



# J/P ALERT

CONFERENCE OF MAJOR SUPERIORS OF MEN JUSTICE AND PEACE OFFICE



December 2010

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## *Archbishop Dolan, Bishop Hubbard Voice Bishops' Support for Ratification of Nuclear Arms Reduction Treaty*

WASHINGTON-The new president of the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) (USCCB) and the chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace have urged the United States

Senate to ratify the New START Treaty. The treaty, signed by President Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on April 8, would reduce the nuclear arsenals of both countries by 30 percent.

"The Church's concern for nuclear weapons grows out of its commitment to the sanctity of human life," wrote Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, New York, in a November 29 letter to the Senate. "Consistent with Catholic teaching, the Holy See and the U.S. bishops have long supported reducing the number of nuclear armaments, preventing their spread to other nations, and securing nuclear materials from terrorists. For decades they have promoted the twin and interrelated policy goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We understand this is an ideal that will take years to reach, but it is a task which our nation must take up with renewed energy."

Bishop Hubbard chairs the bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace.

Archbishop Timothy Dolan, the recently elected president of the USCCB, said, "I renew and reemphasize the position taken by my predecessor, Cardinal Francis George, that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is 'a steadfast supporter of strong and bipartisan action on the new START Treaty.'"

Full text of Bishop Hubbard's letter follows.

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I urge the Senate to ratify the New START Treaty during the lame duck session. Last April our Conference welcomed the signing of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) between the United States and the Russian Federation and joined the Holy See in calling for its ratification.

As bishops, we are pastors and teachers, not technical experts. We cannot

comment on every technical aspect of the pending Treaty, but we can offer moral direction and encouragement. Both the Holy See and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops support the New START Treaty because it is a modest step toward a world with greater respect for human life.

Ratification of the New START Treaty is critical because verification ensures transparency and transparency builds trust. The earlier verification and monitoring requirements expired one year ago. Without a new treaty there is no verification requirement in place, a disturbing and potentially dangerous situation our nation has not faced in decades.

The Church's concern for nuclear weapons grows out of its commitment to the sanctity of human life. This commitment led to the development of just war criteria, including the principles of discrimination and proportionality. Nuclear weapons are a grave threat to human life and dignity. Nuclear war is rejected in Church teaching because the use of nuclear weapons cannot ensure noncombatant immunity and their destructive potential and lingering radiation cannot be meaningfully proportionate. Pope Benedict XVI said in a January 2006 statement, "In a nuclear war there would be no victors, only victims."

Consistent with Catholic teaching, the Holy See and the U.S. bishops have long supported reducing the number of nuclear armaments, preventing their spread to other nations, and securing nuclear materials from terrorists. For decades they have promoted the twin and interrelated policy goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We understand this is an ideal that will take years to reach, but it is a task which our nation must take up with renewed energy.

The New START Treaty is important for international efforts to address nonproliferation. The "grand bargain" of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was that states with nuclear weapons would work on disarmament, states without nuclear weapons would not acquire them, and all states would have access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Cooperation within the international community is essential for securing nuclear weapons and materials, and deterring other countries from developing their own arsenals. With fewer nuclear weapons in the world, the likelihood of one falling into terrorist hands is reduced and countries are more likely to cooperate in enforcing nonproliferation demands and controlling the supply of nuclear materials.

Military experts and former national leaders have come together across party lines to support the New START Treaty. Leaders from both parties, diplomats, and military experts argue that the Treaty does not constrain U.S. missile defense and that announced investments in our nation's nuclear weapons infrastructure will keep our nuclear deterrent safe and reliable.

The U.S. Bishops' Conference is urging strong bipartisan support for the New START Treaty because the Treaty makes our nation and world safer by reducing nuclear weapons in a verifiable way. We urge the Senate to take up the New START Treaty without delay.

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard Bishop of Albany Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace

*Redemptorist fears for the future of Iraqi Catholics*

Martin Barillas, Spero News

"Iraqi Christians are now terrified and in shock. They are faced with a terrible dilemma: emigrate and save the lives of their loved ones, or stay in the country and witness to the faith, risking death." This was according to Fr. Vincent Van Vossel, CSsR., Superior of the Redemptorists order of Catholic priests in Baghdad, after the massacre that took place October 31 in the Syrian Catholic Church of Our Lady of Salvation.

Terrorists linked to al Qaeda stormed the church, immediately killed both priests at the altar, and took the congregation hostage. Iraqi security forces stormed the church to free the hostages, but not before the terrorists detonated explosive suicide vests and fragmentation bombs. Reports are that 58 deaths resulted in the incident, while there were 70 wounded.

Fr. Vincent, who has lived in Iraq for 40 years and teaches at Babel College in Baghdad, the college affiliated with the Pontifical Urban University, has issued a heartfelt testimony to Fides: "We are living something that is really terrible. There had never been a massacre of such magnitude, all within a church during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. I have visited the church and listened to the testimonies of the faithful in shock. The terrorists mercilessly killed women and children. The community is traumatized. The church looked like a cemetery."

The Christian community in Baghdad lost two young priests of the Syro-Catholic rite, Fr. Wasim Sabieh and Fr. Thayer Saad Abdal, while a third priest, Chorepiscop Fr. Rufail Quataimi, is still in the hospital in serious condition. "What a tragedy! The two priests who died, not yet in their thirties, were my students at the College. They were very active in Bible apostolate, in interfaith dialogue, and charity. Fr. Thayer was in charge of a Center for Islamic Studies, and Fr. Wasim was very involved in helping poor families. We will miss them," says Fr. Vincent.

The priest recalls that "yesterday a number of attacks hit Baghdad and Shiite areas, which means that not only Christians are under attack, but the whole area is flooded by terrorism. It is hard to see a hopeful future for the nation right now," he says. "We do not know who is behind these acts, nor where the nation is headed. Meanwhile, the people suffer. There are such great evils that beset the country."

Hence, the dilemma for Christians: "The faithful say their life has become impossible. Many Christian families are organizing themselves to leave the country. The excruciating dilemma is whether to flee in search of a better future, or stay, risking their lives. In this tragic moment, the Bishops have a great responsibility to speak to the faithful, to give their reasons and hopes, to convince them to stay. The task of our pastors, today, is very difficult," he remarked.

[An interview with Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda, CSsR, of Iraq, is available in [Scala](#), the Redemptorist newsletter.]

## ***Bishops Commend House Resolution Seeking Protection for Religious Minorities in Iraq***

WASHINGTON-The U.S. bishops commended a resolution in the House of Representatives that condemns recent attacks on religious minorities in Iraq and calls for the U.S. government to work with the Iraqi government to protect these vulnerable groups.

In a November 29 letter to the sponsors of House Resolution 1725, Bishop Howard Hubbard of Albany, New York, chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on International Justice and Peace, and Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, co-adjutor archbishop of Los Angeles and chairman of the USCCB Committee on Migration, called for its immediate passage.

The resolution was introduced November 18 by Representative Chris Smith (R-NJ) and co-sponsored by Representatives Frank Wolf (R-VA), Anna G. Eshoo (D-CA), Mark S. Kirk (R-IL), Gary C. Peters (D-MI), Joseph Pitts (R-PA), and Trent Franks (R-AZ).

"Our conference welcomes this bipartisan resolution as a way to focus attention on the situation of the vulnerable religious communities in Iraq," the bishops wrote. "In particular," they added, "we support the emphasis on developing a comprehensive plan to improve security for religious minorities and to increase their representation in the Government of Iraq and to include them in all aspects of Iraqi society."

In their letter, the bishops referenced the recent attack in Our Lady of Salvation Church in Baghdad. "The October 31 attack on worshippers in Our Lady of Salvation Church in Baghdad that killed 58 and wounded 75 and the continuing violence against Christians are horrific reminders of the appalling lack of security that has condemned many in Iraq to live in fear," the bishops said. The House resolution condemns the attack against Our Lady of Salvation Church.

The bishops also welcomed the resolution's concern for Iraqi refugees and supported its call for measures to accelerate the review of their applications for resettlement and to improve conditions on the ground so that refugees may safely return to Iraq.

"We sincerely hope that H. Res. 1725 will be adopted quickly by the House of Representatives as we believe it will help improve security for all Iraqis, especially Christians and other vulnerable minorities," the bishops said. "We hope it will contribute to the overall goal of achieving a responsible transition that will reduce further loss of life and address the refugee crisis in Iraq."

## ***[Project of Solidarity with Haiti \(Canadian Religious Conference\)](#)***

A delegation composed of general superiors from Quebec and Ontario who have sisters in Haiti and/or in solidarity with Haiti is currently preparing a meeting with representatives of the Haitian Conference of Religious (CHR). The following are the objectives for the meeting:

- Collectively express our solidarity with members of our communities and with members of other communities through the Haitian Conference of Religious;
- Try to better understand the realities of the country, the Church, and Consecrated Life;
- Commit together to a mystico-prophetic reflection on Consecrated Life in the context of great distress like that experienced by Haiti;
- Find opportunities for concerted responses, sensitive to their reality, which would be inspiring testimony.

The project, born from a reflection that began in Rome last May during the [International Union of Superiors General](#) (UISG) assembly, is being coordinated by Sr. Kesta Occident, CSC, in close collaboration with the CHR and a planning committee for this meeting of solidarity. About twenty people from this country, including a delegate from the CRC, will participate on the project from December 15 to 19, 2010. They will be accompanied in their reflections by committed, Haitian resource people: theologians, sociologists... and representatives of the national Church. On site reception will be assured by various religious congregations.

Those participating in the project hope that the meeting will be a witness to the solidarity of religious life here with communities in Haiti, with the Church and with the people, and that a common movement can be realised between the congregations for more concerted apostolic actions.

In the Spirit that animates us, we ask for your prayers and your solidarity. Assured of your

communion, we can move forward together in hope.

For the Committee,  
Pierrette Bertrand, OFSJ  
Montreal, November 9, 2010

## *National Migration Week 2011*



Renewing Hope, Seeking Justice is the primary theme for the 2011 National Migration Week, held January 2-8. The observance began over a quarter century ago by the bishops to provide Catholics an opportunity to take stock of the wide diversity of the Church and the ministries serving them. As the face of the local churches continue to change, these materials are becoming increasingly important. The materials created for National Migration Week also provide an important educational resource that can be used throughout the year by individuals, families, schools, and parishes to learn about the complex issues surrounding migration.

Following the lead of Pope Benedict XVI, who is focusing on migrant families for his [2011 World Day of Migrants and Refugees message](#), the bishops have decided to focus on the family as a sub-theme this year. Included in this year's new material is a poster, a prayer card, and a bulletin insert that focuses on the stresses and strains that migration has on families and the affect that economic underdevelopment has in this process. In coordination with The Catholic University of America, a new educational website will focus on the important role that the Catholic Church has played in the area of refugee resettlement for nearly seven decades. In addition, you can always find material from past years and new material that we will add over the coming months. We hope that these resources will provide help to teachers, directors of religious education and others interested in this issue.

We invite you to download these resources directly from our website at [www.usccb.org/mrs/nmw/](http://www.usccb.org/mrs/nmw/) or you can order them in bulk for a nominal price through the USCCB publishing office.

To purchase National Migration Week material, please contact USCCB publishing at 800-235-8722 or visit their website at [www.usccbpublishing.org](http://www.usccbpublishing.org) to browse Migration and Refugee Services material.

## *Jesuit Refugee Service Celebrates 30 Years*

On November, 14, 1980, Jesuits moved to meet the humanitarian and education needs of the Vietnamese boat people, and [Jesuit Refugee Service](#) (JRS) was born. Today, the number of forcibly displaced persons worldwide has increased from 16 to 45 million.

Thirty years have passed since the initial vision of Jesuit Father Pedro Arrupe (pictured below)-JRS's founding father and the former superior general of the Society of Jesus-and JRS has grown into an international humanitarian organization. JRS has projects in 51 countries worldwide and has dramatically increased the scale and scope of its services to include education, emergency assistance, health care and human rights protection, serving more than half a million refugees.

"Accompaniment is the heart of this approach.



Our place is close to refugees, being touched by their reality: in camps, conflict zones, detention centers... on the margins of society. This closeness teaches us how best to serve and advocate on behalf of refugees and promote justice and reconciliation," explained JRS International Director, Jesuit Father Peter Balleis.

JRS places the highest priority on ensuring a future for refugees by investing in education and training. Worldwide, JRS provides primary, secondary, third level and vocational education services to approximately 280,000

children, young people and adults each year. In partnership with refugees and based on solid research, JRS tries to address the root causes of forced displacement. JRS works to empower refugees and host communities to defend their human rights, promoting harmony and dignity.

## *Franciscan Action Network Hires New Executive Director*

November 17, 2010

Washington, DC - The [Franciscan Action Network](#), (FAN) is pleased to announce the hiring of Patrick Carolan as its new Executive Director.

FAN is a grassroots, faith-based civic engagement organization with a growing national base of organizations and persons who are inspired by the witness and example of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi. The Franciscan Action Network is designed to bring a coordinated and effective voice to matters of Justice, Peace and Care for Creation in our world. According to FAN Board of Directors President Margaret Mary Kimmins, OSF: "After conducting an extensive national search the Board is pleased to bring Mr. Carolan, who has a wealth of experience in administration, public policy, leadership and fund raising combined with a strong Catholic faith tradition and a Franciscan heart on board as Executive Director. We are looking forward to working with Patrick."

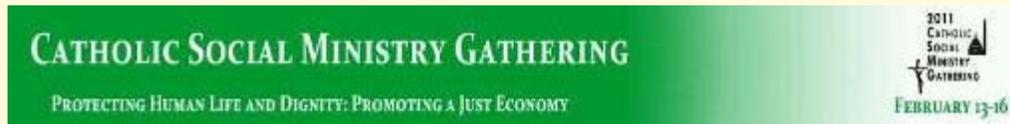


Mr. Carolan currently resides in Stratford, CT, with his wife and children. He currently works for the Diocese of Bridgeport as Manager of Advancement/Development for the Stamford Catholic Schools and at St. James Parish in Stratford where he is involved in developing Faith Formation and Social Justice Programs. Previously he has served as president of a Connecticut State Employee Union, has held senior/executive level positions in Medicaid Managed Care companies and has served on numerous boards and commissions both in Connecticut and nationally, dealing with public policy issues.

Sr. Margaret Mary also offered thanks and gratitude on behalf of the Board to Father Larry Janezic, OFM, who is concluding his term as Interim Executive Director and is preparing to return to pastoral work in a parish in Indianapolis, IN. According to Sr. Margaret Mary:

"Father Larry helped FAN grow to a nationally recognized action network. We are sorry to see him leave and wish him God's peace."

## *2011 Catholic Social Ministry Gathering*



### *Protecting Human Life and Dignity: Promoting a Just Economy*

Join us at the [Catholic Social Ministry Gathering](#) as 19 leading Catholic national organizations explore common issues and concerns of global and domestic policy on human life, justice and peace that challenge our nation and world. Join Catholic social ministry leaders from across the United States.

#### **Gathering meeting schedule:**

Sunday, February 13, 2011, 4 p.m. - Wednesday, February 16, 2011, 2 p.m.

#### **Pre-Gathering meeting schedule:**

February 11, 2011 - Sunday, February 13, 2011

#### **NEW!**

#### **Step 1. Register for the meeting**

[Click here for on-line registration](#)

Early Registration fees are \$260.00 from November 2010 through December 17, 2010

Standard Registration fees increase to \$310.00 from December 18, 2010 through January 20, 2011

Additional fees may apply for Pre-Gathering meetings (formerly wrap-arounds)

#### **Step 2. Book your hotel room**

Participants must make their own hotel reservations - call 1-888-444-OMNI (6664) use the discounted group code 12400609632 or go online to [Omni Shoreham Hotel](#).

Contact CSMG Reservations with questions at [csmg@usccb.org](mailto:csmg@usccb.org) or 1-877-247-0449.

### *For the Peace of Jerusalem: a national Christian campaign*



Support Faith in Peace...

[Send a Christmas Card to the President](#)

Today the peace process is failing, obstructed by obstacles both daunting and superficial. But we are calling for its revival now. We believe that peace in the Holy Land is vital, it is urgent, and it is possible.

We, as Christians across the United States, are taking up our role as peacemakers to work for peace in the historic Holy Land. During this season of Advent, the time of anticipation of Christ's birth and God coming to dwell among us through the birth of a child, we are calling on you to join us in working for the birth of peace.



What can you do? [Send a Christmas card to President](#)

[Obama](#)! Join thousands of Christians across the United States in wishing the president a joyous Christmas and telling him that you believe in peace, you expect peace with justice and security for all, and you expect it soon.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. - Isaiah 9:6

[For the Peace of Jerusalem: Christians for Israeli-Palestinian Peace Now](#) is a national campaign calling on people of Christian faith across the country to work for a just and secure peace for Israelis and Palestinians in the Holy Land. The campaign's launch on December 1, 2010 is especially timely given the U.S. administration's focus on direct negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian leadership, the challenges these talks have already faced, and the important role of the Holy Land in this season's celebrations of Christ's birth. Find out more about the campaign and its members at [www.PeaceofJerusalem.org](http://www.PeaceofJerusalem.org).

The campaign is organized by [Churches for Middle East Peace](#), a 26-year old coalition of coalition of 24 national Church denominations and organizations, including Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant traditions. It works to encourage U.S. government policies that actively promote a just, lasting and comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, ensuring security, human rights and religious freedom for all people of the region. For more information visit [www.cmep.org](http://www.cmep.org).

**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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and to others who have expressed an interest.

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