

## Faith Leaders and Peace Practitioners Deepen Church's Commitment to Nonviolence

The Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and Pax Christi International's Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, of which LCWR

is a founding member, held a workshop from April 4-5 on the theme, "Path of Nonviolence: Towards a Culture of Peace."

With a consideration and understanding of current situations of conflict and violence, participants engaged in dialogue about the roots of violence, the hope for peace and reconciliation, and reflected on paths to nonviolence. They noted that nonviolence is not only a method but a way of life, a way to protect and care for the conditions of life.

"Our conversations on nonviolence and peace filled our hearts and minds with a consideration of the dignity of each person – young people, women and men, people who are impoverished, citizens and leaders," said Mons. Bruno Marie Duffé, secretary of the dicastery. "Nonviolence and peace call us to a conversion to receive and to give, to gather and to hope."

"Pax Christi International deeply appreciates the support and participation of the dicastery in this workshop, which has been a significant and positive step in the work of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative," said Marie Dennis, co-president of Pax Christi International. "We are touched by the interventions from all the participants, who reiterated the importance of nonviolence rooted in respect, patience, and spiritual strength."

Workshop participants hailed from Mexico, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Colombia, Honduras, Brazil, Canada, the United States, Uganda, Philippines, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Fiji, South Sudan, Kenya, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Palestine, the United Kingdom, France and Italy, and included bishops, archbishops, peace practitioners, theologians, social scientists, educators and those in pastoral ministry. In addition, the dicastery's prefect Cardinal



Peter Turkson (Ghana) was present, as was Cardinal Joseph Tobin (Newark, New Jersey). Ann Scholz, SSND represented LCWR.

Participants will continue their dialogue and research; their reflections will be shared with the Holy Father, with the hope for a possible encyclical that will address these issues and challenges and will promote nonviolent initiatives as a way for mediation, rights, hope, and love.

## 'The Climate Action Now Act' Moves Forward in the House

On April 4, members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee voted 29-19 in favor of HR 9 "The Climate Action Now Act." This legislation would require the United States to remain in the Paris climate agreement, which President Donald Trump has vowed to leave, and would keep the country on track to achieve benchmarks set by the Paris accord. It would ensure that the United States meets its international commitment to cut carbon emissions by at least 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025.

On December 12, 2015, the nations of the world came together to declare with a single voice their commitment to tackle the climate crisis. Nearly 200 countries, including the United States, China, India, and the European Union, have signed the landmark Paris Agreement to combat climate change and to accelerate and amplify the actions and investments needed for a sustainable low carbon future. Its central purpose was for the nations of the world to work together, through nationally determined contributions (NDC), to keep the global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees Celsius and to try to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 F).

On June 1, 2017, President Trump announced his intention to withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement making it the only country to reject the global pact. Despite his declaration, the earliest date the United States could withdraw from the Paris Agreement is November 2020. HR 9 would prohibit any federal funds from being used to take any action to advance the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement.

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## 'The Climate Action Now Act' Moves Forward in the House

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There is far-reaching support for the Paris Agreement from state, local, and tribal-elected officials, business leaders, consumer, health and labor organizations, faith leaders, and more. More than 2,000 businesses and investors, 280 cities and counties, and 10 states have independently pledged to meet the US commitment under the Paris climate agreement.

## Justice Promoters Gather to Examine Racism and White Privilege

More than 115 justice promoters attended the third convocation of Justice Promoters for Women Religious (JCWR) in St. Louis, March 25-27. Women religious and their lay colleagues, both men and women, came from across the country to tackle the twin challenges of white privilege and systemic racism.

Participants were invited to take a deep dive into the conference theme, *Racism: Through the Prism of Social Justice*, to examine the roots of systemic racism, and to explore the difficult work of purging themselves, their communities, and the country of racism and its destructive effects.

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Patricia Chappell and Anne-Louise Nadeau of Pax Christi USA keynoted the convocation. Convocation participants presented workshops that challenged people to go deeper still into the roots of racism. Marcelline Koch, OP offered a breakout session that explored the "soup" of white privilege in which the majority swim. Jennifer Reyes Lay, assistant director of the justice office of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, invited participants to wrestle with the legacy of white supremacist colonial Christianity. Meg Olson of NETWORK Catholic Social Lobby led an interactive workshop which served to educate about the origins of the structural racial wealth and income gap and the systemic nature of racism in the United States.

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- Letter to House leadership expressing support for HR 6, the Dream and Promise Act of 2019, which would put immigrant youth known as Dreamers and long-time beneficiaries of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) on the road to citizenship. LCWR (3/28/19)
- Letter to members of Congress expressing strong support for the National Origin-Based Antidiscrimination for Nonimmigrants Act (NO BAN Act) which would end the harmful Muslim Ban and put in place vital protections against future discriminatory bans. LCWR (3/21/19)
- Letter to House and Senate leadership urging Congress to appropriate \$50 million in the FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies bill specifically for the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and National Institutes of Health to research gun violence. LCWR (3/24/19)
- Letter to members of Congress, asking them to use their oversight authority to prohibit the closure of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) International Operations Division. LCWR (3/24/19)
- Letter to members of Congress urging them to reinstate a just tax system, including investment in the renewal of the entire nation's economic wellbeing and protection of vulnerable communities living in poverty. LCWR (3/26/19)
- Letter to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Wheeler urging him to withdraw the Waters of the United States Rulemaking which threatens the health and safety of one-third of Americans and instead embrace EPA's stated mission to protect human health and the environment. LCWR 3/30/19
- Letter to members of Congress asking them to co-sponsor the Agricultural Worker Program Act of 2019 which provides a one-time opportunity for experienced agricultural workers to apply

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