As the world prepared to mark the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster in April 1986, the nuclear industry in the United States was celebrating a “nuclear renaissance.” Proponents of this renaissance were lining up to espouse nuclear power as the “clean” energy future that will solve the global warming problem. Then came Fukushima. As I am writing this, the Japanese have elevated the official Nuclear Accident Severity Level from 5 (equal to 3-Mile Island) to 7 (equal to Chernobyl) the highest level on the scale. Increased radiation levels in drinking water have now been found across the United States. Radiation cannot be contained.

Despite nuclear industry supporters in the media who have been steadily reassuring viewers that “radiation is natural and we are exposed to it every day,” the health threat from radiation exposure is well documented and clear. But there is another dimension to the Fukushima disaster that has eluded commentary. What would the radiation release be if a nuclear weapon were detonated, say, in South Asia? The United States maintains thousands of nuclear weapons on hair-trigger alert at a cost of nearly $40 billion each and every year. If only a few—two or four—weapons were exploded, particularly to destroy deeply buried targets like a nuclear enrichment facility, what would the effect be? Fukushima reminds us that radiation knows no political boundaries, no ideological barriers. That plume (thousands of times deadlier than the release from the Fukushima plant) would hit the California coastline within weeks just as it did last month following the Fukushima meltdown.

We have accepted the fact that we live in an interconnected and interdependent global community. The Fukushima disaster should be a wake up call warning us away from the brink of a corporate “nuclear renaissance” but moreover, should end our false belief that nuclear weapons offer any sort of “defense” or protection. Any use of nuclear weapons anywhere in the world will eventually, and quite quickly, come back to kill us.

Pax Christi USA has, since its founding, been unequivocally committed to nuclear abolition. Vatican II’s explicit condemnation of any use of nuclear weapons is a solid foundation for Catholic opposition to nuclear weapons. The trillions of dollars spent in the nuclear era on weapons that can never be used has been the very theft from the poor also condemned at Vatican II. What Fukushima underscores is that inherently dangerous technology, no matter how technologically sophisticated the nation is, remains a constant and uncontrollable threat. Nuclear power will never be rendered safe and the effort to portray nuclear power as a green technology is the flip side of portraying nuclear weapons as a safe deterrent to war. The time has come for Pax Christi USA to make the final link and officially take an organizational stance against nuclear power.

Leadership is about discernment and taking a stand. Pax Christi USA has been blessed by strong leadership at critical moments in the past and continues to be blessed with strong leadership and committed peacemakers willing to exercise leadership today. Enclosed in this mailing is this year’s ballot for National Council. Once again we have an excellent slate of candidates willing to put their skills in service of our movement and tackle the tough issues that face us. continued on p. 8
Pax Christi Long Island’s history starts with Joan Wittreich who established PCLI in 1980, organizing retreat days, potlucks and peace awards. Most importantly, Wittreich set forth the principles and the path that still guide our region.

PCLI has flourished under the guidance of various dedicated coordinators, including Sister Mary Fritz, SSJ; Veronica Fellerath; Sister Mary Beth Moore, SC; and present coordinator, Sister Jeanne Clark, O.P. We are all grateful for their energy and wisdom.

PCLI has a variety of on-going activities. Our newsletter, “Peaceworks,” is edited by Bob Keeler, (LI Journalist and recipient of a Pulitzer Prize Award) and published twice-yearly. We have local group meetings in Wyandanch, Bay Shore, Patchogue and South West Nassau. Our Stand-Up for Justice Committee is dedicated to supporting immigrants, Muslims and others who are targeted for oppression. One of our local members emails a newsletter of local peace actions about every two weeks.

In our history, we consider the following moments to be significant:

• vigils outside St. Agnes Cathedral calling upon Bishop Murphy to denounce the war in Iraq
• a car caravan that visited over 10 parishes calling for an end to war in Iraq
• annual liturgies at different churches marking each new anniversary of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan
• our annual Memorial Day Peace Procession at Jones Beach during the occasion of a huge display of military air power and weapons
• World Peace March – about 10 preparatory events were held on LI and then a glorious march across the Brooklyn Bridge in driving rain
• Pray-In outside Rep. Peter King’s office prior to delivering a letter signed by 80 LI religious leaders urging him to cancel the Congressional hearings investigating Muslims and mosques

In March, PCLI presented the Peace Award to Seemi and Habeeb Ahmed of the Islamic Center in Westbury as “Builders of the Peaceful Community”, and in April, we presented our Peacemaker Award to Rev. John Dear, S.J.

In summary, PCLI is grateful for our strong connections with other peace groups on Long Island. We are most grateful for our members, past and present, who, despite pressing commitments of family and work, and everything else that life hands out, have unfailingly given their time and energy to the vision of Pax Christi—the Peace of Christ. Alleluia for them!

PC-Indianapolis focuses on drones
Pax Christi Indianapolis offered several educational opportunities in March on drone warfare. At Marian University in early March, PC-Indianapolis member Fran Quigley gave a presentation on “Indiana Drones: Robotic Warfare in the Heartland.” Quigley also presented a workshop on drones at the Midwest Peace and Justice Summit at Indiana University and Purdue University at Indianapolis. You can see Quigley’s three-part series on Indiana drones at http://www.nuvo.net/indiana/drones/part-iii-in-a-series/Content?oid=1859790.

PC-Springfield offers a variety of opportunities for peacemakers
Pax Christi Springfield (IL) offers wide variety of opportunities in their area for peace and justice activists. PC-Springfield continues to hold a weekly vigil focusing on the Iraq and Afghanistan War. Each December, PC-Spring-
field holds a fair trade fair. From February to April this year, PC-Springfield will be collaborating with the Catholic Coalition on Climate Action, hosting and promoting four programs focusing on the environment throughout the Springfield diocese.

PC-Philadelphia holds retreat on action, contemplation
In preparation for this year’s Holy Week, the Catholic Peace Fellowship Philadelphia-Chapter of Pax Christi USA held their annual retreat on Saturday, April 16. The topic of the retreat was “Seeking Justice and Peace through Action and Contemplation,” and was led by retreat leaders Sharon Browning, JD and Fr. Gerard Marable. For more information on the retreat and other activities, check out their newsletter at http://www.cpfphila.org.

New group starts in Paso Robles, CA
Earlier this year, a new Pax Christi local group was started in Paso Robles, CA, led by Craig Kelso. PC-Paso Robles has begun working to educate their community on “misplaced priorities” related to war-funding and the economic crisis. In a recent letter-to-the-editor, Kelso wrote: “The cost of one soldier for one year in Afghanistan is $1 million, a single anti-tank missile is $85,000, and a predator drone is $4.5 million, while the cost of college tuition at a California State University is $9,285. Imagine if the $37.9 billion California contributed to the war went to paying off our state debt. State debt is mounting at a rate of $1.7 million per hour!”

Pax Christi Baltimore celebrates twenty five years
Pax Christi Baltimore, under the leadership of Chuck Michaels, celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. The anniversary was observed with a certificate presented to PC-Baltimore at Pax Christi Metro D.C.-Baltimore’s annual assembly in March. The assembly’s focus was “From the Ruins of Iraq and Afghanistan: Building a Catholic Movement to End War and Build Peace,” and included speakers Andrew Bacevich and Michael Baxter.

Pax Christi Boston connects peacemaking and biodiversity
Pax Christi Boston members were recently reminded that the primary purpose of Pax Christi is nonviolent peacemaking. We listened to the story of the grandmother spider who with her web spun a connection between the light from above to the ground below our feet. There is one web of life and we destroy it at our peril. The sky and the people living below the earth joined in one web of life—one human family living in one biodiversity... Living in a culture rooted in militarism, competition, fear for our security, and war-making as a solution to disagreement and political change, we choose life. (Submitted by Christina Abbey)

Virginia group takes its name from Bishop Walter Sullivan
Bishop Walter Sullivan Pax Christi community operates in the Tidewater area of SE Virginia. The group is named after former Pax Christi USA Bishop-President and bishop of Richmond, VA, Bishop Walter Sullivan. The group began out of the Peace Working group of Tidewater Sowers of Justice and includes a list of about forty people interested in issues of peace who gather for events. In March, Bishop Walter Sullivan PC co-sponsored, along with the Norfolk Catholic Worker, a Lenten vigil to promote the study of nonviolence and disarmament, near the Naval Base in Norfolk and the Joint Forces Staff College.

Pax Christi USA Meets with Papal Nuncio
Archbishop Francis Chullikatt, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See at the United Nations welcomed a delegation from Pax Christi USA and Pax Christi International at the Holy See Mission in New York April 14. Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International and Dave Robinson, Executive Director of Pax Christi USA were joined by Pax Christi International United Nations Representative Madeline Labriola and Pax Christi Metro New York Coordinator, Rosemarie Pace for discussions on the Vatican’s efforts on nuclear abolition.

“The Vatican, and particularly Archbishop Chullikatt, have been in the forefront of calling the international community to outlaw nuclear weapons the way other weapons of mass destruction have been outlawed,” said Dave Robinson. “This meeting was an excellent opportunity to meet with the new Nuncio at the UN and strategize ways to work together to achieve our common goal of nuclear abolition.”

Updates

Local, Regional and National

3
Expanding Capacities for Peace in Cite Soleil

Announcing a Pax Christi USA-Port-au-Prince Collaborative Project

We are pleased to announce a reinvigorated relationship with Pax Christi Port-au-Prince and a new collaborative project to support their efforts in the neighborhood of Cite Soleil. We hope you’ll be inspired to learn about and get involved with this exciting project! This article provides an overview of the Pax Christi Port-au-Prince project and Pax Christi USA’s supportive role this year.

The dignity of the citizens of Cite Soleil is routinely marginalized by abject poverty, violence, unmet educational needs, and the stigmatization of living in a designated ‘red zone’. This character defamation of hundreds of thousands of people has led many NGOs and relief efforts to turn their backs upon Cite Soleil, both before and after the earthquake of 2010.

Daniel Tillias, Program Director of Pax Christi Port-au-Prince writes, “While information about fugitives taking control of the neighborhood and terrorizing the population intimidate NGOs from coming inside Cite Soleil, our on-going sports activities with the children have brought evidence to NGOs and governments of the needs of this neighborhood. They should rid their minds of the pretext of violence in Cite Soleil that enables them to forget about the people here in their relief and development activities.”

The roots of the people of Pax Christi Port-au-Prince exist in this very place of marginalization. For years, members have consciously placed themselves here, trying to contribute to the place where many of them grew up. Yet resources have been scarce and lasting partnerships have been few and far between given the heavy discrimination that has long branded the neighborhood.

The Pax Christi Port-au-Prince’s project, known as SAKALA, blends sports, community building, and peace education in an effort to provide safe environments and empowerment for youth, women, and other community members. The term SAKALA is both an acronym and a word in and of itself. As an acronym, it stands for “Sant Kominote Altenatif Ak Lape” which translates from Creole to English into “The Community Center for Peaceful Alternatives”. As a word, it translates roughly to “We will find our way together”.

Currently the program has established four soccer teams, involving one hundred twenty youth, that partake in practices and tournaments to promote peace education, small group classes where messages throughout the city, a community garden for food provision recreation and a methodology to disseminate peace education messages and strategies.

Do you and/or your Pax Christi group want to be supportive of these efforts?

Email: _______________________________________________________________________________________

State:____________Zip:_______________________ Phone: _____________________________________

Address: ___________________________________________ City: _______________________________________

Name: ____________________________________________  Diocese:____________________________________

Pax Christi Michigan and Pax Christi Saint Leo have gotten involved! Kim, Therese, Molly, and Tony raised enough support for the production of one hundred soccer jerseys and warm-up jackets for the youth. Congruent with the vision of the SAKALA staff, the jerseys have different faces on the back, so that the jerseys themselves are educational tools.

During Practice

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During Practice

Pax Christi Port-au-Prince’s Seventeen Year-Old Soccer Team
youth, that partake in practices and tournaments to provide recreation and a methodology to disseminate peace messages throughout the city, a community garden for food and environmental education, small group classes where questions can be asked and understanding can grow about the concept of peace and its relationship to soccer, and group discussions where activity reflection and conflict mediation can occur. The project helps participants to imagine and enact alternate realities in Cite Soleil as well as offer up a different, more complex vision of life in this neighborhood to those outside looking in. It aims, through this, to open a space where the youth and their families can begin to move forward and rebuild on a different premise, with self determination, of who they are and what they have to offer Port-au-Prince and the Republic of Haiti in a post earthquake context.

Pax Christi USA sees this as the right moment to reinvigorate our historical partnership with our Haitian Pax Christi brothers and sisters. Our collaboration on this ongoing project will take the form of three initiatives:
• Developing and supporting further peace education efforts

Do you and/or your Pax Christi group want to be supportive of these efforts?
One crucial aspect in growing and sustaining the SAKALA project itself is increasing the quantity and quality of relationships built with the project. On the U.S. side, Pax Christi USA wants to develop a network of members that seek to learn from, and contribute to, the efforts of our Haitian sister organization.

Already, Pax Christi Michigan and Pax Christi Saint Leo have gotten involved! Kim, Therese, Molly, and Tony raised enough support for the production of one hundred soccer jerseys and warm-up jackets for the youth. Congruent with the vision of the SAKALA staff, the jerseys have different famous peacemaker names on the back, so that the jerseys themselves are educational tools.

Much member interest in Haiti has existed over the years and we look forward to more clearly identifying and coordinating this energy to establish a support base for this project through the national office.

Please email manuel@paxchristiusa.org and amy@paxchristiusa.org or return this slip to the National Office in Washington, D.C. if you would like to be a part of this network.

Name: _______________________________ Diocese: _______________________________
Address: ____________________________ City: _________________________________
State: __________ Zip: __________ Phone: ________________________________
Email: ________________________________________________________________
Expanding Capacities for Peace in Cite Soleil

SAKALA is both an acronym and a word in and of itself. As an acronym, it translates from Creole to English into “The Community Center for Peaceful Alternatives” and as a word, it translates roughly to “We will find our way together”

- Creating an inter-Pax Christi sustaining network for Pax Christi Port-au-Prince
- Nurturing Pax Christi Port-au-Prince as an aspiring Pax Christi region

Pax Christi Port-au-Prince has been engaging in a multiplicity of efforts for community peace building but is looking to expand on their informal methods by introducing more formalized educational material into the project. To support this vision, the Pax Christi USA staff will work with Pax Christi Port-au-Prince to create a peace education curriculum for the seventeen year olds’ soccer team in Cite Soleil. Participants will come for Sunday lessons and lessons themes will be reinforced during the week before and after practices or games. Part of the hope in our design focus on the oldest children is to increase their capacities for mentorship to the younger participants in the program.

Younger Children spend time at Pax Christi Port-au-Prince’s field and watch the soccer practice

Formalized peace education lessons, used to bolster the sports activities, will provide additional tools and mechanisms for students to transform conflict, think creatively, and build community. Already the children of Cite Soleil have seen the non-formal use of techniques for the transformation of conflict through creative processes to have a dampening effect on the violence there. Participation in the peace-centered soccer program, which brings together youth from upper and lower Cite Soleil, has increased relations such that youth can travel more freely and securely in sections of the neighborhood where they do not live. We hope to build upon these positive outcomes.

We also hope that you, as a PCUSA member, will benefit from this partnership as you are able to follow the
Looking for something new?

Pax Christi USA offers internships:
- Placement in Washington, D.C.
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- Research and Policy Work
- Publications & Design
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- Administration
- Web Design

Internships with Pax Christi USA

Interns reviews:
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- "This is not your average internship."
- "You will not be getting coffee for anyone but yourself..."

For more information:
Contact Sister Dianna Ortiz, OSU, Pax Christi USA Deputy Director
pcusa.internship@gmail.com
202-635-2741
www.paxchristiusa.org

continuation and growth of a truly grass roots community development project in an ostracized location. Since the earthquake, many ‘experts’ have declared how to ‘fix’ Haiti and many of the roughly 10,000 NGOs working there have responded in this paternalistic manner. With Pax Christi Port-au-Prince being the compass for our joint efforts, Pax Christi USA hopes to model a healthy and ethical development coalition stripped of neo-colonial attitudes. We hope to better equip us all to advocate on behalf of Haitian-driven initiatives and help challenge the harmful rhetoric that insinuates that both Haiti’s past failures for the last 200 years are due to its unwillingness to change and that Haiti’s success or failure is primarily important as an indication, for the West, of what is developmentally possible in Africa, East Asia, and elsewhere.
today. Please take a moment and fill out the ballot and return it to the National Office in the enclosed envelope.

For many years we have been accompanying Pax Christi friends and colleagues in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Their signature program uses sports to promote peace and build positive relationships in the poorest, most marginalized neighborhood in the Western Hemisphere—Cite Soleil. Pax Christi USA recently received a very significant anonymous grant to support and build the Pax Christi Port-au-Prince project. The pages that follow describe the project and invite you to support the effort by signing up as part of a nationwide network we are establishing to accompany Pax Christi Port-au-Prince as they further develop their peacebuilding project and develop Pax Christi Port-au-Prince. If you would like to be a part of this exciting project, please fill out the form and return it to the national office. You will receive regular updates on the project, opportunities to support the program and suggestions for promoting the project in your parish, school or community.

Here at home, the budget crisis in Washington threatens to defund critical programs for our most vulnerable sisters and brothers—those who are poor, the elderly and the young. The Medicare guarantee established in the 1960’s to ensure health care to retirees hangs in the balance. School loans, environmental protections, scientific research, renewable energy technology, Head Start, and nearly every other program “of social uplift” as Dr. King called it, is slated for deep and potentially crippling cuts. But the Pentagon will continue to receive lavish funding and the nuclear weapons complex will receive more than $200 billion of increased spending to expand the US’s ability to produce nuclear weapons. Three wars continue to take their deadly toll in human lives and public funds. Your voice is now needed more urgently than ever before! Pax Christi USA will continue to challenge these absurd priorities in the coming months, but we need your help.

Meeting these challenges takes resources. Organizing, communicating, developing and distributing resources to support your work at home in educating and mobilizing takes resources. So I ask you to prayerfully consider making an extra contribution beyond your regular membership dues today. Simply send your tax-deductible check in the enclosed Sowing the Seeds Fund for Peace to ensure that Pax Christi USA can continue to mentor a new generation, challenge the unchecked Pentagon spending, stop development of new nuclear weapons and raise a voice for those whose lives hang in the balance whether they are in Camden, NJ or Kabul, Afghanistan. Your support is critical in continuing to build and sustain our Internship/Formation Program and all the work that Pax Christi USA does day in and day out. You can also choose to contribute via our secure website, or become a Sustaining Member by signing up to give a monthly contribution on your credit card. You can stop the giving at any time, but your regular contribution of as little as $10 a month ensures a reliable stream of income vital to our ongoing activities.

Pax Christi Port-au-Prince’s project is known as SAKALA. The term SAKALA is both an acronym and a word in and of itself. As an acronym, it stands for “Sant Kominote Altenatif Ak Lape” which translates from Creole to English into “The Community Center for Peaceful Alternatives.” As a word, it translates roughly to “We will find our way together.” As Pax Christi USA, we have always found our way together and we will continue to do so. I thank you in advance for your support of Pax Christi USA and for your support of the SAKALA project. Together we will find our way and make a critical difference in the lives of the next generation whether here at home, in Port-au-Prince or across our nation. Shalom!

In peace,

Dave Robinson
Executive Director, Pax Christi USA