



# Pax Christi

LITTLE ROCK

# Pax Christi Little Rock

## PCLR Board Members

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- Sarah Ngundue
- Jan Pipkin
- Joanne Rausch
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**Blessed are the Peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9**

## Contact Information

- **Website:**  
[www.paxchristilittlerock.wordpress.com](http://www.paxchristilittlerock.wordpress.com)
- **Facebook:**  
Pax Christi Little Rock
- **Address:**  
415 N. McKinley St., #1040  
Little Rock, AR 72205
- **Phone:**  
(501) 258-8653
- **Email:**  
[paxchristilr@gmail.com](mailto:paxchristilr@gmail.com)

## Pax Christi LR Speaker Series:

### Fr. Sharbaugh To Share Catholic Teaching on Peace and Social Justice

Father Jason Sharbaugh will present a program on peace and social justice teachings in the Catholic Church at the Pax Christi Little Rock Speaker Series on Thursday, March 21 at 7:00 pm. The program will



Fr. Jason Sharbaugh

take place in Fitzgerald Hall, Rm. 101 on the campus of St. John's Catholic Center (2500 N. Tyler Street, Little Rock).

Father Jason will celebrate his ninth year in the priesthood in May of this year. He is currently the associate pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish in Fayetteville and serves as sacramental minister at Blessed Stanley Rother Church in Decatur and St. Mary Church in Siloam Springs. Father Sharbaugh was born on March

22, 1976 in Chester, Pennsylvania and moved to Morrilton at the age of two. Although his parents were not practicing Catholics, his maternal grandmother was and she took him to Mass at Sacred Heart Church, where he also attended school. He graduated from Sacred Heart in 1994. Fr. Sharbaugh went to the University of Arkansas where he initially had some difficulty finding his place. However, he got involved with the campus ministry program and discovered that his greatest happiness came through helping others. He graduated college in 2002 and decided to attend law school at UALR. Midway through his first year, Fr. Sharbaugh made the decision to become a priest and was accepted as a diocesan seminarian in 2004. He was ordained in May of 2010. He is a Catholic Relief Services Global Fellow, travelling to Zambia in 2017. Fr. Sharbaugh says he knows he was called to be a priest because of the peace he feels when in the service of others. He hopes through CRS to raise awareness of global poverty.

**Learn to do good; Seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan plead for the widow. Isaiah 1:17**

## Peace Offerings

## Dr. Edma Delgado Shares the Vision of El Zócalo Immigrant Resource Center

Edma Delgado, PhD, a board member from El Zócalo Immigrant Resource Center, provided members of Pax Christi Little Rock with helpful information regarding the different services provided by this organization during the PCLR Speaker Series held on Thursday, February 21.



**Dr. Edma Delgado**

In addition to her work at El Zócalo, Dr. Delgado is an assistant professor of Spanish at the University of Arkansas Little Rock. She received her PhD in Spanish Language and Literature from the University of Kansas in 2015. She has been involved on the board at El Zocalo for the past several years, and she is clearly passionate about investing in the Hispanic community here in Little Rock.

There were over 20 people who attended this Speaker Series event. Pax Christi LR supporters asked many questions and engaged in an animated discussion with Dr. Delgado about the realities faced by Hispanic immigrants in Little Rock. She detailed the different services provided to the Hispanic community by El Zócalo, including English classes, cultural integration training, food and clothing pantries, and referrals to essential resources such as physicians, legal aid, housing support, schooling and child-care, etc. She also described many of the difficulties faced by immigrants in Little Rock. Dr.

Delgado emphasized that the most important aspect of life in the Hispanic community revolves around family. She said that folks coming from Mexico or Central America tend to



**PCLR Speaker Series**

locate where other family members are already settled. Dr. Delgado stated that El Zócalo provides some of the essential items such as food and clothing that these families require as they are settling into an unfamiliar place and lifestyle. One of the most important aspects of this Immigrant Resource Center is the fact that it is a place where folks can gather to share information and spend time with one another. In Spanish, El Zócalo means “town square,” and it is certainly a facility that is central to the life of many in this community. For more information or to donate, you may call 501-301-4652. You can also email [team@zocalocenter.org](mailto:team@zocalocenter.org).

### Pax Christi's Monthly Mission



Our custom is to contribute to a different peace and social justice cause at each of our monthly meetings. In March, we will be collecting personal hygiene items that will be donated to El Zócalo, an immigration resource center in Little Rock. Please bring items such as deodorant, toothbrushes/toothpaste, mouthwash, feminine hygiene products, razors, floss, lotion, soap, and shampoo/conditioner to the talk on Thursday, March 21 at 7 pm. All are welcome.

**We are a country where people of all backgrounds, all nations, all languages, all religions, all races can make a home. H. Clinton**



## Peace Offerings

## PEACE PARTNERS

Peace Partners highlights various peace and social justice organizations that share our vision: active promotion of peace in our neighborhood, state, country and world. The goal is to increase awareness of the many organizations in our area that work for peace through social justice and invite joint ventures between these groups to increase the effectiveness of our mission.



The Arkansas House of Prayer (AHOP) is located on the grounds of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church at 28215 Chenal Parkway in Little Rock. It was founded in 2007. It is a sacred space specifically built to accommodate people of all faiths who desire to seek silence and feel God's presence, experience guidance, restore energy, and be filled with insights. The House of Prayer is a joint ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Arkansas and St. Margaret's Episcopal Church. Sister Deborah Troillett, Director of AHOP, has been a great friend to Pax Christi Little Rock. She has provided instruction to the PCLR board and supporters in meditation and centering prayer. If you would like to learn more about AHOP, you can call them at 501-821-7773 or email [info@arkansashouseofprayer.org](mailto:info@arkansashouseofprayer.org)

**May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the Lord. . . Psalm 104:34**

## PCLR Board Members Attend Meditation Retreat

Members of the Pax Christi Little Rock Board attended a day of training in centering prayer, a course offered by Nick Cole, board member at the Arkansas House of Prayer. The workshop "Learning God's First Language: Silence" was held on March 16 at St. Margaret's Episcopal



Church and the Arkansas House of Prayer. In addition to learning the basic tenets of Centering Prayer as taught by Father Thomas Keating, the 20 participants shared in a meditative walk through a labyrinth, spent time in meditation in the House of Prayer, and had an in-depth discussion on the importance of developing a spiritual practice in their lives. Nick Cole was trained by Fr. Keating for several years and he shared many personal stories that brought the concept of centering prayer home to the group. Additionally, he presented information on recognizing our false self in action and ways to diffuse our unhealthy ways of coping with others.



## SOLES4SOULS CORK DONATIONS

**Over the past month, 1412 corks have been donated. Added to the total number (9019) sent out to Soles4Souls previously, our total is now 10,431. Please save the corks from those wine bottles and remember to bring them to our next PCLR meeting, drop them off at 415 N. McKinley St., #1040, LR or call 663-5075 and we will pick them up. Thank you!**

## Peace Offerings

## CENTERING PRAYER

Centering Prayer is a method designed to facilitate the development of Contemplative Prayer by preparing our faculties to receive this gift. It is not meant to replace other kinds of prayer; rather it casts a new light and depth of meaning on them. It is a movement beyond conversation with Christ to communion with Him.

### GUIDELINES

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.
3. When engaged with your thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.
5. Optimally, do this practice twice a day for twenty minutes.

This prayer can lead to an opening of mind and heart to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words and emotions.

## CALENDAR OF PEACE

### MARCH/APRIL EVENTS

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>March 19</b>        | <b>6th Annual Feast of St. Joseph Celebration</b><br><b>St. Joseph Center of Arkansas</b><br><b>5:30-8 pm</b>  |
| <b>March 21</b>        | <b>PCLR Board Meeting-6 pm Fitzgerald Hall</b><br><b>Speakers Series-Fr. Jason Sharbaugh-7 pm</b><br><b>Fitzgerald Hall at St. John's Center</b>   |
| <b>March 27</b>        | <b>The Climate Reality Project</b><br><b>UALR Downtown -7 pm</b>   |
| <b>April 1-8</b>       | <b>PCLR Team leaves for Puerto Rico</b>  |
| <b>April 4</b>         | <b>An Evening with Sister Helen Prejean</b><br><b>Saint Mark's Episcopal Church</b><br><b>6:30-7:30 pm</b>   |
| <b>April 7 &amp; 8</b> | <b>Imagine: Justice, Freedom, Peace</b><br><b>Spring Concert-River City Men's Chorus</b><br><b>Sun., April 7 at 3 pm</b><br><b>Mon., April 8 at 7 pm</b><br><b>Second Presbyterian Church, Little Rock</b><br><b>600 Pleasant Valley Drive</b> |
| <b>April 9</b>         | <b>ACPJ Monthly Meeting-6:30-8 pm</b><br><b>Little Rock Friends Meeting (Quakers)</b>  |
| <b>April 28</b>        | <b>Pilgrimage for Peace-2 pm</b><br><b>Heifer International and then walk to Beacon</b><br><b>For Peace and Hope in N Little Rock</b><br><b>Meet at 1 World Ave., Little Rock, AR 72202</b>  |



## Peace Offerings

**LET GO AND LET GOD: A LENTEN REFLECTION**

In this gift of life that we've all been given by our Creator, our experience can be compared to that of an ever flowing stream that presents new possibilities, challenges, and opportunities in every moment. Our lives move past us ceaselessly and you might say that we are here to witness, learn and grow from all aspects of creation that God sets before us. To make it a little more complicated, as creatures who have been granted free will, we are given the option to interact in whatever way we choose with all that occurs around us. And these interactions can teach us so much if we remember that none of what is placed before us belongs to us. It is all temporary.

All of it.

So, everything goes along pretty well until we begin to grow attached to these people and things passing through our lives. When we love something or someone, we don't want to let it or them go. We want to keep them with us because we feel good when they are around and we think we've found what we need to make us happy. We may begin to grasp these experiences too tightly, preferring to stop and hold on rather than "going with the flow" and listening for what God wants for us in the next present moment. This is a very human thing to do. When an experience or a person brings us great joy, we want those feelings to last forever. Yet that is not the way of our world. It seems that change is the only constant, and that if we do not learn to simply experience what God places before us and then let go when the time comes, our possessions (both people and things) become our main concern and thus a distraction from our main purpose-to love and serve our Lord each day in whatever manner we are directed.

During these days of Lent, as we spiritually focus on penitent preparation for the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ, we have the opportunity to practice this "letting go" of our earthly attachments. To engage in sacrifice that allows us to strip away some of the things in our lives that distract us from sole reliance and focus on God. Our bishops remind us that "in a particular way during Lent, we are asked to devote ourselves to the spiritual and corporal works of mercy that remind us that faith finds expression in concrete everyday actions meant to help our neighbors in body and spirit." As Christ prepares for his ministry, death and ultimate resurrection by fasting for 40 days in the desert, so we let go of our earthly attachments and turn our hearts, minds and bodies to doing those things that Christ taught us to do throughout his ministry. Small actions to help our neighbors, heal the sick, care for the poor and recognize/address our own blind spots that keep us separated from God.

With this in mind, let us be thoughtful how we live each day in this Lenten season, knowing that with every sacrifice, we clear the way for a renewed, more creative relationship with our Creator God that loved us into being.



## Peace Offerings

**PUERTO RICO BOUND**

With each trip back to Puerto Rico, our awesome team continues to grow in number. As of our orientation meeting on March 11, we had a record number of ten with plane tickets in hand! The most impressive thing about this number is that we are all going to fit into an approximately 1100 SF, 3 bedroom home provided for us free of charge by our peace partners in Puerto Rico-Casa Solidaria.

Although I was seriously worried about this last trip when we had just 8 people, I am no longer concerned as we found that close quarters just brought us closer!

We will leave for Puerto Rico Monday morning, April 1 and return near midnight on April 8. Casa Solidaria has earned a grant to rehab 15 homes in Miraflores beginning in April, and we will be part of the crew involved with mold removal, painting, sealing, electrical work (we are bringing an electrician-Jim Martine), and general clean-up. We also have several nurses and a teacher travelling with us, so we will also explore other ways we can work with folks in the recovery process.

**BACKPACKS ARE BACK!**

Pax Christi Little Rock is getting a jump on the Backpacks filled with School Supplies project for the 2019-2020 school year. And there are several reasons for this early motivation!



Thanks to the Honduras mission at Christ the King Catholic Church, who donated over \$2300 worth of school supplies, we have money left over in our budget to potentially add another 1-2 schools to our donation list for next year. Additionally, our friends at the Fraternal Order of the Eagles and the Women's Auxiliary are apparently going to match or even exceed their \$10,000 donation last year, so this adds to our ability to share!

This past year, PCLR provided supplies to students at Rockefeller Elementary, St. Theresa's Catholic School, St. Edward's Catholic School and elementary schools in Pine Bluff and Dumas school districts. Pax Christi representatives will be meeting with administrators to determine which additional schools might most benefit from this project, both Catholic schools and public schools throughout the state. The possibility of collecting school supplies in various parishes for this project so that others might benefit from being involved in this worthwhile endeavor is also being discussed.

Although she never wants to be mentioned, so much credit for the organization and sheer physical labor goes to Sherry Martin, treasurer of the Pax Christ LR board of directors. She has stored, sorted, inventoried and assessed all of these supplies and she organizes the "backpacking party" every year. This wouldn't be possible without her!

## Peace Offerings

## The New Zealand Shooter-Another Tragic Case of Mistaken Identity?

### Some thoughts on the tragedy by Dr. George Simon

Last Friday afternoon, the world witnessed yet another tragic mass shooting. Such events have become all-too-familiar to us now. But this one occurred in a country relatively unaccustomed to gun violence, and oddly enough, in a place call Christchurch.

Brenton Harrison Tarrant is a 28 year-old Australian with an identity problem. He both sees and styles himself as a just another “white European” (his truck blared with the sound of a Serbian nationalist song) whose very definition of himself as a person and way of living his life are increasingly under attack by various foreign “invaders.” “*They*,” he believes, want to change the very landscape he inhabits, and destroy all that he has come to identify with and cherish. This is the “yin” force behind the opposing “yang” force of these increasing acts of retribution. And Tarrant wanted not only to avenge this perceived injustice but also to have some fun doing it (“Let’s get this party going!,” he chanted before inaugurating his carnage) when he entered a mosque and opened relentless fire on the unsuspecting worshipers there.

It’s hard to make sense of these senseless acts. And we have long believed that they are driven primarily by fear and secondarily by ignorance. Accordingly, we attribute the various “hate crimes” we increasingly witness to Islamaphobia, homophobia, etc. And while there’s little doubt that ignorance and fear play roles in our failures to understand and embrace each other, I think we overlook the major, fundamental, or “original” sin of all mankind: *vanity*. Aquinas made the point long ago about this granddaddy of all sins. The serpent didn’t get to us by stoking our fears. We were already in (and some



would say have always remained in) paradise. We had no reason to fear or fret. The tempter got to us by appealing to our fundamental weakness, a weakness born of our unwitting separation of ourselves from the Source. He convinced us that we were better than we had been told and that we could be even better still and have even more than we already had. And he convinced us that we were not truly loved but rather cheated by a God who is both stingy and jealous. He appealed to our core weakness and we took the bait. We always do. The proof or what was really behind Mr. Tarrant’s rampage lies is his stated intent to have fun doing it. He felt perfectly *entitled*. In his mind, he was doing the world a favor. And he saw himself and the community he felt a part of as not only naturally superior but also insufficiently revered. And he made it his personal mission help rid the world of the scourge of what one person famously described as “the deplorables” disdaining both his land and his identity.

Mr. Tarrant’s problem is not unique. It’s one

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we all share to some degree. It's a case of mistaken or misguided identity. Not knowing our true worth or where it comes from is our core problem. It always has been. And in our unwitting separation, we're blinded to all we've been given. We can't appreciate the sheer, unimaginable magnificence of it all and the infinite inherent grace behind it. And we can't possibly know our worth until we understand our true identity. And we can't know that identity without appreciating the identity of every other part of creation. We are all – (whether we realize it or not, or appreciate it or not) the body of Christ – the material manifestation or “incarnation” of the Living God.

To say things another way, we all struggle with some form and degree of narcissism. And we tend to look in all the wrong places and in all the wrong ways for what we think is love. Yes, we seek our unhealthy reassurances in part to feel safe. But we mostly seek them to feel validated or important. In our separation from the Source, we've forgotten that our very existence is proof of our value. We have forgotten that we were loved first and have been purchased at a great price. We are, therefore, of inherent value, even in our broken, estranged state. And there's absolutely nothing we have done or can possibly do to merit that worth. Coming to know that deeply is the only way to diffuse these vile acts of asserting worth at someone or something else's expense.

Pax Christi means the peace of Christ. It is the peace that Jesus knew intimately and rested in despite all the suffering he experienced. And it's the peace that comes from the realization that *all* creation is His very body and is intimately

connected. That's the message Jesus tries to convey in the beatitudes. And it's why he dubs the peacemakers among us the most internally happy and satisfied. If we are to be active peacemakers, we need not seek so much to preach to one another or to “convert” one another as to wake each other up. And we can't possibly do that without first awakening ourselves. (There are many vehicles for doing this, like Centering Prayer, meditation, etc. that Pax Christi will be sharing with its members over the next several months.)

Only God – Love, the energy behind it all and that sustains it all – has the power to heal the divides between us. And we have to reconnect to the Source if we're ever to properly relate to one another. But first we have to get our small, false, admittedly insecure, but mostly vain selves out of the way and let God work.

Let's pray that we all awaken. Let's pray that we see the paradise we've inherited through absolutely no merit of our own. Let's pray that we come to know our true identity and worth, and finally divest ourselves of the vanity of seeing any part of creation as separate from or inferior or superior to another. Perhaps we'll even get past the tendency to see any way culture, race, belief system, or philosophy as superior or inferior. We just don't have time for such silliness anymore. The stakes are far too high.

**God doesn't love us because of our worth, we are of worth because God loves us. -Martin Luther**



## Peace Offerings

## SAVE THE DATE

### PAX CHRISTI LR SPEAKER'S SERIES

#### CENTERING PRAYER: A PATH FOR SEEKING INNER PEACE

THURSDAY, APRIL 11 at 7 PM

FITZGERALD HALL, ST. JOHN'S CENTER  
2500 N. TYLER STREET, LITTLE ROCK

MARY HUNT, GEORGE SIMON, and SHERRY SIMON

Information provided in a workshop conducted by Nick Cole, student of Father Thomas Keating (originator of Centering Prayer), will be shared. A video tape of Fr. Keating teaching the essentials of Centering Prayer will be viewed and there will be time to practice centering prayer together as a group. All are welcome!

Pax Christi Little Rock believes that we must first find the peace of Christ in our own hearts before trying to teach these tenets of peace to others. With this in mind, PCLR will be presenting a series of workshops to teach different "tools of peace." Peace certainly comes from above, but let us strive to pave the way and then walk together on this journey!

## PEACE BE WITH YOU

### PILGRIMAGE FOR PEACE 2019

Sunday, April 28, 2019

2:00 pm-3:00 pm

Heifer International

1 World Avenue, Little Rock, AR

We will gather at 2 pm in front of Heifer Int'l and walk as a group over the Junction Bridge to the **Beacon of Peace and Hope** on Riverfront Dr. At the Beacon, walkers and others will gather for a **Remembrance Service** at 3 pm to "mourn the violence committed in our community, nation and world, and to walk together as active peacemakers." This ecumenical service welcomes all!

