



## **Pax Christi Metro New York Fall Assembly**

by Doretta Cornell

Pax Christi Metro New York held its Fall Assembly on Oct 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 on Zoom. The first portion of the Assembly was devoted to business.

**Finance Report:** An astonishing financial report showed that, in spite of the lock down and reduction by half of the Catholic Charities grant, we have the same total as last year. Income came from programs and donations. Expenses decreased with Executive Director Rosemarie Pace's retiring and the office move to St. Francis Assisi.

### **Committee Reports:**

The Witness Committee held a successful outdoor Hiroshima/Nagasaki Remembrance event. The Prayer Walk for Repentance and Transformation was held in Battery Park and was well received. The Witness Committee also plans the Good Friday Walk of Peace which was held on Zoom in 2021. At the time of this writing it is not decided if the walk will be live or virtual in 2022.

The Education Committee has focused on Kerux, the Fall Assembly, and inviting applications for the Young Peacebuilder Awards. New members are also welcome for this committee.

The Development Committee is focused on fundraising and also ways of involving younger people. All three committees encourage and welcome new members to help plan Pax Christi events and future. Anyone interested in joining a committee or helping with a specific event is encouraged to call the office.

### **Regional Groups:**

Brooklyn has begun a Nonviolence Literary Circle, with an eye to developing actions. New members are welcome.

Madeline Labriola, now in Rhode Island, reported that her new group focuses on racial justice and nuclear weapons. One effective activity: they hold Zoom meetings with Congressional representatives, being sure to keep up on bills in progress and be clear about what they urge the legislators to do.

Pax Christi Queens has been re-formed and is reading and discussing Racial Justice and the Catholic Church by Bryan Massingale.

For contact information for any local groups, please contact the PCMNY office.

### **Special Reports:**

Pax Christi USA is creating state-wide Pax Christi Regions. New York is one of the pilot states, and Rosemarie Pace has been invited to coordinate and help develop it. (More on this on page 3.)

PCMNY Board Member Beverley Johnstone explained the structural changes that are emerging now that PCMNY is without an Executive Director. A separate Advisory Committee has been formed to help with restructuring. The PCMNY office moved into a new home at St Francis of Assisi parish. Office Manager Elda Luisi reports that the new space at St. Francis is rent free for a year, and the Franciscans are interested in working with PCMNY. They have adjacent space which we might ask to use for events. The Board continues to meet, exploring changes.

In the second half of the Assembly, Keynote speaker, John Amidon addressed the topic of *Interconnected Challenges to Peace: Militarism and the Climate Crisis*. Amidon is founder of the Kateri Tekakwitha Peace Conference, and a contributing editor to *Bending the Arc: Striving for Peace and Justice in the Age of Endless War*.

Mr. Amidon reminded us that Love is a “methodology for learning,” citing the Gospels, Dostoevsky, Marshall McLuhan, Rumi, and Cornel West as models. He then spoke of the dangerous climate conditions current on our planet, with the last few years the hottest on record.

The U.S. Army, he told us, foresees climate change bringing threats to government stability and social structures, an increase in infectious diseases and migration. They are conducting exercises to prepare for action in extreme climate conditions and loss of infrastructure and supplies we count on today. Mr. Amidon suggested that we examine our own preparedness for loss of electricity, supplies, etc.

What about Peace? he asked. Primary for us is addressing our country’s militarism and the trillions spent on the military instead of addressing homelessness, extreme weather events, etc. Right now, the Pentagon’s budget is greater than those of the next 11 countries together. We need to develop the political will to use these funds to address climate change, and we must collaborate, especially with China, to address climate change.

The U.S. nuclear arsenal is a huge threat. We must increase the number of inspectors and end the “first strike option,” as well as guarantee that no one person has final say on launching nuclear weapons. If 300 nuclear weapons were detonated, 70% of the Earth’s sunlight would be blocked for 1000 years. We would starve in two years.

Mr. Amidon then presented a short video tribute to Sr. Megan Rice, who had just died, citing her great efforts against nuclear weapons. Her message was consistent: we must transfer our support to life-giving possibilities.

What are we to do? Mr. Amidon finished with a clear list of immediate actions:

- Call on our representatives to cut the military budget now.
- Call on Congress to honor the UN Resolution outlawing nuclear weapons.
- Go to school budget meetings; insist that military recruiters not be allowed in schools.
- Advocate for school gardens and support bees.
- Act for environmentally responsible justice in your area.
- Plant trees.
- Use public transportation.

A video of the Keynote speech is on the PCMNY website.

*Doretta Cornell, is a member of the Education Committee.*

# The Birth of a Region

by Rosemarie Pace

It started with a phone call early in 2021. Johnny Zokovitch, executive director of Pax Christi USA, called me with an invitation. He began by asking if I remembered a proposal he had made years ago regarding PCUSA regions. I remembered the proposal, but not that it came from him. The idea was to standardize PCUSA's regions so that there would be one for each state in the U.S., 50 regions in all.

The rationale behind this proposal was that regions as they still exist in PCUSA vary a lot. Some already comprise a whole state, but, at least for a time, there have been regions that extended beyond one state. Other states, like New York, have multiple regions within the state, and then there are parts of the country where there are no regions. There are members, but they have no official "region." The intention is to correct this irregularity so that everyone in PCUSA will be part of a region, and all regions will be more comparable in structure.

Historically, a region was defined as a geographic area with at least 200 PCUSA members, at least five local groups, a means of communication throughout the region, and at least one event to bring all regional members together each year. They often, if not always, coincided with dioceses, e.g. Pax Christi Metro New York includes the Archdiocese of New York and the Brooklyn Diocese. A more up-to-date description can be found at the PCUSA website here: <https://paxchristiusa.org/who-we-are/regions/>.

Well, Johnny was calling me to ask if I would be Coordinator of the newly named Pax Christi New York State. Needless to say, I asked what that would entail, considering I had only retired from PCMNY's directorship a few months prior. After some hesitation on my part and a good sales pitch on Johnny's, I agreed. In time, I recruited a Co-Coordinator who might complement my gifts and shortcomings. Ryan DiCorpo responded to my outreach, much to my pleasure and gratitude. Ryan is young, a member of PCUSA's Young Adult Caucus; a graduate of Fordham University where he was involved in peace advocacy; a part-time assistant to Fr. James Martin at *America Magazine* and a talented writer in his own right.

Since all this started, PCNYS has already grown. Thanks to Anne Bjornson, who found John Amidon in her search for a speaker for the 2021 Fall Assembly, Pax Christi Upstate New York—Ben Salmon Chapter has joined Pax Christi Long Island, Pax Christi Metro New York, and Pax Christi Western New York as our latest state chapter. Pax Christi Upstate New York existed years ago, but it's been dormant for several years. I found out John is Catholic, from upstate, and a committed peace activist. I thought of other upstaters I could contact to see if they would be interested in reviving PC Upstate NY. Happily, I got a very thoughtful and willing response. The few folks that I knew have become a much bigger group, because they already work together to ban killer drones and to address other peace issues. They are an inspiration because of their energy, knowledge, and experience standing up and speaking out, true activists eager to meet with our Senators, confront our bishops, and interact with our military, as well as educate the general public.

In addition, PCNYS has its own Facebook page sharing information, inspirations, and invitations to pray, study, and act for peace and justice locally and globally. Please like and follow our, i.e. *your*, page at <https://www.facebook.com/Pax-Christi-New-York-State-100663832260872>, and please help PCNYS continue to grow and thrive.

*Rosemarie Pace is Co-coordinator of Pax Christi NYS and retired Director of Pax Christi Metro NY.*



You visit the earth and water it  
making it abundantly fertile.  
God's stream is filled with water;  
with it you supply the world with grain. *Ps 65:10*

Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving to future generations, we look at things differently; we realize that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others. Since the world has been given to us, we can no longer view reality in a purely utilitarian way, in which efficiency and productivity are entirely geared to our individual benefit. Intergenerational solidarity is not optional, but rather a basic question of justice, since the world we have also belongs to those who will follow us.

*Pope Francis, Laudato Si*



## BOOK REVIEW

*Burglar for Peace: Lessons Learned in the Catholic Left's Resistance to the Vietnam War*, by Ted Glick. PM Press. 2020. 203 pp. (\$20.)

Many of us have heard stories about resistance to the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 70s. Some of us even took part in that resistance. And those involved in the Catholic peace movement understand that there was a distinctly Catholic non-violent dimension to that resistance—the Berrigans, Elizabeth McAlister, Catholic Workers, and many more.

Yet no one has documented the anti-Vietnam efforts of the Catholic Left quite as Ted Glick does in *Burglar for Peace*. Perhaps this is so because he dropped out of college in 1969 to join the peace movement and continued through the end of the war, spending almost a year in jail for some of his actions. But he writes because he believes it is crucial that many more people know this inspiring history at this perilous time in US and global politics.

Glick begins with an overview of the anti-war resistance, from the almost immediate protests against LBJ's initiation of fighting in 1965, through the draft-card burnings, to increasing "ultra-resistance" efforts launched by (then) Father Phil Berrigan and the Baltimore 4 pouring blood on draft files. He then shifts to how he himself became part of the ultra-resistance, moving from being a middle-class college sophomore and son of a pastor to dropping out and turning in his draft exemption card in solidarity with those denied his student exemption. He then burned his subsequent draft card.

Put in touch with Phil Berrigan, Glick went on to participate in many anti-draft and anti-war actions, beginning with the destruction in 1970 of thousands of draft files in Philadelphia by the East Coast Community to Save Lives, a number of them priests and nuns. The details of these actions are fascinating-

staking out various venues, being spied on by a government informant, experience in various jails over subsequent months and years.

The story of the trial of Glick and his group for breaking into the Rochester FBI, Selective Service and US Attorney's offices is particularly moving because the judge allowed the defendants to speak at length about their reasons for acting. Dan Berrigan even came from federal prison to testify about the inadequacy of the just war theory and his experiences during the bombings of Vietnam.

Eventually the Rochester defendants were convicted and spent ten months in prison. But their testimonies had an enormous impact on those who heard or read them. And Glick's time in prison only confirmed his commitment to anti-war activism. Among other things, his witnessing of the abuse and violence against prisoners transformed him forever. He continued to engage in non-violent actions against the war that landed him in jail, including a die-in at the 1972 Republican convention that renominated Richard Nixon., and his near-involvement of the trial of the Harrisburg 8. He also participated in a number of long, physically dangerous liquid-only fasts against the war.

These descriptions don't do justice to the nuance of Glick's narratives, a lot of them based in journals that Glick kept along the way. But no book is perfect. The inclusion of those journal entries is also one of the book's flaws; sometimes there are too many of them.

For this reason, my favorite sections of the book are the last few chapters where Glick leaves journals behind and discusses specific aspects of the Catholic Left in the last years of the war. In particular, Chapter 10, "After Harrisburg," discusses developments that led beyond the "Catholic Left" to "something new." Glick was by then working with a group called Prisoners Strike for Peace and the Camden 28, who had broken into Camden, NJ draft board offices in 1971, and were acquitted in 1972, "a real setback for the government" and its war. A subsequent and final gathering of the ultra-resistance "focused on a number of flaws in the anti-war movement, including sexism, authoritarianism, manipulation and elitism."

Special criticism was focused on Phil Berrigan's leadership of Jonah House in Baltimore, which had been a driving force in previous interwar action, and of the focus there on small symbolic actions at nuclear military sites, with hardly any attention to the forces that were driving the militarism and what should be done about that. Prophetic actions without analysis and tactics seemed increasingly useless. These differences, and particularly Phil Berrigan's domineering style, eventually drove a wedge between the Berrigan Family (Phil and Liz McAlister were by then married and had two kids) and Glick, for whom Berrigan had once been a mentor.

I was struck by this conflict because in the biography of Dan Berrigan, *At Play in the Lion's Den*, Jim Forest details a similar conflict between Phil and Dan, who were brothers. Forest argues that the tension was based in Phil's taking after his father's angry and domineering style, and Dan being more like his warm and loving mother. Fortunately, the rift between Dan and Phil gradually healed, as did the rift between Glick and Phil. As a testimony to that, Phil's daughter Frida actually writes the introduction to *Burglar for Peace*.

Glick concludes his book with a chapter on what he learned from the Catholic Left and what his focus has shifted to in recent years: since 2003 he has been a dedicated climate activist, in large part because of a deadly heat wave he experienced in Europe that year. But he believes that the nonviolent direct action that had such an impact in the Vietnam War years is pivotal to reversing climate change as well. He especially advocates the kinds of extreme fasting that he himself once undertook and cites our own Marie Dennis's 1992 fast against global hunger as an outstanding example. He also calls us to act against government

repression, racism, and sexism, and urges us to follow the example of First Nations peoples in their resistance to oil pipelines and other corporate incursions.

All told, an inspiring conclusion to an informative history of our Catholic Left forebears. May we find ways to emulate them and Glick as well.

*Marian Ronan is Research Professor of Catholic Studies at New York Theological Seminary, a Black, Hispanic, and Asian seminary in Manhattan, and is active in the Downtown Brooklyn Pax Christi group.*

**A Gift of Peace** has been given in memory of:

Milagros Alicea  
Cruza Alicea  
Fr. Ronald Bonneau, C.Ss.R.  
Fr. Don Cozzens  
Olimpia Coralia Font, ACM  
Sr. Noreen Marie George, OP  
Edward Gilley  
Sarah Miller  
Bob Stinson  
Jean Webb  
Ron Zablotny



**Please remember them in prayer.**

**Kerux No. 128**                      **2022 Winter**

“Kerux” is the Greek word meaning “herald”. As the name of our newsletter, it reminds us that we are to be heralds of God’s nonviolent love. We welcome letters, articles and reviews.

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### Volunteers Needed!

Volunteers are always welcome... and needed. If you are interested in joining the Education, Witness or Development committees and help plan some of Pax Christi’s events, please contact the office by phone (good) or email (better). Help is also needed for mailings and other office activities. If you would like to be placed on the volunteer list, contact the office.

## Announcements

**April 2<sup>nd</sup>** : St. Francis of Assisi Church and Pax Christi Metro New York, with the support of Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of New York, will be sponsoring a symposium concerning Catholic Social Justice on Saturday, April 2, to be held on the church premises from approximately 9am to 4pm, ending with a Mass. The Keynote Speaker will be John Carr, founder and co-director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University. He served for over 20 years as director of the Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, directing the Conference's public policy and advocacy efforts on major domestic and international issues as well as sharing Catholic social teaching on human life and dignity, solidarity, faithful citizenship, and care for creation.

The other part of the day will be devoted to small group sharing on such topics as climate justice, prison justice, housing justice and refugee justice with representatives of various Catholic social justice groups. Plans are still being mapped out about the details of the day, and invitations will be sent out to PCMNY members and members of St. Francis of Assisi parish, Catholic Charities and university students in the metropolitan area. Early registration is encouraged once the invitations go out.

**April 15<sup>th</sup>**- The PCMNY annual Good Friday Way of the Cross will again be a virtual gathering. All are welcome. The zoom link will be put on the website closer to the date. The Witness Committee understands that many wish to resume our prayer and public witness in person along 42<sup>nd</sup> Street as do we. At the same time, we hope that some who are no longer able to do the physical walk will join with us in prayer on Good Friday.

**Annual Appeal:** If you haven't already done so, please reflect on the many reasons you value PCMNY, especially in the current political climate, and respond as generously as possible to our annual appeal. If you did respond, THANK YOU!

**Other Ways to Support Your Pax Christi Region:** Visit <https://www.nfggive.com/guidestar/13-3424349> to donate online. Also support us by searching the Internet with GoodSearch.com (powered by Yahoo) or shopping online with GoodShop.com. Just indicate Pax Christi Metro New York as your charity. You can also turn your online shopping and searching into much-needed donations at [www.iGive.com/PaxChristiMetroNewYork](http://www.iGive.com/PaxChristiMetroNewYork) OR <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/13-3424349>.

**"Gifts of Peace":** Donate to PCMNY in honor of those you love, whether they're celebrating a special holiday, a birthday, anniversary, jubilee, or new baby, are in need of encouragement, or mourning a loss. Cards are available from the PCMNY office for a recommended donation of \$5 each.

**Pennies for Peace:** On your own or with others, collect pennies throughout the year. Convert them to dollars and send them to PCMNY as a year-end gift.

**Matching Gifts:** Ask your company if it will match your gift to PCMNY.

**Bequests:** Please remember PCMNY in your will. Our legal name is Pax Christi Metro New York and our tax ID number is 13-3424349.

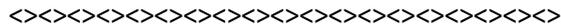
**Upcoming Events**

- April 2<sup>nd</sup> Catholic Social Justice Symposium (see in Announcements-details TBA)
- April 15<sup>th</sup> Good Friday Way of Peace- on Zoom 9-11:30 am
- June - Peacemaker Awards Reception, Date TBA

Contact the office for updated information on all events:

[info@nypaxchristi.org](mailto:info@nypaxchristi.org), 212-420-0250, or [www.nypaxchristi.org](http://www.nypaxchristi.org).

Also visit us on Facebook and Twitter.



"For all our differences and disagreements, we can live in a world of peace. In opposing every attempt to create a rigid uniformity, we can and must build unity on the basis of our diversity of languages, cultures and religions, and lift our voices against everything which would stand in the way of such unity." ----Pope Francis



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