforcement people to repair the damage done.

As the program has succeeded and expanded from Waldo to Knox County, a Restorative School Practices program has been added to intervene in school situations that involve troubled children. The Mid-Coast program's success has inspired Rev. Snyder and the members of Pax Christi to whom he spoke last year, to share this more widely.

On Saturday, June 6th; at 12:30 p.m., at St. Pius X Church Hall, 492 Ocean Avenue in Portland, Rev. Snyder will be joined by a panel: Scott Story, Sheriff of Waldo County; Leanne Zainea, Assistant Attorney General of Maine; Margaret Micolichuk, Executive Director of the Restorative Justice Project; and Paul Gagnon, a Vista volunteer. They will share their history of helping to heal the wounds caused by crime in our neighborhoods, towns, and cities and offer a do-it-yourself model for other Mainers to follow. All are invited.

To register and for directions, call or e-mail Denny Dreher 286-9747 or e-mail at laffmom@yahoo.com or Bill Slavick at 773-6562 or billslavick@myfairpoint.net. For program information: Restorative Justice Project of the Midcoast, 338-2742 or info@rjpmidcoast.org. The June 6th program is free; contributions are welcome. (Peaceworks' third RJ program is at Curtis Memorial Library at 7 p.m., June 19th)

Romero Award: Jim Harney

The Pax Christi Maine Council will present its Oscar Romero Award for Nonviolent Witness to Peace and Justice in Service of the Poor to the late Jim Harney. The time and place for the award will be set at the annual meeting June 6. Jim was a member of the Milwaukee 14 Viet-nam war resisters who burned draft records and was an outspoken ad-vocate for victims of violence and exploitation in Latin American aided by stirring photograph documentation. He founded Posibilidad.

***“Awakening the Dreamer” PCM Retreat
October 14-15, at Living Water. See p.7.***

Web Site, Newsletter, Member Form Online

We would like very much to distribute the Newsletter on line to the ex-tent possible, saving paper, print cost, postage, and preparation time. The newsletter will continue to go to all who are not online or who want a hard copy. To receive it online, go to memquinn@peoplepc.com to let Mary Ellen know and check www.paxchristimaine.org regularly. The web site is now up again, thanks to Julio Robles. **Please use the web site membership form and join PCM. Recommended contribution \$25. Whatever, please give us your e-mail address for alerts and notices.**

June Assembly Focus on Prioritizing, Retreat, Elections, Communications

The 2009 Pax Christi Annual Assembly will be from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 6th at the St. Pius X Church Hall, 492 Ocean Avenue.

The agenda, subject to additions beforehand or at the meeting, will include reports from the Coordinator, Treasurer, local groups, and the PCUSA Regional representative, followed by discussion of Membership, Website, Newsletter, and the October 2009 retreat.

Election of the Council follows: Present group members are Suzanne FitzGerald (Acadia), Charlotte Herbold (Belfast), Mary Beth DiMarco (Houlton), Mary Ellen Quinn (Penobscot), and Elaine McGillicuddy (Portland). At-large members are Sally Chappel (Bridgton), Denise Dreher (Biddeford), Pam Murphy Ewers (Wells), Suzanne Hedrick (Noble-boro), Erik Johnson (Hollis), Marlene Laurendeau (Brunswick), Greg Phelan (Brunswick), Pete Sirois (Madison), Ursula Slavick (Portland).

Present officers, elected by the Council last October, are Chair: Denise Dreher, Co-Chair: Francis McGillicuddy, Secretary: Charlotte Herbold, Treasurer: Mary Ellen Quinn. Coordinator: Bill Slavick; Co-Coordinator: Mary Ellen Quinn, PCUSA Regional Representative: Denise Dreher.

Before the meeting, anyone who would not continue on the Council or in office should let Denise Dreher know: laffmom@yahoo.com or 286-9747. Charlotte and Elaine are unavailable to serve as Secretary.

New business: Planning for 2009-2010 includes choosing a retreat theme, leader, and site; prioritizing issues (e.g. the Iraq/Afghanistan/Pakistan war; Palestine, U.S. imperialism, torture and wrongful incarceration, climate change, immigration policy, universal health care, home rule and water rights, human trafficking, gay rights, others); participation in events (Hope Festival, Brunswick Peace Fair, Hiroshima-Nagasaki commemorations, Feast of Mary Magdalene, vigils, civil disobedience, etc.); holding a Kairos day of reflection aimed at deepening Christian discipleship for students and young adults; networking; communications and publicity. Resolutions for approval must be submitted in advance. (From the north on I-295, take the Baxter Blvd. exit, turn right through Payson Park. From the south, take the Forest Ave. west exit, go to Ocean Avenue at Kentucky Fried Chicken, turn right past Cheverus High to St. Pius X.) From the west, go in Washington Ave. (Rt 202) to Ocean, turn right or in Forest (Rt. 302) and turn left at Kentucky Fried Chicken,

Obama Era: Challenges the Same

Last fall, we voted for hope, vague though Barack Obama's vision for fulfillment of our hopes was. A May 4th article by Chris Hedges, "Buying Brand Obama," confirms the worst fears of most everybody who had hope. Its overview lays to rest any notion any had that we could trust government for a while and take a vacation: Corporations are still in full control of our politics. Our June 6th Assembly should focus our collective efforts somewhat, but few of the challenges before us can be easily subordinated.

Could everyone commit to contacting one US senator or representative monthly regarding one of these challenges? This month would be good to address the military budget, health care, or Afghanistan. Peace groups will focus on Afghanistan in June. Pressure on the Middle East any time.

Empire: Its pursuit grows. Defense-related spending approaches \$1 trillion in support of increasing imperialism: 70,000 troops in Iraq for 15-20 years, expansion of another misbegotten and futile war in Afghanistan, bombing in Pakistan. A new Africa Command. No plans to close any of 700-odd foreign bases. Continued funding of repression in Columbia, watching Darfurians and Congolese die. *Snowe, Collins, and Pingree put Maine defense jobs before spending cuts the DOD recommends!*

Israel-Palestine: Obama's commitment to move energetically to a two-state solution brings this issue to the fore. But just as public opinion worldwide is awakening to the racism integral to the Zionist pursuit of all of Palestine without Palestinians, we have Obama presuming to deny five million Palestinian refugees their moral and legal right of return, no one mentioning the denial of equal rights to a million Israeli Palestinians, only "tut-tuts" as settlements expand. George Mitchell pointedly identifying Israel as a "Jewish state" which can be read as an invitation to cleanse Palestinians from Israel, and Hillary Clinton parroting Israel's stalling tactic: Hamas must recognize Israel's right to exist (which means recognize its right to have stolen 80 plus per cent of Palestine), end all violence (without a demand that Israel end its greater violence), and honor all previous agreements, though Israel has honored none. With AIPAC pushing to spare Israel any pressure to agree to a Palestinian state, only further apartheid racism appears in the offing. *Speak very firmly to our Congressional delegation. Tell them that Palestinians are humans with equal rights—to land, water, life, freedom, security, and dignity. Tribal claims do not trump basic Palestinian rights.*

Criminal Immunity: Apparently, no more than Bush is Obama committed to upholding the law by prosecuting war crimes. He is still overlooking a pervasive culture in Washington and the military of torture—and killing—in blaming a few bad apples and ignoring those who gave orders. *Your job, sir, is to uphold the law as defined by the Constitution, as it was Congress's responsibility to impeach a criminal administration.*

Health Care: As doctors, nurses, and the public recognize that the right to quality health care is compromised, sometimes fatally, by placing decisions on care at the mercy of corporate profit, both Obama and Congress refuse single-payer health care, modeled on Medicare, which other countries have emulated, a place at the table. *Forcefully ask Congress folks if they serve the people or the health profiteers.*

Environmental Crisis: Compromises when our very habitat is endan-gered! Nuclear power seen as an answer to energy pollution. Sellouts to coal and corporate power. Toxic cocktail roulette. Failure to safeguard our food, water, air, and soil. *Demand necessary change now.*

Immigration: Even with a depression, there is some hope but the Americans-first camp remains determined to ignore our responsibility for NAFTA's victims and to get rid of "those other people." "Welcome the stranger in our midst" is our guide. *Tell Congress to respect immigrants' humanity, to keep families together, to recognize our responsibility.*

Third World Plight: The push to ethanol, which takes as much energy to produce as it provides, has doubled grain prices in much of the world where dollar a day poor cannot now survive. Pressure on Haiti to dump our subsidized rice there destroyed its sustainable agriculture. Our luxuries and gluttony would feed the billion hungry. *Ask Congress and Obama to explain how a corporate free market economy can possibly improve the lot of the desperately poor by siphoning wealth from their countries by exploiting their resources, labor, and markets.*

Bishop Zavala announces new Catholic campaign for nuclear disarmament

Great Falls, Mont. (May 12)—Bishop Gabino Zavala, the auxiliary bishop of Los Angeles and the Bishop-President of Pax Christi USA, announced yesterday in a major address at the University of Great Falls that "today, we are in a new moment regarding nuclear disarmament."

"Just as I joined my voice with the voices of more than 100 of my fellow bishop members of Pax Christi USA, now more than 10 years ago, I say to you today that nuclear deterrence does not meet the [U.S. Bishop's Peace Pastoral's] criteria, it must be condemned and one day very soon I am sure, the Catholic Church in the United States will echo the words of the Vatican that 'nuclear weapons are incompatible with the peace we seek for the 21st Century,'" stated Bishop Zavala.

Bishop Zavala used this address to publicly announce a new campaign from Pax Christi USA, "A New Moment for Nuclear Disarmament." He pointed out that Pax Christi USA's new campaign is focused on taking advantage of this opportunity to impact future U.S. nuclear policy and undo some of the dangerous decisions made in the recent past.

Citing recent actions like last December's meeting in Paris when one hundred international political, military, business and civil leaders came together to launch a new initiative aimed at eliminating nuclear weapons as well as President Obama's overtures of a U.S. nuclear policy built around the goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons, Bishop Zavala stated his conviction that we stand on the brink of incredible new possibilities.

"So I stand here today with great hope that a very new moment for dramatic and fundamental changes in U.S. nuclear weapons policies is within our reach," Bishop Zavala stated. "In addition to ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, long-sought goals of taking deployed nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert status, negotiating a fissile materials cut-off treaty, and amending the Moscow Treaty to make its proposed cuts in U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals real and irreversible—these are all possible given the new Administration and Senate."

"Each of these important and achievable steps will build the momentum needed to move further toward an international treaty to outlaw nuclear weapons once and for all," he went on to say.

The address in Great Falls was co-sponsored by the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings and the Catholic University of Great Falls.

To see "A New Moment for Nuclear Disarmament," to sign the Global Zero pledge, and to contribute to campaign advertising: www.paxchristiusa.org.

For more information on the Pax Christi USA campaign or Bishop Zavala's entire speech, contact John Zokovitch at johnnypcusa@yahoo.com or (352) 209-8419.

2009 Peace Action Maine Dinner Organization Award:

PAX CHRISTI MAINE

Pax Christi was born after World War II from the example of a French bishop who had sought to bring fellow prisoners of war to forgive their German captors. He was later encouraged to begin a peace movement grounded in the nonviolent Jesus. In this country, Dorothy Day and Bishop Tom Gumbleton were its most prominent founders. Pax Christi USA's chief accomplishments here have been its contributions to the formulation of *The Challenge of Peace*, the 1984 U.S. Bishops' pastoral; 1991-94 accompaniment of Haitian democrats; opposition to wars and nuclear weapons, and non-violent conflict resolution support.

Since its founding in 1980, Pax Christi Maine has seen its primary goal as converting Maine Catholics, unfamiliar with the Vatican II shift from going along with unjustifiable wars, to Gospel peacemaking, into active opponents of war and

supporters of non-violent alternatives to war--to peace-makers. PCM identifies itself as the Catholic and ecumen-ical peace, social justice, and environmental movement in Maine.

Fr. Jim Gower, who initiated PCM in 1980 by founding groups around the state, has been a guide and an exemplary witness of Gospel nonviolence and peace in the Maine Catholic community and especially in towns and parishes where he has served. PCM was the first 20th century Maine peace group to export leadership to the national scene when Fr. Gower traveled the country in the early 80s, urging parishes to form Pax Christi groups. Groups have formed in some fifteen Maine communities,

Pax Christi Maine initiated the Nuclear Freeze campaign in Portland, largely organized several humanitarian aid cargo container shipments to Nicaragua during the contra terror, and held a Peace Institute in Westbrook with Eileen Egan, Gordon Zahn, and Rev. Vincent McSorley. It has reached 25,000 Maine Catholics with hundreds of features on peace and social justice in Church World, and the state with numerous letters, dozens of op eds, and its web site. Its newsletter circulates to 300.

Actions have included Hiroshima commemorations, vi-gils, protests, leafleting, funding for John Burke's peace banners, support of the Aegis Plowshares, communica-tions with public officials, and networking with Maine peace organi-zations. Social justice concerns have included women's, gay, and immi-grants' rights and sustainable ecology.

PCM's Oscar Romero Award for Non-Violent Witness to Peace and Justice in Service of the poor has been presented to Fr. Bill Callahan of Quixote Center's Quest for Peace, four Maine workers with the poor, Paolo Evarista Cardinal Arns of Sao Paolo, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Haiti, the Plowshares, and Kathy Kelly. Fr. Dan Berrigan, Callahan, Fr. Emmanuel Charles McCarthy, Nica-raguan Foreign Minister Fr. Miguel d'Escoto Sr. Joan Chit-tister, Fr. John Dear, Bishop Tom Gumbleton, Colman McCarthy, Liz McAllister, Sr. Amata Miller, and Sr. Ruth Rosenbaum have led retreats. Speakers have included Nobel Peace Prize recipient Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Fr. Roy Bourgeois, Gumbleton, Salvadoran Fr Jose Alas), Stan Goff, Dave Dellinger, and Jim Harney. The 1995 Pax Christi USA Assembly brought Sr. Helen Prejean, and English Pax Christi leader Bruce Ritter to Gorham.

Pax Christi Maine's coordinator has served in peace and social justice coalitions and as a member of Catholic Organizations for Renewal, where PCM promoted a U.S Catholic council to address dysfunctional church leadership; a Council has been announced.

The St. Francis Pledge

I/We Pledge to: **PRAY** and reflect on the duty to care for God's Creation and protect the poor and vulnerable. **LEARN** about and educate others on the causes and moral dimensions of climate change. **ASSESS** how we-as individuals and in our families, parishes and other affiliations-contribute to climate change by our own energy use, consumption, waste, etc. **ACT** to change our choices and behaviors to reduce the ways we contribute to climate change. **ADVOCATE** for Catholic principles and priorities in climate change discussions and decisions, especially as they impact those who are poor and vulnerable.

Bill Slavick's remarks on receipt of the Peace Action Maine Award

Pilgrims Passing To and Fro: Peace Action Maine Award

For Pax Christi's hundreds of witnesses to peace throughout the state and the years, thank you.

From the perspective of our 29 years, it is clear that southern Maine peacemakers have forged a heterodox community whose diverse groups and individuals work comfortably together, with respect, love—even tolerance, appreciating that only together can e expect to be heard and make peace. So you are, in effect, recognizing years of common effort.

Chaucer's knight remarks that "the world is but a thoroughfare of woe,/ and we ben pilgrims passing to and fro." We know the thoroughfare of woe, from Vietnam to Iraq and Palestine, but how blessed the company has been on our pilgrimage! And how blessed we in Pax Christi are by family recognition--the most treasured approval.

Pax Christi Maine is one part of this blessed community of Maine peacemakers, the living who are here tonight or would be— (many are at the Hope Festival in Bangor)--I think especially of Fr. Jim Gower, the embodiment of Christian witness-- and those who have gone to eternal peace. I think of special moments--closing the doors on a second cargo container of aid to Nicaragua packed in one day, a single office chair left on the Back Cove pavement; of the electric atmosphere in presenting

the Oscar Romero Award to the much defamed Jean-Bertrand Aristide, of the 1995 Pax Christi National Assembly in Gorham ending with all dancing to "Simple Gifts," of John Burke's resplendent banners in the Plowshares march to the Federal courthouse, and great retreats, among them Joan Chittister's reportage of the women's gathering in Beijing, after which our song leader proposed singing "Abba, Father." "Are you kidding?" Joan's strong Midwestern voice boomed.

We would bring the Maine Catholic community to Gospel nonviolence, to the peace of Christ who, a notable Scripture scholar observed, was nonviolent or He was nothing. We are wayfarers in that journey, praying, studying, spurred by the memory of Francis of Assisi, Dorothy Day, Oscar Romero, Rachel Corrie, Meg Perry, and the living witnesses of Kathy Kelly, Tom Gumbleton, and the millions of Palestinians, Colombians, and Iraqis who today witness to nonviolence despite oppression and violent victimization, trying only to live in peace.

The Christian witness that pacified the Roman empire has been muddied by history, in our time by the unchristian right's pursuit of nutcake fantasies about the end time, yoked to imperial violence. For Pax Christi Maine, the glaring failure of church leadership to heed the words of John XXIII and the Bishops' *Challenge of Peace* and its obsession with violence against the unborn to the complete neglect of the greater violence we do daily against the poor and defenseless everywhere constitutes a major obstacle. Church leadership's disregard for the violence we do is not conducive to winning support. It is for example, more important for Bishop Malone to run up his flag in opposition to what he calls the "primal evil of our time," even at the price of abandoning civility and rejecting responsibility for his mistake in not setting limits on use of this hall, than for us to have an opportunity to call Chellie Pingree to account for her approval of needless slaughter and empire. I would speak briefly to what I believe is the foremost challenge to our continuing work for peace.

If we attend the sweep of history closely, we may notice a shift in thought from many centuries of envisioning the perfect life to be realized to the mind as an agency of progress, of the pursuit of material interests, of political power and greed, to minds with a passion for the modern nation state. Herman Broch's 1932 novel, *The Sleepwalkers*, depicts "the dissolution of the European value system" that once, "delimited by a common faith," had constituted a cultural totality but in its degeneration has left a cultural vacuum, in which various types of somnambulists move about attempting to fulfill delusionary dreams they mistake for reality. Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, and George W. Bush come to mind, but also, early in the 20th century, Peguy, Maurras, d'Annunzio, and Kipling, bent upon action, on immediate results, impatient of argument, with fixed ideas. Ronald Reagan's abandonment of the common good for laissez-faire license and the neocon pursuit of a U.S. imperium reflect this shift. So does Israel's racist end-justifies-the-means dismissal of Palestinian rights and dignity to create an endlessly unjust and violent ethnocracy and Washington's misbegotten complicity in it. So is the politics of the Christian right and the marginalization of religious and humanist appeals to justice and peace raised so eloquently by Dennis Kucinich determinedly marginalized by the mass media.

We face not just the principalities and powers, the political power and greedy robber barons who, complicit in killing thousands of Democrats in Operation Condor in Latin America, would surely not hesitate to take out a John F. Kennedy bent on peace, a Martin Luther King who condemned the Vietnam war militarism, a Bobby Kennedy who embraced the poor, who would not hesitate to silently await in hope a fortuitous 9/11 excuse for extending empire in the Middle East. And the mass media propaganda machine ever at their beck and call, sanitizing their brutal and bloody denial of humanity to most of our fellow humans into a video game. We also face the misbegotten patriotism that asks no questions even as it slaughters innocent Iraqis and Afghans by the million.

More importantly, I think, that cultural vacuum has led to a societal loss of moral conscience, a pervasive insensitivity to the

consequential suffering of empire, an indifference to our agency in the dismantling of whole national societies—death, destruction, unending pain, homelessness. For example, we have already forgotten the momentary glimpses of the waste of Gaza allowed us—the rows of bodies of women and children deliberately targeted in schools, hospitals, and marketplaces; fragile irrigation agriculture bulldozed; industry leveled; a million and a half people, 80% refugees of the 1947-48 ethnic cleansing, already denied more than minimal human sustenance for 18 months, a war crime we financed and ignored, effected with arms we provided, now helpless, paralyzed, denied cement, iron and equipment to rebuild, denied even macaroni, in a determination to force upon them acceptance of their dehumanization. Out of the news, forgotten.

Truthfully, how many of us, the knowing elite, have lost sleep over Gazans' plight, over a half million children, their developments stunted, their psyches scarred by death, trying to make play of rubble? Or have ever thought about the hundred thousand Palestinian refugees of '47-48 whose homes have been bulldozed because denied building permits for 60 years? Remember the thousands of farms with a million beloved olive trees chainsawed or transplanted to Israeli settlement landscaping? Have lost sleep over millions of homeless Iraqis, the many thousand victims of Agent Orange, and Nicaraguan and El Salvadoran promise denied by ideology? Even noticed the millions dying in Africa to give us the diamonds and coltan and oil our gluttonous life style requires?

We are a people run amok and unfeeling, our violence divorced from our claimed humanity, we, in Denise Levertov's words, "whose language imagines *mercy, / lovingkindness*; we have believed one another/ mirrored forms of a God we felt as good. . . ."

Bishop Malone Censors PAM Program

The relatively small annual Peace Action Maine dinner crowd enjoyed the food, prepared by Local Sprouts, and the music by the Iranian group Yaar, but there was a bittersweetness about the organization award going to Pax Christi Maine, the Catholic and ecumenical peace and social justice movement--Bishop Malone's demand that either Rep Chellie Pingree be removed from the program for her public stance on abortion or the event would have to be moved, for which interference there was no provision in the rental agreement, an impossibility on short notice. Pingree was disinvited and diners wanted further explanation from us and assurances that we did not approve. We had, in fact, sought to intercede, complaining of his interference with our ministry and proposing that a statement disassociating the Church from the event, be read instead of censorship. But Sue Bernard reported that Malone "feels that the assault on human life through abortion is the primal evil of our time" (trumping the greater suffering and death and equal evil of war, empire, militarism, and needless poverty, hunger, disease, and bad water). We pointed out that this was not a matter of Church communities or institutions "honoring" politicians who "act in defiance of our fundamental moral principles," which the US Bishops' Conference disapproves, but a secular organization renting a church facility where they would hear and challenge Rep. Pingree, who had supported the attack on Gaza and needless military spending. We also observed that Malone had not consulted with the people of God nearest the situation and heard them before acting. Every speaker felt obliged to speak to the situation and a statement by Rep. Pingree was read in her absence. Many went away disgruntled. We went away embarrassed.

If we would make peace, we must recover our lost humanity, our lost bond, in justice and love, with our brothers and sisters everywhere. And then we must discover how to be missionaries of that humanity, sharing a vision of the human dignity of all, or our pilgrimages as would be peacemakers will be meaningless, in their barrenness little different from those Air Force retirees who sit in Colorado manipulating killing machines in Afghanistan. Our task is no less than recalling our neighbors to our common humanity.

The peace community's pilgrim steps have been small, the journey hardly begun. Reflecting on the huge challenge we face, may such awards propel us to hurry it up.

Penobscot Valley PC Using "Violence to Wholeness" Process

Penobscot Valley Pax Christi, meeting at St. Mary's in Bangor since September, has been engaged in forming community, using PCUSA materials, and, since March, pursuing the Pace e Bene "From Violence to Wholeness" ten-part process in the spirituality and practice of active non-violence. It is an excellent opportunity to study, share, and expand awareness.

This positive development has somewhat offset the loss of Fr. Tom Lequin, transferred to Farmington in November, who offered a monthly Mass for Peace and was vocal about the tragedy of Iraq and war in general. The monthly Peace Mass will be celebrated again soon.

Mary Ellen Quinn represented Pax Christi Maine at the March Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine news conference marking the 6th anniversary of the Iraq War.

PCM was a co-sponsor of an Active Community Teach In entitled, "New Organizing Strategies for the Obama Era" which featured Joseph Gerson as keynote speaker. PC materials were available at a table during workshops.

In April, Penobscot Valley PC joined in the 15th annual HOPE Festival at the University of Maine at Orono. Over 70 organizations working for peace, justice and a sustainable environment gathered to share information, present workshops, network and entertain those attending with great music and activities for all ages.

Pax Christi Penobscot Valley continues to welcome new members and new ways to answer the call to Gospel nonviolence. Contact: Mary Ellen Quinn at 223-4992 or memquinn@peoplepc.com

Fr. Miguel D'Escoto and Fr. Jose Alas, Friends of PCM, Move Up

Not long after Archbishop Oscar Romero's assassination, Salvadoran Fr. Jose Alas spoke movingly in Portland of how Msgr. Romero served his people despite both the oligarchy's and Rome's opposition. Shortly after Nicaraguans desperately chose an end to the contra terror over the revolution that had brought them education and health care, former Foreign Minister Fr. Miguel d'Escoto led a PCM retreat on Eucharistic non-violence. Recently, Fr. Alas, director of the Salvadoran Foundation for Self-Sufficiency, was named Archbishop of San Salvador. Fr. D'Escoto is now serving as president of the United Nations Assembly.

Join Pax Christi Maine now. Please.

AN INVITATION: Please join us in exploring

Restorative Justice: A Successful Maine Model

Learn about an alternative approach to criminal justice that works—an approach rooted in Judeo-Christian ethics, which seeks healing and restoration through discipline rather than punishment. Restorative justice is an answer to failed rehabilitation, recidivism, overcrowded prisons, soaring costs, and shortage of funds.

Saturday, June 6, 2009, 12:30-4:30 p.m.

St. Pius X Church Hall, 492 Ocean Avenue, Portland

Rev. T. Richard Snyder, Ph.D.

*Chair and co-founder, Restorative Justice Project of the Midcoast
Professor Emeritus, Former Academic Dean, N.Y. Theological Seminary*

Panelists

Scott Story: Sheriff of Waldo County, Member of the Maine Board of Corrections

Leane Zainea: Assistant Attorney General, Maine, RJP Board

Margaret Micolichuk: Executive Director, RJP

Paul Gagnon: Vista Volunteer, RJP

Dereck Creasy, RJP Program Participant

Pax Christi Maine

The Catholic and Ecumenical Peace and Social Justice Movement

To register or for more information, call 773-6562, e-mail William.slavick@maine.edu, or write Pax Christi Maine, 242 Ludlow Street, Portland 04102. Contributions for program welcome

Pax Christi Maine Retreat: Awakening the Dreamer **October 17-18, 2009, Living Water Spiritual Center, Winslow**

The Awakening the Dreamer symposium takes a fresh approach to our most critical concerns – environmental sustainability, spiritual fulfillment, and social justice. What are the connections between these issues? What can we do?

The “dream” refers to the key assumptions that infuse modern societies (sometimes called a worldview). Western global culture dominated by a dream of “progress” that tries to possess and the rest of the world to meet our purposes. This dream sees as separate from the rest of nature, and peoples of different cultures separate from each other. However, as the forests disappear, the mountains of plastics rise, minority cultures begin to fade away, threat of global ecological collapse becomes ever more present, and more people are realizing the true costs of this mindset and are awakening to become part of a global grass/flax-roots movement people who are changing the world.



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Through a mix of video clips, personal reflection and group interaction, the Awakening the Dreamer symposium helps participants to explore the state of our world and the thinking in modern, industrial societies that got us where we are today. People are empowered to consider how we can all play a part in addressing these issues and embodying a vision for a better world.



The Awakening the Dreamer workshop was first developed in the US in 2005 by the Pachamama Alliance, a US-based non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve the Earth’s tropical rainforests and contribute to a new global vision of sustainability and equity for all. It was developed following a call from the Achuar people deep in the Amazonian rain forest for “the modern world to change its dream”.

Do you wish to awaken more to your role as a global citizen? Would you like more clarity as to what sustainability is about? If you would like to explore how we can make a difference to create a spiritually fulfilling, socially just, and environmentally sustainable human presence on Earth, please join us. The workshop will be facilitated by: Patricia Proulx-Lough, MS, a multi-systemic family therapist and facilitator for the Transition movement in the US, and Alastair Lough, PhD; hydrogeologist, environmentalist, and a leader/facilitator in the US Transition movement.

To register, contact Mary Ellen Quinn at memqinn@peoplepc.com, 223-4992, or 91 Baker Road, Winterport, ME 04496. The Saturday-Sunday program, room and four meals, is \$150, less if missing means or not staying overnight. To include Friday dinner, night, breakfast, add \$80. Full payment by October 1. For information and scholarship aid: Denise Dreher, laffmo@yahoo.com or 286-9747, or Bill Slavick at billslavick@myfairpoint.net

Marilyn Roper: Rooted in Jesus

Lenten Service Remarks, Abridged Excerpts

Lent is a time of reflection and repentance, often heightened by fasting – of taking stock of where we are, our failures to measure up, and hope for spiritual renewal with the peace that passeth all understanding.

Reading Marcus Borg's "Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time," I learned that in the story of the Good Samaritan the priest who passed by on the other side of the road was obliged to do so because the man looked dead. According to the Jewish laws of that time about clean and unclean, the priest could not touch the dead body. In the Gospels, Jesus railed against these laws time and again. Who did Jesus choose as the hero of the story? A Samaritan – a member of a group very much looked down on and reviled by Jesus' fellow Jews. To be rooted in Jesus is to be loving and compassionate and to put oneself in another's shoes rather than abide by many of the conventions of the day.

Jesus treated women as fully human and equal to men, which was very unusual in the time and culture in which he lived. In the early church, women held positions of authority.

Today gay people are looked down on and reviled by many in our society. The common assumption is that Jesus never spoke about gay people because it is not mentioned in familiar translation of the Gospels. Surprisingly, in Matthew, Chap. 5 translated from the Aramaic (the language Jesus and his disciples spoke in the Bible used in Antioch and Edessa, Jesus does mention gay people.

In the early 1900s, George Lamsa, who grew up in southwestern Turkey understanding written Aramaic and its idioms, recognized that that it was not a camel but a rope and the eye of a needle. The words are almost identical in Aramaic. And in Matthew 5:22, the word Jesus uses is not "fool" but "effeminate," meaning brutish, abnormal. Thus, "...And whoever says to his brother, you are effeminate, is condemned to hell-fire." Jesus was once again sticking up for all God's children.

This is not the only time that Jesus' teachings differ with some of those in the Old Testament. Again, from the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew Chapter 5: "You have heard that it was said 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil ..." You have heard that it was said 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..." This a tough one. But it is what Jesus tells us not to kill, kill, kill, including women and children in collateral damage – not to retaliate and compound the violence but to pray for your enemies which, by the way, helps one to see things from their perspective. Are we rooted in Jesus or in the secular conventions of the day?

In a course in Native Studies last fall, I learned of the Massachusetts Lieutenant-Governor and Commander in Chief of His Majesties' province of Massachusetts offering 40 pounds for every Penobscot male scalp, 20 for every female above age 12. Sounds like a genocidal pro-clamation for bounty on as many aboriginal scalps as possible – and who could tell the difference between a Penobscot, Maliseet or Passamaquod-dy child's scalp? Terror in the woods and along Maine's waterways. Were these Christians rooted in Jesus? Do unto others... Love your enemies?

This is a good Lenten Season in which to reflect and repent. We have seen the mighty brought low. . . . Decreased consumption has actually brought a welcome "breather" for our planet overburdened by exploitation of resources and pollution. 'Tis really a gift to be simple and to be free with God's Grace to come down where we ought to be." Let us revisit the Gospels and sit quietly with Jesus – our guide to a better, more loving, joyous, wholesome and sustainable way of life.

UPCOMING:

Fr. Louis Vitale, "Love Your Enemies: Transforming Us vs. Them Thinking," Wed., June 3, 7:30 p.m., Meg Perry Center

Rev. Roy Bourgeois, MM, of School of the Americas Watch will tour Maine between September 9 and 11, likely Portland the 9th, Lewiston, Farmington, Orono the 10th, Blue Hill area 11th a.m..

PCUSA on Global Health Crisis

The swine flu outbreak reminds us that we are all connected to each other on this planet, that no person or nation is an island unto themselves and that the fate of each person touches every other person. We can no longer think of ourselves as only citizens of the United States. We are members of one human family, made in the image of God.

Unfortunately this global health crisis is also being used by those who reject this vision of the unity of the human family. Right-wing demago-gues and opportunistic politicians are using the concerns over the out-break of swine flu in Mexico as an excuse to continue

spreading the racist fear and hatred of immigrants (particularly undocumented immigrants) that was engaged during national debates about immigration reform.

Houlton PC Continues Stand for Peace

Houlton PC is into its seventh year standing for peace, a silent vigil every Friday from noon to 12:30 p.m. --the Ropers, Boo Gagnon, and Mary Beth Di-Marco when work allows. Thumbs up from drivers, toots, or V signs of solidarity are frequent.

Members took the Houlton PCM banner, crafted by Mary Beth, to the Nevada nuclear test site where it caught the attention of Fr. Louis Vitale, who speaks widely for Pax Christi and Pace e Bene.

Deacon Al Burleigh's ecumenical Lenten service message was Jesus' praying for and loving one's enemies. Marilyn's focused on rootedness in Jesus as being loving and compassionate, putting oneself in another's shoes rather than abiding by the conventions of the day.

Portland PC Vigils, Networks, Sponsors

Portland PC has joined in anti-war and justice for Palestine weekly vigils, worked through the Sacred Heart/St. Dominic Social Justice Com-mission in sponsoring anti-war vigils following Sunday Mass, bringing speakers, and showing films. Ursula Slavick read the original Julia Ward Howe Mother's Day proclamation against war following Sunday liturgy.

Members Heard on Same-Sex Marriage

Pax Christi members were heard widely in the recent debate on same-sex marriage legislation. Charlotte Herbold had a strong letter in the *Bangor Daily News* and Elaine and Francis McGillicuddy another in the *Portland Press Herald*. Bill Slavick's op ed was published April 15th in the *Brunswick Times-Record*, challenging Bishop Malone's claim to speak for the Catholics of Maine and the validity of his arguments. Bill had another in the *Lewiston Sun Journal* last November when the same-sex bill was submitted. Copies are available from the authors.

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