

Modern Quixote Fr. Bill Callahan Left a Large PCM Legacy

A prophetic giant in the post-Vatican II American church, Rev. William Callahan, died July 5 after a very long struggle with Parkinson's disease. Many in PCM mourn his passing and share in the grief of his several brothers and sisters and his long-time Quixote Center co-founder and partner, Dolly Pomerleau, who became his wife in his last days.

Two of Pax Christi Maine's earliest retreats, both at Goose Cove Lodge on Deer Isle, were led by Bill, both during the gestation of his widely-read and oft-reprinted contemporary spirituality classic, *Noisy Contemplation*.

Noisy Contemplation's wise counsel is reflected in this excerpt: "We travel with a God who loves us. We travel with a community of faith. We'll often remember that we're crabgrass Christians, whose love can survive in the cracks of life's sidewalks. Our love reminds us that God's spirit is with us all days. We are blessed with a merry God. Indeed, we are the entertainment."

Then active Pax Christi members joined other peace and social justice activists in filling a succession of Quest for Peace cargo containers with humanitarian aid for Nicaragua, whose population was being targeted by the US-sponsored and funded contra terror. Five or six were filled, once two in one day! The Quixote Center had vowed to match Pres. Reagan's military aid to the contras with equal value humanitarian aid—and did, \$227 million worth!

When pressure on Bill from Rome and several bishops led to an ultimatum to abandon his work in Nicaragua and for church reform—ordination of women and respect for gays. Bill refused and fought dismissal from the Jesuits. In solidarity with Bill, PCM created the Oscar Romero Award for Nonviolent Witness to Peace and Justice in Service of the Poor; its first presentation was to him in Portland.

Shortly thereafter, when an exhausted and threatened Nicaraguan electorate turned the Sandanistas out, Bill was instrumental in PCM enlisting the ex-Foreign Minister, Miguel d'Escoto, a Maryknoll priest and founder of Orbis Books, for a retreat on Eucharistic nonviolence. Last year d'Escoto served as president of the United National General Assembly! A year or two later, Bill was instrumental in exiled Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide accepting the Romero Award which brought him to St. Pius X Church hall for a packed occasion that *Church World* editor Henry Gosselin judged the salient experience in his 25-year tenure.

Some time later, several PCM members joined Ketxu Amedua, the diminutive Basque head of the Institute for

John XXIII in Managua, which distributed Quest for Peace

Celebrate Fr. Jim Gower, Early Peace Ambassador

A newsletter number that remembers Bill Callahan and recalls Pax Christi's history can hardly overlook Father Jim Gower's huge contributions to peacemaking over 30 years.

Jim, now in an assisted living facility suffering from short-term memory loss after two bad falls, was, next to the perpetual peace journeyer Dorothy Day, Pax Christi's first peace ambassador, albeit largely forgotten. (One of his falls was in the process of returning a borrowed bicycle; he had discovered positioned him too high above the ground!)

Jim had served in the Navy in World War II and turned on war. The founding of Pax Christi USA gave him a vehicle for urging Gospel nonviolence. In the early 80's, when PC-USA was Sr. Mary Evelyn Jegen and a secretary in Chicago, he took a leave of absence as a Waterville curate and made two circuits of the county, driving from parish to parish, celebrating the Eucharist, preaching peace, then meeting with interested parishioners and urging them to join Pax Christi and gather a local group. At each stop, he begged gas money to the next. In Chicago, he had to wait for faculties, ending up in Cardinal Cody's office in the late afternoon. Cody bemoaned the press persecution he was suffering. Shortly after Jim left, Cody suddenly died, his probable last official act one for peace! Jim's efforts included founding a dozen groups in Maine. Maine attendees of PCUSA assemblies are invariably asked about Fr. Jim. The 1995 assembly in Gorham occasioned a number of reunions.

Until his health declined, the climax of PCM retreats was always Jim's celebration of the Eucharist just before noon Sunday—invariably a moving celebration of PCM's unity.

Jim's hand to mouth PCUSA tour was not his first leave. After heading a Natural Family Planning program and seeing its limited success, *Humanae Vitae's* appearance sent him on a year's leave to Rome to discover what was going on. He stayed only six months, spending the second six at Harvard: "Rome has a lot of piety, no intelligence, Harvard a lot of intelligence but no piety," he reported.

When Jim had left Waterville, then with 16 priests, on his Pax Christi leave, organizers of a farewell dinner had to rent the Armory. Jim's reputation for care and

understanding had occasioned everyone with problems going to him.

Another excursion took Jim with the first Witness for Peace accompaniment party to Nicaragua. On return, Bob Ewell recalled Jim's Pied Piper appeal to children wherever they went. Subsequently, as Bucksport pastor, he had converted a mostly unused parlor into a Sunday day care center.

On Jim's retirement, a former parishioner observed that "they never appreciated his talents." In fact, he and an old Bar Harbor schoolmate founded the College of the Atlantic. Jim had wanted a peace focus, but they realized that an eco-logical focus would have greater appeal to the wealthy summer set who would be asked to give something back. Long on the college's board, after his retirement in 1997 and his return to Bar Harbor, he was often seen on campus.

Jim had hoped to tour the diocese, preaching weekly family agape dinners. But few pastors invited him, not wanting him to rile any in their parishes with talk of Gospel non-violence! When asked to substitute, it was often with a plea not to be controversial! So, he took his daily constitutional and, in good weather, his retirement congregation became the parents and children who stopped to visit him at his bench on the Bar Harbor village green

For its near-30-year history, Fr. Gower has been the heart of Pax Christi Maine, his witness constant and strong. In-different to things, always traveling light, his impromptu words invariably move his audience. He is interested in all, caring for those in need, and incapable of saying a bad word about anyone--however challenged. His usual reply to criticism of others will be "Is that so?" The PCM community recognizes him as the saint in our midst.

Few Pax Christi members live near Bar Harbor and Jim is much alone. He would appreciate reports from old friends and acquaintances--hearing what you are up to. His address is 25 Village Inn Road, Birch Bay Village, Bar Harbor, ME 04609. phone 288-8014. He may be abed by 8:30 p.m..

Dignity and Justice for Palestinians

Pax Christi Maine is committed to Gospel nonviolence, promoting the dignity of every human person, and a just world order. For 30 years, we have addressed the violence

of war, nuclear weapons, racism, imperialism, exploitation, sexism, and environmental abuse. We will continue to speak as the need or neglect or misrepresentations of fact or disrespect for others' dignity and rights dictate.

PCM has addressed the violent denial of human dignity to Palestinians in the Zionists' colonial dispossession of over a million Palestinians in 1947-48, 1967, and since and Israel's repressive occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. PCM has also faulted Palestinian violence against Israeli civilians. Now the escalation of Israeli violence, illegal land grabs and settlements, increased U.S. financial support despite Israel's refusal to cooperate in pursuit of peace, and Israel's brutal suppression of nonviolent protests in Israel and Palestine oblige us to speak out more strongly.

Observation

Emblematic of the worsening situation is the Israeli military deliberate killings of children—abed, studying, sitting on a bench, on the way to buy candy, a baby at a checkpoint. A recent report describes the death of a 13-year old Gaza girl who wandered into the Israeli border no-go zone. A soldier noted that she appeared a frightened child. His partner, a sniper, shot her. On approaching the child, he noticed that she was still moving and shot her again. Then he emptied his clip into her--23 bullets. "If it moves, kill it," he repeated his orders. Israeli journalist Gideon Levy sees the killings as "a reflection of the army's contempt for the lives of Palestinian children and its terrifying indifference to their fate." "The IDF shoots at children to wreak vengeance and punish," he explains--and "look what is happening to us and our army." Vengeance and punishment for what? For not leaving Palestine to the colonial Israelis who want it all--for resisting, however weakly, their dispossession.

Also emblematic are the four-year blockade of Gaza, stunting children's development, and the 2008-2009 attack that killed over 1300, designed, Levy observes, to cut 1.5 million people off from the source of life—and convince them that their lot is subjugation or death. Levy dates Israel's descent into open racist bullying from the 2006 Lebanon war when the justice minister declared that "we are allowed to destroy everything" and a poet pleaded: "Attack Lebanon and also Gaza with plows and with salt, destroy them so no inhabitant remains. Transform them into barren desert, piles of rubble . . . kill them, spill their blood, frighten the living."

Judgment

Our measures are Gospel nonviolence and the Church's social teachings which affirm the sacredness of every

person, society's responsibility for the common good, a right to the necessities of life, our obligation to the poor, the right of all to participate in society, the right to employment, the claims of creation to respect, our obligation to love our neighbors, and the peace that is the fruit of justice.

In Israel's determination to possess the whole of Palestine without Palestinians, denying the indigenous population the dignity and security it claims for all Israelis, the Occupation violates all of these social justice tenets. And the Gaza blockade and attack; the killing and executions of peace flotilla passengers; the increasing dispossession of Palestinians from their homes and land for Israeli settlements; the imprisonments, torture, home demolitions, destruction of over a million olive trees; the denial of adequate water, food, and health care, and the inevitable failure of peace negotiations in which Israel is never expected to respect the demands of justice or law reveal an oppressor deep in moral darkness.

In an October 22 statement, the Synod of Middle East Bishops concurs in this judgment in addressing the heart of the conflict: Israelis may not use Scripture to justify injustice, for God "will speak peace to his people" (Ps 85:9). Taking one's neighbor's house is not just. The bishops boldly dismiss repeatedly failed U.S. efforts to broker a peace agreement in calling on the international community to apply the U.N. "Security Council's resolutions" and take "the necessary legal steps to put an end to the occupation of the different Arab territories." [26 former European leaders agree] Their objective is an independent and sovereign Palestinian state and both Israeli and Palestinian states enjoying human dignity and security; Jerusalem a shared holy city respecting the religious patrimony of the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faiths; a fully sovereign Lebanon working out Christian and Muslim coexistence, and a free, peaceful, and secure Iraq,

In this call for justice based on the dignity of every person and on law, the bishops, like Pax Christi Maine, necessarily reject the Israeli narrative of heroic liberation. Palestinians were not responsible for European colonial racism, anti-semitism, and eastern European pogroms before and after World War I nor for the Nazi Holocaust, none of which justified the forcible dispossession of the peaceable Christian and Muslim populations in Palestine, there over 1700 years, to establish a Jewish homeland. The Palestinians' only "crime," one Holocaust survivor observed, was being born in Palestine.

Yet, since the United Nations partition vote and Israel's confiscation of 70-odd per cent of Palestinians' land 62 years ago and another 10-plus per cent since 1967, millions of Palestinian refugees,

marking time for decades in camps, have been denied their legal right to return to their villages and land. And the world's unique forgetting of the Palestinian dispossession, Israeli historian Ilan Pappé observes, has served to license Israel's serial abuses of Palestinians—and others—since. Washington's United Nations vetoes and well over \$100 billion in aid to Israel have enabled it all.

There is no prospect for justice or peace in Palestine when the U.S. and Israel demand that Palestinians approve their dispossession; that they end violent resistance when Israel engages in constant violence against them, and that they honor all past agreements when Israel has honored none, and when Palestinians and the Arab League agree to yield the 78 per cent of Palestine Israelis held in 1948 provided that refugee rights of return and compensation are honored, Israel ignores the offer. Meanwhile, Washington continues banrolling Israel's violence, confiscations, and repression, and insists that both sides must make compromises when any further Palestinian compromise would preclude a viable Palestinian state.

A Call to Action

Over the last 63 years, few Maine voices have been heard in defense of Palestinians' human dignity. Our Congressional delegation has consistently voted to sustain the Occupation and repression. Now Israel's expanding illegal settlements, fencing of Palestinians into unsustainable Bantustans; increasingly wanton violence, denial of necessities to the millions of effectively imprisoned Palestinians, and its refusal to end the Occupation oblige us to speak out.

But, alone, Pax Christi Maine will not be heard. So we call on our fellow Christians and all of good will to join us in our cry to end the U.S.-Israeli persecution of Palestinians.

Join us in pressing the United Nations to meet its responsibility to free the Palestinians and give them justice.

--In challenging the U.S. government and media pretense that forcible possession of Palestinian land and water establishes a right to steal—that might makes right.

--In insisting, with Palestinians, that their right of return to their towns and villages and compensation is not negotiable.

--In challenging Israel's treatment of Palestinian civilians as combatants; its illegal blockades, closures, and other forms of collective punishment, and its criminal failure to meet its responsibility as an occupier to assure the well-being of the occupied--that they have ample food, clothing, housing, health care, and educational opportunities.

--In challenging as unchristian the Christian right's espousal of racist injustice to Palestinians: the Christian priority is loving one's neighbor, not hurrying the end time.

--In challenging our Congressional representatives and government to end their blind support and funding of Israel, to recognize Palestinians' human dignity and rights, and to support an immediate end to the Occupation.

We urge our fellow Christians to applaud with us the courageous peace work within Israel and the Occupied Territories, often at risk of arrest, torture, injury, or death, and the work of Jews, Christians, and Muslims here and elsewhere for justice in Palestine. We especially applaud Palestinian nonviolent resistance in the face of violent Israeli suppression—as we celebrate the overwhelming majority of Palestinians' nonviolent sufferance of their oppression.

Only justice rising from compassion can lead to peace in the Middle East. So we call on all, especially fellow Christians, to demand justice and to work for it, without ceasing, employing all nonviolent means, until there is peace.

Outrage at Israel's unrestrained violence has raised awareness of the Palestinians' plight. Successes of the boycott, divestment, sanctions campaign and recognition of Palestinian statehood by Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina have raised hope. Now Israel has made clear that it is not open to persuasion. Only a world-wide grassroots effort for human dignity can prevail. Join us in that effort.

For action information, visit www.paxchristimaine.org

Signed [Pax Christi Maine Council]

For close to 30 years, Pax Christi Maine has espoused Gospel nonviolence and promoted the dignity of every human person and a just world order. Challenges have included war, nuclear weapons, imperialism, racism, the death penalty, economic exploitation, greed, sexism, homophobia, and environmental abuse.

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dispossession of over a million Palestinians in 1947-48, 1967, and since and Israel's repressive occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. PCM has also faulted Palestinian violence against Israeli civilians.

Observation

The dispossession and dehumanization of Palestinians continues. Emblematic is the Israeli military's deliberate killings of children—abed, sitting on a bench, studying, on the way to buy candy, a baby awaiting passage through a checkpoint. A recent report describes the death of a 13-year old Gaza girl who wandered into the Israeli border no-go zone. A soldier noted that she appeared a frightened child. His partner, a sniper, shot her. On approaching the child, he noticed that she was still moving and shot her again. Then he emptied his clip into her--23 bullets. "If it moves, kill it," he repeated his orders. Israeli journalist Gideon Levy sees the killings as "a reflection of the army's contempt for the lives of Palestinian children and its terrifying indifference to their fate." "The IDF shoots at children to wreak vengeance and punish," he explains--and "look what is happening to us and our army." Vengeance and punishment for what? For not leaving Palestine to the colonial Israelis who want it all-- for resisting, however weakly, their dispossession.

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In Israel's determination to possess the whole of Palestine without Palestinians, denying the indigenous population the dignity and security it claims for all Israelis, the Occupation violates all of these social justice tenets. And the Gaza blockade and attack; the killing and executions of peace flotilla passengers; the increasing dispossession of Palestinians from their homes and land

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In this call for justice based on the dignity of every person and on law, the bishops, like Pax Christi Maine, necessarily reject the Israeli narrative of heroic liberation. The colonial racism that infected virtually all of Europe before and after World War I and Britain’s encouragement of Jewish colonization did not justify the forcible dispossession of the peaceable Christian and Muslim populations, there over 1700 years, to establish a Jewish homeland. Nor were Palestinians responsible for the French anti-semitism of Alfred Dreyfuss’s false conviction for treason, the eastern European pogroms, and the Nazi Holocaust that spurred Zionism after World War II. The Palestinians’ only “crime,” one Holocaust survivor observed, was being born in Palestine.

Yet, since the United Nations partition vote and Israel’s confiscation of 70-odd per cent of Palestinians’ land 62 years ago and another 10-plus per cent since 1967, millions of Palestinian refugees, marking time for decades in camps, have been denied their legal right to return to their villages and land. And the world’s unique forgetting of the Palestinian dispossession, Israeli historian Ilan Pappé observes, has served to license Israel’s serial abuses of Palestinians—and others—since. Washington’s United Nations vetoes and well over \$100 billion in aid to Israel have enabled it all.

There is no prospect for justice or peace in Palestine when the U.S. and Israel demand that Palestinians approve their dispossession, that they end violent resistance when Israel is a terrorist state engaged in constant violence against them, and that they honor all past agreements when Israel has honored none. Nor can there be peace when Palestinians and the Arab League agreement to yield the 78 per cent of Palestine Israelis held in 1948 provided that refugees rights of return and compensation are honored is ignored while Washington continues bankrolling Israel’s violence,

confiscations, and repression, and insists that both sides must make compromises when any further Palestinian compromise would preclude a viable Palestinian state.

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PAX CHRISTI MAINE COUNCIL

Christians for Palestinian Rights (CPR)

Boycott, divestments, and sanctions actions of the Presbyterian Church, the work of Sabeel, the recent statement of the Synod of Middle East Bishops and Patriarchs in union with Rome—and, conversely, the notable silence of most church leaders—indicate a need for many more concerted Christian voices insisting that it is time for the world community to secure the human dignity and freedom of millions of occupied and refugee Palestinians.

To that end, Christians for Palestinian Rights will seek to educate Maine Christians on the Middle East situation and to facilitate those voices being heard in Congressional offices, in Washington, and in the media—with speakers, films, articles, public statements, and information for letters to editors and to Congress.

Membership for all of good will requires only a promise to communicate on Palestinian rights monthly to someone. A council will channel information to the listserv, plan programs and actions, and approve public statements. If you would join, please forward your e-mail address to william.slavick@maine.edu. If you would be interested in serving on the council, likewise.

Denise Dreher Succeeds Bill Slavick As Pax Christi Maine Coordinator

Last year Bill Slavick indicated a desire to step down as PCM Coordinator when a successor was chosen. At the September Council meeting, his resignation was accepted and the Council elected Denise Dreher as Coordinator. Until the next annual meeting, she will continue as Council chair, in which role she and Bill have worked closely together through most of his 23 years as Coordinator, with Denny taking on some Coordinator duties of late.

Bill continued PCM's run of strong retreat leaders, established by Dan Berrigan, Bill Callahan, and Charlie McCarthy, by bringing Miguel d'Escoto, Richard Rohr, Jim Douglas, Joan Chittister, John Dear, and others; Nobel

Peace Prize winner Adolfo Perez Esquivel for a speech, and Eileen Egan, Gordon Zahn, and Richard McSorley for an institute in Westbrook. He established the Oscar Romero Award for Nonviolent Witness to Peace and Justice in Service of the Poor which occasioned appearances by Cardinal Evarista Paolo Arns of Sao Paulo, Haiti President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the Plowshares, and Kathy Kelly, and organized the 1945 PCUSA Assembly in Gorham. He published over 200 peace and social justice articles in *Church World*, op eds in daily papers, and ran for the U.S. Senate as a peace candidate in 2006.

Between now and Pentecost, Bill will organize Maine listening sessions preparatory to the American Catholic Council in Detroit Pentecost weekend and promote it on MaineCatholicsTogether.blogspot.com. He will give his remaining energies to challenging denials of the human dignity of Palestinians, Haitians, immigrants, and other human rights victims and the patriarchy's efforts to shove aside Vatican II reforms. He hopes to complete a long-delayed edition of the letters of Kentucky poet/novelist Elizabeth Madox Roberts, author of *The Time of Man*.

Dear Pax Christi Maine members and friends,

Moving into the role of Coordinator for Pax Christi Maine is daunting in many ways, not the least of which is following the 23 years of leadership which Bill Slavick has provided

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and the many achievements of those years. As Chair of the PCM Council, I have worked closely with Bill for many years, and we will continue to work together with the Council and other Pax Christi members as we seek to follow the nonviolent Jesus in this age of violence, war and tremendous injustice.

Bill and I have different gifts to share, different leadership styles, but we have, I believe, been called to walk the same path. As a mentor, Bill has been challenging, sometimes disturbing in his ability to hone in on the core truth of an issue and unrelenting in pursuing that truth, his voice often the prophetic one upsetting my/our complacency. His encyclopedic knowledge and prodigious memory are legend (at least in Maine).

Perhaps equally amazing is the great, yet quiet, generosity and sense of hospitality which underlie Bill and Ursula's lives. (I cannot omit here what I believe will be remembered as Bill's greatest achievement—choosing Ursula as his life's partner. Together they are an amazing team.) Thank you Bill, on behalf of all of us, for your years of devoted leadership. I step onto the path with a deep sense of humility and gratitude.

Pax Christi Maine's numbers are not large, but our voice has been persistent, due in no small part to Bill's efforts, and it is needed more than ever today. The following words from Fr. John Dear, S.J. (June 10, 2008) speak to my hopes for Pax Christi Maine:

"I believe that Pax Christi is crucial to the church's future. My hope is that every Catholic in the United States will become a member, that every parish will form a local group, that Pax Christi will nurture the Catholic community into becoming a community of nonviolence, and that it will help the church reject the just war theory and return to the Sermon on the Mount as our catechism and basis for operating."

"Pax Christi, like the peace movement in general, is just beginning. We have only just started to imagine and work for a world without war, poverty, nuclear weapons and global warming. We have just begun to reclaim the non-violence of Jesus for our church. We've just begun to grasp the implications for our parishes and presence in the world. We've just begun to make our peaceable presence felt, to be a leaven within the church."

Obviously, we have a long way to go and much work to do in order to achieve the vision John Dear presents. The prayer/study/ action mode of Pax Christi groups offers one way to proceed. We must nourish hope within our communities, and help create new Pax Christi communities. As we enter more deeply into the season of Advent, the sense of longing for peace on earth grows stronger but seems a more distant possibility than ever in our lifetime. Retelling the story of the birth of the child Jesus brings hope once again to our weary hearts. But we need to gird ourselves with that hope and stride forth on the narrow path of nonviolent love and action with Jesus the man, who both told us to love one another and set about changing the status quo of his time. Are we up to the journey? Can we walk the walk?" Let us pray that we will be blessed with new vision and strength of heart and soul to enable our effort to do so.

May Peace, Love, Joy and Hope be with you and with our sisters and brothers throughout Maine, our country, and our world,

Denny Dreher
Coordinator, Pax Christi Maine

Origins of Pax Christi

Although many know that Pax Christi began at the end of World War II, I found the details provided in one of Fr. John Dear's writings deeply moving and worth sharing with newsletter readers.

"Pax Christi goes back over sixty years now. It began in 1945 in a prison in southern France. The prison brimmed with resisters who had abetted fleeing Jews and who were now awaiting the one-way trip to Buchenwald, where they would surely face execution."

"One of the prisoners was Bishop Theas, an outspoken critic of the destruction of villages and the persecution of Jews. He

negotiated with his Nazi wardens . . . to conduct a special Mass.

"A few weeks earlier, Nazis had committed atrocities nearby, having rounded up local villagers and locked them in their church and, in massive retaliation for the murder of several Nazi soldiers, set the church aflame. The prisoners got wind of the news and burned with desire for vengeance. At the Mass, Bishop Theas preached "love your enemies, do good to those that hate you, pray for those who persecute."

His homily did not go uninterrupted; several of the men contradicted him. The bishop replied, "I cannot preach anything to you but what Jesus said: 'Love your enemies' I can preach no more, no less." At the Lord's Prayer, the bishop added "Germany" after the line, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." His fellow prisoners could scarcely bear it.

"That Mass changed his life. At the war's end, after his release, Bishop Theas dedicated his life to reconciling French and German Catholics. Shortly afterward, a French lay woman, Madame Dor-tel-Claudot, was getting a "prayer crusade" underway. She wanted to organize a peaceful procession of reconciliation between French and German villages on the border. Would Bishop Theas help? she asked. He agreed. He lent his support and within months, such processions between old enemies occurred regularly.

"The bishop named the movement, "Pax Christi" -- the peace of Christ. Word of it spread, and within a year, the Vatican blessed it, and not long after, institutionalized it as the Catholic Church's official body to promote peace, disarmament and reconciliation. Bishop Theas and Madame Dortel-Claudot are our founders.

"Pax Christi blossomed in Europe fast. Today one finds branches in more than 30 nations, including in Latin America and Africa. Pax Christi also has consultative status as a non-governmental organization at the United Nations.

"Pax Christi USA was formed in 1972 by Gordon Zahn and Eileen Egan, along with . . . Dorothy Day, [Joseph Fahey], and Thomas Gumbleton. In 1985, the great Benedictine Sisters of Erie gave it a huge boost by setting up the national office in Erie, PA, where it remains" [Subsequent to Dear's account, PCUSA opened a second office in Washington, D.C.]
- Denny Dreher

Dear Pax Christi Friends and Readers,

In the halcyon days of Henry Gosselin's and Claire Bastien's *Church World*, I harbored the illusion that PCM just might bring the Maine church to Gospel nonviolence, then, as Maine goes...! That dream died well before *Church World* as I acknowledged the social indifference of many Catholics and my limitations, and the hierarchs seemingly fell silent about war and all else save sex. At best, we have been Gospel nonviolence's faithful remnant, other-wise seemingly clueless at reaching and moving the masses and especially youth, so many

of whom are open to the cry of the poor—and now the earth. Still, I am grateful for the community and richness of our retreats, assemblies, etc., and I have enjoyed stubbornly filling ten poorly proofed pages periodically. Thank you for your accompaniment and Ursula for her patience. Bill

Wanted: Skilled Technologists!

PCM is looking for a person or persons with computer skills to assist with newsletter production. Contact Denny if this describes you: dmdreher@myfairpoint.net. Likewise, PCM needs someone with skills to do posting on paxchristmaine.org

Visit:

mainecatholicstogether.blogspot.com A

forum to sustain us as faithful Christians in our communities.

RE: PCM Groups

It is a tragedy that the great wealth of Catholic Social Teaching lies buried, for the most part, in the basement of the institutional Church at a time when it could provide major building blocks for a renewed social and political discourse, one that would seek the common good rather than create divisions and promote violence to solve our common problems.

Pax Christi Portland recently commenced study of Catholic Social Teaching, with the intent that we will promote such study within our parishes, or local PC groups. We invite others to join in the effort to bring the “Catholic Church’s biggest secret” out of hiding.

Why we oppose inland wind farms

A wind velocity map of Maine shows clearly that our wind resource is only poor to moderate except along the coast (not in the “expedited” area of Maine wind law LD2283 due to the clout of those living there, presumably) and off-shore. This is part of the reason why industrial wind complexes in northern Maine (such as Mars Hill and Stetson I and II) actually produce only 15-30 % of rated capacity -- the figure quoted by a wind “farm” developer that it will power 23,000 homes. After a year of operation, the wind mill at UM at Presque Isle (UMPI) has only actually produced 11.6% of rated capacity. During the second quarter of 2010, Stetson I and II and really produced only 17.5% of rated capacity.

The poor performance of wind in northern Maine is only one of the reasons why First Wind LLC (and all the other-named LLCs under its ownership) is losing money, is deeply in debt, and may go bankrupt in 2011 because its public stock offering (IPO) in October was withdrawn. Anyone who has studied industrial wind carefully knows better than to invest and only tax breaks, subsidies and hedge funds closely tied to government (i.e. D.E. Shaw and Larry Summers) are keeping them alive in the Northeast. Iberdrola (controlled by interests in Spain and Abu Dhabi) now owns Central Maine Power and a

Canadian company owns Bangor Hydro which recently merged with Maine Public Service. SO Most of the transmission lines in Maine are now run by foreign companies in their interests. The very costly upgrade of CMP lines (recently allowed by the PUC) is not to fix “aging lines” but to transport wind power from Maine to the big markets south of us. However, Maine rate payers will finance 8% of this billion dollar boon-doggle. Wind power is costly and bad for Maine businesses.

Are these tax credits and the governmental financing of Industrial wind in Maine warranted? No. These wind “farms” will not reduce our dependence on foreign oil because only 1% of electricity in Maine is generated with oil and no one we know is heating a home or driving a car with electricity (except internally-generated electricity in hybrid cars). Baldacci’s claim that “all of Maine’s energy is imported” is untrue. Almost 60% of Maine’s electricity today already comes from renewable sources in Maine such as hydro and biomass (which, by the way, provides jobs for wood workers year after year vs. only nine months constructing a wind “farm”). Forty percent is generated from natural gas which comes mainly from Canada. This gas is not a result of highly destructive “fracking” yet, but there is shale in southern New Brunswick which developers are poised to exploit if allowed.

But won’t Big Wind power reduce our carbon footprint? No. Maine is not a prairie. Its mountains are thickly covered with CO2-absorbing trees. The first job of constructing a wind farm is to permanently remove thousands of trees (followed by herbicides) for roads, turbine sites, transfer stations and transmission lines. After the blasting to bedrock, the holes are filled with hundreds of tons of concrete for the foundations required by the massive turbines/blades that range from 390’ to 450’. The manufacture of one ton of concrete releases one ton of CO2 into the air. There are many other polluting factors in the making and transport from abroad of the steel turbines and non-bio-degradable composite blades. But it gets much worse. Because wind is intermittent, there has to be back-up electricity at the ready to be fed into the grid to forestall blackouts. In Maine that back-up is provided by natural gas turbines that must be kept in “spinning mode” and ramped up and down to compensate as the wind falls or is so strong that the turbines must be shut down. This creates the release of more CO2 than if the gas turbines were operating in normal mode. Wind “farms” also utilize electricity from the grid to keep the blades at the proper angles, power the lights, etc. Big Wind is an even greater environmental debacle than ethanol from corn.

Fossil fuel plants are built in tandem with Big Wind complexes to provide needed back-up energy. In China, these power plants rely on coal. Just google wind farms and coal-fired power plants.

Four Earth First! folks were arrested November 8 protesting construction of the Rollins Wind “farm” near Lincoln. We were not, but we did carry a big sign in the biting rain decrying the destruction. Jonathan Carter of Forest Ecology Network and other Green Party members were there, too. Most of us are members of the Citizens Taskforce on Wind Power, a state-wide group.

Angus King says that evidence of Big Wind not

reducing carbon emissions is “bunk,” but he and his partner Robert Gardiner (for-mer President of MPBN) will loose millions on their Highland and Roxbury wind “farms” if people begin to learn the truth. Many European and U.S. studies indicate only tiny CO2 savings from industrial wind; some indicate substantial increases. On Nov. 16 the John Muir Trust of Scotland claimed that “no large wind farms should be approved until developers’ environmental claims can be independently confirmed by government scientists.” Fol-lowing President Sarkozy’s outlawing of any more wind “farms” in rural France, Denmark has recently dropped support for Indus-trial wind in inland areas of that country. Several European coun-tries stopped subsidizing wind “farms” several years ago and there is a glut of turbines/blades – now coming to the USA.

You have probably heard a lot about noise from wind turbines. Bad as the audible noise (dBA) is, the low-frequency (dBC) vibra-tions are the real health problem. For those within 7000’ or so of turbines, these vibrations can not only cause sleeplessness but trig-ger heart problems and vertigo. Dr. Nina Pierpont has labeled this complex of symptoms “Wind Power Syndrome.” A Portugese study labels these conditions “vibroacoustic disease.” Maine has no regulations governing dBC levels and we know from personal experience that some of the LURC commissioners had never even heard of this problem as they granted permits to wind developers! To learn about the many problems with Big Wind and its inte-gration into the grid, please go to these web sites: www.ppdlw.org and www.wind-watch.org. – Harrison and Marilyn Roper

The silent interfaith Houlton peace vigil continues every Friday noon.

El Salvador: Remembering Romero

Traveling to El Salvador in a School of the Americas delegation with Fr Roy Bourgeois was a profoundly moving experience.

During the 1980s ,El Salvador received millions in U.S. mili-tary aid; US Special Forces helped train Salvadoran troops, and the SOA trained thousands of Latin American officers, many of whom committed heinous crimes, among them the assassins of Arch-bishop Oscar Romero; the brutal torture, rape, and murder of the four American church women, and the killing of six Jesuit priest/ scholars and their housekeepers at the University of San Salvador.

We joined thousands of Salvadorans on the evening of March 20th on a candle lit Salvador del Mundo procession through the streets of San Salvador to the cathedral where Romero's body had lain in state on the day of his funeral. During that solemn event, Salvadoran troops had opened fire, killing and maiming many of the mourners. Romero's coffin had been rushed into the cathedral.

On this evening, against the backdrop of an immense painting of Romero, a Mass was being celebrated on the steps of the cathe-dral by a dozen bishops garbed in Episcopal splendor. Ironically, while Romero lived and spoke out against the evil being pepe-trated against his people, only one fellow bishop had supported him, the only one who had also attended his funeral.

On the 24th, the 30th anniversary of Romero's assassination, many thousands of Salvadorans packed the Chapel of Divine Pro-vidence Hospital where Romero had been slain. The deep love and devotion of the people made real Romero's promise that if slain, he would live on in his people. People wept as they carried the fruit of their labor up to the altar; flowers, clay pots and other gifts of their hands. Romero's presence was intensely manifest. I was taken by the beauty of Romero's people, the young and old who reached out to us in the crowd to thank us for our presence, their faces kind but ravaged by years of war, fear and poverty.

With the Mass over, the people headed out, in intense heat and humidity, on the long solemn walk to the cathedral. Young people chanted as they walked. Some carried colorful flags and banners with pictures of Romero and other victims of the war. There had been a time such an overt show of support would have brought a violent response from the authorities

Archbishop Romero's body is interned in the crypt below the sanctuary of the cathedral . It is a beautiful tomb on the corners of which are bronze sculptures of four nuns, representing those who had come to his aid when he was shot. Despite the intense heat, the throng of faithful surrounded the tomb; it was completely covered with bouquets of fresh flowers.

Meanwhile, upstairs, a traditional Mass was being celebrated with a handful of worshippers. Despite the fact that the current president of El Salvador is a member of the left-wing FSLN, there is still deep division within the country and the Catholic Church.

We visited Chalatenango where the four American church women lived and where they are interred. The local priest told us that a Mexican priest had been assigned to a nearby parish and had taken down any remembrances of Romero from that time.

We also visited the Jesuit University and the rose garden where the six Jesuit priests were brutally slain. A Jesuit survivor of the assault related the details of that horrific event. No one has yet to be brought to justice though the perpetrators are known.

Of all the sites we visited, one of the most profound is Cuscatlan Park where an immense memorial wall carries the names of over 75,000 victims of the US-funded war along with the names of many of the disappeared. It is longer than the Vietnam War me-morial. On it are these words: "Peace is not the producer of terror or fear. Peace is not the silence of cemeteries. Peace is not the re-sult of violent repression. Peace is generosity. It is our right and our duty. --Archbishop Oscar Romero, martyr" --

Suzanne Hedrick

Catholic Social Teaching a Guide For Addressing Major Issues

Portland PC discussions of Catholic social teaching and revision of a PCM statement on Palestine have occasioned realization that the great wealth of Catholic Social Teaching offers building blocks for a renewed social and political discourse directed to the common good rather than division and violence.

The social encyclicals, pastorals, and Vatican II Council statements can be brought to bear in developing immigration policy, environmental degradation legislation and treaties, foreign policy based on justice and cooperation, and economic, welfare, and tax policies founded on concern for the common good rather than licensing greed for a few that impoverishes everyone else.

Consideration of a Palestine statement has surfaced the thought that PCM can contribute to discussion of these issues in Maine by developing succinct statements on applicable Christian social justice principles and relevant facts for wide circulation to justice, peace, environment, immigration, and foreign relations organizations, churches, and synagogues. We can say clearly that losing the climate change war means losing everything, that shutting out those whose survival depends on immigration is alien to the Gospel, that imperial and economic wars are immoral and suicidal, and that only totalitarianism or anarchy and revolution can result from the concentration of wealth in the hands of a very few at the expense of the sustenance of everyone else.

Please send suggestions, drafts, or to Bill Slavick at 242 Ludlow St., Portland 04102 or billslavick@myfairpoint.net.

May Day Assembly Honors Jim Harney, Hears Of H.O.M.E, Elects Leadership

The May Day Assembly at H.O.M.E. in Orland featured presentation of the Oscar Romero Award to Jim Harney posthumously to Nancy Minot, her presentation of Jim's photography, and a discussion of the work of H.O.M.E. coop by Sister Lucy Poulin, Margaret deRivera, and several refugees.

The brief business meeting agreed on a PCM environmental focus for six months and set October for all dues renewals.

With the exception of Elaine McGillicuddy who chose not to continue, present at-large Council members were re-elected: Mary Beth DeMarco, Denise Dreher, Pam Murphy Ewers, Suzanne Hedrick, Erik Johnson, Peter Sirois, Sally Chapell, and Martha Dickinson elected if confirmed. Group representatives are Mary Ellen Quinn (Penobscot Bay), Suzanne Fitzgerald (Acadia), Charlotte Herbold (Belfast), and Ursula Slavick (Portland). Denise Dreher was re-elected Council Chair, Charlotte Herbold Secretary, Mary Ellen Quinn Treasurer, Bill Slavick Coordinator pro tem (until anticipated replacement, and Mary Ellen Quinn co-coordinator.

Possible 2011 retreat themes discussed were the interface between the military industrial-complex and preservation of the environment. Leaders mentioned were Mary Lou Kownacki, David Korten, Fr, Miguel d'Escoto, and Archbishop Rembert Weakland.

A September 18th Waterville Council meeting occasioned Denise Dreher's election to replace Bill Slavick as coordinator and Bill as Portland Council representative. The need for a newsletter editor replacement was noted and more frequent web site postings and user hits if the web site is to be justified.

Support for the new Start Treaty was urged. Members were asked to question 2010 candidates on their commitment to peace and social justice; to support Citizens United in ending corporate personhood, and to attend women's issues—Congo war crime rapes, lack of maternal health care, poverty, and religious and cultural subordination. It was agreed to keep a better common record of individual and group Pax Christi peace endeavors. A spring Assembly focus on Christian environmentalism at an ecological site was proposed. The next meeting is March 12.

Retreat: Orthodox Spirituality

This year's annual retreat at the Living Water Spiritual Center in Winslow featured Kyriacos and Emily Markides, Cyprus natives and UMO professors of Sociology and Peace Studies, respectively.

Kyriacos's focus was Greek Orthodox spirituality which he approached through his own journey from agnosticism through transcendental meditation and the paranormal to a reconversion that began with a visit to Mt. Athos, a Greek peninsula inhabited since the first millennium by as many as 4000 monks (1600 now) whose lives revolve around prayer, study, and work.

Kyriacos's argument is that the universities' "syndrome of modernity," based on four assumptions—the reductionism that sees the universe as all there is, the empiricism of scientific knowledge, cultural relativism, and the determinism of genes and culture—has reached the moon and given us science and tolerance but exorcised the Spirit and contaminated religion with politics.

By contrast, Kyriacos introduced his Mt. Athos spiritual guide, Father Maximos, who taught him that to know God you have to work to overcome egotism, and introduced him to more contemplative Orthodox worship: an Easter vigil on Mt. Athos might extend from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. He sees Catholicism as having pre-served Western civilization, Protestantism as giving us democracy, and Eastern Orthodoxy mysticism. The East can learn social action from the West, the West the East's hesychast tradition of quietitude exemplified by hermits. He notes a Catholic bishop's observation that Christianity needs to "breathe with both lungs"—the East's mysticism and the West's intellectualism.

Kyriacos identifies common characteristics of mystics' journey to knowledge of God, from metanoia, a turning to see things from a different point of view, through catharsis and

fotisis (enlight-enment), to theosis Kyriacos's most recent book is *Gifts of the Desert: the Forgotten Path of Christian Spirituality*.

Emily's account of promoting eco-villages in Cyprus and then realization of a permaculture garden at *Agja Skepi* offered useful illustrations of creation from the bottom up. "We must work among people for whom change *has* to come," she emphasized.

--Sally Chappell, Charlotte Herbold, Bill Slavick

PC Penobscot Valley Theme Environmental Justice

PC Penobscot Valley's 2010-11 theme is environmental justice, utilizing materials from the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops, the Declaration on the Environment of John Paul II and Patriarch Bartholomew, as well as the Catholic Climate Covenant. A member's series of reflections on environmental issues will serve as a foundation for our study.

PCPV has distributed a CCC handout on How To Reduce Your Carbon Footprint and information on the St. Francis Pledge to all area parish locations.

Other activities have included participation with other peace and justice organizations in an August Hiroshima Remembrance at the Bangor Public Library and an October Teach-In on the Afghanis-tan War at the Bangor UU Church.

Mary Ellen Quinn represented Pax Christi Maine among speakers at a press conference called to draw local attention to the "One Nation" rally in Washington in September.

And PVPC recently hosted a presentation by Miriam Devlin, MD, SMIC, on "Food as Sacrament" at St. Mary's Church. She has taught spirituality and bio-ethics locally and overseas and her talk focused on scriptural references to food, stewardship of God's Creation, and the importance of eating whole foods.

A Mass for Peace is celebrated at St. Matthew in Hampden monthly on the third Tuesday. PVPC develops the prayers of intention. Monthly PC Penobscot Valley meetings at St. Mary's in Bangor continue to draw attendees from all of the surrounding parishes and area. Join us anytime you are in the area! Contact: Mary Ellen at 223-4992 or memquinn@peoplepc.com

Who are our members?

PCM has been reluctant to break off relations with old members and friends, but we need to hear from you occasionally! Member-ship in Pax Christi Maine (PCM) is achieved by residence in Maine, subscription to the purposes of Pax Christi Maine, a \$25 contribution (which may be waived) or membership in PCUSA, and submission of one's contact information, including email address. **The uniform dues renewal month is October.** Send membership information and dues to Mary Ellen Quinn, 91 Baker St., Winterport, ME 04496.

Name _____

Address _____

Town, State,
Zip _____

Email
address _____

Visit www.paxchristimaine.org

Visit paxchristiusa.org

Portland Pax Christi Focuses On Catholic Social Teaching

This fall, Portland Pax Christi has been meeting twice monthly for a discussion of Catholic social teaching, "the Church's best-kept secret." Materials from the USCCB and Minnesota, and several John Dear, SJ, statements and homilies on the Beatitudes have sparked discussion. Discussions will continue into 2011.

For Hiroshima Day, PPC prepared a letter to media, politicians, and arms manufacturers noting that no U.S. resort to arms in 50 years, all opposed by the peace movement, was found justifiable, and joined in August 6 and 9 vigils. Weekly Wednesday noon Monument Square protests of the Afghanistan war continue.

PPC has fronted for PCM's sponsorship of several programs in Portland. They include Dr. David Ray Griffin's talk, "Is the War in Afghanistan Justified by 9/11?" in May; Scott Hamann's account of his experience in the Gaza peace flotilla which was attacked by Israeli Defense Forces with several consequent deaths and assassinations, James Douglass's September talk on "JFK, Obama, and the Unspeakable," which traced Kennedy's movement from Cold Warrior to peace-maker and the assassination plot to stop him, and a December program on the lethal, crippling, and deforming effects of depleted uranium weapons dust on soldiers, civilians, and the unborn led by Herbert Reed and Gretel Munroe. Douglass, who runs a Catholic Worker house in Birmingham with his wife, Shelly, led a PCM retreat in the 1980s.

A Portland Peninsula cluster Peace Mass is scheduled for January 1 at Sacred Heart/St. Dominic Church.

To Form a New Pax Christi Group:

Pax Christi welcomes memberships but its work is very largely in small groups—in parishes, towns, commuting areas.

PCM can provide you a list of PC members within an hour of you. Contact Denise Dreher (south) or Mary Ellen Quinn (north) for assistance.

Call To Action Palestine Caucus Explodes

For several years, Bill Slavick has, as PCM coordinator, chaired caucuses on Palestine at Call To Action in Milwaukee. This November, the numbers attending exploded from 15-30 in previous years to 141, larger than many CTA program sessions.

May peace come to the Holy Land.

Pax Christi Maine
352 Granite St. Ext.
Biddeford, ME 04005

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exploded from 15-30 in previous years to 141, larger than many CTA pro-program sessions. His brief discussion of the situation and the unlikelihood of a peace settlement led to a lively discussion. Packets of materials were provided participants.

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