

Catholics for Peace and Justice

JULY 2012 Newsletter

Summer is often a time when we step back to reflect on past endeavors, read that book that's been on our list all year and contemplate what we will commit ourselves to in fall. Our members are no different as evidenced by the thoughtful reflections and prayer that accompany the actions and issues in our newsletter this month.

My most recent summer read was Richard Rohr's "Everything Belongs". Rohr speaks to living at our "spiritual core" rather than on the "cultural fringe" in a way that beautifully echoes what I and many others have experienced as true. I may be the next to last person to have picked up this book. If you are too, it's worth your time.

Looking forward to fall, we invite you to consider hosting some event at your parish around Catholic social teaching and the election. We will be focusing our efforts on offering opportunities to engage in "civil dialogue" centered on election issues and moral theology. Learn more under ["Faith, Politics and Civil Dialogue"](#) below.

As we enjoy God's gifts of summer,
Blessings on your ministry



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Faith, Politics and Civil Dialogue Do Mix - Fall Programs

So often what makes sorting through the rhetoric of the election year even harder is the fear spin that is placed on nearly every sound bite that echoes through the media. If this legislation is passed, these taxes are raised or those dollars are gone, or if this person gets into office all hope will be lost. You personally and people like you will have to give up your life savings or worse yet - the greatest of American fears will take place - you may be inconvenienced.

The scary part about instilling fear is the level of passion it raises in the minds and hearts of us human beings. The level of anger saturating the hearts of various members of our community has been almost, if not, personality altering.

Unmitigated fear can be paralyzing. It can alter our behavior. It can cause us to say things, do things, react and behave in ways beyond our normal selves. Fear can even override our faith in God. Look at the disciples, who following the crucifixion of Jesus, cowered in their room with doors closed “for fear of the Jews”. Fear can shut down the possibility for us to act on our faith. It can turn off our moral belief system and even provide the power to send us into mob mentality.

How did Jesus react to fear? Do not be afraid. “Peace be with you”, “Peace be with you.” “Peace be with you.” What peace was Jesus talking about? - The peace of God that comes from whole hearted faith when we allow the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Jesus knew what fear was and that it can be an obstacle between us and God. We must have faith in the Peace of God through the Spirit to overcome the fears of this world that separate us from God. Fear that inhibits our transformation to loving “God with all our heart and all our soul and with all our mind, and to love our neighbor as our self.”

Then, is fear the opposite of faith? Can the spread of unhealthy fear, which separates us from loving God and neighbor, be the same as spreading sin and evil? If that is the case, then think of the consequences for our nation as we role full force into this election season. The more immediate question – do we as Christians called to live God’s Word sit back and watch or worse yet forget and forfeit our calling to enter the fray. Or do we “Listen, with the ear of our heart” (Rule of St. Benedict, Prologue 1) and rise to our God given humanity to engage in a different way. One such way is through the teaching and practicing of civil dialogue.

In March of this year, Catholics for Peace and Justice joined together with St. Mary Hales Corners to offer a program entitled “Do Faith and Politics Mix?” The program, which was well received, offered participants the opportunity to learn about Catholic moral teaching and civil dialogue – to practice listening to each other with respect and openness so as to honor the experience of truth each person brought to the discussion. In other words, to listen to each other face to face “with the ear of our hearts”.

This fall, in September and October, programs in “Faith, Politics and Civil Dialogue” will again be offered. Programs are tentatively scheduled at St. James Menomonee Falls/Sussex and at St. Mary Hales Corners. Announcements will be forthcoming as dates and locations are firmed up.

If you are thinking about and would like help holding a similar type program at your parish, contact us at info@catholicsforpeaceandjustice.org for more information. As we move through the election season, Catholics for Peace and Justice will continue to offer to work with parishes and groups to provide meaningful and productive programs that address the issues in light of our Christian Catholic moral foundation – with a focus on civility.

Peace be with you.

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Liturgy & Justice: Making the Connection

Our Lady of Lourdes is running a series of articles in their bulletin on Liturgy & Justice: Making the Connection. The first article in the series “[Part 1 “Just what is liturgy all about, anyway?”](#)” can be found [on their website at the end of the July 1, 2012 bulletin](#). The series will examine the parts of the Mass and note the natural connections between these and Catholic social teaching.

From Part 1: “In discussing the social responsibility of all Christians, the Synod Fathers noted that the sacrifice of Christ is a mystery of liberation that constantly and insistently challenges us. I therefore urge all the faithful to be true promoters of peace and justice: All who partake of the Eucharist must commit themselves to peacemaking in our world scarred by violence and war, and today in particular, by terrorism, economic corruption and sexual exploitation.” (Benedict XVI, Saramentum caritatis, 2005, no. 89).

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Nuns on the Bus – Links to Videos, Updates, and an Alternative to the Ryan Budget

Nuns on the Bus: “As Catholic Sisters, we are missioned to stand with people in need and to be witnesses for economic justice.” For updates go to www.nunsonthebus.org and to [Moyers and Company](#), on board the bus, providing regular reports and videos. Moyer’s team provides a wonderful series of stories and videos from Mercy Housing to Sister Corita Kent’s Radical Art to Sister Simone’s meeting with members of Paul Ryan’s staff in Janesville including a great [video of Sister Simone’s interview with Steven Colbert on the Colbert Report](#). .

Nuns on the Bus speak out against the [Ryan Budget and offer an alternative proposal](#)

Jesus said, “You will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judea and Samaria, and indeed to earth’s remotest end.” (Acts 1:8)

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Afghan Women: Which Side Are We On?

**By Pat Kennelly, MU Center for Peacemaking/Voices for Creative Nonviolence
From Afghanistan - June 5, 2012**

Here in Afghanistan, the United States is spending \$2 billion dollars a week on war under the guise of improving Afghanistan. In Chicago at the NATO summit, Hillary Clinton, Madeline Albright and several influential female leaders came together and publicly claimed an American and NATO troop presence in Afghanistan was warranted in order to continue to improve the security of women. The problem is that these influential women are calling for the very thing that makes Afghan women insecure. Further, they are endorsing Afghan leaders who attack women's rights. [Read the Article](#)

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**Out of Afghanistan: Ending Obama's War
America Magazine, June 15, 2012**

An interview with David Cortright author of Ending Obama's War: Responsible Military Withdrawal from Afghanistan.. Cortright tells of an increasing deterioration of security due to the large presence of NATO forces. The number of civilian casualties continues to rise each annually along with the number of armed insurgents. The US and NATO presence has been cited by insurgents as the number one cause of joining the Taliban. Once again war is not the solution. [Watch the interview](#) then contact President Obama and your members of Congress to maintain the pressure to leave Afghanistan sooner rather than later.

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Farm Bill Update – Senate Preserves SNAP Structure with Cut to Benefits

The Farm Bill that passed the Senate on June 21 continues the strong structure of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Senators Reid, Stabenow and Roberts are credited with maintaining that structure. Amendments that would have crippled the program and left poorer, hungrier, and unhealthier millions of people who rely on the program for basic food were defeated.

The bill does, however, contain a \$4.5 billion cut to SNAP that will harm large numbers of struggling families. That provision limits the ability of states to operate "Heat and Eat" policies, and will trigger sizable reductions on monthly SNAP benefits for many households. According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), an estimated 500,000 households a year will lose \$90 per month in SNAP benefits. [Latest information on SNAP and the Farm Bill](#).

"Institutionalized greed with structural consequences demands counter measures at the structural level, if we are to overcome pressing problems of poverty, socio-economic disparities and ecological destruction," *Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser, former general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC)*.

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Supreme Court Decision on AZ Immigration Law

"There are two signs up at the border between Mexico and the United States. One says "No Trespass!" The other says "Help Wanted." And 12 million vulnerable people have been trapped between those two signs." *Jim Wallis, Sojourners*.

The U.S. bishops greeted with hope and caution the June 25 Supreme Court decision to strike down provisions of an Arizona immigration law that would have allowed warrantless arrests of people suspected of an offense that is deportable, that would have made it a crime to seek work in the state and that would have made undocumented presence a state crime. The bishops found hope in the decision in Arizona vs. United States and said it reflects the bishops' call for humane and just immigration laws and concern for laws that could tear families apart. Their caution lay in the lifting of an injunction against immigrants

having to show papers in some circumstances. [Read the Article](#)

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Children and Families Benefit from Health Care Ruling

WI Council on Children & Families

The Supreme Court's decision to uphold the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) paves the way for further progress toward making sure all Wisconsin children have access to the quality, affordable health care they need to grow and thrive.

Many Wisconsinites are already benefiting from provisions that keep children healthy. For example, kids with asthma, diabetes, and other medical conditions can no longer be denied coverage simply because they already have a health problem.

[Top Ten List of Ways WI Families are Benefiting from the Affordable Care Act](#)

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Common Ground Update

[July Common Ground Newsletter](#)

Along with the ground breaking Supreme Court decision on Affordable Health Care, Common Ground and the CG health care coop has been making the news. Check out the following articles. [Health Care Reform](#)

[Article and Common Ground](#)

[OP Ed Article by Sandford Horwit](#)

When it comes to the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare, apparently there is no end to partisan political sniping in Washington even when the casualties include one's own voters beyond the Beltway.

[Journal Sentinel article on Common Ground Healthcare Coop.](#)

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The Downside of Technology

From Four Corners Fair Trade

By Liz and Russ Dixon and Lynn Handler

According to research recently reported in The Wall Street Journal and on Scholastic's Parents website, our children are spending too much time with technology (an average of four hours/day for children ages 8-18) and not enough time with nature. Why does that matter? It matters because they are experiencing a lessened quality of life. According to Richard Louv, author of Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder, contact with nature engages all the senses, rejuvenating a child's brain. Children who "have direct access to nature are better learners."

On May 25 of this year, The Wall Street Journal reported that research shows "people are more creative, happier and better able to focus" after even "a brief exposure to the outdoors. . . . When surrounded by trees and animals, children with attention-deficit disorder are less likely to have behavioral problems and are better able to focus on a particular task." Obviously, one of the best things we can do for our children is to get them outdoors. Another excellent way to build a healthy relationship with nature is to introduce them to quality nature books.

To help parents, teachers, and other "big" friends of children choose such books, the Four Corners of the World Fair Trade Education Committee has [published lists of highly recommended reads for pre-school, elementary, and middle-school children on its website](#): (These recommendations are available at public libraries and can be purchased online. Some are available at local bookstores.) Remember what Dr. Seuss said in I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!: "The more that you read, the more things you will know.

The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." Let's take our kids outside; let's give them books that help them understand what's out there.

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Rio+20 The Future We Want - UN Earth Summit

"Rio+20" is the short name for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil June 2012 – twenty years after the first UN 1992 Earth Summit in Rio. At the Rio+20 Conference, world leaders, along with thousands of participants from the private sector, NGOs and other groups, came together to shape how we can reduce poverty, advance social equity and ensure environmental protection on an ever more crowded planet.

The official discussions focused on two main themes: how to build a green economy to achieve sustainable development and lift people out of poverty; and how to improve international coordination for sustainable development. One result of the conference was establishing high level task force on [Global Food Security initiating a Zero Hunger Challenge](#). [Learn more about conference outcomes](#).

"Delegates must look beyond the surface of problems in order to probe their root causes, which lie in the human heart and mind." Participants need to "perceive the world as having a spiritual as well as a physical dimension", since the "world is a sacred place as well as our only home". "What we are proposing and proclaiming here is not just theological rhetoric. For many people, these issues are now a matter of life and death." [World Council of Churches message to Rio+20 conference delegates](#):

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WAVE – Journey for Justice

We're traveling over 86 miles on July 11 to draw public attention to the fact that every day, 86 lives are lost to gun violence. We'll be going 86+ miles by foot, bike and even rollerblades to draw widespread attention to the daily victims of gun violence. We're going to be meeting with people all throughout our Journey for Justice -- including elected officials. And I want to be able to share your voice when it happens. We want to share your personal message of support for the 86 -- and make clear that these senseless tragedies will never be forgotten or ignored. All along the route and at a powerful event at the finish line, we'll be sharing and displaying messages of solidarity from around the entire state. Please send a message of support for gun violence survivors and their family members, or [share your personal story of how gun violence has affected your life](#). Once we cross the finish line, survivors and family members of victims will join us to honor our lost and to speak out for the safe Wisconsin we all envision.

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Voting with a Catholic Conscience – Theology on Tap – July 11

Theology-on-Tap, a speaker series for young adults, married and single, in their 20s and 30s, on July 11 will sponsor: Voting with a Catholic Conscience; Presented by Lincoln Rice. Session lasts from 7:00 – 9:00 PM with a short break around 8:00. Location: Krueger's Entertainment Center at N87 W16471 Appleton Ave. No need to register. Just bring yourself, a friend, and an open mind. There is no cost to attend. Snack and drink are free. This round is on us!

[Full list of sites and speakers](#),

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Ban "Killer Drones" Film Screening – July 17

Tuesday, July 17, 2012, 7pm Peace Action Center, 1001 E. Keefe Ave. A Film and Discussion about the increasing use of "[Killer Drones](#)" by the USA. Representatives of the Volk Field 7 will be present. Film presentation with testimonies from Col. Ann Wright (ret.), Kathy Kelly and Brian Terrell and of the Creech

Fourteen. Discussion will follow. Sponsored by Breaking the Silence, breakingthesilence@nonviolentcow.org - 414 379 4162, www.nonviolentcow.org
"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win."
Mahatma Gandhi
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SOA Watch and Mexican Caravan For Peace with Justice – August 12

"Over 60,000 people have been killed in the violence in Mexico since President Felipe Calderon deployed some 50,000 troops and federal police five years ago to confront the drug cartels. "The gun smuggling circuit between the US government agencies and drug forces was later revealed as an official operation called "[Fast and the Furious](#)"." This summer, starting August 12, the "Caravan for Peace with Justice and Dignity", led by victims of Mexico's US-backed drug war, will travel through the United States Southwest, meeting with civil society and ending in Washington, DC, on September 10. [Learn More](#)
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Ground for Hope Interfaith Regional Conference – Oct. 21-22

Planning is well under way for Ground for Hope – Wisconsin, a regional environmental training conference Oct. 21-22 for clergy, seminarians, lay leaders and faith community members of many faiths and denominations. Renowned Native American environmental leader Winona LaDuke will give the keynote talk. There will be a large array of workshops on topics ranging from sacred texts and energy/climate issues facing Wisconsin to environmental justice and sustainable food for faith-based sites. Plus, there will be an optional Muslim iftar fast-breaking meal and optional eco-spirit bus tours to Milwaukee area sites where inspirational environmental and sustainability efforts are under way. The Interfaith Conference's Interfaith Earth Network and the national GreenFaith organization are planning this event with help from 16 major co-sponsors. The first day will be at the Islamic Community Center, the second at the Archbishop Cousins Center. Prices and other details are being finalized. Go to www.greenfaith.org for updates. [Program details](#)
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Parish Social Ministry – Save the Date Nov 2/3

This November, our local Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and Catholic Charities USA is hosting a training on Parish Social Ministry at the Cousin's Center on Friday Nov 2 and Saturday Nov 3. [A "Save the Date" flyer is attached](#). Please let folks in your networks know.
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Reflections

Seeing through Different Eyes

By Frank Pauc

Back in January I went to the Islamic Resource Center to sign up for an Arabic class. The Islamic Resource Center (IRC) is located in a building that it shares with a medical clinic near the intersection of Edgerton Avenue and 27th Street in Greenfield . The place was nearly empty the first time that I visited there. That was a pity because the inside of the IRC is much more inviting than the outside of the building. It reminds me a bit of the homes people have in Mediterranean countries; the exterior of the center seems cold and impersonal, but the interior is full of beauty and warmth. The IRC contains art and books and the faint smell of coffee. It is a place that is simultaneously exotic and welcoming. It is a wonderful facility once a person passes through the front door. [Read More...](#)

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One Human Family/One Earth Community

By S. Lilia Langreck

We read in the Preamble to the Earth Charter: “As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common dignity.”

This truth is espoused by people of varied cultures and religious persuasions.

Michael Dowd in his book Earthspirit calls us to see the divine in everything that lives and supports life, and empowers us to love what we see with all our heart, mind and strength.

Thich Nhat Hanh speaks to us from his Buddhist tradition: “I am determined not to kill and not to condone any acts of killing in the world, in my thinking, and in my way of life...” [Read More....](#)

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Prayer

Ojibway prayer

From S. Lillia Langreck’s One Human Family/One Earth Community

Great Spirit

Look at our brokenness

We know that in all creation

Only the human family

Has strayed from the sacred way

We know that we are the

Ones who are divided

And we are the ones

Who must come back together

To walk the sacred way.

Great Spirit

Teach us love, compassion, honor

That we may heal the earth

And heal each other.