

PAX CHRISTI AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

KIA TAU TE RANGIMARIE KI A TAATOU KATO A / WORKING FOR PEACE FOR ALL EVERYWHERE



This month's news...



The Catholic Nonviolence
Initiative

Pax Christi on the road again
by Kevin McBride

Book Launches in
November

Tēnā koutou katoa

November has mainly been about 'war and peace'. The 100th anniversary of Armistice on the 11th month, at the 11th hour of the end of World War 1 is a remembrance of the sheer relief of the people, primarily located in Europe at the time. The hope that the guns will fall silent and then the jubilation and dawning realisation that it is finally over. For the soldiers on the battlefield, description of that time, was of numbness to begin with and the relief that it was over...they had made it.

Peace can be such an elusive concept...the destruction of lives, the post traumatic stress of the generations to come. Another war, and more destruction and damage both physically and mentally. When will we, humanity, learn that violent solutions through war, does not bring peace?

In this month's newsletter, we cover the 'Catholic Nonviolence Initiative', a project of Pax Christi International that promotes nonviolence and just peace strategies. This initiative was one of the main talking points for Greet Vanaerschot's presentations throughout New Zealand late last month and into November. It is an initiative that we need to encourage all civil society groups and Nation States to adopt... only then, maybe we can have true peace.

The Catholic Nonviolence Initiative

The Catholic Nonviolence Initiative affirms that active nonviolence is at the heart of the vision and message of Jesus, the life of the Catholic Church and the long-term vocation of healing and reconciling both people and planet. This initiative was launched during the Nonviolence and Just Peace Conference in Rome in 2016. A summary of the final statement to come out of this conference calls on the Church to:

- Continue developing Catholic Social Teaching on Nonviolence.
- Integrate Gospel nonviolence explicitly into the life, including the sacramental life and work of the Church.
- Promote nonviolent practices and strategies.
- Initiate a global conversation on nonviolence within the church; with other faiths and the wider community.
- No longer use or teach the just war theory.
- Lift up the prophetic voice of the church to challenge unjust world

powers and to support and defend those nonviolent activists whose work for peace and justice put their lives at risk.

To read the full statement that came out of the Rome conference go to www.nonviolencejustpeace.net/final-statement-an-appeal-to-the-catholic-church-to-re-commit-to-the-centrality-of-gospel-nonviolence/.

Bridget Crisp



Pax Christi on the road again

by Kevin McBride

The recent visit of Pax Christi International Secretary-General, Greet Vanaerschot, and Communications Director, Johnny Zokovitch, to New Zealand provided an opportunity to follow up on last May's tour of diocesan Justice and Peace Commissions and to further develop cooperation in the work of justice and peace in the nation and regionally. The beginning of this journey followed a well-attended Pax Christi meeting in Auckland on Sunday (28 October) and visit to the Seminary, on Monday, by Greet and Johnny with local Pax Christi members to meet with Bishop Peter Cullinane (retired), Co-Patron of Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand. On Tuesday 30th October, Bridget Crisp with Johnny in one car, and Kevin and Barbara McBride with Greet in another, set off for Turangi via multiple routes to the first stop Tirau and then Orakei Korako, for a visit to the thermal area. One of the geysers played for them as we left, adding to a unique experience, particularly for Belgium-based Greet.

From Turangi, we traveled across the Desert Road, where Ruapehu shrugged off its cloud long enough for photos and then on to Palmerston North, where we met Bishop Drennan. That evening, Greet spoke of Pax Christi's international work to a gathering which included Emeritus Bishop Owen Dolan as well as Bishop Drennan. The following day, it was on the road again to Wellington where we were hosted at the Home of Compassion in Island Bay. We took some time to view Wellington in a southerly then had the rest of the day to relax and prepare for presentations at Peace Movement Aotearoa's "National Peace Workshops", commencing on the Friday.

Friday was spent in meetings with Cardinal Dew, Caritas staff and various justice-oriented group leaders before the opening of the peace workshops that evening.

The next two days saw us participating in and presenting to a variety of workshops covering national, international and regional issues. Greet and Kevin McBride gave presentations on Pax Christi International (focusing on the Catholic Non-violence Initiative) and Pax Christi Aotearoa-New Zealand respectively. After the Workshops closed mid-afternoon on Sunday, we farewelled Bridget, who was returning to Auckland, and boarded the "Kaiarahi" for the 8 pm crossing to Picton. Unfortunately, we couldn't show Greet and Johnny much of Cook Strait or the Picton Sounds, but the crossing was very smooth, which suited Greet.



Johnny, Barbara, Greet and Kevin at the Desert Road Lookout in front of Ruapehu. Image: B Crisp.

Pax Christi on the road again cont...

The following morning, we enjoyed a late breakfast in Picton then set off to traverse the newly-repaired coastal road through Kaikoura to Christchurch. Frequent stops allowed us to see a lot of the damage caused by the earthquakes and, when we got to Kaikoura, to enjoy lunch and the spectacular views on a glorious early summer day. Tuesday provided another stunning day, so we took Greet and Johnny through the Botanic Gardens and earthquake-damaged Christchurch CBD, then around the Summit Road to Lyttleton where we had lunch. The last presentation, at St Mary's Pro-Cathedral, was before some long-term justice and peace veterans; ending a very successful series which introduced Greet and Johnny to the New Zealand peace environment and gave local engaged people and groups a deeper understanding of Pax Christi's work at international and regional levels. It will lead to greater understanding and positive cooperation among both groups. We are most grateful to all those who worked locally to provide hospitality and meetings and above all to Greet and Johnny for their visit and their efforts to bring this most distant outpost of the Pax Christi movement into closer relations with its international partners.

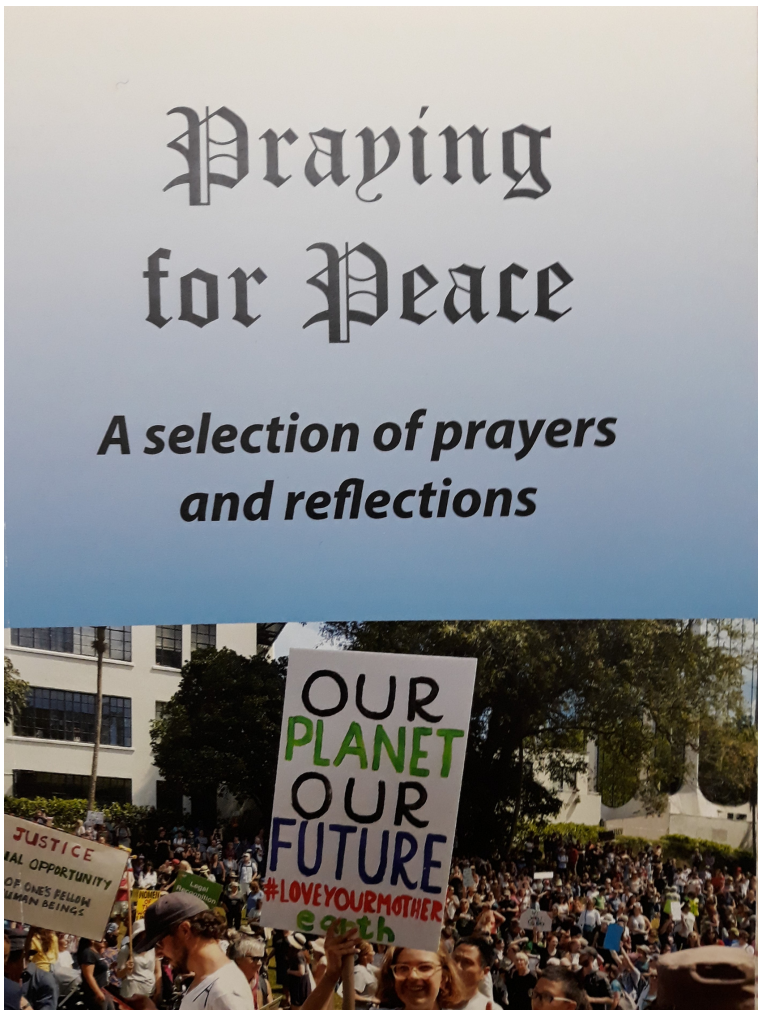
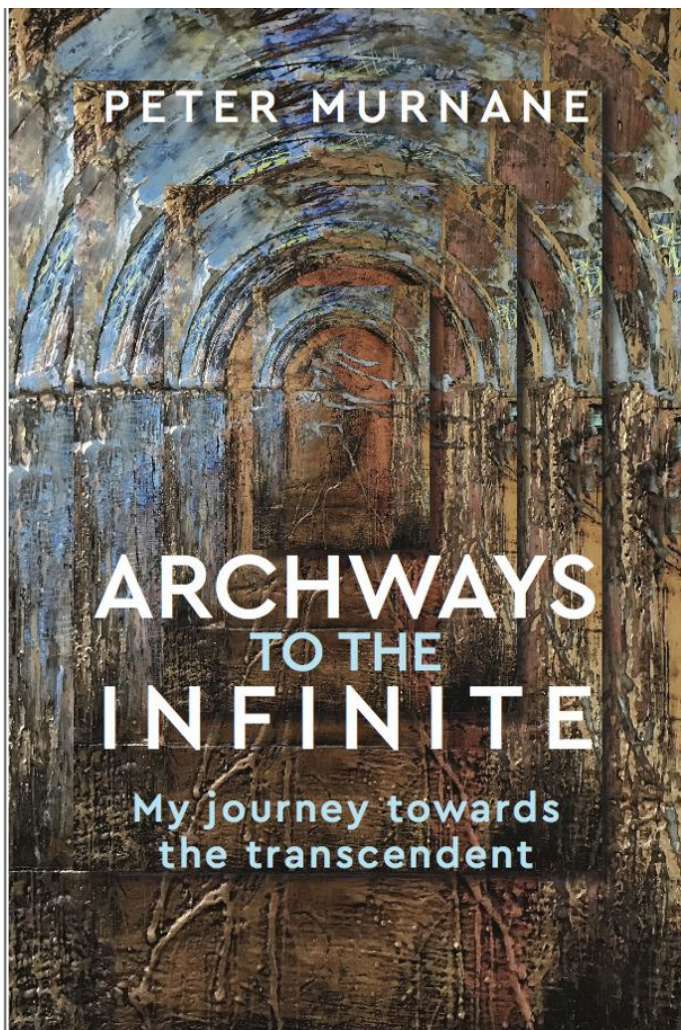
The images are from the top: Greet lighting candle during the Peace Movement Aotearoa Conference; meeting with Bishop Charles Drennan, Palmerston North Diocese (both images by John Zokovitch, Pax Christi International). The final image is getting an elusive shot of the person behind the camera: John (Johnny) Zokovitch, Communications Director for Pax Christi International. Image: B Crisp.



Book Launches in November

If you happen to be in Auckland, please support the following book launches....

The Peace Place is hosting a book launch of **'Archways to the Infinite: My Journey towards the transcendent'**, by **Fr. Peter Murnane OP**. The launch will happen at the **Peace Place (2F/22 Emily Place), Auckland on Thursday 22nd of November at 7pm**. Special book launch price of \$32 (or online through Pleuroma).



Pax Christi Aotearoa launches **'Praying for Peace: A selection prayers and reflections'** on **Monday November 26th , St Columba Center at 7pm**. Book cost will be \$20

Pax Christi

Aotearoa New Zealand

Pax Christi is an independent Catholic social justice organisation. We work hard to address issues of peace and justice at a local, regional and global level.

If you want to know more about Pax Christi, to join meetings, or to set up group meetings in your area, please contact paxnz@xtra.co.nz or ring 09 377 5541.

Pax Christi relies on volunteers & donations to enable the work to continue.

To make an online donation our a/c name and number is:
Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand
03-01730353-867-00
Please contact us for a receipt.
Your support is greatly appreciated.

An update on the situation in Nauru.

According to UNICEF, refugee and asylum seeker children on Nauru are being brought over to Australia for medical treatment. Although a good step, it does not go far enough as these children have no legal status - thus their future is uncertain. Pressure on the Australian Government needs to be maintained to provide a plan of relocation of all refugees that ensures their dignity and rights.

Source Material: unicef.org.au

DIARY DATES

- 22nd Nov Book launch of 'Archways to the Infinite' by Fr Peter Murnane OP.
- 25th Nov Elimination of Violence towards Women.
- 26th Nov Book launch of 'Praying for Peace: A Selection of Prayers & Reflections'. (Pax Christi Aotearoa Initiative).
- 29th Nov International day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.
- 2nd Dec International day for the Abolition of Slavery.
- 12th Dec AGM of Pax Christi Aotearoa
The Peace Place, Auckland
5pm

Next month's newsletter will be for both December and January. Anybody wanting to contribute please send your contributions to bridget.crisp@xtra.co.nz or to paxnz@xtra.co.nz.

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Newsletter template: canva.com
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