2021 Pax Christi USA National Conference

~ Virtually ~
July 30-31, 2021
PAX CHRISTI USA
NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Friday, July 30th
7:00pm ET/4:00pm PT
Welcome & opening prayer service
7:30pm ET/4:30pm PT
Olga Segura’s keynote, followed by a Q&A
9:00pm ET/6:00pm PT
Closing prayer service

Saturday, July 31st
12:00pm ET/9:00am PT
Welcome & opening prayer service
12:30pm ET/9:30am PT
Breakout session #1
2:30pm ET/11:30am PT
Breakout session #2
4:30pm ET/1:30pm PT
Teacher of Peace Award presentation to Rev. Bryan N. Massingale, S.T.D.
5:00pm ET/2:00pm PT
Closing Mass with celebrant Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv.
6:00pm ET/3:00pm PT
Closing remarks
6:30pm ET/3:30pm PT
Social time with fellow attendees
IMPORTANT! YOUR LINK FOR JOINING THE 2021 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

You only need ONE link to join the Pax Christi USA National Conference for Friday’s opening plenary in the evening through Saturday’s conclusion in the early evening. Anytime you want to log-in, you can use this link.

Join the conference at this link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89434812640?pwd=Tkp4WFhHejNsNURwN2pkempFNzJWZz09

- Meeting ID: 894 3481 2640
- Passcode: 543865

Dear 2021 National Conference participant,

This is just a quick note of welcome to all who will be joining us for this most unusual national conference. When I first returned to Pax Christi USA as executive director, one of the questions I got from members of our community the most was, “Are we going to start having annual national conferences again?” To which I replied, emphatically, “Yes!” I just didn’t anticipate that the first one would happen in the midst of a global pandemic and therefore, virtually! But here we are. We’ve learned so much this past year about making a way where there is no way, including technologically -- increasing our capacity for connecting and meeting and gathering in strange new ways across the distances and despite the isolation of the pandemic.

I’m hopeful that we can put all those skills and experiences to use to make this a meaningful conference, despite the challenges.

Because for me, Pax Christi USA has always been about community, and I think there is a power in gathering -- whether in small groups in each other’s homes or in parish halls or schools and universities; or in larger settings, like this national conference, even over Zoom. I know firsthand the joy and uplift, the solidarity and support I have experienced over the past year whenever I have seen so many of your faces, whether at our monthly Peace Masses, our seasonal prayer services, webinars or elsewhere. I hope you have experienced some of that too over the course of this challenging, frightening year.

Pax Christi USA is a **community**, a community of communities -- small, local faith communities of resistance and mutual support, whether as state chapters and regional groups, Pax Christi local groups, high school or college chapters, religious communities, Catholic Worker communities, in parishes, or wherever and however two or three gather together to practice discipleship, live out the gospel, embody the peace and justice at the heart of the message of Jesus. Coming together like this at the 2021 National Conference, even virtually, is an acknowledgement of our oneness, our solidarity, our communion.

So thank you for being here, with us, together. I hope you feel that Pax Christi is your home, your community. And I hope that next summer, as we celebrate our 50th anniversary, we can do so in person, gathered together, fully present with each other.

In peace,

Johnny Zokovitch
Executive Director, Pax Christi USA
OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Olga Marina Segura

We’re excited to have Olga Marina Segura, author of *Birth of a Movement: Black Lives Matter and the Catholic Church* as our opening keynote speaker for the conference. Ms. Segura is a freelance writer and the opinion editor at National Catholic Reporter, previously serving as an associate editor at America Media, where she wrote and solicited articles on race and culture. She is a co-founder and former co-host of the podcast, “Jesuitical.” Her writing has appeared in The Guardian, Latino Rebels, Shondaland, Sojourners, Refinery29, and The Reveal. Prior to working at America Media, Olga was an intern at the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations. She graduated from Fordham University with a Bachelor of Arts in English and a Bachelor of Arts in Italian Language and Literature. She speaks Italian and Spanish fluently and was born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.


Pax Christi USA, the national Catholic peace movement, will recognize Rev. Bryan N. Massingale, S.T.D., theologian, author and scholar-activist, as the 2021 recipient of the Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace Award at the 2021 National Conference. With this award, Pax Christi USA is honoring Rev. Massingale for his witness and leadership, his accompaniment and guidance of movements and organizations committed to the work of peace and social justice (including our own), and his promotion of the social mission of the gospel.

Rev. Massingale, a priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, is the James and Nancy Buckman Professor of Theological and Social Ethics at Fordham University and the Senior Fellow in its Center for Ethics Education. He is the author of *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*, considered to be one of the preeminent books on racial justice and faith, offering both an exploration and critique of the Catholic Church’s history in relation to racism. For all those concerned with justice and healing for our world, Rev. Massingale’s voice and perspective are essential.

An award-winning contributor to major Catholic thought vehicles such as US Catholic, Commonweal, America Magazine, and National Catholic Reporter, Rev. Massingale is also a public intellectual who addresses issues of racial and sexual justice on National Public Radio (NPR), ABC News, and the PBS NewsHour, as well as in the Huffington Post and the Associated Press. His current writing projects explore the contributions of Black radicalism to Catholic theology; the notion of “cultural sin” and its challenge to Catholic theological ethics; and the intersections of race and sexuality in both social life and Catholicism.

Pax Christi USA first gave the Teacher of Peace Award to Dorothy Day of the Catholic Worker movement, in 1978 and has since recognized some of the most significant U.S. Catholic activists for peace and justice of the past four decades, including actor Martin Sheen; poet and priest Daniel Berrigan, S.J.; torture survivor and abolition activist Sr. Dianna Ortiz, O.S.U.; and *Dead Man Walking* author Sr. Helen Prejean, C.S.J.
AMBASSADORS OF PEACE: Phyllis Jepson, Adrienne Alexander, Donna Grimes & Tom Cornell

At key moments in our history, Pax Christi USA has identified and honored extraordinary and experienced leaders within our community and commissioned them to represent our movement through ongoing outreach efforts. These “Ambassadors of Peace” promote the mission of Pax Christi USA through word and witness, sharing our programs and campaigns with new audiences, serving as our representatives in coalitions, and generally carrying the message of Pax Christi USA wherever they go. As part of our closing Mass on Saturday, we’ll commission four new Ambassadors of Peace:

Phyllis Turner Jepson of West Palm Beach, FL is a former National Council member, former state coordinator for Pax Christi Florida, and former staff member at Pax Christi USA. Phyllis’s influence has been most felt in how she grew our grassroots network exponentially, building lasting relationships and seeding new growth for our movement all across the U.S.

Adrienne Alexander of Chicago, IL is a former National Council member and young adult representative, speaker at several National Conferences, and author of our seasonal reflection booklet. Adrienne is a labor organizer in Chicago and long-time promoter of Pax Christi USA to young adult circles in the USA.

Donna Grimes of Washington, D.C. is former National Council member, author of our 2005 Advent reflection booklet, and Assistant Director of African American Affairs at the USCCB’s Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church. Donna’s leadership has guided our outreach efforts to new communities in the church.

Tom Cornell of New York, a long-time Catholic Worker, was one of about a dozen present at the meeting in July 1972 known as the “Pax Christi Affiliation Discussion” which gave birth to Pax Christi USA. Tom served as a marshall for MLK’s March from Selma to Montgomery and has been a mentor to many in Pax Christi USA over the years.

Read more about these new Ambassadors on the Pax Christi USA website.

All of us at Pax Christi USA want to offer a deep bow of gratitude to our 2021 National Conference sponsors who gifted us with special donations to help cover our costs and make this conference available for free to all. We say a big THANK YOU to:

Jeanne Allen | Rosemarie Pace | Abigail Abysalh-Metzger | Fr. Fred Thelen | Marie Dennis
Ronnie Fellerath-Lowell & Bill Lowell | Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv.
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Los Angeles Province | Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
Pax Christi Little Rock | Association of U.S. Catholic Priests | Sisters of Divine Providence | Carol Rice
International Thomas Merton Society | Maryknoll Lay Missioners | Mary Yelenick
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters | Vicki Lott | Pax Christi Michigan
Fr. Joe Mattern & Pax Christi Omro/Oshkosh | Palestinian Christian Alliance for Peace
Fr. Gerald Kleba | Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth JPIC Office | Beatrice Parwatikar
WORSHIP RESOURCE

An Invitation to Inclusivity: In the spirit of the inclusive world we desire, it is Pax Christi USA’s policy to use inclusive language in all aspects of worship. In the prayer services in this resource, we have attempted to employ a variety of images for God, reflecting that God is beyond any and all concepts and language. When possible, Pax Christi USA’s policy is to request the author’s approval to change language for greater inclusivity. When this is not possible, the readings will appear in the author’s words as originally written. Thank you for your understanding and for helping us to pray inclusively.

FRIDAY - OPENING PRAYER SERVICE

READER ONE: Pax Christi USA wishes to acknowledge and honor with gratitude the land and waterways and the Indigenous Peoples, past and present, who have stewarded Turtle Island, a territory that includes what is currently known as the United States of America. We recognize and uplift the understanding that much of this land continues to be unceded and that many Indigenous Peoples Nations currently lack federal recognition.

READER TWO: Pax Christi USA wishes to acknowledge the despicable actions of the transatlantic slave trade that paved the way for current anti-Black racism. The labor of enslaved African people built the physical structures and generated the wealth still enjoyed by many of this country’s institutions and families. We recognize that while many Catholics were abolitionists, still others profited from this shameful practice, and white people continue to benefit from its legacies to this day.

READER THREE: Pax Christi USA wishes to acknowledge and repent for the role of the institution of the Catholic Church in the process of colonization and its complicity in the sins of anti-Black racism, enslavement, and segregation. We commit ourselves to follow the leadership of Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color, including those within the church, and to support them with intention, time, and money in the struggle for collective liberation.

Opening Song: “Christ Be Our Light”

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Refrain: Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed. (Ref.)

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone. (Ref.)

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kin-dom come. (Ref.)

READER ONE: Taken from “Help Me to Believe in Beginnings” from Guerrillas of Grace: Prayers for the Battle by Ted Loder
God of history and of our hearts, so much has happened in our world since we last gathered as community:
We’ve known death and birth;
We’ve been brave and scared;
We’ve hurt, we’ve helped.
We’ve been honest, we’ve lied;
We’ve destroyed; we’ve created;
We’ve been with people, we’ve been lonely;
We’ve been loyal, we’ve betrayed;
We’ve decided, we’ve waffled;
We’ve laughed and we’ve cried.
You know our frail hearts and our frayed history – and now another day begins.

O God, help us to believe in beginnings and in our beginning again, no matter how often we’ve failed before.

Help us to make beginnings:
that we may accomplish justice;
to begin risking
that we may make peace.
to begin loving
that we may realize joy.

Help us to be beginnings for others,
to be singers to the songless,
storytellers to the aimless,
befrienders of the friendless;
to become beginnings of hope for the despairing,
of assurance for the doubting,
of reconciliation for the divided;
to become beginnings of freedom for the oppressed,
of friendship for the forgotten;
to become beginnings of beauty for the forlorn,
of sweetness for the soured,
of gentleness for the angry,
of wholeness for the broken,
of peace for the frightened and violent of the earth.

Help us to believe in beginnings,
to make beginnings,
to be beginnings,
so that we may not just grow old, but grow new each day of this wild, amazing life you call us to live with the passion and peace of Christ Jesus. Amen.

A Rite of Repentance and Recommitment

READER TWO: The first movement in recommitting ourselves to the peace of Christ is recognizing how we have failed in the past and still remain complicit in violence.

God of Justice, we are the ones whom you have called out of empire, “the called out ones”, the ekklesia, the church. We are called to resist the power of the culture in which we live and witness instead to the redemptive power of Jesus in his life, death and resurrection. We are called to be the sacrament, the sign of Christ in our world. Today, we recommit our lives to you, we reject the false promises and temptations of empire, we repent of our complicity in empire, and we pledge to walk forever in your way of justice, love and peace, O God. Amen.

READER THREE: And let us pray together, from wherever we are:

Our Mother, our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kin-dom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kin-dom, the power and the glory, now and forever. Amen.
FRIDAY - CLOSING PRAYER SERVICE

READER ONE: I want to ask folks, wherever you are, to lift up your arms and to reach out to your left and to your right, so that in each little box of this Zoom call, it looks like we’re reaching out to the people on either side of us, holding hands across the distance, visibly demonstrating that we are indeed one body.

We know that we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses, and that over the past year or so, we’ve lost some of those who shone brightest among us. We remember in a special way tonight Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace, Sr. Dianna Ortiz, who passed earlier this year in February. While we no longer have her physical presence with us, we know she is with us even more deeply now, gathering us in, holding us close, and helping us to be the peace of Christ, the community of Pax Christi.

(At the invitation of the prayer leader, please type into the chat the names of other Pax Christi members that have transitioned to that cloud of witnesses of the past year, and we’ll read out those names and number them as among us tonight...)

Let us pray...

God of Heaven and Earth, you created the one human family and endowed each person with great dignity. Aid us, we pray, in overcoming the sin of racism. Grant us your grace in eliminating this blight from our hearts, our communities, our social and civil institutions. Fill our hearts with love for you and our neighbor so that we may work with you in healing our land from racial injustice. In Christ, we pray. Amen.

SATURDAY - OPENING PRAYER SERVICE

Opening Song: Lift Ev’ry Voice

Lift ev’ry voice and sing,
’Til earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list’ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on ’til victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our ancestors died.

We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
’Til now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thy might
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts drunk with the wine of the world,
we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.
READER ONE: Loving Creator, be with us today as we walk together the way of peace which is justice...

READER TWO: Thank you for all who have gone before us, those who have inspired us and beckon us to join them on... Thank you for the beauty of creation, for the land upon which we gather, and all those who cared for this land and named it ‘home’... Thank you for your grace and courage and how it animates our lives...

READER THREE: Help us to create a world where all are free, loved, cherished, valued and respected... Help us to begin to imagine that another world is possible... Help us to liberate spaces where community and communion can flourish and grow...

(A brief moment of silent contemplation)

READER ONE: With the prophet Isaiah, may we be animators of your peaceable kin-dom, where:

“The wolf shall live with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling together;  
and a little child shall lead them.  
The cow and the bear shall graze,  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.  
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put a hand on the adder’s den.  
They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of God  
as the waters cover the sea.” (Isaiah 11:6-9)

READER TWO: Surprise us O God, for we often expect so little. Come to us in ways we cannot predict and come to us in familiar people, experiences and words. Keep us from living as if life is repetitious – but instead fire us with expectation, knowing that you move toward us, with life far in excess, far more abundant than we dare to hope or dream. We pray this in the name of Jesus... Amen.

A special link will be shared during the conference in the chat for folks to follow along and participate in our closing Mass...
**BREAKOUT SESSIONS...**

Note that each session will be recorded and uploaded to our website for later viewing.

**Breaking the Idols: Nuclear Weapons and Intersectional Justice** – The production, testing and deployment of nuclear weapons impact all of us in many ways. This breakout session will explore the effects of nuclear weapons on our economy, our environment, and on racial justice, and how breaking the idolatry of the bomb can move us closer to building the beloved community. Panelists include Art Laffin, Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace and long-time Catholic Worker; Vincent Intondi, professor and author of *African Americans Against the Bomb: Nuclear Weapons, Colonialism, and the Black Freedom Movement*; and Vicki Elson, creative director for nuclearban.us; moderated by Nick Mele, Pax Christi USA Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament coordinator.

**Dream of Tomorrow: Building capacity by looking at peacemaking through an intergenerational lens** – Capacity building is most effectively achieved when different perspectives are combined to dream about the future of a movement. By examining peacemaking through intergenerational analyses, participants will be encouraged to reflect upon their own involvement in movement-building, both in passing on a legacy across generations & thinking creatively about new approaches we can utilize to expand capacity. Panelists for the conversation with peacemakers across several generations include Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace and former member of the Pax Christi Anti-Racism Team, Beatrice Parwatikar; Former Pax Christi USA National Council chair and coordinator of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, Judy Coode; and recently elected National Council member Jeff Sved. Moderated by Lauren Bailey, Pax Christi USA National Field Organizer and organized by members of the Pax Christi Young Adult Caucus.

**Shaken Awake: Taking on Pope Francis’s Challenge to Cultivate “Antibodies of Justice, Charity and Solidarity”** – Pope Francis challenged the Church to be shaken awake by the pandemic in a way that “wars or injustice across the world, nor ... the cry of the poor or of our ailing planet” could do. What are some of the components for “building a civilization of love,” something new in the shell of the old? Panelists in this session will offer a few insights about what they think should happen to resist calls for a “return to normal”, change the narrative, and make something new. Panelists include: Adrienne Alexander, Labor Organizer; Elizabeth Garlow, Co-Convener, U.S. Economy of Francesco; and Luis Marchese, a distributed organizer in the Sunrise Movement.

**Pax Christi, a Catholic Movement for Peace: Does Our Reality Match Our Tagline?** – This session aims to complement Olga Segura’s exploration on the Black Lives Matter movement and the Catholic church (both in terms of her book, the study circles taking place and her presentation at the conference) while also re-examining the challenge posed by Fr. Bryan Massingale to Pax Christi USA in the early 2000s. Pax Christi USA membership is still overwhelmingly white and “woke,” but have our members really embraced the work of anti-racism and to what extent? Facilitated by the Pax Christi Anti-Racism Team.

**We Tell Our Own Stories: Advancing Narratives and Socio-political Analyses Concerning Migration** – Join Migrant Roots Media (MRM) to develop a historically-informed analysis of global migration. MRM is an independent digital platform that seeks to amplify the perspectives of migrants on the root causes of forced displacement. We shed light on the socio-political and economic reasons people struggle to stay and thrive in their homelands to transform narratives and political analyses concerning migration and other social issues. Moderated by Pax Christi USA Program Director Roxana Bendezú.

**Why Do You Look for the Living among the Dead?** We have known so much distancing, isolation, dread, death, suffering. How do we move out of our tombs and broken spirits into resurrection and restoration? Jesus cries out to us: Come forth! Come out! This session will be presented by Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace, storyteller and author, Megan McKenna.
Thanks so much for participating in the 2021 National Conference! We hope you'll take some time to visit the Pax Christi USA website and check out what we have to offer following the conference. We’ll be planning shortly for the Catholic Nonviolence Days of Action, September 21 to October 2; a new literary circle for liberation beginning in September using Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace Art Laffin’s new book; resources and reflections for Advent and Christmas; and all kinds of plans for our 50th anniversary in 2022!

Lastly, if you're in a position to do so and can make a donation, we hope you will! You can [click here to give quickly and securely online](#), or [send in a check](#) to Pax Christi USA, 415 Michigan Avenue NE, Suite 240, Washington, D.C. 20017.

Thanks once again and peace be with you!