





## ARCHBISHOP OF DETROIT

July 2025

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is a joy to welcome you to the Archdiocese of Detroit for the 2025 Pax Christi USA National Conference.

Your presence here is a sign of hope. At a time when our world is marked by division, violence, and injustice, your commitment to the Gospel values of peace, reconciliation, and the dignity of every human person serves as a powerful and prophetic witness. Thank you for your courage, your prayer, and your persistent labor in the vineyard of justice and peace.

The theme of this year's conference— "Reclaiming the Power of Nonviolence in a Broken World"— could not be more timely or more needed. In the face of so much suffering, fear, and polarization, you remind the Church and the world that Christ's way of nonviolence is not weakness, but the truest strength: a strength rooted in mercy, humility, and the transforming power of love.

Detroit is a city shaped by resilience, faith, and a deep yearning for renewal, qualities that harmonize beautifully with the mission of Pax Christi. As you pray, reflect, and organize together, may you find this city to be a place of inspiration, encounter, and spiritual refreshment.

I look forward to joining you for the closing celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday, July 27. Until then, please know of my prayers for a fruitful and Spirit-filled gathering. May the peace of Christ dwell richly in your hearts and guide your steps in the days ahead.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,

+ *Edward J. Weisenburger*

Most Reverend Edward J. Weisenburger  
Archbishop of Detroit

# RECLAIMING THE POWER OF NONVIOLENCE IN A BROKEN WORLD

## *Pax Christi USA's 2025 National Conference*

**July 25-27, 2025**

In a time of global challenges, Pax Christi USA gathers in Detroit for a transformative weekend of hope and action. Whether you're a seasoned member or new to the movement, this conference is your opportunity to connect, learn, and renew your commitment to peacemaking and care for the Earth and all its inhabitants.

We are looking forward to a weekend of speakers, workshops, liturgies, and activities designed to advance nonviolence in our broken world and build a revolution of love. Inspired by our beloved late Pope Francis, who called us to be "pilgrims of hope" in this Jubilee year, we pray this gathering will be a time of rejuvenation and promise, as we remember that the arc of the universe bends toward justice.

### **Pax Christi USA 2025 National Conference Land Acknowledgment**

We welcome you all to this conference and to this opening prayer time.

We invite you to take a deep breath, to center into this moment, and to enter the presence of the God of Peace who loves you.....who loves all of us, infinitely and unconditionally.

As participants of this conference, we gratefully acknowledge the Anishinaabe Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples on whose ancestral homelands we gather, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities who make their home here today. We are grateful for their past and continued stewardship of this land, Earth, sky, and water and we celebrate the resilience, strength, and enduring presence of Indigenous people demonstrated around the world. We commit to actively supporting their efforts for restoration of land and water rights, as well as cultural healing and recovery.

We take this time to respectfully acknowledge the sovereignty of these, and other Indigenous Tribes and express our deep gratitude, appreciation, and honor for the original caretakers and inhabitants of the land upon which we live and pray today.

We now invite you to welcome ...the risen, nonviolent Jesus;  
...Yahweh - the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Moses;  
...the prophet Mohammad (May Peace Be Upon Him),  
...and the Creator who unites us all.

We welcome them into our community of peace, and into our hearts.

**We breathe in this Holy Spirit of peace and nonviolence as now we begin....**

## **Pax Christi USA 2025 national conference committee**

Judy Coode • Vic Doucette • Daniel Francis • Josephine Garnem  
Mary Hanna • Charlene Howard • Tiffany Hunsinger • Camila Perez  
Lasya Priya • Michelle Sherman • Fr. Fred Thelen • Iyana Turner Vance • Pat Valaer

### **Pax Christi USA staff**

Charlene Howard, *Executive Director*  
Judy Coode, *Communications Director*  
Ronnie Fellerath Lowell, *Ignatian Volunteer*  
Daniel Francis, *Development Director*  
Stephen Niamke, *National Field Organizer*  
Camila Perez, *Campus Outreach and Communications Coordinator*  
Michelle Sherman, *Project Director for Nonviolence and Campus Outreach*  
Sha’Kia Smith, *Operations Associate*  
Iyana Turner Vance, *Director of Operations*  
Scott Wright, *Ignatian Volunteer*  
Amir Goli and Jomon Skaria, *accounting*

### **Pax Christi USA National Council**

Bishop John Stowe, bishop president  
Sherry Simon, chair  
Jeff Sved, vice chair  
Fr. Fred Thelen, treasurer  
Rozella Apel-Hernández  
Vic Doucette  
Josephine Garnem  
Sr. Annie Killian, OP  
Sr. Susan Nchubiri, MM  
Manuel Padilla  
Lasya Priya  
James Watts

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## **Conference activities and prayer space**

### **Resistance art space: Ambassador foyer**



Sometimes our resistance is artful and brilliant and we don’t always notice! Stop by the art tables in the Ambassador foyer with a spread of samples of newsletters, posters, memes, and photos of artful graffiti or murals for viewing.

***Saturday, 4-4:45 PM, Brule A, Art of resistance and the media of our lives***

Lee Miller will facilitate an open discussion and images from the ways we communicate, around issues of solidarity, peace, justice and spirituality. Can we choose ways to communicate that give us joy when we create them? Can we be more effective when we share the issues of our lives with creativity? A gathering for creators, editors, and the consumers of the message.

### **Prayer room: Off the Ambassador foyer**

Visit for a quiet reflective space. Sacrament of Reconciliation available on Saturday (see schedule).

### **Communal fiber arts project: Ambassador Ballroom**

Whether you’re a seasoned fiber artist or just starting out, we invite you to be part of something special. Bring fiber squares (crocheted, knitted, quilted, etc) you’ve made at home, and together, we’ll create a beautiful, larger work of art in the name of peace. Each square tells a story, and when we connect them, will reflect the creativity and spirit of our collective community. Place squares in the basket at the registration table or give to Sha’Kia Smith in the Ambassador Salon 2 at the fiber arts table.

# Our keynote speakers and musical liturgists

## July 25: Opening address with Maria Stephan

Maria Stephan is the Chief Organizer at the Horizons Project. She is an author and organizer whose work in academic, public service, and nonprofit sectors has focused on the role of nonviolent action and peacebuilding in advancing human rights, democracy, and sustainable peace in the US and globally. She serves on the advisory council of Pax Christi International's Catholic Nonviolence Institute, and was a participant in the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative gatherings in Rome in 2016 and 2019. She and Erica Chenoweth are co-authors of *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. Their second book together, *The Role of External Support in Nonviolent Campaigns: Poisoned Chalice or Holy Grail?* was published in 2021.



## July 26: Morning keynote with Jonathan Kuttub

Jonathan Kuttub is the executive director of Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA), co-founder of the Palestinian human rights group Al-Haq, and co-founder of Nonviolence International. He is a founding director of Just Peace Advocates Mouvement pour une Paix Juste, a Canadian based international law human rights not-for-profit organization and is president of the board of Holy Land Trust. An international human rights attorney, Jonathan practices in the US, Palestine and Israel. He was the head of the legal committee negotiating the Cairo Agreement of 1994 between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). He provides analysis regarding international law and human rights, understanding the facts on the ground, what options are possible beyond a two state solution, and Christian Zionism.



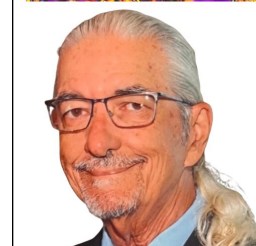
## July 26: Evening program with Martha Inés Romero (video)

Based in Colombia, Martha Inés Romero serves as Secretary General of Pax Christi International. Martha Inés has a rich depth of experience working throughout the Americas and with global partners. She studied conflict transformation at the Kroc Institute for Peace and was a member of the Catholic Peacebuilding Network. She is both ecumenically and interfaith minded and works with partners across the civil society for dialogue and cooperation within communities across Latin America and the Caribbean. Her previous experience is in the aid sector, where she held international roles at Oxfam Great Britain and Catholic Relief Service.



## Musical coordinator ValLimar Jansen and performer/liturgist Frank Jansen

ValLimar and Frank Jansen will join us during our conference weekend to lead prayer and praise, and to provide entertainment during Saturday evening's social. With more than 100 unique performances annually, ValLimar offers dynamic Scripture proclamation, reflection, music, costumed dramatic storytelling, prayer, and inspirational exhortation for schools, parishes, dioceses, and retreat centers throughout the US and Canada. Frank has served in parish ministry for more than 40 years, with a professional music career that spans over a course of almost 50 years. He has served as a liturgist, director of music, and/or principal pianist for countless liturgies, many including bishops and cardinals. Both Jansens have advanced degrees in music and performance.



## Musical guest Santiago Fernandez



Santiago Fernández has been active in parish ministry for more than 30 years. He holds a bachelor's degree in music and is certified in both Pastoral Ministry and Liturgical Ministry, locally by the Archdiocese of Detroit and nationally by the USCCB's Commission on Certification and Accreditation. He served on the National Advisory Council to the USCCB from 2000 to 2004 and was Liturgy & Prayer coordinator for the First National Encuentro for Hispanic Youth and Young Adult Ministry 2006. He is author of the bilingual book *Un Hermoso Intercambio Cultural/A Beautiful Cultural Exchange*, offering ideas, reflections and suggestions to open doors and broaden horizons within the multicultural integration of pastoral work in the United States. He currently serves as music and worship director at Church of the Holy Family, in Novi, Michigan.

# Schedule

## Friday, July 25

**3 PM:** Registration opens (Ambassador foyer)

**4 PM:** Hotel check-in (Main lobby)

**4-5 PM:** Orientation and Pax Christi USA 101 session for first-time attendees (Marquette B)

**5:15-6:30 PM:** Pax Christi International gathering; registration required (Marquette B)

*Dinner is on your own*

*Visit exhibitors and vendors (Ambassador Ballroom, Salon 3)*

**7 PM:** Opening prayer/blessing (Ambassador Ballroom, Salons 1 and 2)

**7:30 PM:** Welcoming remarks

**7:50 PM:** Opening keynote: **Maria Stephan**

**9:15 PM:** Closing song, wrap up and announcements

**9:30-10:30 PM:** Post-plenary social (Ambassador Ballroom and foyer)

## Saturday, July 26

**8 AM-10 PM** Exhibitors and vendors will be open (Ambassador Ballroom, Salon 3)

**8:45 AM-6 PM** Prayer room open (off Ambassador foyer)

**7 AM:** Mass (Brule A)

**8-9 AM:** Buffet breakfast (Ambassador Ballroom, Salons 1 and 2)

**9-9:15 AM:** Morning praise with **Valimar Jansen** (Ambassador Ballroom, Salons 1 and 2)

**9:15-10:45 AM:** Plenary session/ keynote with **Jonathan Kuttub**, followed by conversation with **Huwaida Arraf** and **Adam Shapiro**, moderated by **Kim Redigan**

**10:45-11:15 AM:** Break

**11:15 AM-12:45 PM:** Workshops session 1 (See page 8)

**12:45-2 PM:** Lunch and free time

Sacrament of Reconciliation available (Prayer room, off Ambassador foyer)

**2-3:30 PM:** Workshops session 2 (See page 9)

**3:30-5:30 PM Break**

Visit exhibitors and vendors

Working groups/affiliate groups are welcome to caucus during this time

**3:25-5:30** Sacrament of Reconciliation available (Prayer room, off Ambassador foyer)

**3:45- 4:15 PM** Centering prayer led by **Josephine Garnem** (Marquette B)

**4:00- 4:45 PM** Resistance art session led by **Lee Miller** (Brule A)

**5:30 PM Dinner check in** (Ambassador Ballroom, Salons 1 and 2)

**6 PM** Dinner

**7-10 PM:** Evening programming including a message from **Martha Inés Romero**, presentation of the inaugural Sr. Dianna Ortiz, OSU Peacemaker award to **Joryán Hernández**, plus entertainment and music with **ValLimar Jansen**, **Santiago Fernández**, **Keir Ward Gospel Choir**, and others.

### **Sunday, July 27**

*If you plan to attend the prayer witness in the afternoon, please remember to check out of your hotel room in the morning and store your luggage behind the desk in the lobby. **Check-out time is 11 AM.***

**8-9 AM:** Breakfast (Ontario Exhibit Hall East)

**9-10 AM:** Morning plenary (Ambassador Ballroom, Salons 1 and 2)

**Meta Peace Team** receives the 2025 Teacher of Peace award

**Ralph McCloud** receives the Eileen Egan Peacemaker award

Commissioning of our new Ambassadors of Peace

**10 AM:** Break. *Last opportunity to visit exhibitors and vendors!*

**10:30 AM:** Closing liturgy

**11:45 AM:** Closing remarks, conference ends. Gather on the first floor for the prayer walk.

**12-1 PM:** Prayer walk and witness at the Spirit of Detroit statue, a short walk from the hotel.

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## **Award recipients**

### **Meta Peace Team, recipient of the 2025 Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace award**

Since 1978, Pax Christi USA has presented an outstanding peacemaker (individual or organization) with the Teacher of Peace award, our highest honor, to those who have shone a light for us on our journey toward solidarity and justice. Michigan-based **Meta Peace Team (MPT)** provides a civilian-based, community-focused nonviolent presence in areas of conflict. It educates and trains on the efficacy, vision, power, and practice of active nonviolence, particularly as it relates to nonviolent conflict intervention, and places peace teams both domestically and internationally where invited.



### **Ralph McCloud, recipient of the Pax Christi USA Eileen Egan Peacemaker award**

Established in 2007, the Eileen Egan Peacemaker award is given periodically to honor a group or individual who have given strong, extraordinary prophetic witness for peace in a time or situation of violence or injustice. **Ralph McCloud** served as executive director of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), the anti-poverty program of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, for 16 years before resigning in May 2024. McCloud, who currently serves as a Fellow with NETWORK, was chosen for this award for his unceasing efforts to lift up and center Catholic social teaching. (Photo by Jessica S. Zurcher)



### **Joryán Hernández, recipient of the first Sr. Dianna Ortiz OSU Peacemaker award**

This year, the Pax Christi USA national council voted to create a new award to celebrate young peacemakers. Named in honor of our beloved deputy director who died in 2021, the first Sr. Dianna Ortiz OSU Peacemaker award is presented to **Joryán Hernández**, a graduate student at the University of Notre Dame who has been a leader in the campus campaign in solidarity with Palestine and in calling for the university to divest from military contracts, particularly in light of the extraordinary suffering of the people of Gaza.



## Morning workshops: 11:15 -12:45 PM

### **Building communities of hope – Walking with immigrants**

*Sponsored by the Pax Christi USA Immigration Working Group*

*Coordinated by: Bill O'Brien, Strangers No Longer*

***This workshop will not be recorded.***

*Location: Nicolet A*

Participants will hear a variety of testimonies from two immigrant leaders, a high school student leader, and a parish pastor, all responding to Pope Francis's exhortations to build communities of hope here in the United States. We will have time for Q&A and a brief description of how to build a Circle of Support in your parish or community.

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### **Broken treaties, broken land; Restoring relationships, restoring the Earth**

*Sponsored by the Pax Christi USA Indigenous Solidarity Working Group*

*Presenters: Carrie Hansen, Mary Beth DiMarco, Melissa Chapman Skinner and Andrea Pierce*

*Location: Marquette B*

Using Pax Christi USA's "Pray-Study-Act" model, members of the Indigenous Solidarity Working Group will examine how the early United States adopted the Doctrine of Discovery — a legal framework that allowed European Christian nations to claim lands already inhabited by Indigenous peoples. This session will invite attendees to reflect, learn, and act — fostering solidarity, healing, and advocacy for the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island and the Earth we share.

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### **The humanitarian crisis in Darfur and Sudan and what can be done in response**

*Presenter: Dr. Nada Fadul, Professor at the University of Nebraska College of Medicine*

*Moderator: Dr. Gail Presby, Department Chair of Philosophy, University of Detroit Mercy; Pax Christi Michigan*

*Location: Duluth B*

The United Nations has described the war and humanitarian crisis in Sudan as the biggest humanitarian crisis ever recorded, and the African Union has declared it the worst humanitarian disaster in the world today. A conservative estimate suggests that between 145,000 and 150,000 civilians have been killed. At least 15 million people have been displaced, and 8.7 million are on the brink of famine. More than 18 million Sudanese face acute food insecurity. The economy has collapsed, millions are unemployed, and access to essential services has nearly vanished. More than 70 percent of Sudan's healthcare facilities are inoperable, leading to the spread of diseases and a lack of medical care for those who are injured and sick. This workshop will explore what is happening in Sudan and possible ways to resolve the crisis and what we can do in the United States.

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### **When you feel like flipping tables: Faith-based advocacy for our times**

*Presenter: Catherine Gillette, NETWORK Advocates*

***This workshop will not be recorded.***

*Location: Brule A*

In this training, we will engage what it means to be a faith-based advocate and help you hone your advocacy skills to meet the specific challenges of our times. We will examine which tactics are most (and least!) effective at influencing Members of Congress and what types of information elected officials most want to receive from you. We will explore how to build an effective campaign, data-driven approaches to messaging, and organizing best practices to help you expand your network. We will discuss the role of creativity in campaigns, as well as the importance of centering joy and community in our resistance.

## Afternoon workshops: 2-3:30 PM

### **Catholic Nonviolence Days of Action**

*Presented by Pax Christi International/Catholic Nonviolence Initiative*

*Presenters: Nicolás Paz (Catholic Nonviolence Initiative) and Rosie Davila (Pace e Bene/Campaign Nonviolence)*

*Coordinator: Marie Dennis, Director, Catholic Institute for Nonviolence*

*Location: Marquette B*

This workshop will share about Pax Christi International's Catholic Nonviolence Initiative and the 2025 Catholic Nonviolence Days of Action (CNVDA), with an invitation to become involved in CNVDA at a local level in the US. In 2025, CNVDA will again join Campaign Nonviolence. Last year, as part of Campaign Nonviolence, more than 80,000 people participated in 5,329+ actions, events, and marches across the US and around the world.

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### **Protect our kids: Youth, suicide, and guns**

*Presented by the Pax Christi USA Gun Violence Prevention Working Group*

*Coordinators: Jeanne Allen, Mary Gagnon, Madeline Labriola, Mary Ellen Quinn, LCSW, and Sherry Simon, PhD*

*Location: Duluth B*

The United States' suicide problem is a gun problem. This workshop will combine prayer, background information on suicide by gun in the US, statistics, personal stories, related mental health issues, and discussion around solutions to this growing public health emergency in our country.

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### **What Catholics can do to abolish nuclear weapons**

*Sponsored by the Pax Christi USA Nuclear Disarmament Working Group, organized by Nick Mele*

*Speakers: Allen Pietrobon, Denise Duffield, and Kim Bergier*

*Moderator: Camila Perez, Pax Christi USA Campus Outreach and Communications Coordinator*

*Location: Brule A*

This August marks the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Meanwhile, the nuclear powers have resumed the nuclear arms race, even as other existential threats like climate change and pandemics threaten the planet. Many US Americans feel they are powerless to effect needed change, but now is our time to stand up and demand change. This workshop provides a brief review of Catholic teaching on nuclear weapons and includes practical suggestions for Catholics to call for nuclear disarmament: from disinvestment from financial institutions and manufacturers involved in making nuclear weapons to advocacy with neighbors, bishops, and elected representatives. You will learn how you can build a more peaceful world.

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### **Resisting a surveillance state: Racism, warfare, and economic injustice powered by AI without ethics**

*Sponsored by the Pax Christi USA Young Adult Caucus, organized by Jessica Sun*

*Speakers: Jalal Abukhater (7amleh), Tawana Petty (Petty Propolis), and Andrea Reyes (TechTonic Justice)*

*Moderator: Jessica Sun, Pax Christi Young Adult Caucus*

*Location: Nicolet A*

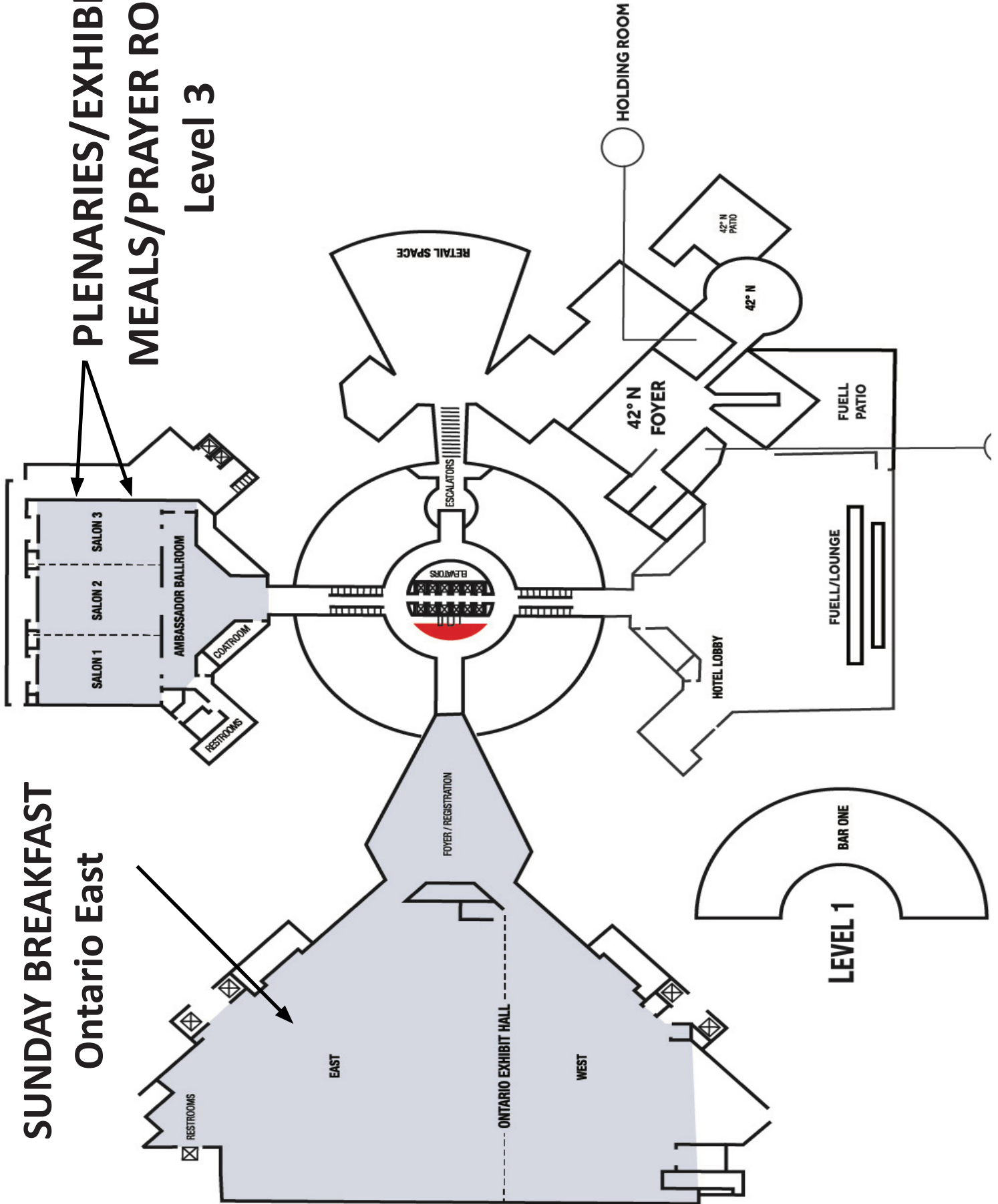
The use of artificial intelligence (AI) is proliferating. It has become a well-known marketing term as tech CEOs, high-profile engineers, and politicians have used prophecy as advocacy for decades, funneling untold wealth and power into the hands of the few. When powerful interests frame new applications of AI as inevitable, magical, and something to be adapted to without the possibility of rectification, great damage occurs. Government officials, law enforcement agencies, armies, landlords, and employers often hide when they use AI to make decisions about healthcare, employment, public benefits, housing, police investigations, and targeting in war. In this session, three expert speakers will expound upon how AI is already being used to fuel economic injustice, conflate security and surveillance with safety, destroy democratic government decision-making, and commit flagrant violations of human rights and laws of war, as we are witnessing in Palestine/Gaza today. The speaker presentations will be followed by a panel Q&A with the audience.

# SUNDAY BREAKFAST

## Ontario East

PLENARIES/EXHIBITS  
MEALS/PRAYER ROOM

Level 3

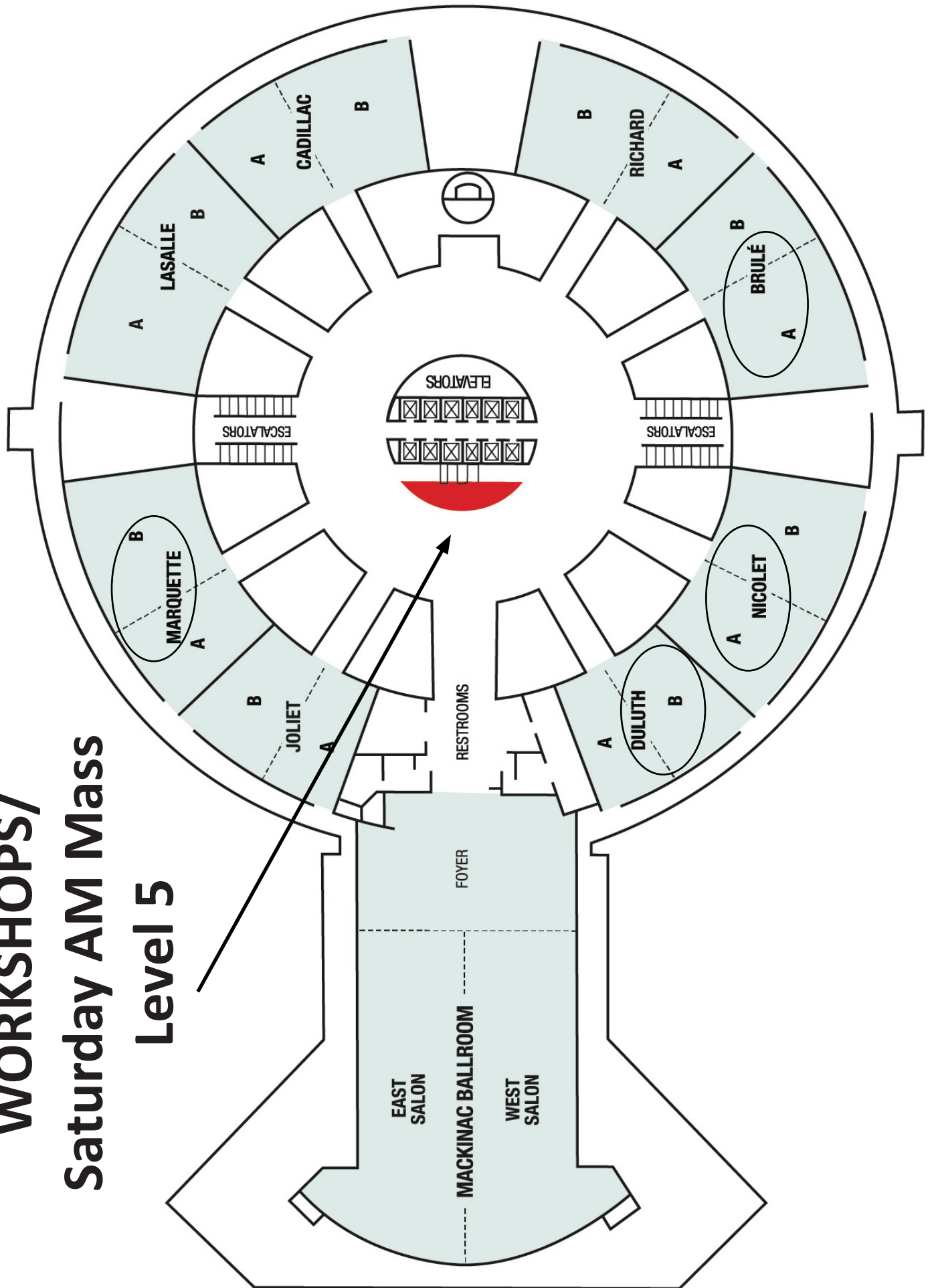


LEVEL 1

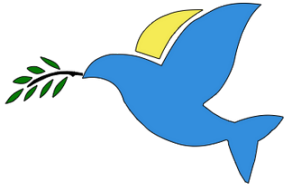
BAR ONE

# WORKSHOPS/ Saturday AM Mass

## Level 5



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**FRANCISCAN**  
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**Dominican Sisters**  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

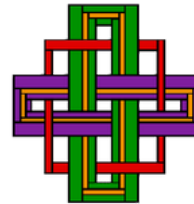
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## Pax Christi USA contact number:

### 202-635-2741, ext 3

*For medical emergencies, call 911*

Lost and found items can be brought to the  
Pax Christi USA table in the Ambassador foyer



*Use this QR code to donate to  
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**Pax Christi USA**

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