

Tidings of Hope: The Social Concerns Newsletter of the Diocese of Green Bay

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Greetings,

In July, I attended the Pax Christi USA national conference entitled “Know Justice; Know Peace: Ending War at Home and Abroad.” Pax Christi’s purpose is, “...to create a world that reflects the Peace of Christ by exploring, articulating, and witnessing to the call of Christian nonviolence. This work begins in personal life and extends to communities of reflection and action to transform structures of society. Pax Christi USA rejects war, preparations for war, and every form of violence and domination. It advocates primacy of conscience, economic and social justice, and respect for creation.” Yes, you will find it in the *Official Catholic Directory!*

Jeremy Scahill is an internationally known author who has reported on events surrounding the Katrina disaster and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In his keynote address on Saturday morning, he pointed out that in the last two years, the United States has expanded the war in Afghanistan, maintained its detainment policies in Guantanamo Bay, and increased sales of weapons to Pakistan. At a time when the U.S. Congress is investigating the Blackwater Corporation for its military practices in foreign countries, the current U.S. administration has awarded it a 25 billion dollar military contract. Worse yet, Scahill noted that current Department of Justice officials have thrown out investigations of abusive practices by former U.S. personnel along the lines of genocide, relocation, and torture. But this isn’t all that I remembered from Scahill’s talk. As a footnote, he shared that he was raised in Catholic schools and praised the Dominican sisters who helped form him and then added, “but I don’t go to church anymore.” After his talk, those at my table processed his talk and I shared that one of the most striking things that I heard was, “...I don’t go to church anymore.”

Scahill’s work is very important. The exposés that he leads uncover major abuses of human rights and questionable expenditures by our government. By choosing not to share his life with a local faith community, I am afraid that he is failing to make the connection between his necessary social justice work and the message of the Jewish prophets and Jesus Christ. He also fails to avail himself of the support of certain others by failing to go to Church.

But there is a scary afterthought to his address. One person around our table posed that perhaps Scahill stopped going to church because Scahill thought that organized religion had stifled (or would stifle) his work. It was a sad theory by one of the conference attendees, but nevertheless reminded me how fortunate we are to have the support of each other in our consistent work for Catholic social action.

Yours in Christ,

Steve Herro, O. Praem.

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Social Concerns Director



News on Catholic Campaign for Human Development, JOSHUA/ESTHER, and the Diocese of Green Bay



Catholic Campaign for Human Development
UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

During the summer, I was introduced to a gentleman in our diocese who was involved with the work of some of the founders of Catholic Campaign for Human Development when they were working together for justice in Chicago's west side in the late 1960s and early 1970s. I wish that I could share Chris' entire letters, but due to space restrictions, allow me to share some excerpts:

...The late Bishop Michael Dempsey of Chicago, who was instrumental in founding CCHD and a friend, spent a good deal of his priestly life advocating for the poor on Chicago's Westside. He really lived the Gospel message of Jesus in His concern for those who were marginalized. I have always thought about Bishop Dempsey and his work when making my contribution to CCHD....

...In the summers of 1968 and 1969 I supervised seminarians working in Chicago's Westside Housing projects for the poor. I experienced firsthand the effects of discrimination and injustice perpetrated toward the least of our brothers and sisters. There was great rejoicing when Fr. Dempsey became a bishop. A pastor of the poor...was ordained bishop.

Wouldn't it be something if Chris' first person testimony was taken into consideration by Church leaders when

deliberating the future of Catholic Campaign for Human Development?

From April to August, seven Catholic leaders from JOSHUA and ESTHER met with the Director of Stewardship and Pastoral Services Mark Mogilka and myself in order to respond to Bishop Ricken's request to suggest a format for interested Catholics to continue to participate in the local efforts of JOSHUA and ESTHER outside of their parish being a member of either organization. Our progress was limited due to a United States Conference of Catholic Bishop's national task force on Catholic Campaign for Human Development. This national task force should submit a report for approval to all U.S. Bishops at its November 2010 meeting. So, for those who wonder, "What's up with the Diocese's position on JOSHUA and ESTHER?," perhaps the best response is that the relationship is in a holding pattern until Bishop Ricken has decided how to implement the report of the national task force.

For those who would like to learn more about the controversy surrounding CCHD and the Bishop's task force, I recommend a few articles: McClory, Robert J. "The fight over fighting poverty: CCHD and the push for reform," (<http://www.uscatholic.org/culture/social-justice/2010/06/fight-over-fighting-poverty-cchd-and-push-reform>) and Filteau, Jerry. "Ten dioceses bishops' antipoverty campaign," (<http://ncronline.org/news/justice/10-dioceses-quit-bishops%E2%80%99-antipoverty-campaign>)

Reminders

- ◆ Could your parish social concerns committee chair please submit a current list of committee members (name, phone, postal and email addresses) to the Social Concerns Office, Diocese of Green Bay, PO Box 23825, Green Bay, WI, 54305 (or pastserv@gbdioc.org) so that we may keep our mailing list current?
- ◆ If you wish to be added to a legislative alert system to receive periodic emails on important pending state and federal legislation, please email sherro@gbdioc.org.
- ◆ A listing of diocesan social justice videos is available at <http://www.gbdioc.org/stewardship-a-pastoral-services/social-concernsjustice-a-peace/social-justice-videos.html>

Faithful Citizenship resources, 2010

Be prepared for the fall 2010 elections! Debates are hosted by the League of Women Voters, Appleton (<http://www.lwvappleton.org/>), League of Women Voters, Green Bay (<http://greatergreenbay.wi.lwvnet.org/Forums.html>), and Wisconsin Public Radio (<http://wpr.org/election/futureForums.cfm>). The Wisconsin Catholic Conference has posted a pastoral letter by our bishops, questions for all of us to keep in mind this season, and a guide to what is and what is not appropriate campaign awareness behavior in our churches and schools; http://www.wisconsinatholic.org/faithful_citizenship.cfm



Catholic Relief Services engaged in Haiti and Pakistan

by Julian Lazalde (Catholic Relief Services,
Midwest Regional Office)



In the last nine months we have witnessed two of the largest natural disasters in recent memory affect two of the world's poorer countries: Haiti and Pakistan. Despite the tough economic times at home, the financial response of the Catholic Church in the U.S. is making a difference where it is also needed in Haiti and Pakistan.

Nearly nine months have passed since the day of the Haitian earthquake. The outpouring of financial support from the U.S. Catholic community has been overwhelming. The faithful of the Green Bay Diocese contributed over \$1.2 million in donations to Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) Haitian relief - THANK YOU! These funds have, in part, helped provide housing assistance for over 250,000 people, employed more than 10,000 people in 'cash-for-work' activities to stimulate local economies, and in conjunction with Caritas Internationalis, continue to feed nearly 900,000 people immediately after the quake.

Nearly six months after that unprecedented natural disaster came another.

Starting in July, torrential rains led to the worst flooding in Pakistan's history. Government and humanitarian estimates put the number of displaced people between 16 – 20 million.

Though hampered by washed-out roads and bridges, CRS has reached thousands of people. CRS has provided nearly 2,300 homeless families with shelter and hygiene materials as well as water purification tablets, plastic sheeting and cookware. Once the most immediate needs are met, CRS is planning 17 cash-for-work projects, paying people affected by the disaster to build irrigation channels, pathways and retaining walls.

CRS' work in Haiti is now shifting from immediate need to long term, sustainable development and rehabilitation that will continue over the next five years. Contributions to Haitian relief earlier this year will also be applied to this long term, sustainable, outreach. But in Pakistan, the immediate need of those affected by the floods is still paramount.

Huge progress has been made despite massive obstacles in both countries. In Haiti, only four percent of rubble in and around the Port-au-Prince area has been cleared, and in Pakistan receding flood waters and collapsed infrastructure make transportation very difficult. Working in challenging environments, CRS will continue to serve those in need despite the obstacles. For more information, please visit <http://www.crs.org/emergency/haiti/index.cfm> and <http://crs.org/pakistan/pakistan-floods-reshape-landscapes-and-lives>.

Haunted by God: The Life of Dorothy Day Coming to Oshkosh and Green Bay

by David Mueller



My devotion to Dorothy Day began as a college freshman, working in the library at UWGB. One day while restocking the shelves with mostly academic and scientific journals, I happened upon a small eight page newspaper, *The Catholic Worker*. I was struck by the starkness of the illustrations as well as the price of one cent. I started reading these newspapers and other writings by Day. Several years later, I spent the summer living and working at the New York Catholic Worker and was able to get to know Dorothy on a personal level.

Her service to the poor and marginalized with whom she lived raised my awareness to work for a more just society. Her opposition to war led me to study nonviolence and realize that it was at the core of the Gospel as she had proposed. Her life and writings are even more important for the issues we face in the 21st century, as the gap between rich and poor grows, unemployment is rampant and we continue at war in Afghanistan.

Was it God's providence that I met persons from Stillpoint Theatre Collective at the Pax Christi USA Conference in Chicago last July? Day's remarkable life is portrayed in the Collective's play *Haunted by God, the Life of Dorothy Day*. Lisa Wagner, founder of the Collective, will present the play **November 13, 2010, 6:30 pm; Father Carr's Place 2B, 1695 Oshkosh Ave, Oshkosh and November 14, 2010, 2:00 pm, University of Wisconsin Ecumenical Center, Green Bay.** For directions to the Ecumenical Center, <http://www.ecuwgb.org/directions>.

Dorothy matters to me because she helped shape my values, actions and viewpoint for the past 35+ years. She has had the same impact on countless thousands of other American Catholics. In 2000, Pope John Paul II approved her cause for canonization. Don't miss this great opportunity to learn about her life and why she still matters today. Plan on attending one of these exciting performances.

**Catholic Diocese
of Green Bay**

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Social Concerns Newsletter

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Clarifications offered on pending federal immigration legislation

Catholic Church leadership supports **S 729 and HR 1751, the DREAM Act**. The bills provide for the regularization of the status of undocumented young adults who were born outside of the U.S., have lived here prior to their 16th birthday, and graduated from a U.S. high school. If they have completed two years or college and/or military service, their immigration status would be regularized and they could be eligible for jobs, federal student loans, etc. in the U.S. Though either bill has failed to come to a vote this session, there is a strong possibility that either might come to a vote after the election and before January. Senator Kohl and Senator Feingold are co-sponsors;

Congressman Petri, Congressman Kagen, and Congressman Obey have not agreed to co-sponsor the House version. **S 3932, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2010**, was introduced on September 29 by Senator Menendez. Though the bill has generated a lot of attention in some immigration circles, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops will not support the bill as long as it contains a clause that equates unmarried relationships with married relationships when immigrants are attempting to be united with loved ones. For more information about the Catholic Church's position on the national immigration debate, <http://justiceforimmigrants.org>.

New resources

- ◆ Join others in promoting peace in Sudan, which is preparing for a historic referendum on national unity. <http://peaceinsudan.crs.org/>. There is a very detailed guide available at <http://paxchristiusa.org/101Days-Sudan.pdf>
- ◆ Contact the Social Concerns Office, 920-272-8299/877-500-3580 x8299, for a free copy of a six session Bible study, *Out of the Waters: Resisting the Power of Fear*. It is based on Ex 1-5.