



Pax Christi

LITTLE ROCK

Pax Christi Little Rock

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**Blessed are the
Peacemakers, for
they shall be called
the children of God.
Matthew 5:9**

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PAX CHRISTI LITTLE ROCK SPEAKER SERIES

Msgr. Scott Friend to Present Thoughts on Pastoring a Multicultural Community

Msgr. Scott Friend, Director of the Vocations and Seminarians Office at the Diocese of Little Rock, will be the featured speaker at this month's PCLR Speaker Series held on Thursday, November 14 at 7 pm in Fitzgerald Hall (St. John's Center-2500 N. Tyler Street, Little Rock). Msgr. Friend will talk about how his study of St. Ignatius has helped him work towards inclusion of different cultures in Diocese of Little Rock parishes.

When he served as a parish priest, Msgr. Friend was extraordinarily successful in increasing the attendance of Hispanics in parishes to which he was assigned. For example, St. Raphael in Springdale became one of the fastest growing parishes in the diocese, more than doubling in size with Msgr. Friend as pastor. Msgr. Friend was ordained in 1987. Since his appointment as

Vocations Director, the number of seminarians has increased from 14 to 35 in a few short years. Most of his seminarians come from parish-

es in Arkansas, and a third of his seminarians are Hispanic. In the spirit of the New Evangelization, Msgr. Friend places a strong emphasis on cultivating a spirit of mission and passion for ministry among the seminarians. He believes that the growth in vocations is strongly connected to the diocese's invest-



Msgr. Scott Friend

ment in the growing Hispanic population. Msgr. Friend has dedicated his priestly ministry to be an advocate for the Hispanic community, becoming the first Diocesan Director of Hispanic Ministry in 1992.

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. I Corinthians 12:12-13

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**YOU ARE INVITED TO THE
PAX CHRISTI LITTLE ROCK
CHRISTMAS PARTY POTLUCK**

WHEN: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12 AT 6-9 PM

WHERE: FITZGERALD HALL-DIOCESE OF LR

2500 N. TYLER STREET

LITTLE ROCK, AR 72203

PLEASE BRING YOUR FAVORITE HOLIDAY DISH. PAX CHRISTI WILL PROVIDE FUN BEVERAGES AND A MAIN COURSE.

WE WILL ONCE AGAIN ADOPT A FAMILY THROUGH SETTLED SOULS AND WE ASK THAT YOU BRING THEM A GIFT TO PUT UNDER THE TREE. WE WILL SEND OUT AN EMAIL SHORTLY SO YOU CAN PICK A FAMILY MEMBER AND PROVIDE GIFTS FROM THE LIST.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE. YOU CAN RSVP FOR THE PARTY AT paxchristilr@gmail.com.

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PAX CHRISTI "GARAGE SALE" RAISES MONEY FOR 2020 PROJECTS

Pax Christi Little Rock held a fundraiser that involved several members collecting their unused household goods, pricing them, and holding a sale to raise money for 2020 projects. Initially, the plan was to give 50% of the sale money to Pax Christi, but



once the sale was complete, all donors agreed to give 100% to the organization. The sale was held over a three day period, October 25-26 and November 2. The sale was extended due to rainy weather throughout the first weekend that lowered the number of people at the sale.

During the first weekend, a total of

\$711.50 was raised. On the last day of the sale, \$700.57 was raised. for a total of \$1412.07.

These funds will go a long way to support projects next year such as backpacks filled with school supplies for four different schools plus the Puerto Rico mission, the Pilgrimage for Peace and general support for various other peace and social justice organizations in the state.

Once the sale was complete, the household goods that were left were donated to Good Will Industries and Habitat for Humanity.



WE WANT TO HEAR
..... from
YOU

Pax Christi LR wants to invite all interested parties to send in articles pertaining to peace and social justice to add to our newsletter. Your story can be related to your opinion on a topic, a personal experience or an event that affects our work towards social justice. You can email your article to paxchristilr@gmail.com.

SOLES 4 SOULS

Over the past two months, 403 corks have been donated to Soles4Souls. Added to the total number (12,170) previously sent off, our total is now 12,573. Save your corks and bring them to our next PCLR meeting, drop them off at 415 N. McKinley St., #1040, or call 258-8653 and we'll pick them up. Thanks!

**He who oppresses the poor taunts his Maker,
but he who is gracious to the needy honors
Him. Proverbs 14:31**

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BACK FROM THE BRINK CAMPAIGN: A PAX CHRISTI USA INITIATIVE



Pax Christi USA launched its Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War Campaign.

Pax Christi believes that the massive death, damage, years of suffering, and pure adulteration of humanity and creation caused by nuclear weapons should never happen again.

Therefore, the goal of this campaign is to get your local government (state, city, town, or country) to adopt publicly a “Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War” resolution. Places around the country are already doing this.

Phase one of the campaign will be August 6, 2019 through August 9, 2020, and all PCUSA regions, local groups, and individuals are invited to participate. The campaign, modeled on the larger US Back from the Brink initiative, is endorsed by numerous church, civic, and peace groups. Pax Christi USA is already a public endorser.

Pope Francis said, “I plead for disarmament and for the prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons.” (2017 World Day of Peace message)

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Pax Christi calls on the US to lead a global effort to prevent nuclear war by:

1. Renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first;
2. Ending the sole, unchecked authority of any US President to launch a nuclear attack;
3. Taking US nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert;
4. Canceling the plan to replace its entire nuclear arsenal with enhanced weapons;
5. Actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

For their efforts and focus on banning nuclear weapons, the Nobel Awards Committee gave the 2017 Nobel Peace Award to the International Coalition Against Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). ICAN continues to advocate for additional nation states to sign and ratify the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. At this point, 70 nation states have signed the treaty and 23 nation states have ratified it. Once 50 nation states have ratified it, it will become international law, which means nuclear weapons will become illegal.

To further this objective-particularly in nuclear-armed countries-ICAN is working to change

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public opinion through their Cities Appeal. In the US, one of the leaders in this effort is Back from the Brink. Cities and local governments are asked to sign resolutions supporting dramatic limitations on nuclear weapons. Although these resolutions do not directly affect funding for these weapons, the resolutions are an educational tool about nuclear weapon destructiveness and cost and can become a vehicle to change public opinion away from a “deterrence” mentality. At this time, resolutions have been passed by the State of California and a number of cities such as Los Angeles and Baltimore, as well as a number of local municipalities. The momentum is building; in May 2019, the City of Paris, which is the capital of a nuclear armed country, passed an anti-nuclear resolution.

In the US, city and local anti-nuclear resolutions are a way for us to make our voices heard, to publicly call attention to the nuclear threat to all of us, and to change public opinion toward banning nuclear weapons. While decisions about nuclear weapons require federal legislation, the threat affects all of us. Likewise, it is our tax dollars that pay for nuclear weapons. These are tax dollars that could go to our local governments for needed health, education and infrastructure needs. In pursuing city and town resolutions, we need to make

legislators and residents more aware of what our tax dollars are buying versus what these tax dollars could fund locally.

Supporters of the ICAN Cities Appeal, and Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War, include:

Pax Christi USA and many local Pax Christi groups. Other supporting organizations include Pax Christi International, the Union of Concerned Scientists, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL).

Current tensions in the world, for example, with Iran and North Korea, could easily escalate into nuclear conflict, underscoring the need to act now to reduce the nuclear threat.

Local chapters of Pax Christi can become involved:

- Choose a legislative level of government to approach.
- Let PCUSA know you are joining the campaign and which branch of government you will approach. Share periodic progress reports with PCUSA.
- Frame a Back from the Brink resolution.
- Identify one or more legislators or councilpersons who might be in agreement with the resolution. Ask each one to propose and/or co-

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body you have chosen. Visit, write and telephone other legislators to support the sponsored resolution. Persevere; this may take sustained effort.

- Seek partners. There are other peace, faith, policy and science groups who support bans on nuclear weapons. Find local groups and coordinate with them.

This campaign proposal is focused on two of PCUSA's priorities:

- Spirituality of Nonviolence and Peacemaking
- Disarmament, Demilitarization and Reconciliation with Justice



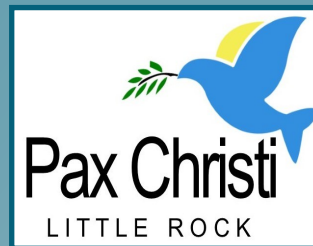
PCUSA has been supportive of these initiatives through its webinars, public state-

ment, and periodic conference calls with PC leaders who have specifically indicated a focus on nuclear disarmament issues. The Back from the Brink Campaign calls each individual member, local group, and region to a concerted and communal effort in 2019-2020. (This article is composed of excerpts from the Pax Christi USA website-Back to the Brink Campaign)

Pax Christi LR has joined the national campaign and will develop an organized approach to provide city and state legislators with information regarding the wisdom of nuclear disarmament. Pax Christi Little Rock stands in solidarity with Pax Christi USA, Pax Christi local chapters and other peace and social justice organizations that support disarmament and reconciliation with justice.

Please view this [webinar](#) to obtain more information on the Back from the Brink campaign.

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 November,

we will be collecting for **El Zocalo Immigrant Resource Center**. El Zocalo was founded in 2011 and continues to provide education, information, childcare, a food/clothing pantry, and many other resources that support individuals and families in the immigrant community. The organization is located in the Geyer Springs Methodist Church in southwest Little Rock. If you would like to contact El Zocalo, you can reach them at team@zocalocenter.org or call 501-301-4652. Please give generously.

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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.



El Zocalo Immigrant Resource Center is a grassroots organization in Central Arkansas whose mission is to promote a dignified life for immigrants in AR by connecting individuals and families with services and fostering community-wide understanding through education. Poverty, language and cultural barriers often make it difficult for immigrants to navigate life in Arkansas. El Zocalo takes a culturally-informed approach, providing the support immigrants need to help themselves. El Zocalo means town square in Spanish, denoting a place where people help one another.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY: LET'S BUILD A HOME TOGETHER



Pax Christi Little Rock is coordinating a project between several peace and social justice organizations in the Central Arkansas area to sponsor part of one home construction through **Habitat for Humanity of Central Arkansas**. We have received pledges of almost \$2500 from different sources. This means that Pax Christi along with other peace and social justice organizations will be listed as Beautification sponsors. Once we receive all of our pledged donations in the next few days, a date will be scheduled to spend one day on site providing landscaping services to a Habitat for Humanity Home. All groups will be listed as sponsors on this project. Pax Christi Little Rock will get information out to all participating groups as soon as it is available. Call Sherry at 501-258-8653 if you have any questions. Thanks to all who contributed funds to make this joint venture possible!

ARKANSAS PEACE WEEK COMMITTEE MAKES PLANS FOR 2020

The Arkansas Peace Week Committee met on Sunday, November 3 at Caroline Stevenson's home to review the events included in Peace Week 2019 and determine a focus for Peace Week 2020. Members promoted continued involvement in the schools, increasing the school districts utilizing the Peace Curriculum. Additionally, there was much discussion about AR Peace Week being an umbrella organization, providing connection and structure for other organizations to support their participation in Peace Week. Ongoing monthly meetings to be held with goal of peace group connection.



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FINDING SOLACE AND GROWTH THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES

Autumn

Rainer Maria Rilke

*The leaves fall, fall as from far,
Like distant gardens withered in
the heavens;*

*They fall with slow and lingering
descent.*

*And in the nights the heavy
Earth, too, falls from out the stars
Into the Solitude.*

*Thus all doth fall. This hand of
Mine must fall and lo!*

The other one: it is the law.

*But there is One who holds this falling
Infinitely softly in His hands.*

Fall has always been my favorite time of year. The days grow shorter and the air grows cooler, constellations glow in the night sky, and the moon, when it is full, takes my breath away. I spend an inordinate amount of time looking at the moon during this season. This past September, there was the most amazing Harvest moon. I found myself gazing at the glory of that sight and wishing that it would never change. That it would just stay bright and perfect forever, each night coming up over the horizon as grand and golden as the night before. But, that isn't the way it works here. The only constant in our lives appears to be change. And God, of course, is constant, so I think that

God must have some purpose for things to be changing all the time.

Certain change seems good. When I was young, I loved it



as the days grew closer to my birthday or Christmas. And when I got sick, it was good when those days came when I started feeling better. But there are certain changes that are so difficult to bear. The death of a loved one, the loss of an important relationship, tragic illness of family and friends, or simply time moving on beyond cherished moments in our lives: raising children, visiting parents at the holidays, performing work that we loved in a space we loved. These are more challenging moments to move past.

So we are left at the end of certain phases of our life trying to find some meaning and purpose in the transitional days between one phase of life that is ending and the next that looms unknown in an uncharted future. It is so easy to get fixated on the negative changes and so be lost in the despair that comes from losing those things we hold so dear when their time comes to an end. However, I must believe that there is some purpose in consciously moving

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through this grief that is the natural reaction to loss. Parker Palmer says it very well, "All the "falling" that is going on out there is full of promise. Seeds are being planted and leaves are being composted as earth prepares for yet another uprising of green. I find nature a trustworthy guide...I've come to understand that life "composts" and "seeds" us as autumn does the earth. I've seen how possibility gets planted in us even in the most difficult times."



I am finding this a very helpful thought. It is as though this sadness that is left at the end of a fruitful, creative phase of life is a necessary grief that carries with it the seeds of the old life into the new. I am picturing a sunflower that is only ready to launch its seeds into the world after it is dying. In thinking about that, it becomes clear that the seeds contain the life force and material of the original flower. So, we can have faith that when we lose people and places in our life, we take some part of them into the future with us. These aspects of others whom we have loved become planted in us and make us better, more complete people, perhaps even preparing us for the journey ahead. I must believe that or I would not be able to move forward.

Nature is all around us and it is our best assurance that all will be well even in the darkest times. To be aware of the dying light of winter but know that each day past

the winter solstice grows a little longer gives us hope for a new spring. Winter appears barren and dead, but beneath the surface of the fallow earth, the buried seeds are readying themselves for future days in the sun.



I've often heard people wonder where God is when bad things happen. I can't blame them as I have asked this question myself many times. Rather than believe that God is absent and just doesn't care, or even worse that God made the bad things happen, perhaps we can wonder what we might learn from these difficult times? How might we grow? Maybe pain teaches us things we wouldn't otherwise understand. To grow through pain, we must grieve well and identify what we will take forward from our previous life experience. People are never really gone if we keep them in our hearts and employ the things we learned from them when they were here. When we do this, their love remains with us on the journey.

Richard Rohr said, "If you don't transform your suffering, you will transmit it." It's important to grieve our losses and work through our pain so we can be sure it isn't taken out on others or ourselves in addictive or unconscious ways. To do this, we must keep our loved ones ever in our



hearts, knowing in faith that, like the sunflower, they will constantly be born anew in each day of our lives.