Countering such tragic and cruel beliefs, standing against the murder of innocents, the loss of life, the debasement of basic human decency—basic human decency. It is important that we stand with those of like mind, of course, but it is equally important that we carry our message to hostile fields, regardless of the reactions we receive. And carry that message we do.

All this, of course, takes the time of Pax Christi community; it takes something else as well. To challenge the daily loss of life in two wars, the terrible injuries to body and brain, to demand an end to the squandering of billions and billions of dollars on war when that money is so desperately needed by those who are poor in all nations including our own, to do this takes money as well.

Please understand, we devote considerable time to tactics and strategies that, hopefully, will be effective in deflecting calls for future wars. We would much prefer to spend our energy on preventing wars but given conditions in the world today, we must also work to bring ongoing wars to an end. This nation was taken into war in Afghanistan at a moment when nearly worldwide sympathy went out to our country because of 9/11. Our leaders gave no thought to mobilizing that support in any other way but war, a war that goes on and on and in despair we now pay warlords to help us bring democracy to Afghanistan. As wars do, one that began with a limited objective has turned into a struggle in the midst of quicksand with no clear path to firmer ground.

If this were not enough, despite the protests of millions upon millions around the world, the thirst for war arose in the now obvious duplicitive machinations of our leaders less than two years later. Once again, well-funded war and destruction were triumphant.

In the midst of two wars, we stand for peace. In the midst of billions spent for destruction, we stand for construction of schools, of health clinics, of decent housing. In the midst of profiting through war, we struggle for true profit for the people, education, health care, jobs for the betterment of all.

Friends, we of Pax Christi work in coalition with like-minded groups. We educate; we meet with officials who are sympathetic to our position and those who are antagonistic. Some of our members even respond to a call in their consciences and, thus, are arrested for conducting peaceful protest. All this is to say that we will not take one step backward from our commitment to peace and all the benefits that would come with it. We ask you to stand with us. Please support the efforts of Pax Christi USA and prayerfully consider an additional gift to Pax Christi USA beyond your regular membership dues. Simply send your check in the enclosed Be Not Afraid Fund envelope to the national office. Or, consider joining our Sustainers program to have a regular monthly contribution deducted from your credit card or bank account. You can do this for as little as $10 a month, and you can stop it at anytime. And remember, when you are told that there is no alternative to war, tell them “Yes there is. It’s called Peace. Just ask Pax Christi USA.”

Together on the journey,
Sister Dianna Ortiz, OSU
PAX CHRISTI MICHIGAN LEADS WORKSHOP AT U.S. SOCIAL FORUM
Fr. Peter Dougherty and Joan Tirak of Pax Christi Michiga
gan presented a workshop at the U.S. Social Forum in
Detroit on June 24. The workshop was entitled “Blueprint
for a Nonviolent World.” The workshop laid out a
blueprint of the world we can create and what it can
look like, drawing on Gandhian insights and nonviolent
resistance. The U.S. Social Forum’s purpose is to effec
tively and affirmatively articulate the values and strate
gies of a growing and vibrant movement for justice in
the United States.

PAX CHRISTI NEW MEXICO
COMMENORATES HIROSHIMA, NAGASAKI
On July 30-31, Pax Christi New Mexico held its annual
Hiroshima commemoration, with this year’s theme being
“65 Years Is Enough! Retire the Bomb! We Want a
Nuclear Free World!” The events included an evening
lecture with Bishop Gabino Zavala, Bishop-President of
Pax Christi USA; nonviolence training; and the annual
sackcloth and ashes peace vigil at Los Alamos. For the
vigil, participants sat in prayerful silence, in sackcloth
and ashes, for thirty minutes to repent of the mortal sin
of war, terrorism or their industries.

PAX CHRISTI INTERNATIONAL HOLDS
TRIENNAL WORLD ASSEMBLY IN FRANCE
Gathered at the Saint Thomas Centre in Strasbourg,
France, just a few steps from the European Institutions,
a hundred delegates, Bishop-President of Pax Christi USA,
nonviolence training; and the annual
sackcloth and ashes peace vigil at Los Alamos. For the
vigil, participants sat in prayerful silence, in sackcloth
and ashes, for thirty minutes to repent of the mortal sin
of war, terrorism or their industries.

PAX CHRISTI NEVADA-RENO HOSTS LABYRINTH WALK, VIGIL FOR TORTURE AWARENESS
Pax Christi Nevada-Reno, in partnership with about 15
other organizations including the Life, Peace and Justice
Commission of the Diocese of Reno, held their annual
labyrinth walk and candlelight vigil commemorating the
13th annual United Nations International Day in Sup
port of Torture Victims and Survivors. The event was
organized in solidarity with the Torture Abolition and
Survivors Support Coalition International (TASSC).
Additional Pax Christi groups and members from around the
U.S. held events in support of TASSC’s “Break the Cycle of Torture” week, June 21-27.

PAX CHRISTI METRO NEW YORK GIVES OUT PEACEMAKER AWARDS
At a special reception on June 13, Pax Christi Metro New
York recognized the contributions of several important and influential people and organizations for peace. The
2010 Peace Medals of Pax Christi USA were presented to
Dr. Joseph Fahey, former General Secretary of Pax Christi USA, and Eugene Moretta, a long-time PCNY office
volunteer and conscientious objector.

NEW PAX CHRISTI LOCAL GROUPS STARTING UP FROM CALIFORNIA TO GEORGIA AND POINTS BETWEEN
In recent months, several new Pax Christi local chapters
have started. The chapters cover a wide area of the
U.S. and include new groups at Catholic Worker Houses, in high schools, and at parishes, in addition to regular
community-based local groups. The new groups are starting in Martinez, CA; at the St. Jude Catholic Worker in
Champaign, IL; in Littlestown, PA; at St. Mark’s High
School in Wilmington, DE; at the Trinity House Catholic
Worker in Albuquerque, NM; in Indianapolis, IN; in Cart
erville, GA; at St. Ann’s Parish in Marietta, GA; and at
Pax Christi the King Parish in Southaven, MS. For information on connecting with these groups or starting your own, contact Johnny Zokopitch at johnnypcusa@yahoo.com or 352-219-8419.

PAX CHRISTI USA OFFERS A WIDE VARIETY OF INTERNSHIPS
Internships with Pax Christi USA give you the opportunity to explore the intersection of faith and action,
spirituality and social justice, advocacy and discipleship. Our internships focus on both personal and social transformation while giving you the chance to work with us for that change which reflects the essential message of Jesus proclaimed in the gospels.

Why not love?
We hoard an unsustainable power.
McCright, Obama, Al Qaeda and the Taliban hu
manly crave for affirmation but are trapped in unsus	ainable power. In this self-constructed cage, we pro	per our own privileges.
The elite keep choosing violent conflict though it gets us nowhere nearer each other nor nearer safety.
Ordinary folk like us help with our tax-payer money and compel silence.
We are in a cage that is cracking, so we desperately
call it a “democracy” or an “amoral morality” or a war against “terror.”
I am part of this decay; you see, I’m living in Afghan
istan and Afghans and internationals are dying.
People are dying, NOT objects.
Our world mistakes war as “justified solutions,”
when it’s really a lust. We deceive our greed with
“necessities” and selectively hear “I must be correct,
wronged AND good.”
Our self-abosorption “spectates” angrily as oil is
spilled, wealth is monopolized and worst, as blood is shed.
We don’t want these inequalities but stand paralyzed against both “democratic and undemocratic powers.”
Replacing General Stanley McCrystal won’t change
“war, terrorism or their industries.”
Violent may and power can’t be replaced by
more militarily but more diplomacy, and not by a
civilian-military diplomacy but by a civilian-civili
diplomacy. You can’t have a mother nurturing her child, even a “deviant” child, with the lure of mammon and
the threat of guns.

Any general would serve better now under a civilian
presidential mandate to reverse escalation and execute a restorative withdrawal.
We the people need to keep building massive global conversations that lead to concrete kindness.
Why not love?
What would we lose?
Why not say, “We relate badly. We don’t know one
other anymore. Our politicians’ self-interest mirrors ourselves and this narrow abyss is suffocating every
one.”
Instead of risking the death of reform, why not take
day or more off work, get to our communities and go
on-line, make phone calls, etc., to organize the conver
sations and encounters that would reconcile us with
each other globally? Not mainly with agreeable “allies”
but more so with perceived “enemies.”
Sustain a wave.
19 year old Faiz says, “The seed of peace is love, is
friendship.” When asked by international peacemakers
how Afghans can be helped, 14 year old Abdulai said,
Just enCOURAGE us.
Through these small, cumulative instances of shared
compassion, if love could change everything, every
thing could change.

For more information contact Sister Dianna Ortiz at Dianna.pcusa@gmail.com or 202-635-2741.

INTERNSHIPS WITH PAX CHRISTI USA
Our world today cries out for hope. Now is the time for proclaiming a world rooted in peace, defined by
justice, and shaped by a commitment to sustainability.
Internships with Pax Christi USA give you the opportunity to explore the intersection of faith and action,
spirituality and social justice, advocacy and discipleship. Our internships focus on both personal and social
transformation while giving you the chance to work with us for that change which reflects the essential
message of Jesus proclaimed in the gospels.

Pax Christi USA offers a wide variety of internships:
• long-term (1 or 2 year) • short-term (3 months)
• for class credit • full time or part time
• stipended positions • available in Erie, PA,
Gainesville, FL, and Washington, D.C.

Internships available in:
• administration • development
• field organizing • policy work
• communications • youth and young adult
• Web design • program areas of PCUSA

For more information contact Sister Dianna Ortiz at Dianna.pcusa@gmail.com or 202-635-2741.

PAX CHRISTI USA, WITH A LINK AVAILABLE ON THE PCUSA
homepage.
“Do American Christians hate the people of Afghanistan?”

The words traveled through the phone and knocked my heart into the pit of my stomach. There was silence for a moment. I presume all of us North Americans from Christian Peace Witness who were on the phone—perhaps 10 of us—were dealing with the same ache at that moment. I, along with Bob Cooke, was representing Pax Christi USA in a conference call with the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers in Afghanistan, and the boys were given a chance to ask questions of us. This was the first.

Since 2008, a group of young Afghanistan youth in the Bamyan province of Afghanistan have been on what they call “Our Journey To Smile.” They advocate the principles of peacemakers like Jesus, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr. and try to elevate the voice of the people longing for peace and nonviolence in the region. This June, the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers participated in a virtual speaking tour across the United States after visas were denied for three of them to come in person. At Pax Christi USA’s National Conference, some of you had the opportunity to meet Josh Stieber, an Iraq War veteran who is now a conscientious objector and peace educator, who physically traveled around the country to set up the means to make this civilian-civilian tour dialogue possible.

A few months ago, this was the question that hung on the line. As progressive-faith-based-anti-war-activists, we’re well aware of the “good versus evil” rhetoric and the pitting of Christians against Muslims in the “War on Terror.” But, now we weren’t rebutting a media pundit, or our government leaders, or our conservative neighbor. We were responding to youth in Afghanistan.

One U.S. woman on the call started the trail of responses. She thanked the youth for his courage to ask that question. And then she said she’d like to reframe the question, not to ask if American Christians hate the people of Afghanistan, but to ask, “Do Christians in North America LOVE the people of Afghanistan?” She went on to describe how she had thought this was the failure: not loving. All of us North Americans on the call were humbled.

Hearing the youth speak from their experience was both heart-breaking and uplifting. They shared their hope and their efforts to spread messages of peace. I was reminded how powerful civilian to civilian dialogue can be and how engaging in this kind of sharing is foundational for sustaining our peace-making efforts here in the United States.

As I work in the D.C. office and invest my time in Pax Christi USA’s anti-war efforts, I’ll be doing all the usual—tracking legislation, publicizing action ideas, and sending prayer materials your way. But as I’m doing that work, I’ll be reminded of that question at the center of it all, “Do Christians in North America LOVE the people of Afghanistan?” I hope you’ll do the same.

If you would like to send a message of peace and encouragement to the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers, email me at amy@paxchristiusa.org. I’ll compile these words from Pax Christi USA members and send them to our contact with the AYPV. You can also learn more through their Website, http://ourjourneysmile.com/blog/.

By Amy Watts. Amy is a Program Associate in the PCUSA Washington DC office.
The catastrophic Gulf Oil Spill enrages us with loss of life, livelihoods, and the spectacular biodiversity of the Gulf bioregion. We need to remember that our addiction to oil helps fuel the greed of BP and other companies profiting from such practices that destroy Earth.

Rob Gorman, Catholic Charities Director in one of the most seriously affected dioceses, Houma-Thibodaux, recently told members of the Catholic Coalition on Climate Action that the aftermath of this spill is worse than Hurricane Katrina because the unknown effects create further anxiety for residents already beset by fears of loss of jobs, homes, health, and area-wide economic devastation.

“There will be able to learn a lesson from this about prudence and care in using the resources of the earth?” Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, director of the Vatican press office, asked in June 2010 when he described the oil spill as a lesson in humility for all human activities, not only the energy industry.

We need to understand this disaster in light of our endless wars, and start putting more resources into research and development of renewable energy sources.

A nonviolent resistance is growing in Palestine, yet rarely does its stories reach us. Each week, hundreds gather in towns all over the West Bank to protest nonviolently. In July, many marked the sixth anniversary of the International Court of Justice’s decision that Israel’s Apartheid Wall is illegal. Below is a sampling of some of the nonviolent actions that happened that day as well as a sense of how more and more villages continue to organize and engage for sustained resistance.

For example, the popular committee of Al Ma’sara was established in November 2006 and has held weekly nonviolent demonstrations since that time. To mark the sixth anniversary of the International Court of Justice’s decision, supported by a number of international and Israeli activists, they constructed and then demolished a symbolic wall. They set up the Styrofoam wall at the intersection of roads 356 and 3157 that link illegal Israeli settlements to Jerusalem and each other. Throughout the Palestinians can at present use the road to get to Ramallah, Israel soon plans to block Palestinian access, making it a settlers-only road.

As usual, the village of Bil’in held its weekly protest that day against the Apartheid Wall and the illegal occupation. Bil’in has had 70% of its farmland annexed by the wall and an expansion of the large illegal settlement Modi’in Illit—over the village has for that reason become one of the main sites of the Palestinian resistance. Bil’in protests, over 300 of which have been held in the last five years, are known for their imaginative and highly visual demonstration props. The anniversary was no exception, as the protest was dominated by an enormous weighing scale carrying signs saying “Israel” on one side and “The World” on the other to symbolize the imbalance of Israel’s power compared to the rest of the world. The scale was planted in a fake swimming pool as our hearts are converted to deep recognition that we are of you, and listen for your whispering spirit calling us to loving solidarity with all that lives and is essential to life. Amen.


Global Restoration and the BP Oil Spill

~ from the Global Restoration and Care for Creation Priority Committee

Forgive us, ancient oceans, as we struggle to live in harmony with all God’s creation; as our hearts are converted to deep recognition that we are of you, we are one with you, your loss is our loss, your dying is our dying. Forgiving God, shelter us in Earth’s mystical beauty; hold us still to stop and listen for your whispering spirit calling us to loving solidarity with all that lives and is essential to life. Amen.

~ by Diane Lopez Hughes

Take Action!

Enclosed in this membership mailing is a postcard for prayers for Palestine. We have been asked to mail these postcards in support of Library on Wheels for Non-Violence and Peace (www.lownp.com). This action, sending postcards labeled to Palestine, is to educate and raise awareness about Palestine.
A resolution from the U.S. Conference of Mayors, calling on Congress to “Slash Nuclear Weapons Spending and Redirect Funds to Meet the Needs of Cities,” states that: “The U.S. Conference of Mayors calls on the U.S. Congress to terminate funding for modernization of the nuclear weapons complex and nuclear weapons systems, to reduce spending on nuclear weapons programs well below Cold War levels, and to redirect funds to meet the urgent needs of cities.”

The resolution also “calls on the U.S. Senate to ratify the new START treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty without conditions and without delay” and “calls on President Obama to work with the leaders of the other nuclear weapon states to implement the U.N. Secretary-General’s Five Point Proposal for Nuclear Disarmament forthwith, so that a Nuclear Weapons Convention, or a related set of mutually reinforcing legal instruments, can be agreed upon and implemented by the year 2020, as urged by Mayors for Peace.”

To read more go to www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=4141. Further quotes can be found at www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/New%20START%20Quotations.pdf

What Do We Do Now?
If now we hear of continuing opposition to the treaty and threats of halting its ratification, we can be sure that a likely reason behind such a stance would be to keep arms control victory from Obama before the midterm re-elections. We must not allow these Senators to use such an important treaty in a sole attempt to secure their own political futures. This is not the time for political posturing but an opportunity for our Senators to be true statesmen and women.

By Manuel Padilla. Manuel is a Program Associate in the Washington, DC, office, where he works on nuclear disarmament issues.
vest well over $100 billion in nuclear delivery systems to sustain existing capabilities and modernize some strategic systems.”

This $100 billion figure stands on top of both the $50 billion and the $80 billion dollar figures above. And we would do well to consider the potentialities of the caveat “well over.”

The two main concerns (European missile defense and adequate funding for the nuclear complex) of leading Republicans who would stand in opposition to the treaty and put ratification at risk have been alleviated. These are not legitimate reasons for Senators, like Senator Kyl, to oppose the ratification of the treaty. To put it bluntly, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, quoted in the Washington Post in May 2010, said,

Let me first say a word about ratification from my perspective. There has been a very intense continuing consultation on the Hill as the negotiations have proceeded. Two of the areas that have been of concern in the Senate, among senators: Are we protecting our ability to go forward with missile defense? And are we going to make the investment in our nuclear infrastructure so that the stockpile will remain reliable and safe? . . . We have addressed both of those.

Why Is Ratification of START So Important?

We at Pax Christi adamantly oppose the increased militarization, through the expenditure of resources on the nuclear weapons complex, that accompanies this treaty. But, the treaty itself is of utmost importance. Here are the reasons: First, we as a nation need to vastly reduce our reliance on nuclear weapons as a cornerstone of our national security. This treaty is a significant landmark that lies on the path in that direction and builds on the momentum, and our hopes, toward nuclear disarmament and a world free of nuclear weapons. If this treaty is not brought to the Senate floor or suffers a defeat, we will lose that momentum. Second, START is a pragmatic step away from MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) and a step toward MAC (Mutually Assured Confidence) with the Russian government and the Russian people. Third, the signing of the new START treaty definitively helped us enjoy the success we had at the NPT Review Conference. This success comes not only from the reduction in nuclear arms that the treaty enacts but signals and engenders good faith on the part of the United States, good faith needed to build trust and bind us in our common goal of nuclear disarmament.

Why Do We Oppose Funding of the Nuclear Complex, and How Do We Defend START Ratification Divested of Funding?

Nuclear weapons are one of the primary threats to human security and their very existence helps to legitimize the need for them as a “deterrent.” Nuclear deterrence, in turn, only fuels and escalates the motivation of others to obtain nuclear weapons as a cornerstone of their own security and to gain for themselves international recognition and respect. But let us see plainly how nuclear weapons are really perceived by our own Department of Defense. A U.S. Department of Defense report entitled “Deterrence Operations Joint Operating Concept” states, “Additionally, nuclear weapons allow the US to rapidly accomplish the wholesale disruption of an adversary nation-state with limited US national resources.” In other words, these weapons are not primarily a tool for deterrence for the United States or any nation or group who possesses them or seeks to possess them. Nuclear weapons are a tool for total disruption. They disrupt the environment and our health through irradiating the very space we exist in, as well as our land and water; they disrupt our economy and so disrupt our communities through the theft of education, food, healthcare, and other forms of social wellbeing from those who are poor; they disrupt our relationships with each other by fostering a culture of violence, dominance, and mistrust. And yes, they disrupt, wholesale, entire cultures and nations.

Senator Kyl, and others, who would either oppose the ratification of this treaty or require a conservatively estimated 200 billion dollars as a pay off for its ratification stand in favor, consciously or not, of continuing the disrupting effects of nuclear weapons and the nuclear weapons complex on U.S. society and other societies around the world. This systematic program of disruption is violence of the first order, and it must be vigorously resisted.

Continuing the nuclear complex, with massive investment, cannot be the pre-condition for a disarmament treaty, it cannot be the reason for ratification. But there exist other reasons, potent and compelling ones, for ratifying this treaty. They exist as a result of our moral obligations and our NPT obligations. Furthermore, we can use the support of START by military brass, Defense Administration officials, and statespeople alike as answers to those who would use national defense as an argument against the ratification of this treaty. Below are some resources that address all three.

1. Moral Obligations under Catholic Social Teaching

Cardinal George in his letter to Obama on START: “The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) welcomes the signing of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the United States and the Russian Federation. We will urge members of the U.S. Senate to come together across party lines to ratify the new START Treaty (…) Based on a moral imperative to rid the world of nuclear weapons, the Conference of Bishops will be a steadfast supporter of strong and bipartisan action on the new START Treaty as an important and essential step toward a nuclear-weapons-free future.”

Bishop Hubbard’s Letter to the Senate urging ratification of the new START treaty:

Dear Senator:

The President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Francis Cardinal George, OMI, recently wrote to President Barack Obama welcoming the signing of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) between the United States and the Russian Federation. A copy of his letter is attached for your ready reference.

In his letter the Cardinal noted that USCCB will urge Senators “to come together across party lines to ratify the new START Treaty.” I write to encourage bipartisan Senate ratification of the New START Treaty as a step towards a world without nuclear weapons—a future long supported by our Church, and by former presidents, secretaries of state and defense, and national security advisors of both parties.

For further resources from the USCCB on START and Catholic Social Teaching go to www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/2010-04-09-start-treaty-resource.pdf

2. NPT Obligations

Article VI of the NPT states, “Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”