

PAX CHRISTI AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

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

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Tēnā koutou katoa

Peace, I sometimes think is elusive. An ideal constantly strived for, but difficult to maintain. I make this comment in the context of the following:

- -The signing from the 50th member state of the Treaty of the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The elimination of weapons of mass destruction is now in sight!
- Violence has recently erupted in Philadelphia following another police killing of a black man; violent attacks resulting in death in France; regional tensions globally continue to escalate as vulnerable peoples continue to be exploited or have their human rights impinged on.
- Finally, COVID-19 continues to impact on all global peoples causing fear and creating rising tension as governments put in place measures to try and control the virus.

The flames of hope for peace occasionally burn bright, but sometimes is so low that it can be easily overlooked. We need to think of times of personal action, personal witness, and moments we have seen others operate for the common good and the dignity of all. Only then will this fan the flames to spread and surround the world a peace that is solid and true. Kia kaha.

Bridget Crisp rsm

Police Raid Disquieting

by Kevin McBride



The recent raid by police on the homes of two humanitarian workers, one of them a Presbyterian minister, apparently on the grounds of their work in North Korea gives grounds for concern to all groups wishing to work for peace for all everywhere. For such groups, there is no “us and them” but instead a common humanity in need of humanitarian support.

There may have been a time when New Zealand was engaged through regional military alliances in conflict with North Korea, but that conflict, though still unresolved, is more than 50 years in the past; what remains for the losing side of that conflict, is an ongoing need for support in the provision of fundamental needs arising from their continuing widespread poverty.

Recently, funds have been raised to help provide testing gear and protective equipment to counter the effects of the Covid virus, something more difficult for North Korea under ongoing sanctions. Knowing some of the principals involved in this work, we have no doubt that they would be applied with integrity.

If there is anything to fear about the current regime there, history tells us that its leaders will remain in power the longer that they can claim to be saving the country from outside invaders. Dialogue and negotiation will bring about equitable relationships much faster than will continued isolation and aggression. It is not always easy to find positive aspects about such afflictions but the possibility of finding a common purpose in addressing this pestilence is much more likely to bring about reconciliation than is continuing hostility.

Aotearoa-New Zealand has an enviable regard for our readiness to assist in humanitarian crises; we would do far better to follow that instinct than to give way to pressure related to security-related alliances founded on the preservation of military ascendancy.

Peace Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

by Kevin McBride

In his latest encyclical, “Fratelli Tutti”, Pope Francis reflects on the breakdown of social relationships which has led us into a crisis in relationships which threatens the peace and security we have come to hope for. Alongside today’s great technological and scientific advances “there exists a moral deterioration that influences international action and a weakening of spiritual values and responsibility (that) contributes to a general feeling of frustration, isolation and desperation ... outbreaks of tension and a build-up of arms and ammunition in a global context dominated by uncertainty, disillusionment, fear of the future and controlled by narrow economic interests.” Basing his reflection on the parable of the Good Samaritan, he calls us to move beyond our closed, selfish world to a new, open world, where we move beyond ourselves to a world of “associates, partners in the pursuit of particular interests” which transcends borders and develops in us a “heart open to the whole world”, a world based on dialogue and friendship, truth, kindness and forgiveness, where “each one of us is called to be an artisan of peace, by uniting and not dividing, by extinguishing hatred and not holding on to it, by opening paths of dialogue and not by constructing new walls.” Pope Francis concludes his reflection by saying that he “felt inspired particularly by St Francis of Assisi but also by others of our brothers and sisters... Martin Luther King, Desmond Tutu, Mahatmas Gandhi and many more. “

He might well have mentioned two peacemakers from our own land, Tohu Kakahi and Te Whiti o Rongomau, whose settlement at Parihaka gave inspiration to some of the above and many who followed them. The coming anniversary of the invasion and dispersal of their community on 5 November, gives us again an opportunity to reflect on their aspirations and their effect on so many who continue to seek and work for peace for all everywhere.



The David Wakim Lecture 2020: John Minto: 'Telling Lies about Palestine'

This year's lecture was given by John Minto, well known political activist and national chair of the Palestinian Solidarity Network Aotearoa.

John's topic of discussion on Thursday 8th October was about the lobbying done on behalf of the State of Israel by pro-Israeli lobby groups. Perceptions of Israel are beginning to shift and there has been an increase of condemnation by many about Israel's abuse of human rights of Palestinian people.

John's lecture highlighted some of the methods lobby groups have tried to employ to protect Israel's interests. For example, trying to get governments to agree that any criticism of Israel is to be labelled as anti-Semitism.

There is a push by many non-governmental and political activist groups to the global public and world's governments to boycott, divest and place sanctions on Government products and companies in an effort for Israel to change its policies regarding land grabs and relationships with Palestinian peoples.

The lecture was live-streamed and recorded. There was a good turn out at the St Columbus Centre and apparently 10 000 people connected into the livestream of this event! Those of you wishing to watch the recording go to YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xzLShqWrn8>

"Things are changing. Israel's narrative as the only peace-loving democratic state in the Middle East surrounded by hostile Arab neighbours has been falling apart for years."



Ratification! The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

by Bridget Crisp

In the last couple of days, Honduras became the 50th Member State to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This is significant as it allows the Treaty to become international law, through ratification.

Ratification of this treaty stops or prevents more countries from obtaining nuclear weapons and prevents existing nuclear powers from increasing their nuclear arsenal. It also puts pressure on these nations to dismantle their nuclear weapons programme.

Ten of the fifty countries who have signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons have been Pacific Island Nations. This is significant as much of the nuclear development and testing of the nuclear weapon arsenal occurred in the Pacific. Pacific Island nations who had nuclear testing happening on their islands, atolls and waters are still dealing with the environmental destruction that resulted from such tests. Some nations who have independence may be able to get redress from the formal ratification of the treaty which will happen in 90 days. Others who are still controlled by a nuclear power will find it more difficult, although the treaty will put pressure on nuclear powers to comply to international law. It is a little over 75 years since the first nuclear weapons were used against a nation – Japan.

We all know the devastating effects these weapons had on the nation. Pope Francis, within his most recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* writes the following after reflecting on the impact nuclear weapons have had:

‘We need also to ask ourselves how sustainable is a stability based on fear, when it actually increases fear and undermines relationships of trust between peoples. International peace and stability cannot be based on a false sense of security, on the threat of mutual destruction or total annihilation, or on simply maintaining a balance of power... In this context, the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons becomes both a challenge and a moral and humanitarian imperative... Growing interdependence and globalization mean that any response to the threat of nuclear weapons should be collective and concerted, based on mutual trust. This trust can be built only through dialogue that is truly directed to the common good and not to the protection of veiled or particular interests’. [262]

As we celebrate All Souls, All Saints and Parihaka (Nov 5th); it is timely to remember those innocent souls who have lost their lives in any conflict, those nameless saints who have tirelessly laboured to bring about justice and the moral good in society and the brave non-violent practitioners who took a stand in the face of aggression and violence.

These are the people who have helped sow the seeds of hope in our world today.

NEW BOOK : ADVANCING NONVIOLENCE

Pax Christi International and its Catholic Nonviolence Initiative are pleased to announce the publication of *Advancing Nonviolence and Just Peace in the Church and the World*, the culmination of a three-year global conversation among church leaders, community organizers, activists, social scientists and theologians about how the Catholic Church might return to its Gospel nonviolence roots and transform the world.

The book shares the experiences of on-the-ground nonviolent interventions, explores the scriptural, theological and historical foundations of nonviolence, reviews the most current social science on how nonviolence has been effectively employed, and outlines a vision for how the Church might embrace active nonviolence into every aspect of its life. *Advancing Nonviolence and Just Peace* is a biblical, theological, ethical, pastoral and strategic resource for anyone seeking to understand or expand Catholic thinking on nonviolence. It answers commonly asked questions about active nonviolence and Catholic social teaching, including:

- Does nonviolence work to resolve conflict?
- What did Jesus and the Bible say about nonviolence?
- What has the Church taught about nonviolence?
- Is nonviolence the same as pacifism? How are they different?

Advancing Nonviolence and Just Peace explores the foundations of Catholic thinking about nonviolence. It includes reviews of papal statements and church documents, a survey of the biblical teaching from the Hebrew Bible and Christian scriptures, a review of contemporary theological research on nonviolence, and dozens of recommendations for further discernment on how the Church might live into its Gospel nonviolence mandate. This is an essential resource for moving forward the dialogue on how the Church can lead, teach and respond to conflict in the world. Order your copy (go to Pax Christi International to follow link).

Source: www.paxchristie.net





While commemorating its own 75th anniversary, Pax Christi International issues this statement with other Catholic voices advocating for peace, justice, and human rights at the United Nations (UN). Like the UN, the Pax Christi movement and other Catholic organisations were born out of World War II's devastation and the desire to save subsequent generations from the scourge of war.

Statement on the 75th anniversary of the United Nations: A call for its strengthening in the (post) COVID-19 era

On this United Nations (UN) day, 24 October, 2020, Pax Christi International along with its members and partners commemorates the 75th anniversary of the UN system and wholeheartedly recognizes the global organisation's contributions to peace, justice, and human rights around the world.

Accomplishments include the development of human rights, fostering sustainable development and climate action, governing global finance, adopting disarmament standards and taking initiatives to end hostilities (such as the UN Secretary General's recent appeal for a global COVID-19 ceasefire). Our members and partners around the globe have advocated at the UN for such actions and have actively participated in their implementation.

While celebrating its achievements and supporting its work, we are deeply worried about the challenges the UN is facing. These concerns are especially pressing in these times when multilateral responses to social, economic and environmental issues, including to the devastating COVID-19 health crisis, are urgently needed.

We are particularly concerned with the UN Security Council's recurring inability to act in critical situations¹, the unwillingness of some member states to step up action in response to the climate crisis, the inadequate responses to urgent needs of migrants and refugees, unaccomplished nuclear disarmament and the lack of engagement with the world's citizens.² Hopefully, this year's anniversary and the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis will create momentum for a long-awaited strengthening of the UN system, for which the support of all member states is urgently needed.

On 21 September 2020, in a General Assembly meeting to commemorate the UN's 75th anniversary, world leaders adopted a declaration honouring the multilateral framework and

¹ Examples include the Security Council inability to deal with the crisis regarding the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, the civil conflict in Syria and the disputed elections in Belarus. Moreover, it took the Council several months to back the UN Secretary General's March appeal for a global COVID-19 ceasefire.

² 74% of respondents to an UN global consultation to mark the 75th anniversary see the UN as "essential" in tackling global challenges when looking at the future. However, over half see the UN as remote from their lives and say they don't know much about it. See p. 99 of *The Future We Want: The United Nations We Need* report (September 2020): https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un75report_september_final_english.pdf.

pledged to better live up to the promise to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.³ To honor that promise we urge UN member states to reject nationalistic populism, and instead to work together for a more sustainable world.

In his recent speech to the General Assembly, Pope Francis said: “The pandemic has shown us that we cannot live without one another, or worse still, pitted against one another. The UN was established to bring nations together, to be a bridge between peoples. Let us make good use of this institution in order to transform the challenge that lies before us into an opportunity to build together, once more, the future we all desire.”⁴

This year also marks five years since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at its core. UN member states have committed to take steps to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure all people enjoy peace and prosperity. To achieve these goals by 2030, world leaders must rethink the global order, which is reaching its social, economic and ecological limits, as this year of disruption has clearly demonstrated.

We are concerned at the slowing of progress towards achieving the SDGs, especially as the pandemic is hitting vulnerable people the hardest.⁵ The global fight against the pandemic can constitute an opportunity for nations to refocus on the SDGs with a view to achieving a fairer, better, and safer world for all.

On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the UN and in this year of unprecedented crisis for humanity, we ask UN member states to renew their commitment for an enhanced UN system in the (post) COVID-19 era and to take the following actions:

- Supporting the Secretary-General’s prioritisation of conflict prevention and sustaining peace, as part of the restructuring of the UN peace and security pillar, by contributing to the work in the field of addressing root causes, peacemaking, mediation, peacekeeping and post-conflict efforts.
- Exploring, choosing, and implementing nonviolent approaches to resolving disputes that endanger international peace and security, amongst others on the basis of Article 33 of the UN Charter. Considering nonviolent strategies as the first option in response to violent or potentially violent societal challenges, instead of resorting to military action that risks further aggravating a situation.
- Increasing budgets for the functioning of the UN and in particular for the achievement of the SDGs by 2030 and for tackling the COVID-19 health crisis among vulnerable

³ UN meeting coverage and press releases, *World Leaders Adopt Declaration Promising Safer, More Resilient World for Future Generations, as General Assembly Marks United Nations Seventy-Fifth Anniversary* (1 September 2020), GA/12267, available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2020/ga12267.doc.htm>.

⁴ Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the UN, *Address of His Holiness, Pope Francis, To The United Nations General Assembly* (25 September 2020), 75th Session of the UN General Assembly, available at: <https://holyseemission.org/contents//statements/5f6df8f78dd6b.php>.

⁵ SDG Knowledge Hub, *UN Secretary-General Releases 2020 SDG Progress Report* (19 May 2020), available at: <https://sdg.iisd.org/news/un-secretary-general-releases-2020-sdg-progress-report/>.

populations. Shifting funds to SDG budgets and away from global military spending, which saw last year the largest annual increase in a decade reaching \$1917 billion.⁶

- Signing and subsequently ratifying the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted in 2017 at the UN in New York, or if already done so, to encourage other countries to also sign and ratify the treaty. Fully implementing the treaty once it enters into force, which will be 90 days after the 50th ratification (to date: 47 ratifications)⁷, including its provisions on victim assistance and environmental remediation.

With support of the following members and partners:

PAX for Peace, Netherlands
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 Centre Jeunes Kamenge / Bujumbura, Burundi
 Peace Tree Network, Kenya
 International family of Catholic social justice organisations (CIDSE)
 The Union of the European Conferences of Major Superiors (UCESM)
 RENATE (Religious in Europe Networking against Trafficking and Exploitation)
 Neighbourhood Community Network
 MIAMSI Catholic movement

⁶ SIPRI, *Global military expenditure sees largest annual increase in a decade—says SIPRI—reaching \$1917 billion in 2019* (27 April 2020), available at: <https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/2020/global-military-expenditure-sees-largest-annual-increase-decade-says-sipri-reaching-1917-billion>.

⁷ See this ICAN website for the latest updates regarding the signatures and ratifications of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons : https://www.icanw.org/signature_and_ratification_status.

Edmund Rice International
 VIVAT International
 Association Internationale des Charités
 International Coordination of Young Christian Workers
 International Office of Catholic Education (OIEC)
 World Organization of Former Students of Catholic Education (OMAEC)
 Servicio Internacional Cristiano de Solidaridad con los Pueblos de América Latina (SICSAL)
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Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, United States
 IHM Sisters Leadership Council, United States
 Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, United States
 Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods Indiana, United States



WORTH READING

State of the Environment Report 2020: 'Towards New Horizons'

The Caritas State of the Environment Report 2020 is now available to download and read. The report titled 'Towards New Horizons' examines and monitors key environmental issues in the Caritas region of Oceania – i.e. the Pacific Ocean region. The key issues that Caritas focuses on are:

- Extreme weather
- Rising seas and coastal erosion
- Access to safe local food and water
- Offshore mining and drilling
- Climate finance

Go to caritas.org.nz to download your copy.

DIARY DATES

Nov 5th	Parihaka Day
Nov 25th	Elimination of Violence towards Women
Nov 29th	International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.
Dec 2nd	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery.
Dec 6th	Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand AGM at Te Waipuna Puawai, Auckland
Dec 10th	Human Rights Day

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 paxchristiaotearoa@gmail.com or ring 09 377 5541 / 021 729944

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

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