



J/P ALERT

CONFERENCE OF MAJOR SUPERIORS OF MEN JUSTICE AND PEACE OFFICE



March 2012 (*en español*)

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Religious Leaders Urge New Attention to Middle East Peace

WASHINGTON—The National Interreligious Leadership Initiative has voiced concern for efforts for Arab-Israeli-Palestinian Peace in a

statement issued March 1 and noted the plea “is more urgent than ever.”

The leaders of major Jewish, Christian and Muslim national religious organizations issued their statement March 1. Their full statement can be found at www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/global-issues/middle-east/upload/NILI-Statement-with-Endorsers-2012-03-01.pdf.

Signers included Bishop Richard E. Pates, Chairman, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on International Justice and Peace; Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, Archbishop Emeritus of Washington; and Bishop Denis J. Madden, Auxiliary Bishop of Baltimore.

The Leadership Initiative specifically called on the Administration, Congress and candidates for office to do the following:

- Address warnings to both sides to prevent violence, and undertake diplomatic efforts, in coordination with the Quartet, to help maintain a durable, effective ceasefire; all attacks on civilians must immediately end;
- Continue to support Palestinian state-building and economic development capacity, including immediately lifting the Congressional hold on humanitarian aid;
- Support Palestinian efforts to form a government capable of representing the West Bank and Gaza on the essential conditions that it agree to halt violence, respect all existing agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and negotiate a two-state peace agreement with Israel;
- Urge Israel to halt all settlement expansion, including in East Jerusalem; and
- Urge a resumption of negotiations for a two-state peace agreement, based on U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242, 338 and 1397, and drawing on elements from the Arab Peace Initiative (2002), the unofficial Israeli Peace Initiative (2011), and the Geneva Accord (2003) which might lead to an agreement acceptable to both sides.

The leaders also listed factors that make the peace in the Middle East of critical concern. They include

- Hopes and challenges related to the Arab Spring, including concerns for the rights of minorities;
- Aftermath of the war in Iraq, including challenges to Iraqi democracy and stability;

- Future of Afghanistan as the U.S./NATO role winds down;
- Tensions in U.S.-Pakistan relations;
- Deepening crisis in Syria; and
- Dangers of confrontation over Iran's nuclear development activities.

Irish Priest is the Latest Catholic Ecological Voice *[excerpts]*

By [Arthur Jones](#), *National Catholic Reporter*

[The complete text of this article can be found on the [NCR web site.](#)]

NAVAN, IRELAND -- There was a priest in America that Columban Fr. Seán McDonagh needed to see. McDonagh, recalled to the monastery in Navan, County Meath, Ireland, after several years in the Philippines, had himself routed through New York. It was 1980. Sent as a missionary to Mindanao in 1972, McDonagh had developed reforestation and land-use projects with the T'boli people. Standing up to the money interests was risky; a Passionist priest colleague, Carl Schmitt, had already been murdered "up in the mountains."

The New York priest that McDonagh was intent on meeting also was another Passionist, Fr. Thomas Berry. He'd agreed to meet in a diner, but not for long. Berry had an afternoon appointment.

Not long ago, McDonagh, his hand wrapped around a coffee mug in the Dalgan Park monastery kitchen at Navan, recalled that they talked for an hour, then two hours, then three.

...

Nine books and constant world travel later, McDonagh has never been more in demand. Not long after finishing his coffee, he had to pack for the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Durban, South Africa. In the previous 12 months he'd attended climate change and sustainable development meetings on two other continents, marked the "Year of the Forests" in Rome by reading a theology of trees to the major religious superiors, was a speaker at the Pacific Institute in Sydney, Australia, and received a global justice award.

He also finished a manuscript, *Nuclear Power Post-Fukushima*, and began the search for a publisher. The new book comes two decades after his *To Care for the Earth: A Call to a New Theology*, one of the first books in English on creation theology. Said McDonagh, "The theological framework we had was so static it wasn't taking into account what was happening on the planet.

...

As ecological issues adviser to the Columban Fathers, the work broadened -- into Third-World debt issues -- once he'd dodged a suggestion that he go to Rome for a doctorate in canon law. "That was my worst nightmare. Not the slightest interest in canon law, but I had a huge interest in anthropology, culture and faith, culture and linguistics and faith."

...

Back at his base in Ireland, McDonagh and the Columbans have turned Dalgan Park into an environmental education site, an impetus that's led to a master's in ecology and religion being offered at All Hallows College, part of Dublin City University. It's one way to counteract the fact that "there are not that many people in the church who are either knowledgeable or articulate on ecological issues. Yet modules like 'God and geology' and 'God and biodiversity' -- that's where the excitement is."

Just Peacemaking Initiative

The Challenge and Promise of Nonviolence for Our Time

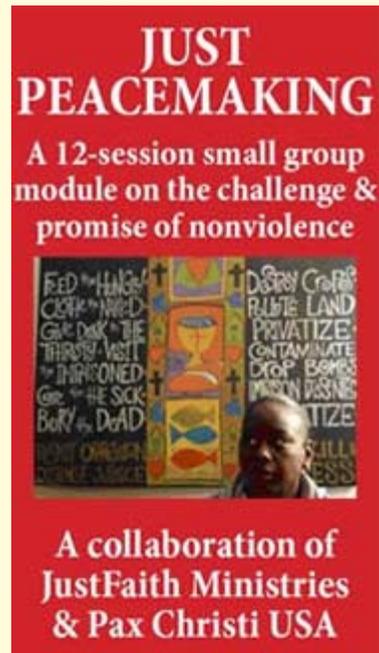
[Pax Christi USA](#) announces the completion of a new collaboration with [JustFaith Ministries](#). This new collaboration is a 12-session module for small groups, crafted by Pax Christi USA National Council member and author Scott Wright, with input and contributions from Marie Dennis, Pax Christi International Co-President; theologian and former PCUSA National Council member, Jeanette Rodriguez; Donna Grimes, Poverty Education and Outreach Manager at the USCCB's Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development and former PCUSA National Council member; Tom Cordaro, author and founding member of the Pax Christi USA Anti-Racism Team; and others....

The 12-session program explores the challenges and promises of justice-based peacemaking, and includes:

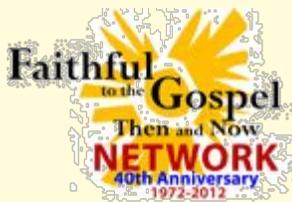
- Prayer
- Readings and discussion
- Four "film nights"
- A strong spirit of group dialog and interaction
- Immersion activities
- A call to organize a just peacemaking initiative locally

This module is broadly ecumenical and asks each and every participant to reflect deeply and to act locally, or, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi: "You must be the change you want to see in the world."

For a full description of the module, [click here](#).



NETWORK's Ministry of Justice



On December 17, 1971, 47 Catholic Sisters from across the U.S. involved in education, healthcare, community organizing and other direct service gathered at Trinity College in Washington DC to shape a new ministry of justice. This came at a time when the Catholic Church was undergoing dramatic changes in response to Vatican II reforms and calls from the Vatican and U.S. Bishops to seek "Justice in the World." Women religious

boldly joined in the waves of civil rights, feminist and anti-war activism that were sweeping the U.S.

During their weekend meeting, they voted to form a national "network" of Sisters to lobby for federal policies and legislation that promote economic and social justice. To get their organization off the ground, they passed a bag and collected \$185, and in April 1972 they opened a two-person office in Washington. Soon thereafter, the Conference of Major Superiors of Women Religious (now the Leadership Conference of Women Religious) voted its strong support of [NETWORK](#), passing the resolution by a wide margin.

Throughout the 1970s, NETWORK's first home and staff residence served as a center for Washington-area Catholic peace and justice activism, with Saturday-night liturgies that drew activists from near and far. The justice agenda was far-reaching, ranging from global hunger to nuclear weapons and women's rights. NETWORK's famous legislative seminars drew hundreds of participants and presenters who included prominent Members of Congress (e.g., Senators Ted Kennedy, Adlai Stevenson, Barbara Mikulski, Walter Mondale and Joseph Biden) and other luminaries like Fr. Bryan Hehir.

NETWORK's impact continued to strengthen in the years that followed. In January 2001, President William Clinton presented the Presidential Citizens Medal, our nation's second highest civilian honor, to one of our founders and first Executive Director, Sr. Carol Coston. She was the first Catholic Sister ever to receive this award. During his remarks, President Clinton noted that "...she helped to create NETWORK, a national Catholic lobby that has mobilized thousands of nuns and lay people to fight for social progress in South Africa, for women's rights and for economic justice. She helped to win passage of the Community Reinvestment Act, which has led to billions of dollars in investment in our inner cities...."

In the four decades since the 47 Sisters' vision first became reality, NETWORK has grown into what it is today – a vibrant testimony to that vision. Many thousands of NETWORK members and activists work to ensure that our justice advocacy continues to influence and inspire our elected officials, and our work is recognized by the media and public officials. For example, during the 2010 healthcare reform struggle, NETWORK Executive Director Simone Campbell, SSS, wrote the "nuns' letter" supporting the bill and got 59 signers on the letter, including LCWR.

She was thanked by President Obama and invited to the ceremony celebrating its being signed into law.

Today, NETWORK is also highly visible and active on other critical issues such as peacemaking, comprehensive immigration reform, housing, poverty, federal budget priorities, trade and hunger. It is because of the continued involvement of hundreds of congregations of women religious and thousands of individual Sisters, as well as that of parishes, small faith communities, religious congregations of brothers and priests, and thousands of individual activists that NETWORK continues to be effective AND faithful to its mission of lobbying, organizing and educating for a nation and world rooted in justice.

The Roundtable's Social Action Summer Institute



ROUNDTABLE

ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC DIOCESAN
SOCIAL ACTION DIRECTORS

Information is now available for this year's [Social Action Summer Institute \(SASI\)](#).

Join social action ministers from across the country for a four-day institute: **Called to Transformative Community: Addressing Poverty Today**. The SASI will feature many engaging speakers including David Beckmann, President of [Bread for the World](#); Jack Jezreel and Joe Grant of [JustFaith Ministries](#); Fr. John Rausch, Director of the [Catholic Commission on Appalachia](#); sessions on international & domestic poverty by staff of [Catholic Charities USA](#), [Catholic Relief Services](#) and [USCCB-JPHD](#); and more.

****Additionally, JustFaith Ministries will host a day of visioning for social justice ministry and transformative learning****

For more program details, visit the [SASI webpage](#) or see the attached flyer. A press release is also attached to share with your diocesan newspapers and others.

Join us July 29-Aug 1, 2012 | Bellarmine University | Louisville, KY

Cost information is coming soon. [Limited scholarships are available](#).

Ecumenical Advocacy Days, March 23-26, 2012



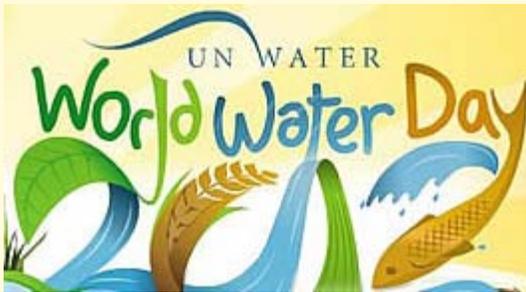
[Come to the 10th Annual EAD, March 23-26, 2012, in Washington, DC](#), where we will explore Economy, Livelihood and Our National Priorities through the lens of Isaiah 58. Join other Christians in seeking a global economy and a national budget that break the yokes of injustice, poverty, hunger and unemployment throughout the world -- heeding Isaiah's call to become "repairers of the breach and restorers of streets to live in."

[Register Here Online Now](#) or [Download the EAD Brochure and Registration Form](#)

In a global economy based on scarcity, corporate greed, and individualism, we will seek God's alternative vision for global community: one that breaks the chains of injustice and creates the possibility of a sustainable livelihood with dignity for all, thus living into a reality of God's abundance.

Come to "*Is This the Fast I Seek?*," EAD's Tenth Anniversary Celebration, March 23-26, 2012, in Washington, DC, and help shape our national priorities. Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice is sponsored by the ecumenical Christian community and is grounded in biblical witness and our shared tradition of justice, peace and integrity of creation. Our goal is to strengthen our Christian voice and mobilize for advocacy on specific U.S. domestic and international policy issues.

World Water Day



[International World Water Day](#) is held annually on 22 March as a means of focusing attention on the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources.

An international day to celebrate freshwater was recommended at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). The United Nations General Assembly responded by designating 22 March 1993 as the first World Water Day.

There are 7 billion people to feed on the planet today and another 2 billion are expected to join by 2050. Statistics say that each of us drinks from 2 to 4 liters of water every day, however most of the water we 'drink' is embedded in the food we eat: producing 1 kilo of beef for example consumes 15,000 liters of water while 1 kilo of wheat 'drinks up' 1,500 liters.

When a billion people in the world already live in chronic hunger and water resources are under pressure we cannot pretend the problem is 'elsewhere.'

CMSM



- *assists major superiors in their role as leaders;*
- *promotes dialogue and collaboration with the conference of bishops and other major groups in church and society;*
- *provides a corporate influence in church and society.*

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It is also sent to justice and peace directors of CMSM member organizations,
and to others who have expressed an interest.
If you fall into the last category and no longer wish to receive this newsletter,
send an e-mail to postmaster@cmsm.org and you will be removed from the list.