



Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

NewsNotes

A bi-monthly newsletter of information on international justice and peace issues

January-February 2017

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Nonviolence: World Day of Peace message

The start of the new year finds many people around the world in need of healing from political, economic, and social injustice. In response, Pope Francis offers a World Day of Peace message on the need for nonviolence as a style of politics.

As we enter a new year with anticipation, we look back at 2016, in which we experienced a U.S. presidential election marred by hate speech, bigotry, and even violence. The country is bitterly divided and uncertain about the future. In the wider world, Maryknoll missionaries witnessed an unprecedented level of violent conflicts, record-breaking numbers of refugees and displaced persons seeking shelter, and human rights abuses that, in some places, approached genocide.

At the same time, as followers of Jesus, we are called “to always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.” (1 Peter 3:15).

In his 2017 World Day of Peace message, Pope Francis reflects on “our broken world” and repeats his observation that “we find ourselves engaged in a horrifying world war fought piecemeal” or world war three “in installments.” His message is that active nonviolence is the only sure way to peace:

“Violence is not the cure for our broken world. Countering violence with violence leads at best to forced migrations and enormous suffering, because vast amounts of resources are diverted to military ends and away from the everyday needs of young people, families experiencing hardship, the elderly, the infirm and the great majority of people in our world. At worst, it can lead to the death, physical and spiritual, of many people, if not of all.”

The pope speaks of Jesus as the model for creative and active nonviolence:

“Jesus himself lived in violent times. Yet he taught that the true battlefield, where violence and peace meet, is the human heart: for “it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come” (Mark 7:21)

“Whoever accepts the Good News of Jesus is able to acknowledge the violence within and be healed by God’s mercy, becoming in turn an instrument of reconciliation. In the words of Saint Francis of Assisi: ‘As you announce peace with your mouth, make sure that you have greater peace in your hearts.’”

With striking clarity, Pope Francis declares that: “To be true followers of Jesus today also includes embracing his teaching about nonviolence.” He recommends the Sermon on the Mount as a “manual” for peacemaking and challenges political and business leaders, international institutions and legislators to engage in

active nonviolence inspired by the Beatitudes.

Refuting the image of nonviolence as passivity and surrender, the Holy Father declares that history has shown that active nonviolence is more powerful than violence, citing the examples of Martin Luther King in the U.S., Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and Leymah Gbowee and the thousands of her fellow Liberian women whose nonviolent protests and pray-ins led to the peaceful end of the second civil war in Liberia.

Pope Francis notes that the success of active nonviolence begins in the family and in our personal practices that model hope. He also emphasizes respect for the human dignity of our enemy. This insight was borne out in the testimonies of Catholic practitioners of active nonviolence at the Vatican conference on Nonviolence and Just Peace last April.

Pope Francis selected active nonviolence as his theme for this 50th World Day of Peace Message at the request of participants of the conference. It is the first significant teaching of a pope on nonviolence, which he names as a priority of the Church:

“I pledge the assistance of the Church in every effort to build peace through active and creative nonviolence.”

He concludes his World Day of Peace message with words of hope and solidarity that we want to carry forward:

“In 2017, may we dedicate ourselves prayerfully and actively to banishing violence from our hearts, words and deeds, and to becoming nonviolent people and to build nonviolent communities that care for our common home. “Nothing is impossible if we turn to God in prayer. Everyone can be an artisan of peace.”§

Faith in action: Read and share the World Day of Peace message at <http://bit.ly/WorldDayofPeace2017>.

Invite members of your faith community to study the peacemakers named by Pope Francis: Mahatma Gandhi or Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in India, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the U.S., Leymah Gbowee in Liberia, Saint Francis of Assisi, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and Saint Therese of Lisieux.

Catholic Nonviolence Initiative update

As a founding member of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns participates in steering the initiative and promoting the outcomes of the Nonviolence and Just Peace Conference.

The Nonviolence and Just Peace conference in Rome in April brought together 83 Catholic peacemakers to discuss their efforts to promote nonviolence in the countries where they serve. They concluded the conference by issuing an appeal to the Catholic Church to become a “living witness” of the nonviolence teachings of Jesus. They urged the Church to move away from the “just war” theory promulgated by Saint Augustine in the fourth century and instead develop a “just peace” approach.

The appeal was delivered to Pope Francis by Cardinal Peter Turkson, then president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and a participant in the conference. On January 1, Cardinal Turkson became the first leader of the new Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, and the Pontifical Council for Health Care Workers will all be merged into this new “super dicastery.”

All this is to say that Cardinal Turkson is in a key position to support the appeal, which includes a request for Pope Francis to write an encyclical on nonviolence.

In an interview published in the *National Catholic Reporter* last September, Cardinal Turkson said conference participants support the shift in Church teaching because the just war theory, which was originally intended to make wars difficult to justify by deeming them morally acceptable only under certain conditions such as self-defense, “too often has been used to endorse – rather than prevent or limit – war.”

Since the conference, we have shared in *NewsNotes* reflections on the practice and spirituality of active nonviolence by Maryknoll Missioners in the Vatican conference. You can read those at <http://maryknollogc.org/tag/maryknoll-nonviolence-reflections>.

We have also endorsed the “Appeal to the Catholic Church to Re-commit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence.” Thank you to all of you who have also added

your names online to endorse the appeal. Please continue to share the appeal with your faith community and ask more people to add their names online as supporters at <http://bit.ly/CatholicNonviolenceAppeal>.

Working with the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns to promote the appeal are Pax Christi International, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), and others, in a project called the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative.

“Affirming the vision and practice of active nonviolence at the heart of the Catholic Church,” the Initiative seeks to build greater awareness in the Church of the successful practice of active nonviolence by

Catholic peacemakers around the world and how the spirituality of nonviolence is a vital part of our tradition. Visit the website at <https://nonviolencejustpeace.net/>.

At the request of participants in the April conference and the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, Pope Francis wrote the fiftieth World Day of Peace Message on active nonviolence, the first major statement of a pope on nonviolence (See page 3).

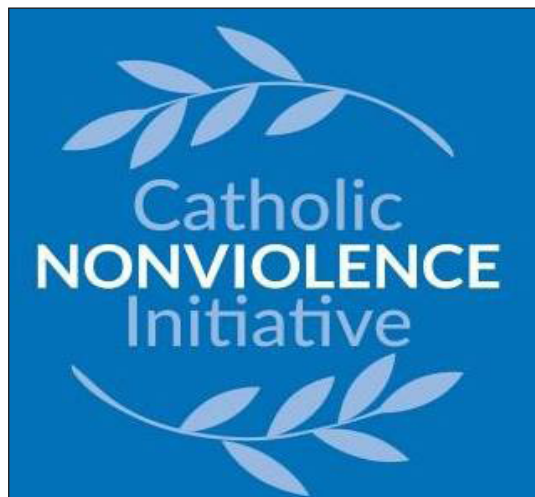
In his message, Pope Francis pledged “the assistance of the Church in every effort to build

peace through active and creative nonviolence”. He began 2017 with daily tweets about nonviolence. Two of the pope’s tweets are pictured on the next page.

Gerry Lee, the director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, is a member of the steering committee for the initiative and is very much involved with promoting the appeal. In December, Gerry joined other leaders of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative at the Vatican to plan the next steps after the World Day of Peace message on January 1.

During the same week, Pope Francis publicly affirmed his commitment to promoting creative nonviolence in his remarks with six new ambassadors to the Holy See. He urged them to cultivate active nonviolence in their work as diplomats:

“[Nonviolence] is not the same as weakness or passivity; rather it presupposes firmness, courage and



the ability to face issues and conflicts with intellectual honesty, truly seeking the common good over and above all partisan interest, be it ideological, economic or political.”

“In the course of the past century, marred by wars and genocides of unheard-of proportions, we have nonetheless seen outstanding examples of how nonviolence embraced with conviction and practiced consistently, can yield significant results, also on the social and po-

(<https://lcwr.org/publications/called-nonviolence>). The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns offers a sixteen-page Lenten reflection guide that includes stories from participants at the Nonviolence conference.

The initiative hosted its first regional meeting for Catholic peacemakers in South Africa in December. Maryknoll Sister Janice McLaughlin of Zimbabwe attended. Plans are underway for more regional meetings in the near future. §



litical plane,” the pope said. “Some peoples, and indeed entire nations, thanks to the efforts of nonviolent leaders, peacefully achieved the goals of freedom and justice.”

The Catholic Nonviolence Initiative will be promoting both the appeal and the World Day of Peace message throughout 2017. Eli McCarthy of the director of Justice and Peace for CMSM and Marie Dennis both wrote articles for “To Go Forth,” a blog from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Department of Justice, Peace & Human Development (<https://togoforth.org/>) and Marie Dennis wrote an article for the Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Faith in action: Learn more about nonviolence in the Catholic tradition by listening to four webinars recorded by the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative at <https://nonviolencejustpeace.net/webinars/>.

Pray, study, and act with the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns “**2017 Lenten Reflection Guide: A Journey with Gospel Nonviolence**” which includes testimonies from Catholic peacemakers at the conference. Lent begins March 1. Download the guide at <http://bit.ly/MaryknollLent2017>.

Congratulations to Marie Dennis, National Catholic Reporter’s “Person of the Year” for 2016

from *National Catholic Reporter*:

“Marie Dennis, [former director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns and] co-president of Pax Christi International, has long known that making peace in today’s world requires not only new ways of acting, but also new ways of seeing and thinking.

“In this regard, 2016 could prove to be a watershed year. In April, at an unprecedented Vatican conference, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and Pax Christi brought together activists, academics and church officials to re-examine how the church thinks about war and peace, violence and nonviolence. The resulting document, “An Appeal to the Catholic Church to Recommit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence,” lays the foundation for a fundamental shift in church teaching.” ...

To read the entire editorial, go to <http://bit.ly/NCRPersonYear2016>.

Climate “trial of the century” moves ahead

A group of children has taken the U.S. government – and soon Donald Trump – to court for failing to protect them from climate change. The landmark lawsuit, Julian v. U.S., first reported in the May-June 2016 issue of NewsNotes is likely to go to trial by Fall 2017.

Called the “biggest trial of the century” by some legal experts, twenty-one children have passed yet another important hurdle in their quest to hold the U.S. government responsible for failing to protect their futures from climate change.

Two days after the presidential election, U.S. District Court judge Ann Aiken denied motions by the defense – the federal government and three large business associations – to dismiss the case. The landmark lawsuit is now clear to proceed to trial.

The plaintiffs – twenty-one children ages 9 to 20 – claim that the U.S. government is placing their life, liberty, and property in jeopardy by its lack of action to address climate change.

In her ruling, federal judge Aiken indicated her support for two fundamental arguments made by the plaintiffs – the notion of public trust and substantive due process rights. “I have no doubt that the right to a climate system capable of sustaining human life is fundamental to a free and ordered society,” she wrote, explaining that public trust rights, which “both predated the Constitution and are secured by it,” cannot be “legislated away.”

“This action is of a different order than the typical environmental case,” the judge concluded. “It alleges that defendants’ actions and inactions—whether or not they violate any specific statutory duty—have so profoundly damaged our home planet that they threaten plaintiffs’ fundamental constitutional rights to life and liberty.”

The case will likely go to trial in the summer or fall of 2017.

If the plaintiffs win, the Trump administration will

be required to drastically reduce fossil fuel production – an order that the administration would surely appeal. If the case were to reach the Supreme Court, few legal experts expect the current eight justices to rule in favor of the children. If a Trump appointee were to join the court, the children’s odds of success are even lower.

President Obama could issue a consent decree in which he would agree to take action in support of the court ruling rather than going forward with the trial. But even if he were to do so, the Trump administration could stop such action, sending the case back to the courts and eventually to the Supreme Court.

During the next presidency, climate action at the local and state level will likely advance. Lawsuits similar to Julian v. U.S. have already been successful in Massachusetts and Washington states. More cases are moving forward.

Professor Mary Christina Wood at the law school of the University of Oregon, an expert in natural resources and public trust law, said if both the executive and legislative branches fail to act, then the judicial



branch must intervene.

Wood's book, *Nature's Trust: Environmental Law for a New Ecological Age*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2014, originated the approach called “atmospheric trust litigation” which applies public trust doctrine to compel government action on climate change.

On Julian v. U.S., Professor Wood said: “whatever way the case goes, it is serving a very important purpose in reframing the climate crisis as one which affects human rights, and fundamental rights that citizens of the United States hold, and also citizens of other nations across the world.”

Environmental justice under President Trump

The challenges facing care for creation are great, but the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns is committed to protecting and advocating for strong environmental protections in the next four years.

During his presidential campaign, president-elect Donald Trump consistently promoted sharp deviations from existing U.S. environmental policy. Aside from meetings with celebrity climate champions, Al Gore and Leonardo DiCaprio, President Trump's cabinet picks suggest he plans to keep his campaign promises. Many of the appointees Trump has made to key agencies with environmental programs have actively opposed existing environmental regulations or have close ties to the oil and gas sectors.

Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt has been selected to lead the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Pruitt is a vehement climate change denier who has attempted to undermine climate policy in recent years. Pruitt is party to a lawsuit with other conservative attorney generals to sue the federal government over the Clean Power Plan, a cornerstone of the Obama Administration's climate policy to reduce carbon emissions and key to meeting our climate commitments under the Paris Agreement. Pruitt has also sued the EPA over rules to regulate other sources of pollution from coal-fired power plants and methane from hydraulic fracturing (fracking). Methane is a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon. He may try to overturn the EPA's endangerment finding that allows for carbon to be regulated under the Clean Air Act, but the rule was upheld in federal courts so it would be a heavy lift.

Former Texas governor, Rick Perry, will be nominated to lead the Department of Energy (DOE). When campaigning for president in the 2012 Republican primaries, Perry pledged to abolish the DOE. Like Pruitt, Perry actively opposes any oil or gas regulations or efforts to address climate change. He is also a climate change denier.

Rex Tillerson, CEO of Exxon Mobil, was a surprise nominee to lead the Department of State. For years, Exxon hid the science showing that fossil fuels contribute to climate change. Tillerson recognizes that climate change is real and human caused and supported the Paris Climate Agreement. Whether Exxon's business opportunities will grow under a fossil fuel-friendly administration and whether Tillerson or Trump would have the last word on the State department's climate policy are open questions. Tillerson's nomination is also controversial due to close ties with Russia's President Putin.

Exxon has also been a vocal opponent of a provi-

sion in the Dodd-Frank financial reforms. Exxon joined a 2012 lawsuit, and a new lawsuit announced in October 2016, as a member of the American Petroleum Institute against the Securities and Exchange Commission. The lawsuit targeted federal rules to implement a provision of Dodd-Frank requiring any oil, gas, or mining company publicly traded on the U.S. stock market to divulge financial payments to governments for their operations. This data can be used to address corruption and as a tool by advocates to direct these funds to serve the common good. Many of the most resource rich countries in the world are also the poorest due to corruption and lack of transparency.

Representative Ryan Zinke (R-MT) was tapped to lead the Department of Interior. Unlike many of his Republican colleagues, Zinke favors the administration of public lands under the federal government. But Zinke may still favor oil, gas, and mining operations on public lands. This would have impacts on the U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Although Zinke has stated that he believes climate change to be real, he is uncertain that it is human caused – despite the solid scientific consensus stating otherwise.

As far as what a Trump Administration would mean for specific policy changes, the Trump administration may look for guidance in a new document from the House Freedom Caucus that details ways to radically deregulate environmental protections including energy efficient appliances, Chesapeake Bay restoration and climate change initiatives. The House Freedom Caucus is a small but vocal group of House Republicans that rose out of the Tea Party movement.

Trump has said he would pull the U.S. from the Paris climate agreement and prohibit contributions to the Green Climate Fund, an important international program to finance projects to mitigate and respond to climate impacts in developing countries. Both the Green Climate Fund and the Clean Power Plan are key commitments made by the U.S. in the Paris agreement, which is supported by a majority of states, cities, businesses, and the civil national security community as well as civil society organizations.

Most of the states who are part of the lawsuit against the Clean Power Plan will already have met their meager commitments to reduce carbon emissions. Other states have pledged to continue to implement their part of the plan regardless of federal actions. §

Trade: The Human Thread Campaign

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns distributed more than 8,000 postcards for people to sign and mail to the CEOs of Macy's and Kohl's as part of the Human Thread Campaign during the final months of 2016.

"Purchasing is always a moral - and not simply economic - act," Pope Francis has said.

Inspired by Catholic social teaching and motivated to action after the tragedy of the Rana Plaza garment factory collapse in Bangladesh, Franciscan Father Mike Crosby launched the Human Thread Campaign to pressure two large clothing department stores, Macy's and Kohl's, to ensure that workers who produce the clothing for sale in their stores are paid a fair wage.

The Human Thread Campaign website explains that the globalization of the production chain has had adverse effects on our ability to empathize with others (<http://www.humanthreadcampaign.org/>):

"Because the production of our clothing has moved from the textile factory nearby to places halfway around the world, this kind of marketplace blinds us from seeing the direct consequences of our consumer choices. As a result, and despite our good will, we have become unwitting perpetrators (or at least participants) of what Pope Francis has called the 'globalization of indifference.'"

Unlike the Good Samaritan who saw the victim on the road, the physical and psychological distance between us and those who produce the goods that sustain us makes it difficult for us to understand our impact on their lives.

"We cannot imagine keeping a poorly paid tailor we know locked in a dimly lit basement workshop to make our clothes" the Human Thread Campaign says, yet we are complicit in the system that pays an average of \$0.24 per hour to work in a garment factory in Bangladesh. Pope Francis calls this slave labor.

Over the course of a few months, the Human Thread Campaign distributed over 64,000 postcards around the country to individuals to send the message to the CEOs of Macy's and Kohl's that their customers want to purchase clothing made by people who earn a just wage. The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns was able to distribute more than 8,000 postcards.

On November 30, known as "Black Friday" in the U.S. and promoted by businesses as a day to shop, Brother Anthony Zuba and several parishioners of Holy Cross-Saint John the Baptist, a church with deep roots in the garment district of Manhattan, hand-delivered 400 signed postcards to the Vice President of Social Responsibility at Macy's.

The Human Thread Campaign is of particular significance to Brother Zuba, whose church was formed by German immigrants in 1840 - many of whom worked in the local garment district. "The women in Bangladesh and Honduras who make our shirts and socks [today] are no different from the German immigrants whose meager earnings fed their families and raised the vaults of Saint John the Baptist." Bro. Zuba was encouraged by the warm reception he and his parishioners received from Macy's in response to their action, and he plans to continue to search for ways to "reduce the distance between us and the people who make our clothes. Likewise, let us reduce the distance between us and the people who sell us our clothes."

As the Human Thread Campaign puts it: "The best way we can say 'Amen' to those who produce our clothing is to work to make their living situation better so that all will know we are Christians in the ways we try to love these neighbors as ourselves. Wouldn't we want them to do the same if we were in their shoes?"§

Faith in Action: To date, MOGC has distributed over 8,000 Human Thread Campaign postcards to supporters around the country - with more available. Call us at (202)832-1780 or email ogc@maryknoll.org to request postcards be mailed to you to distribute among your community.

Take the St. Vincent Pledge
as written on the Human Thread website

We pledge to:

PRAY in order to create sustainable communities through a more just economy.

LEARN about and educate others on the real consequences of globalized supply chains.

ASSESS how we are able to confront the "globalization of indifference" in the clothing industry.

ACT to change our choices and behaviors as consumers in the global economy.

ADVOCATE for Catholic principles, priorities, and values concerning the wages and working conditions of the people who make our clothing.

U.S. trade policy after the TPP

Faith communities joined labor, environmental, development, and farm groups in celebrating the demise in the United States of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement.

On November 10, Senator Charles Schumer, now the Senate minority leader, told U.S. labor union leaders that the proposed Trans Pacific Partnership trade agreement will not be ratified by Congress.

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns and dozens of other faith, labor, environmental, development, and farm groups celebrated the end of a long campaign against this trade deal that was written to put the rights of investors before the needs of vulnerable people. The TPP did not safeguard access to affordable medicines or care for dignified livelihoods and traditional farming practices.

The agreement was negotiated for eight years and signed in February 2016 with 12 nations in Asia, Oceania and the Americas, including the United States. Faith communities raised concerns throughout the negotiations that the TPP would raise prices and limit access to generic medicines for people both in developing countries and in the United States.

Faith communities were equally concerned that the TPP lacked enforceability of sound environmental and labor provisions. Conversely, corporations would have the power to sue governments when their investments were limited by regulations or denied permit or other measures meant to protect national interests such as the environment, labor, or health. Such suits are brought before a three-judge panel of corporate lawyers in an extra-judicial court system like the one housed in the World Bank in Washington, D.C.

The TPP negotiations began in 2008 under the Bush Administration. Negotiations were put on hold in 2009 while the Obama Administration evaluated the agreement and began negotiations again at the end of the year.

The TPP faced growing opposition by both parties in 2016 and became an issue discussed during the primary and general presidential elections, even after the agreement was signed. Opposition was sustained over years by the powerful organizing and advocacy efforts of many coalitions and grassroots activists – including Maryknoll supporters who responded to action alerts and made calls and sent emails to members of Congress, President Obama and the U.S. trade representative.

In April 2016, people of faith came to Washington,

D.C. from across the country to lobby their members of Congress to oppose the TPP because of the impacts on vulnerable people, creation, and democracy. Thank you to everyone who joined the “Stop the TPP” campaign.

Even with the TPP off the table, trade policy will continue to be an important issue with the Trump administration. President-elect Trump said he will seek better trade deals to benefit the United States. Within the first 100 days, his administration may try to renegotiate the North America Free Trade Agreement, a trade deal that has been in force for more than twenty years. It is possible that there could be some tweaks that improve labor conditions in Mexico. But trade provisions to improve labor conditions in other countries have largely been unenforced or difficult for concerned parties to actually get the U.S. to file official complaints.

NAFTA renegotiations could also lead to worse provisions for Mexico and Canada, including wait times for generic medicines. But if negotiations do open up, Canada and Mexico will also have their own demands. If the U.S. does not accept these demands, Mexico and Canada may not be willing to renegotiate the deal.

It is also possible that the Trump Administration will negotiate bilateral agreements with countries like Japan. The U.S. is so far continuing to negotiate the Trade in Services Agreement, which will liberalize services ranging from car sharing programs like Uber to energy providers. This would open up more markets related to trade disputes when companies feel they are treated unfairly by a nation.

So while groups celebrate the demise of TPP, there will still be much work ahead for trade justice advocates. “We welcome dialogue,” said Chloe Shwabe of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, “between governments, businesses, civil society, and affected communities to develop more transparent and equitable trade agreements that center on respect for God’s creation and the human family, and the promotion of sustainable livelihoods through small-scale, local development initiatives.”

In preparation, some groups are beginning to put forward alternative trade models. One interesting climate-friendly approach to trade is offered by the Sierra Club (<http://bit.ly/SierraClubTrade>).§



Economic justice: The commons movement

The commons refers to the cultural and natural resources accessible to all members of a society, such as air, water, and a habitable earth. Members of a growing social and political movement known as the commons movement believe such resources, when held in common, best serve the people whose lives they affected.

For many decades, even centuries, the debate over how best to manage our resources has centered on two basic options – the market or the state. Either the market should determine who owns and manages resources or the state should be primarily responsible. Societies have chosen the combination of state and market power that best fits their needs and wants within a spectrum ranging from full state control to a free market.

Yet both of these options are in crisis with increasing numbers of people questioning their legitimacy. The economic crisis of 2008 and its slow recovery have convinced many that an unfettered market can create serious societal problems and the state has long been considered by many to be incapable of managing resources well due to incompetence and/or corruption.

A host of initiatives, especially at the local and regional levels, are springing up that employ more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable ways to manage resources. The Commons movement is expanding in most parts of the world, with communities reclaiming control over land, water, fisheries, businesses and much more.

Commons management involves people whose lives are affected by the use of a resource. For example, people that live along a river may join together in a cooperative to determine rules for the use of the river. They may go on to develop institutions to enforce those rules.

Utrecht University history professor Tine De Moor describes such institutions as different in their design and functioning from the market and the state as governance models. Commons management prioritizes self-governance, which includes self-regulation, self-sanctioning, and self-management.

De Moor says we may be in a “third wave” or “up-surge” in institutionalized forms of cooperation. The first wave took place from the late Middle Ages to the 17th century with a notable increase in the number of rural commons and urban guilds.

The rise of the Enlightenment reversed this trend with its focus on individualism and “it was at this time that judicial and legal foundations rooted in individualism were laid, while legal foundations for collectivities were removed.”

The second wave from 1880 to 1920 witnessed “a steep rise in the number of cooperatives, as well as other types of collective action like cultural and sports associations, but also trade unions.”

While it is difficult to recognize while it is happening, De Moor believes we are in a third wave in response

to the privatization of so many public goods in recent years. Communities around the world are organizing to reclaim control of their resources and services, creating businesses where the workers are owners and managers, community-owned energy cooperatives, community gardens and much more.

Tomislav Tomašević, program director of the Institute for Political Ecology in Zagreb, Croatia, says, “I think the commons are important as a new narrative that goes beyond the dualism between state and market as the only institutions for collective action and shared prosperity. Both are in crisis and see their legitimacy increasingly eroded today. Commons come in as a new narrative, showing us that it is possible to have collective action which is not based on market exchange, nor on a disciplinary, hierarchical, paternalistic approach implemented by the state.”

Michel Bauwens, founder of the Foundation for Peer-to-Peer Alternatives in Amsterdam, believes that the movement is a response to a systemic crisis in which the extractive nature of the current economic system is endangering the planet. “It is a new value regime and it is not the first time this has happened,” he said.

Perhaps the most important role that the commons movement can provide is helping people see alternatives beyond the market and the state.

“One of the great things about the commons movement,” De Moor said, “is that it forces people to think differently about governance and how things can be organized. The biggest challenge right now is to involve more people in a different way of thinking.”§



U.S.-Mexico border: Radical hospitality

When Maryknoll Sister Lil Mattingly in El Paso, Texas, shared the urgent need for volunteers to help the growing numbers of refugees and migrants there, the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns sent Alfonso Buzzo, our peace fellow, to live and work at Annunciation House, a home of hospitality in El Paso. The following article is Alfonso's reflection on his month-long experience there.

"One comes to appreciate the reality that there can be no 'we and they' in our lives, but only brothers and sisters, all sacred and dignified." – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Annunciation House provides shelter to underserved immigrants, asylum seekers, and refugees at several houses of hospitality in El Paso. It is currently receiving over 1,000 migrants each week, most of them from Central America and just released by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Without hospitality centers like Annunciation House, these vulnerable people would be released to the streets. Instead, they find a place to stay, clean clothes, meals, showers, and assistance in contacting family and planning to travel onward.

Many newspaper and magazines articles, and even documentaries, have been written about the terrible things that many migrants have experienced along the U.S.-Mexico border. There are stories of murder, rape, theft, kidnapping, days spent in holding cells where refugees are treated like criminals, forced to wear ankle monitoring devices and even separated from family by U.S. Border Patrol agents for no apparent reason.

Recent immigrants have been known to experience aggressive searches by security at U.S. airports and attitudes of disdain and hate from lots of people. These are a very real part of the migrant journey to the U.S., but having lived and worked there allowed me to see amazing and wonderful things as well – especially compassionate responses from people who just want to help.

I would like to share some of those stories.

Unexpected family reunions are an unbelievable joy to witness. Immigration officers often separate families traveling together. If a father or mother is traveling with children, the father may be sent to a detention center where he will sit for many months until he is deported, while the mother and children go on to join their family somewhere in the U.S.

We welcomed such a family at Annunciation House – a father, mother, and three children. The father and teenage son were detained in one place and the mother and two younger children to another. Each family group sat in a holding cell for over 10 days with no idea what was happening to the other group.

Immigration officers brought the mother and little

children to one of our houses on a Monday. The father and the teenage son were brought to a different house on Tuesday. Neither the volunteers nor the family knew both groups were in our houses until Wednesday, when for unrelated logistical reasons we assigned the father and son to the same house as his wife and other children. Imagine the very emotional, tearful reunion when they just happened to see each other in the hallway!

Another time we had two families sharing a room in one of our shelters. One family – a woman and her children – couldn't gather enough money from relatives for a bus ticket to the relatives' home in another part of the U.S. Imagine the tears when her roommate's relatives bought the bus tickets for her. These two women only met the day before and they were not even from the same country!

When some of our guests leave Annunciation House, they travel by airplane to their relatives' homes around the U.S., if their family members have been in the U.S. for many years and have the financial means. Imagine never having seen an airport before, and then being forced to find a connecting gate in a massive airport in Chicago or Atlanta, where few people speak Spanish.

One day we received a phone call from an American woman who said she found a Guatemalan woman and her two children lost in an airport. Turns out the Guatemalan mother could not find her gate, was afraid to ask for help, and missed her flight. This American woman offered to drive the Guatemalan family five hours to their final destination – ten hours round trip for her. Amazing!

Pope Francis' pledge resonated with me on the U.S.-Mexico border: "I prefer a church which is bruised, hurting, and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security."§

Faith in action: Learn more about Annunciation House at <https://annunciationhouse.org/>.

Learn more about Maryknoll Sister Lil Mattingly on mission along the U.S.-Mexico border at <https://maryknollsisters.org/mk-sister/sister-lelia-mattingly/>

Haiti: UN apologizes for bringing cholera

In one of his final acts as UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon said the United Nations was "profoundly sorry" for the outbreak in Haiti, which first developed near a UN base in 2010, and committed to mobilizing a response by UN member states.

Cholera, an infection that spreads through water contaminated by human waste, had been absent in Haiti for a century until the arrival of a United Nations peacekeeping force in 2010 after the country's devastating earthquake. Medical studies published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control have shown that the disease was reintroduced via infected members of the peacekeeping contingent and their faulty sanitation practices, which leached latrine sewage into the water supply.

Official estimates claim the cholera epidemic has killed roughly 10,000 people and sickened more than 800,000 in Haiti, the Western Hemisphere's poorest country.

After several years of denial, the *New York Times* reported in August 2016 that the Office of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon acknowledged the UN's role in the outbreak for the first time. The deputy spokesperson for the secretary general, Farhan Haq, said, "over the past year the UN has become convinced that it needs to do much more regarding its own involvement in the initial outbreak and the suffering of those affected by cholera."

Days earlier, the spokesperson for the Office of the UN Secretary General said "the Secretary-General is actively working to develop a package that would provide material assistance and support to those Haitians most directly affected by cholera," and that the UN "intends to intensify its support to reduce and ultimately end the transmission of cholera, improve access to care and treatment, and address the longer-term issues of water, sanitation and health systems in Haiti."

Finally, on December 2, Ban Ki-moon announced in English "On behalf of the United Nations, I want to say very clearly: We apologize to the Haitian people," after asking for "the Haitian people's pardon" in Creole.

"We are profoundly sorry for our role."

In the live broadcast from the U.N. headquarters in New York, during which he detailed the plan, Ban acknowledged that the powerful world body "simply did not do enough with regard to the cholera outbreak and its spread in Haiti."

While the details of the plan are currently being worked out, the UN has announced that it is mobilizing \$400 million for this new response.

The response is being divided into two tracks: First, intensifying support for cholera control and response, and more effectively addressing the medium and

longer term issues of water, sanitation and health systems. Second, providing material assistance to those most affected by cholera.

It is unclear whether "material assistance" will translate into individual compensation, community-level projects, or some combination of the two.

While the progress is exciting, it is critical for advocates to maintain pressure on the Office of the UN Secretary General to uphold its promises and follow through with action.

According to the Haiti Advocacy Working Group, an organization formed by international development, faith-based, human rights and social justice organizations advocating on issues related to U.S.-Haiti policy, several things still need to happen for justice to become a reality:

- Victims must have a key voice in determining the details of the new plan, including a robust consultation process.
- UN member states must fund the new plan.
- The UN must make concrete commitments to cholera elimination (the \$400 million currently being raised only covers cholera control and material assistance).§



Cuba: Reflection on life after Fidel Castro

Fidel Castro, known as the father of the Cuban revolution, died November 25. Maryknoll Sister Ann Braudis, who visited Cuba in 2012, wrote the following reflection on the questions that hang over the future of Cuba.

The Cuban Revolution occurred in 1959 as I was making decisions about the direction of my adult life. I hoped that my choices would be as sacrificial and determined as the young Cuban men and women working to liberate their country from a corrupt government and oppressive military power that had enabled American businesses to exploit the land and the people of Cuba. My road eventually led to Maryknoll and, as a Maryknoll Missioner, to Cuba in 2012.

Prior to my visit to Cuba, I worked in Bolivia where I received excellent medical care from Cuban doctors whose training and philosophy were shaped by the Revolution. I also knew of the Revolution's achievement of universal literacy in Cuba. Later on I learned about Cuba's experience with organic agriculture and ecological care.

In 2012, the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns sent me to Cuba to learn about recent achievements and how to contribute to the conversation about ending the U.S. trade embargo with Cuba.

First, I found the achievements in health care and education to be true to their reputation. Protection of the environment, however, was not easily evident – certainly not in Havana, where air pollution goes unchecked – and not mentioned as a priority by any of the people with whom my companion and I spoke.

In contrast, we were able to see, although not actually visit, beautiful farm fields that we were told were organically cultivated. To our surprise, however, people expressed a preference for chemical agriculture, which was not available due to the U.S. embargo.

Second, the shock of firing squad executions during the early days of Castro's government appeared to have a lingering and sobering effect on the population. The people we met also displayed a sense of weariness due to decades of waiting for more than the essentials for modern life – not only in the material sense but also in the soul-touching arenas of creativity, inspiration, and intellectual freedom.

Contrary to our expectations, we realized that the U.S. embargo had become the Cuban people's justification for the Revolution's failures beyond its initial promises regarding health and education. The general population seemed to lack a dynamism or passion within, even

as people spoke in positive terms of the Revolution and its achievements.

There were other aspects of modern life under Castro's rule that seemed to generate personal internal conflict or disregard for established values – namely, the thriving black market for scarce goods, which included food staples such as eggs and butter, and the growing tourist industry for precious U.S. dollars. There existed a sharp division between what was readily available to tourists and what was available to the Cuban population. These conditions were linked to the end of thirty years of imports from the Soviet Union when it collapsed in 1991 and to the embargo.

Many of the people we talked with referred to a strong sense of national identity and unwavering resistance to the U.S. as their nation's major accomplishments. However, we could not ignore that Cuba continues to be a military state. Dissent is not allowed, except under very particular conditions. Access to the outside world is still limited.

While there were new opportunities for economic development, the pace of change was extremely slow and controlled. More than five decades is too long to wait for social, political, and economic.

Also, the socialist value of equality had been applied without regard for talent and gifts. While it is meant to safeguard basic needs and rights, it does not value personal fulfillment or the expression of deep psyche, which is sacred to our humanity.

Fidel Castro was a gifted person. He had the tenacity to withstand immense hardship, disappointment, and setbacks before the final 1959 success of the Revolution. However, his gift for leadership became petrified in a model that stagnated.

With the end of the embargo and the death of Fidel Castro, the people of Cuba are left to rediscover how to take risks and move with new light, to enter the deep inner space where Spirit is constantly beckoning one into the realm of greater understanding and more penetrating authenticity. To grow they will need to accept that it is not necessary to always be right, but rather, as pointed out by the psychologist Michael Meade, to be aligned with the unfolding process that continually chooses life over death. §



Colombia: Hurdles remain for peace

Colombia's Congress approved a landmark treaty with the FARC guerrilla rebels moving the country closer to a sustainable peace for the first time in fifty years.

In late November, Colombia's Congress approved a revised peace accord with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), a guerrilla movement with which the government of Colombia had been in violent conflict for 50 years. This was only 41 days after the first peace agreement was narrowly defeated in a countrywide referendum. FARC is the country's largest rebel group and had some 6,000 heavily armed fighters deployed across Colombia's jungles and mountains, according to experts.

In order to fast-track the new deal through Congress, President Santos needed the support of the Constitutional Court, whose 8-to-1 decision in favor on December 13 meant that his administration can seek expedited congressional approval for the laws and constitutional changes needed for the peace accord with the rebels.

President Santos took steps to address some of the previous objections from the opposition. The agreement now offers some clarity over what to expect as rebels accused of various offenses, including war crimes and drug trafficking, go before a special court.

However, the new accord still does not allow for prison sentences for those who confessed to war crimes, which the government said would have caused FARC to leave the negotiating table. The agreement also guarantees former rebels representation in Congress, but it bans them from running in newly-created districts in former conflict zones.

According to the Washington Office for Latin America (WOLA), the revised agreement includes a section guaranteeing the rights of Afro-Colombian and indigenous groups, something that advocates have been pushing for years. As WOLA's Gimena Sánchez noted in the Smithsonian Magazine, the peace accord's "Ethnic Chapter" includes long-sought provisions on land reform and environmental rights. However, WOLA reports

that the last weeks of 2016 have seen the worst wave in years of murders of social leaders, indigenous leaders, land-rights activists, and human rights defenders.

The credibility of the accord depends on stopping attacks against these community leaders.

Jesuit Father Francisco de Roux has been working for peace in Colombia for the last fourteen years. "We kept looking for peace," Father Francisco said, "talking with the guerrillas, the paramilitaries and the army, trying

to demonstrate that there was a way to work together, if we took the risk of opening ourselves up to human dignity, present in each and every one of us. The kind of dignity Romero was peacefully fighting for, the dignity we don't get from the government neither from the guerrillas, nor from money, nor from the churches. The kind of dignity we all just carry inside because we are human beings, sharing life and existence in this universe. The dignity we as Christians see as the manifestation of Gods' mystery, the gift of His absolute love in each and every person, in each and every creature, in the world."

... "When we were surrounded by violent groups, we discovered that there is no safety in weapons. That the only true and sustainable protection comes through trusting

people. And that to win trust we have to go through a long process of dialogue and mutual acceptance, and unpredictable individual and social changes, in the midst of uncertainties.

Father Francisco concluded, "I am certain that because of the generosity of my companions, women and men, and due to the way they devoted themselves to protect life and dignity in extreme difficulties, [our peace] process became a reference, in the construction of structural peace, all the while threatened by terrible violence; and the process has been replicated, so that we have now twenty four programs of development and peace in different regions of Colombia."§



Jesuit Father Francisco de Roux of Colombia at the Nonviolence and Just Peace Conference in Rome in April 2016. Photo by Gerry Lee/MOGC.

The Philippines: Archbishop condemns extrajudicial killings

Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan, the president of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of the Philippines, condemned extrajudicial killings of suspected drug dealers and addicts in his Christmas message.

“We have Christmas but there is blood spilling on our streets and sidewalks,” Villegas said in his pastoral message that was read during Masses in the Diocese of Pagadian and posted on the diocese’s website.

“This blood spilling is ugly because it is not the plan of God for His people. Murder is ugly. Extra judicial killing is ugly,” he said.

According to the news service of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of the Philippines (CBCP News), “more than 6,100 bodies have piled up since President Duterte took office in July, having promised a brutal crackdown on the illegal drug trade in the country.”

Archbishop Villegas said there are thousands of families mixing Christmas carols with “quiet tears because a loved one has been stricken down by a bullet.”

He also warned that anger has become so common that revenge “is slowly enchaining us.”

“Anger pushes us to pursue the illusion that we must kill in order to defend life,” he added.

He said that many people are living in fear not just of death but also of “calumny, malicious gossip and trumped up charges” and eventually become silent.

“Fear and anger are strong human feelings but greater than anger and fear is hope. Christmas is not a story of anger and fear. Anger and fear came from Herod not from Christ. Christ brings hope; Herod sows anger and fear. Christmas is Christ not Herod. Christmas is hope, hope stronger than fear and anger. Do not let anger push you to nod in agreement with murder. Do not let fear intimidate you. There is no peace for the coward.”

WOLA: U.S. must condemn killings in the Philippines

On December 9, the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) released the following statement entitled “President-elect Trump Should Repudiate Duterte’s Claims of U.S. Support for His Murderous Drug Policy.”

“Since taking office on June 30, Rodrigo Duterte, the president of the Philippines, has waged a draconian ‘war on drugs,’ encouraging civilians and police to murder people who are believed to sell or use drugs. He has compared his campaign to the Holocaust, expressing a desire to ‘slaughter’ millions, and has said he would pardon security forces who commit violations in the name of fighting drugs. Since July 1, according to the Philippine National Police, there have been more than 3,500 unsolved slayings.

“President Duterte has characterized a December 2 phone conversation with U.S. President-elect Donald Trump as a signal of the incoming U.S. administration’s support for his policies. To date, Duterte’s assertions about that conversation have remained uncontested by Trump or his advisers. The danger exists that this silence may leave people to conclude that Trump does indeed support Duterte’s open exhortations to violence and the resulting slaughter that is being carried out in the Philippines today. It is therefore critical that the incoming U.S. administration publicly clarify that it does not support a campaign that blatantly violates fundamental human rights and is inflicting an agonizing toll of death and human suffering.

“Duterte’s campaign of extrajudicial executions and promises of impunity for the perpetrators is a violation of the human rights obligations of all States under

international law. As was underscored in a joint statement issued in August by the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on Summary Executions and on the Right to Health: “Claims to fight the illicit drug trade do not absolve the Government from its international legal obligations and do not shield State actors or others from responsibility for illegal killings. The State has a legally binding obligation to ensure the right to life and security of every person in the country, whether suspected of criminal offences or not.”

“WOLA has worked for over three decades in support of alternatives to the ‘war on drugs,’ promoting policies that respect human dignity and also reduce the harms related to drugs. In the Americas, authorities have often used the banner of the ‘drug war’ to justify death-squad style murders or to repress political opponents and vulnerable communities. This approach has created countless victims but has had little impact on the illegal drug trade or the corruption that comes with it.

“As an organization that has documented the devastation of violent crackdowns in the name of drug control, WOLA urges President-elect Trump to publicly and explicitly repudiate Duterte’s claims and to disavow any support for his horrific policies. Not doing so would send a profoundly dangerous signal that the next U.S. administration is prepared to turn a blind eye to the most egregious human rights violations.”§

Israel/Palestine: New action by UN Security Council

On December 23 the UN Security Council passed a resolution calling for an end to Israeli settlements with a vote of fourteen in favor and one abstention – the United States.

It is illustrative of international diplomacy, particularly at the United Nations, that a vote of abstention can be significant. On December 23 the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 2334, condemning the building and expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank as a “flagrant violation under international law.”

Of the fifteen members, fourteen voted in favor and one – the United States – abstained.

Just twenty-four hours earlier it seemed the vote would not occur when Egypt pulled its draft of the resolution. UNSC member states Malaysia, Venezuela, New Zealand, and Senegal carried the resolution forward anyway, forcing the U.S. to act: By abstaining, the U.S. allowed the resolution to pass.

With this action, the U.S. broke with a strong history of protecting Israel by exercising its veto power at the Security Council, as it did in 2011 when the U.S. voted against another resolution condemning settlement-building in the West Bank. Then-U.S. Ambassador to the UN Susan Rice insisted that the veto was not in support of settlement expansion but rather a statement of support for the issue to be settled through direct negotiation between the parties.

At the vote on December 23, the current U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Samantha Power, made clear what has changed between the 2011 veto and now: “The settlement problem has gotten so much worse that it is now putting at risk the very viability of that two-state solution.” As of 2016, there are more than 590,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank, which includes east Jerusalem. “Rather than dismantling these [new settlement units] and other settler outposts, which are illegal even under Israeli law, now there is new legislation advancing in the Israeli Knesset that would legalize most of the outposts,” Power said.

In his press statement, Secretary of State John Kerry reiterated that the U.S. allowed Resolution 2334 to pass for one primary reason: “to preserve the possibility of the two state solution.” Both Power and Kerry belabored ongoing U.S. support for the state of Israel, as demonstrated by the recent agreement for the U.S. to provide Israel with \$38 billion in military aid over the next 10 years – the largest such aid package in U.S. history. Power and Kerry also insisted that halting settlement expansion is both consistent with U.S. policy over

the last fifty years and in Israel’s best interest.

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu does not agree. “As I told John Kerry on Thursday, friends don’t take friends to the Security Council,” Netanyahu said during a press conference held after the vote.

Members of Congress – both Democrat and Republican – quickly expressed opposition to the abstention, perhaps none more strongly than Senator Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina, who said the vote “empowered evil.” Senator Graham vowed to lead the charge in canceling the U.S.’s contribution to the UN – which amounts to 22 percent of the UN’s budget.

President-elect Donald Trump tweeted several times about the vote, including a message which said “As to the U.N., things will be different after Jan. 20.”

Leading Jewish organizations such as the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League also opposed the vote. Some more progressive Jewish organizations supported it – including J Street, the New Israel Fund, and Jewish Voices for Peace.

Had this vote occurred in 2008 rather than in 2016, it might have inspired some renewed hope in negotiations for peace between Israel and Palestine. But Donald Trump has already made clear his opposition to a two-state solution by nominating David Friedman for U.S. Ambassador to Israel.

In June, Friedman called J Street supporters of a two-state solution “worse than kapos,” a reference to Jewish concentration-camp inmates who cooperated with their Nazi captors. In a statement by the Trump transition team announcing Friedman’s nomination, Friedman said he plans to move the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv to “Israel’s eternal capital, Jerusalem.”

It is likely that President Obama was motivated to take a strong step forward at the UN before the Trump administration and David Friedman, if confirmed as ambassador to Israel, are able to move the mark a few steps back. §

Faith in action: Write to President Obama before January 20 to thank him for allowing Resolution 2334 to pass. After January 20, write to President Trump to urge him to continue opposing settlement expansion. Write to the President at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact> or call the White House at (202) 456-1111.

Africa: U.S. policy under President Trump

Maryknoll Father Dave Schwinghamer writes that, as Donald Trump begins his U.S. presidency, many in Washington, Dar es Salaam, and Harare can only speculate on what direction the new president will take in regard to Africa.

In a recent trip to Tanzania and Zimbabwe I was repeatedly asked who I thought would win the U.S. presidential election. Like many other Americans, I was surprised that my answer was mistaken.

We know very little of Trump's plans for U.S. policy toward Africa. A key indicator of Trump policy orientation will come about when he appoints the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. So far no names have surfaced for this important position.

A key question for the incoming administration is: to what extent will Trump deviate from the present trajectory of US foreign policy? Under the previous three American presidents a consensus emerged that Africa was a continent of "rising stakes" and emerging opportunities for American investors.

President George W. Bush formed several partnership programs such as the Presidents Emergency Program for Aids Relief (PEPFAR), the Presidents Malaria Initiative (PMI), and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). More recently, President Obama's U.S. Strategy Towards Sub-Saharan Africa tried to coordinate initiatives such as Power Africa and Feed the Future into a comprehensive, forward-looking plan that would stimulate economic growth and bolster strong democratic institutions.

Indeed trade agreements and investment activities now seem to dominate U.S. policy towards Africa. Even though Africa currently represents only 3 percent of all global trade, during the next five years sub-Saharan Africa's GDP is forecast to grow 30 percent faster than the rest of the world. This growth underlies the reason why Congress has not only renewed the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act for another ten years, but also seeks to expand U.S. business ties throughout Africa. Already officials in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative believe that deeper trade and investment ties with Africa will lead to an expansion of markets for U.S. exports. Some think Trump may be interested in modifying the AGOA treaty to include reciprocity provisions.

There are various conflicting theories on the pos-

sible direction or orientation Trump's foreign policy. He might adopt a hawkish Cold War stance towards terrorism and promote military security over humanitarian aid. If he takes an isolationist approach toward humanitarian aid this could have a huge impact on health programs such as PEPFAR. About a third of American foreign aid is directed to health programs, and much of that in Africa. Any reduction in American foreign aid will have far-reaching effects on health outcomes on the continent.

President Trump has implied through tweets that he plans to deviate from the overall policies of President Obama, who visited Africa twice as president. Instead of calling for strong institutions rather than strong men, Trump may admire and work with authoritarian African leaders, like he proposes to do with Putin in Russia and Duterte in the Philippines.

Possibly most worrisome for African nations is President Trump's perspective on climate change. Some believe that Trump will support the extractive industries' global scramble for gas, oil and coal. The appointment of the head of the world's largest oil company, Exxon, as Secretary of State would affirm this concern.

Threatening to pull out of the Paris climate agreement is another campaign promise that Trump may follow through on once he is sworn in. If he keeps his promise to cut billions of climate change spending, African countries will suffer major setbacks in the attempt to mitigate the effects of climate change. Already the continent is warming at 1.5 times faster than the rest of the world.

Other questions about the President Trump's policy towards Africa remain unanswered. Will he support peacekeeping efforts underway in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia? Will he defend human rights in Ethiopia and oil-dependent Angola? How will he relate to international NGOs critical of his policy in Africa? Will he sustain the partnership relationships with African leaders initiated by his predecessor? Will he resist the inroads China has made in Africa? We expect some answers once we know who he taps for Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. §



World AIDS Day: “Moving forward, leaving no one behind”

Since 1988 World Aids Day is commemorated on December 1 as a day to remember those who have died of AIDS and to unite people around the world in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Maryknoll Missioners at the UN and in countries around the world commemorated this important day.

On World AIDS Day this year a special event “Moving forward together, leaving no one behind” was held at the UN headquarters in New York to commemorate World Aids Day and to honor UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, for his commitment and leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Erick Sawyer, founder of the global HIV treatment access movement and retired UNAIDS staff member, talked about origins of HIV thirty years ago when newspaper articles revealed the existence of a virulent new disease that affected gay men, drug users and sex workers. This news instilled panic in the hearts of a fearful public that responded with hostility, discrimination, and stigmatization towards those suffering and dying of AIDS.

Out of discrimination and hostility, a new generation of leaders emerged. People who themselves were living with HIV took on the role of caring for and supporting others who had contracted HIV and were dying of AIDS. These new leaders fought for the right to education, prevention and treatment of the disease.

Then in 1988 the World AIDS day was created and is now a day dedicated to raising awareness, mourning friends and family lost to AIDS as well as lobbying for funding that is used to advance the diagnosis and treatment of HIV/AIDS. The availability of sufficient funding will help advance scientific research with the hope of finding a vaccine that will lead to better prevention or even a cure.

As a way to remember those who died and to show solidarity with those living with HIV, many people wear red ribbons on December 1. This is also to pay tribute to the more than 35 million people who have since died of AIDS and a moment of silence was dedicated to their

memory.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the UN promises to “move forward together and leave no one behind” in the campaign to end the AIDS epidemic. It builds on UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon’s “Global Plan towards the elimination of new HIV infections among children and keeping their mothers alive” which was launched when he visited Kenya in 2011.

In Kenya, Ban Ki-moon met Rebecca Awiti and her triplets, beneficiaries of an effective treatment that

prevented her from passing HIV to her children who were born free of HIV. During the event this past December 1, Awiti thanked the UN for bringing “hope to me, my children and my children’s children that an AIDS-free generation is possible in our lifetime.”

Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS said, “When we said we did not want babies to be born with HIV, people thought we were dreaming. Today, countries are showing that it is possible. We have been able to double the numbers of children put on treatment in less than five years. We have more than 73 percent of pregnant women who are HIV positive today who are covered by those services.”

The commemoration of World Aids Day raises the need to empower everyone in the fight

against the spread of HIV/AIDS. Maryknoll Sister Mary Annel, a doctor in El Salvador, is one of many Maryknoll missioners around the world who does just that. In her latest communiqué she says, “Three of our friends who live with AIDS in El Salvador visit the homes of people living with HIV who are not faithful to their treatment—both new and old patients. They tell people with the disease that it is possible to take their medicines and to live a productive life and support their families. They are wonderful ads for their disease and its treatment.”§



Resources

- 1) **2017 Lenten Reflection Guide: A Journey with Gospel Nonviolence:** The season of Lent is **March 1 – April 15**. Download the 16-page guide produced by the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns with the support of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative. It contains reflections, questions, prayers, and actions based on each week's Gospel reading and topics raised by Catholic peacemakers at the Nonviolence and Just Peace conference held in Rome in April 2016. <http://bit.ly/MaryknollLent2017>



- 2) **National Migration Week** will be observed in the U.S. from **January 8 – 14**. The theme for this year's celebration draws attention to Pope Francis' call to create a culture of encounter, and in doing so to look beyond our own needs and wants to those of others around us. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops web site has a list of resources including a downloadable toolkit that has ideas for prayer petitions, samples of letters to editors, homily suggestions, and talking points for media engagements. <http://bit.ly/2hWbzoR>
- 3) **World Day of Migrants and Refugees** is on **January 15**. Pope Francis has chosen the theme to be "Minor migrants, vulnerable and voiceless." In a statement released last June, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples said that with that theme, Pope Francis "wants to focus attention on the smallest of the small." The statement noted that children, who often arrive unaccompanied in their destination countries, "are unable to make their own voices heard" and "easily become victims of grave violations of human rights." Read and share the Pontifical Message by Pope Francis to mark the occasion at <http://bit.ly/WDMR2017>
- 4) **I Have a Name/Yo Tengo Nombre:** is an online searchable database in Spanish and English by the *Texas Observer* of personal items found with deceased migrants in South Texas, where hundreds of migrants have died trying to get around an internal Border Patrol checkpoint 70 miles north of the border. <https://yotengonombre.com/>
- 5) **International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking:** The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace has designated **February 8** as an annual day of prayer and awareness against human trafficking. February 8 is the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, who was kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery in Sudan and Italy. Once Josephine was freed, she became a Canossian nun and dedicated her life to sharing her testament of deliverance from slavery and comforting the poor and suffering. She was declared a Saint in 2000. Resources for prayer and action are available from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops at <http://bit.ly/2hXH03Y> and from the Interfaith Working Group on Human Trafficking at <http://bit.ly/2jgaVYG>
- 6) **Ecumenical Advocacy Days 2017:** Plan now to attend Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD) in Washington, D.C., **April 21 – 24**. The theme is "Confronting Chaos, Forging Community." Together, we will grapple with the intersectionality of racism, materialism, and militarism - the 'triplets' named by Dr. King in his speech fifty years ago at Riverside Church in New York. We will learn more about the impact they have around the world, in our communities, and in our own lives. Through prayer, worship, advocacy training, and networking with other Christians, we will face the current manifestations of these 'triplets' and together advocate for change in public policy that better reflects the Beloved Community about which Dr. King spoke. More information is available at www.advocacydays.org, or contact the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns.