Dear Pax Christi USA Member,  

As a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDdeN), I am humbled to join the ranks of the outstanding leaders who have served as executive director of Pax Christi USA. I look forward to the challenge and to working with you as we approach the 40th anniversary of the Catholic peace movement in the United States.

Just as PCUSA strives to create a world that reflects the Peace of Christ by witnessing to the Christian call of nonviolence, the SNDdeN community stands in solidarity with Pax Christi. We are partners and supporters and share a common spirit and charism with which I am very familiar and embrace. Since the founding of our community, we have worked in various ways to bring about God’s kingdom of justice, love and peace through education. The threat of war with the use of weapons of mass destruction has caused us to unite with other groups in the Church to work for peace and for nonviolent solutions. Like PCUSA, the SNDdeN community is opposed to war and the preparation for war, and we too are known to frequently send letters to Congress and the media protesting the violence of the war on terrorism and the war at home. In short, I am a Pax Christi USA member and am enthused to now be more integrally involved in working for peace with justice. There is much to do and there are many challenges facing us as an organization. Your patience and support are appreciated.

Throughout the Advent and Christmas season, there is good cause to reflect on the gift of life and the many gifts God has sent our way via people from all over the world who are our friends, colleagues and neighbors. By the same token, Pax Christi has been sent young people whom we cannot afford to ignore or underestimate as an invaluable gift to the peace movement. As we age and a new generation is called to be peacemakers, there are young people who are educated and are well-formed, and believe in and seek a future that includes living in a just and nonviolent world. They await our invitation.

The foundress of my community, St. Julie Billiart, reminds us that we must strive to “obtain the peace and tranquility of nations, the calm happiness of families, and a spirit of content among the people.” At this time, our country and the world need our strong voice. The peace movement in the United States is called to be prophetic and relevant for the times. A renewed and more youthful and culturally diverse Pax Christi can assure that the next 40 years are as productive and prophetic as the last 40. It is my prayer that during my tenure,
New Pax Christi USA
Executive Director

Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN takes over as national office finalizes move to Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C.—Pax Christi USA announced that Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN has been hired as the national Catholic peace organization’s new Executive Director. Sr. Chappell begins her tenure following Pax Christi USA’s recent relocation of its national office to Washington, D.C.

“This is an exciting time for Pax Christi USA as we explore new opportunities under Sr. Chappell’s leadership,” stated Sr. Josie Chrosniak, HM, National Council Chair of Pax Christi USA. “Sr. Chappell brings a wealth of experience in working with religious communities, youth and young adults, and marginalized communities which will enhance and grow our work for peace and justice in the world.”

Sr. Chappell is a member of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Connecticut unit, and served on the Provincial Leadership Team for her community. She holds a Master’s degree in Social Work from the Catholic University of America and was the Director of Youth Ministry at Holy Comforter-St. Cyprian Parish in Washington, D.C.

“We’re delighted Sr. Chappell has joined PCUSA as its new leader,” stated Ronaldo Cruz, who has been serving as the Acting Executive Director for the past 4 months. “Her vision and experience will lead the Catholic peace movement into its second forty years as the conscience of our Church and society.”

Sr. Chappell was trained by Crossroads in anti-racism training and organizing and serves as the national co-chair on her community’s anti-racism team. She was the full-time president of the National Black Sisters’ Conference, from 1996-2001, and is on the Board of Trustees for Trinity University in Washington, D.C.

“I am most humbled and pleased to have been offered the position of Executive Director of Pax Christi USA,” stated Sr. Chappell. “I look forward to continuing and deepening Pax Christi’s commitment to transforming itself into an anti-racist, multicultural movement for peace with justice.”

Sr. Chappell began her work at Pax Christi USA on November 1.

Save the Date!
Pax Christi USA National Conference 2012

July 20-22, 2012
Catholic University of America
Washington, D.C.

More information available soon at www.paxchristiusa.org

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Visit www.paxchristiusa.org for more educational and spiritual resources for peace.
On October 24th, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace released a formidable economic analysis and proposal. Broadly speaking, this “note” draws on past Papal judgments upon the “idolatry of the market” (Bl. John Paul II), and an amoral “technocracy” (Benedict XVI), and builds on the idea of a “true world political authority” (John XXIII) via social principles of subsidiarity, the Council would empower such international authority to regulate globalized markets. No one can in conscience accept the development of some countries to the interests of the countries that effectively enjoy a position of economic and financial advantage.

On inequality in development:

“An economic system of thought that sets down a priori the laws of market functioning and its decisions should not be the result of the more developed countries’ excessive power.”

As if anticipating such dismissals, Bishop Toso at the release of the document in Rome reminded the assembled journalists: “The remedy is an appeal to the common good and to assure that markets serve humankind rather than the reverse. Specifically, the Council proposes that the financial crisis as Catholics first and political partisans second, is a crisis of the heart. It is a crisis of faith. It is a crisis of the soul. It is a crisis of the spirit. It is a crisis of the mind.”

Continued from p. 4

On technocratic hegemony:

Rubbish, rubbish, rubbish,” George Weigel writes, shouting that seems to be shredding the fabric of our lives and livelihoods. The remedies that the Council proposes are similar to those that have been suggested by others over the years. The remedies are that the poor have an agenda and need to be engaged in the development of a financial system that is values driven. The solutions are that the powers that be need to be held accountable to the common good and that the financial structure expresses the values of society. The solutions are that the poor need to be included in the development of the system rather than being the victims of it.

On the proposed economic authority:

The remedies that the Council proposes are similar to those that have been suggested by others over the years. The remedies are that the poor have an agenda and need to be engaged in the development of a financial system that is values driven. The solutions are that the powers that be need to be held accountable to the common good and that the financial structure expresses the values of society. The solutions are that the poor need to be included in the development of the system rather than being the victims of it.

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The analysis of the intrinsic moral failing of modern economic life is particularly compelling. For while the authors detail how the economic crisis of our day “has revealed behaviours like selfishness, collective greed and the hoarding of goods on a great scale,” it is not the greedy sinfulness of individuals that is emphasized. Instead, analysis here focuses on certain structural aspects of contemporary civilization that have abetted and facilitated such greed. Greed no doubt is an endemic temptation for our fallen nature, as it were, but special failings of current institutions, practices, and ideology corrupt the process of human formation in a fundamental way.

What practices and ideologies are to blame? “First and foremost,” we’re told is “an economic liberalism that spurns rules and controls,” an “approach unsympathetic towards public intervention in the market.” The European terminology might confuse American readers (who’d likely call such ideology “conservative,” not “liberal”). But, this is what Blessed John Paul II once called the idolatry of the market, which is described in Monday’s release as a “system of thought, a form of ‘economic apriorism’ that purports to derive laws for how markets function from theory, these being laws of capitalistic development.”

Such thinking is neither radical nor new. Radical as it might seem to Americans, this analysis from the Pontifical Council fits comfortably within magisterial traditions. From the 19th century onward encyclicals and other Church teachings—including the writings of Blessed John Paul II and Benedict XVI—have preached that unregulated market forces endanger the common good. Valuable as they are for economic development, without moral safeguards markets are perceived to foment attitudes toward others and toward the community that not only oppose Christian values but also are unsustainable for an enduring and just social and political order. Market operations incline us to valorize the self and self-interests and to do so in opposition to and competition with others. In individual moral terms, the worry is selfishness, greed, and pride. We’re nudged by market forces, as the document puts it, to live like a wolf among our fellow men and women. Understood more broadly, the Church’s long-standing argument is that the unregulated market’s “invisible hands” erode caritas and concern for others (especially concern for those Jesus called “the least of these”) and militate against the primary purpose of our public life as citizens which is the common good of the whole community in light of salvation.

The statement from Rome draws from the writings of Benedict XVI pointedly in making this case, noting that “[in his social encyclical [Caritas in Veritate], Benedict XVI precisely identified the roots of a crisis that is not only economic and financial but above all moral in nature. In fact, as the Pontiff notes, to function correctly the economy needs ethics; and not just any kind but one that is people-centered. Being should have primacy over having. Ethics should precede economics. Persons are irreducible: they are not merely commodities, consumers, or producers. Thus, a moral appreciation of the utter dignity of the person, the solidarity of the human community, and concern for others must be empowered in public life to guide and regulate the dynamism of economic markets to support the fullness of the Christian vision for the common good. The economic miseries of our time trace to our generation’s failure in this regard.”

The Pontifical Council’s analysis is powerful, and it reso-
The Occupy Wall Street movement has a powerful ally in Catholic social teaching! Recently I became more convinced of this truth after spending a couple of hours with the Occupy Baltimore segment of the now global movement. In front of Baltimore’s pricey Inner-Harbor, I encountered a small tent city ranging from homeless persons to college graduates. Four of them talked with me about why they are there. In the shadow of a skyscraper with huge bold words “Bank of America” on it, one of the occupiers pointed to it and said “they, and the many other greedy corporations like them, control most of the wealth, while so many of the rest of us have so little.”

Since the federal government’s bailout of the mega banks and various other large companies, corporate profits have risen to an all-time high. And yet, many pay little or no taxes. Hedge fund managers and CEO’s are raking in millions, while huge numbers of families continue to lose their homes, 14 million people remain unemployed, 50 million have no health insurance and a record 46 million Americans live in poverty – including 16 million children!

Another occupier cited Nobel economics laureate Joseph Stiglitz’s eye-opening calculation that the richest one percent of Americans own 40 percent of the nation’s wealth. And that the gap between the rich and the rest of us – especially the poor – is wider now than at any time since the Great Depression! The occupiers unanimously agreed that with this tremendous concentration of wealth comes a tremendous concentration of power. Wealthy corporations, with their large campaign contributions, wield considerable influence with Congress and the executive branch, whereas the shrinking middle-class and poor have very little influence with America’s policy makers.

Blessed Pope John Paul II addressed very strong words to these “structures of sin.” He said, “The all-consuming desire for profit, and … the thirst for power, with the intention of imposing one’s will upon others” is opposed to the will of God! The Catholic social teaching principle known as “the universal destination of the earth’s resources” insists that all people deserve a fair share of creation and the goods of humankind – certainly to the point of having each person’s basic needs entirely met. Pope Paul VI taught that God intends for everyone to adequately share in the goods of the earth, and that all other rights must be subordinated to this truth!

American society’s failure to fulfill this ethical principle is a moral indictment against most of Washington’s politicians, corporate America and liberal capitalism – which highly favors those with wealth and power at the painful expense of those with little or none. Blessed John Paul said the human inadequacies of capitalism are far from disappearing.

So much of America’s political and economic system is unjust. And yet for the most part, Catholics are silent. Silence supports the rich and powerful, nevver the poor and weak! But Catholic social teaching calls us to speak up for the poor and weak. So let us raise our voices together with our courageous brothers and sisters of the Occupy movement. Demand that our do-little Congress significantly raise taxes on wealthy individuals and corporations, drastically cut military spending, stop the wars, create millions of public service jobs, give small businesses – especially green energy companies – job-producing financial assistance, extend the efficiency of Medicare to everyone, pass strong anti-sweatshop legislation and greatly increase poverty-focused assistance to the nation’s and world’s poor!

Tony Magliano is a Catholic News Service columnist whose work appears in diocesan papers throughout the United States. If your diocesan paper does not carry his column, we encourage you to call them and request that they do.
On October 24th, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace released a formidable economic analysis and proposal. Broadly speaking, this “note” draws on past Papal judgments upon the “idolatry of the market” (Bl. John Paul II), and an amoral “technocracy” (Benedict XVI), and builds on the idea of a “true world political authority” (John XXIII) via social principles of solidarity and subsidiarity, to foster full and global development, which is “the new name of peace” (Paul VI).

On inequality in development: “While some of the more industrialized and developed countries and economic zones... have seen their income grow considerably, other countries have in fact been excluded from the overall improvement of the economy and their situation has even worsened.”

On technocratic hegemony: “An economic system of thought that sets down a priori the laws of market functioning and economic development, without measuring them against reality, runs the risk of becoming an instrument subordinated to the interests of the countries that effectively enjoy a position of economic and financial advantage.”

On the dark outcome of unequal development: “No one can in conscience accept the development of some countries to the detriment of others. If no solutions are found to the various forms of injustice, the negative effects that will follow on the social, political and economic level will be destined to create a climate of growing hostility and even violence, and ultimately undermine the very foundations of democratic institutions, even the ones considered most solid.”

On the proposed economic authority: “Its decisions should not be the result of the more developed countries’ excessive power over the weaker countries. Instead, they should be made in the interest of all, not only to the advantage of some groups, whether they are formed by private lobbies or national governments.”

*Full text of the statement can be found online at:* http://www.news.va/en/news/full-text-note-on-financial-reform-from-the-pontif

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nates poignantly within our world’s current atmosphere of frustration and despair over out-of-control economic forces that seem to be shredding the fabric of our lives and livelihoods. The remedies that the Council proposes are similarly appealing. Needed, we are told, are morally inspired laws, regulations, and institutions to guide market forces toward the common good and to assure that markets serve humankind rather than the reverse. Specifically, the Council advocates for a supra-national network of laws and an international authority to regulate globalized markets. No fantasizing about black IMF or United Nations helicopters hovering over Wall Street, however. In keeping with the principle of subsidiarity, the Council would empower such authority to intervene only where local and national efforts to regulate for the common good proved ineffective.

American Catholic conservatives are in a tizzy, naturally. “Rubbish, rubbish, rubbish,” George Weigel writes, shouting for all who’ll listen that the Pontifical Council does not speak with papal authority and not only can its teachings be ignored, but they should be. Samuel Greg of the Acton Institute (echoing the American Tea Party’s shrilling that wrong-headed intervention by the “authority” of the Federal Reserve and the national government actually precipitated the crisis) complains that the Pontifical Council offers only “an uncritical assimilation of the views of many of the very same individuals and institutions that helped generate the world’s most serious economic crisis since the Great Depression.” As if anticipating such dismissals, Bishop Toso at the release of the document in Rome reminded the assembled journalists that the Council took its inspiration from Benedict XVI himself who, in *Caritas in Veritate*, proposed that some form of world authority was needed in the present age to bring order to emerging global economic forces.

Cardinal Turkson came to Washington earlier this year where he delivered a powerful defense of Catholic Social Teaching at an event commemorating the 120th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, the seminal papal encyclical to confront issues of economic justice. He is hardly a radical. It is a measure of how distorted the American political landscape has become that his analysis sounds so fresh and so different from the norm in contemporary debates about the economy. In this new document, he invites all Catholics to look at the financial crisis as Catholics first and political partisans second. It is an invitation we should all accept.

*Steve Schneck is the Director of the Institute for Policy Research & Catholic Studies at The Catholic University of America. He is a board member of Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good. This article originally appeared in the Common Good Forum at www.catholicsinalliance.org.*
A Reflection for New Year’s Day

By Diane Lopez Hughes

JANUARY 1, THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD


May God bless you and keep you!
May God’s face shine upon you,
and be gracious to you!
May God look upon you kindly
and give you peace!
(paraphrased from Numbers 6:24-27)

May all beings everywhere live in safety.
May all beings everywhere be happy.
May all beings everywhere be healthy.
May all beings everywhere live with ease.
(Buddhist Lovingkindness meditation)

“The real differences around the world today are not between Jews and Arabs; Protestants and Catholics; Muslims, Croats, and Serbs. The real differences are between those who embrace peace and those who would destroy it; between those who look to the future and those who cling to the past; between those who open their arms and those who are determined to clench their fists.” (Bill Clinton)

Planning Ahead for Lent 2012

“From Ashes to Resurrection: Dust to New Life”

Colleen Kelly is one of the founding members of September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows. The group has over 200 family members and was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace prize. Colleen was awarded the Pax Christi USA 2011 Teacher of Peace Award and continues to lift up her message of resurrection and rebirth in the 2012 Lenten reflection booklet. We have invited her teen-aged daughter Bronagh to share in this year’s book too — a Mother and Daughter team.

Authors: Colleen Kelly and her daughter Bronagh Kelly

For more information, please visit www.paxchristiusa.org

What is our resistance to joining in solidarity with ALL people, ALL sentient beings? Why are we afraid of becoming people of nonviolence, committed followers of the nonviolent Jesus? It’s not only those who would use weapons or hate-filled words against others to gain power or acquire resources who hold back human progress in becoming a peace-filled people. We peacemakers do not follow Jesus when we are unwilling to listen to the “other side” and find common ground on which to build understanding, reconciliation, and compassion. No one is immune from those characteristics—anger, pride, closed minds and hearts—that hold us back from truth and love. Can we strive to be more like Mary, keeping all that we hear and see and holding these experiences in our hearts, absorbing these elements of transformation that could bring us closer to the Kin-dom? Will we pledge to make this year our year of transformation?

Reflection: On this first day of the New Year, what are some first steps I can take to actualize this pledge? How can I listen with my heart to those who do not share my views of justice?

Diane Lopez Hughes is a former member of the Pax Christi USA National Council. This reflection is from That You Might Meet Us Doing Right: Reflections for Advent 2011.
Pax Christi’s legacy will continue and move us forward in educating and transforming minds and hearts for peace with justice. There are many who seek us and who wait for truth and wisdom and who want “to do right.”

As peacemakers we know that consumerism keeps many from recognizing that peoples around the world suffer from the violence of war and the constant threat of war. At home Americans are also victims as unemployment remains high, young people are priced out of college, and home foreclosures have left families homeless. In general, families are not at peace, especially among people of color who experience higher levels of unemployment and poverty, racism and discrimination. In this newsletter you will find helpful resources related to peace with justice to share with your communities. You will find news and updates from around the nation, Tony Magliano’s article on Occupy Wall Street, highlights from the Pontifical Council on Justice and Peace statement and more. I especially want to bring to your attention the reflection for New Year’s Day found on page seven, written by former PCUSA National Council member and past chair of the Global Restoration Committee Diane Lopez Hughes.

Pax Christi USA strives, as do the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, to awaken in ourselves and in those with whom we work a conscience which recognizes sin in its individual and social manifestations. We commit ourselves to act for justice which makes real and credible the message of the gospel. As we enjoy this beautiful season, we give thanks for your generous gifts which serve the Catholic peace movement in the United States. Please continue to generously support the peace efforts of Pax Christi USA. There are many ways to contribute and options can be found in the newsletter and on our website. Your continued generosity is much appreciated, and I ask that you consider making a special gift to further our work for peace and justice.

In Christ’s peace,

Sister Patricia J. Chappell, SNDdeN
Executive Director, Pax Christi USA

THANK YOU!
A Note from Adrienne Swanson,
Associate Director of Development

First of all, thank you for your past support of Pax Christi USA. Now more than ever Pax Christi USA is reliant on our members to help sustain our work for peace with justice. We understand that this is a perplexing time for many of us; if you could expand your giving beyond a yearly membership level and become a monthly “Sustainer”, we would be not only grateful, but greatly empowered to further grow PCUSA’s program efforts. Sustainers give on a monthly basis, simply charged to your credit card.

Some of our members have included Pax Christi USA in their estate plans. You can name PCUSA as the beneficiary of your will, living trust, life insurance, retirement plan, etc. Please consult your financial professional. For giving at work, our Combined Federal Campaign CFC# is 16815. As you make your year-end giving decisions, please remember Pax Christi USA.

If you have any questions on how you can increase your support of Pax Christi USA, please feel free to call me at 202-635-2741 or email me aswanson.pcusa@gmail.com.

Peacemaking Quote

“Today the scale and horror of modern war--whether nuclear or not--make it totally unacceptable as a means of settling differences.”

-Blessed John Paul II