



Winter 2016 Vol. 34

201 W. Miller Rd., Lansing, MI 48911

paxchristi.mi@gmail.com

(517) 481-5280

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE YEARS TO COME

Looking To Our Future

In October of 2015, the Pax Christi Michigan State Council sat down to create a strategic plan for the coming years. Facilitated by Sr. Maureen Mulcrone, we were expertly guided through the process of developing a plan of growth and sustainability. We'd like to share the outcome with all of you as members invested in Pax Christi Michigan's future:

Pax Christi USA Vision: "A more peaceful, just and sustainable world through the efforts of our members and in collaboration with other groups."

Pax Christi Michigan's Vision Statement: "Pax Christi Michigan works to bring about peace locally, nationally and globally through prayer, study and action. We are rooted in spirituality, dedicated to studying issues of justice from the vantage point of all those involved, and espouse working for peace with justice through nonviolent conflict transformation".



Continued on page 2



Inside this issue:

PCM's Strategic Planning for 2016 and Onward 1

Our Annual Purple Ribbon for Peace Award goes to MARY HENNIG 3

Our Young Adult Peacemaker: AIDA CUADRADO 4

Reviewing Our Fall 2015 Retreat 5

PCM Statement on the Flint Water Crisis—Please Share Widely! 6

PCM Outreach 7

Local Group Updates 8

Membership & Conference Reminder 10

State Council:

- Chair: Bob Podzikowski (Oak Park)
- Secretary: Carmen Kelly (Harper Woods)
- Treasurer & Assistant Coordinator: Pat Valaer (Lansing)
- State Coordinator and IT: Mary L. Hanna (Laingsburg)
- Young Peace Activists Liaison: Tera Warn (Detroit)
- Council Members: Mike Kelly, Ed Lorenz, Marilyn Lorenz, Geri Pleva, Jim Rauner, Fred Thelen

Pax Christi Michigan...

- Meets the 4th Saturday of January/April/July/October from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Any PCM member may attend as a non-voting participant. ☺
- Working committees include: Finance, Membership, Technology and Young Peace Activists.
- If you are interested in attending a meeting or serving on the State Council, please let us know, or contact us if you have any other questions.

GOAL 1: Determine a FOCUS for PCM (Yearly/Periodic/Permanent)

FOCUS - Based on 10-24-2015 Strategic Planning Meeting:

***Pursue Peace and Justice Nonviolently Through
Prayer, Study & Action***

TOP 3 ISSUES BASED ON FOCUS:**War and Violence**

- ◊ Emphasize Federal military budget vs. human needs
- ◊ Issue PCM statements and press releases
- ◊ Get our materials and other resources to parishes/local PCM groups

Encourage Church to Lift Up Catholic Social Teaching and the Gospel

- ◊ Establish effective contacts at parishes/dioceses/vicariates; include youth ministers (goal = contact 50 parishes)
- ◊ Add resources for parish bulletins and P&J liturgies to our website
- ◊ Become clearing house for P&J liturgies
- ◊ Offer parish bulletin articles on Catholic Social Teaching (CST)
- ◊ Educate Catholic parishes and other faith-based organizations about CST
- ◊ Offer PCM newsletter distribution for parishes

Racism

- ◊ Establish contacts at parishes, Gamaliel chapters, and civil rights organizations and distribute PCM materials where possible
- ◊ Contact professional organizations comprised of people of color
- ◊ Offer prayer and study options on our website

GOAL 2: Increase and Diversify Membership

- ◊ Attract younger members (campuses; JVC; volunteer groups; Mercy Corps; Catholic high schools and colleges)
- ◊ Broaden PCM name recognition/branding/visibility
- ◊ Seek co-sponsoring and partnering opportunities with like-minded groups
- ◊ Access vicariates and other recognized structures (e.g., *Elephants in the Living Room*)



Our 35th PCM Annual State Conference Awardees

Mary Hennig – Purple Ribbon For Peace Award

This year's Purple Ribbon for Peace Award is presented to **Mary Hennig**.

Mary was born in 1920 in Ann Arbor, Michigan -- the fourth of five children born to devout Catholic parents, her mother being a convert. Mary remembers praying the rosary on her knees each day after dinner, and attending Lenten devotions twice a week at church. One, of course, NEVER missed Mass!

At the age of two, her family moved to Lake Orion, where the Ku Klux Klan was very active. A cross was burned near her home during this time of unrest.

According to Mary, her father was a bit of a rebel. When her Methodist grandmother came to visit, he would go to church with her on Sunday morning -- a forbidden thing to do in those days if you were a Catholic. He also served on the "Church Committee", whose duty it was to sign the financial report. He irritated the pastor by refusing to sign until he, too, had read and approved it. Mary definitely inherited her father's spunkiness and sense of justice!

At 19, she married Ted Hennig and they had 9 children. Mary says, "They were all loved, but never planned". Her family was her world.

Then in 1960, she became actively involved at St. Daniel's Parish in Clarkston. This is where her interest in prison ministry began. As she tells it,

"The late Arlene Moore served as our Christian Service Coordinator. She organized a team of volunteers to go visit Camp Gilman, a low-security prison for women. I was invited to go -- a very new experience for me. Many of these women were mothers of children left to be cared for by others. I came away thinking that these women were just like I was. They did wrong. I do wrong, only their wrong was illegal. They were worried about their children just as I was worried about mine.

In the words of Pope Francis, who was asked why he visited those in prison, he said, 'Every time I go to the prison, I ask myself, why them and not me?' His words express my feelings, also."

With her interest sparked, Mary believes God had a hand in her noticing an ad placed in the local paper. For \$12, you could subscribe to the Death Row Forum. Mary sent the money and received a thank-you letter from Jerry Bevins, the Death Row Forum's co-author. He invited Mary to correspond with him and others "on the row". This encounter developed into a beautiful friendship that lasted until Mr. Bevins was executed by the State of Indiana in 2001. Mary faithfully visited him at least 25 times before his death.

After this, Mary believes that God kept showing her, in many different ways, those prisoners she should correspond with. Her list grew as she continued to write, call, and visit. Today, as she celebrates 95 years of life, the mission continues.

Mary's own words so beautifully express her love and concern for the imprisoned -- many of whom, as we have come to discover, being wrongly accused and incarcerated.

"This has been a joyful journey for me, but also

Continued on Page 4



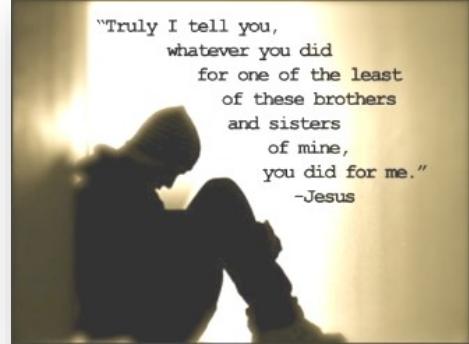
Continued from Page 3

one of sadness. My deepest sorrow is losing someone murdered by the state. When they are hurting - I hurt. When I can help with a letter to the authorities or a phone call - I help. I do feel with certainty that they are all held closely in the arms of God. I do believe that God has a special love for prisoners."

And we, Pax Christi Michigan, have a special love for Mary Hennig.

It is with great affection and admiration that we recognize her life-long commitment to prison ministry and honor her with the **2016 Purple Ribbon for Peace Award**.

Congratulations, Dear Friend!



Aida Cuadraido – Young Adult Peacemaker Award

Our 2016 Young Adult Peacemaker Award goes to **Aida Cuadraido**. Aida grew up in Saginaw, MI. She currently lives in Lansing and is the director & lead organizer of [ACTION of Greater Lansing](#). As part of ACTION, Aida works with many different task forces: Children's Health - Equity and Access; Civil Rights for Immigrants; the Education Task Force; blacklivesmatterlansing (ending structural racism); Green and Healthy Homes; Michigan Power to Thrive; and the Accessibility Task Force. She is also a member of the Cristo Rey Church - a church that does outreach to Latinos/as and people who are marginalized as part of its mission. Many of you will recognize Aida as the woman who presented the "Action" component of our Conference last year: Writing postcards to Attorney General Bill Schuette, asking him to end his opposition to the President's Administrative Relief Program, and to instead stand in favor of keeping Michigan families together.

Aida is the co-chair of Gamaliel Network's Organizers of Color Guild, and is a national bilingual leadership trainer. In the last three years, Aida has helped lead the organization to triple its budget and quadruple its membership. She exercises her faith by organizing for systemic change, and has led an initiative for Gamaliel of Michigan to systemically address the Mass Incarceration/Mass Deportation issue. She also targeted early childhood development concerns by helping launch Michigan Power to Thrive: a partnership with Public Health Departments and community organizing.

Aida says her greatest victory has been helping new leaders recognize and unleash their own power in making changes for their communities.

Aida joined Pax Christi Michigan in 2015, and has applied to be on the national Pax Christi Anti-Racism Team (PCART). She is an asset to us, our community, and our world, and we are lucky that she is a part of Pax Christi. We proudly honor her with the 2016 Young Adult Peacemaker Award.

Congratulations, Aida!

Our world is in good hands with women like you at the helm!

The 21st Annual Pax Christi Michigan Retreat Held October 16-18, 2015

Huge rolling dice, revealing stories and many laughs began a memorable weekend of faith, prayer, ideas and the companionship of fellow peacemakers.

UDM Professor Gail Presby, our ever so capable and knowledgeable retreat leader unfolded for us the oft forgotten role of women in the nonviolent struggles for justice in South Africa, Great Britain, the U.S. and elsewhere. She introduced us to extraordinary women who were the backbone of Gandhi's campaigns in South Africa and India and outlined the role of women in the labor struggles in South Africa and Mandela's later struggles to conquer apartheid. She brought out the importance of collaboration and sharing of ideas which accompanied those efforts.



She shared how Dorothy Day prepared herself for the long haul. Shored up by a community which lived together, sharing conversation, ideas and soul searching, Dorothy knew it was easier to do difficult things together even though her community's open door brought both joy and despair. Gail portrayed Dorothy Day's dedication to works of mercy, which were the opposite of the war she so strongly opposed and how Dorothy, motivated by God's love, modeled the life of Jesus.

Time with Gail was thought provoking, inspiring and motivating.

We enjoyed a delightful Saturday evening with talented musicians, Peter Dougherty, Tim Greenia and Ray Kell. Ninety year old Ray also danced and stood on his head!



We shared a communal Eucharist on Sunday which ended with joyful song.

Gail has reminded us that being with others and group singing can help conquer fear and give courage to wage the struggles for Justice and Peace.

We left with joyful hearts, refreshed with the Spirit of the Pax Christi Michigan Community and gratitude for the hard work and creativity that Mary Hanna, Pat Valaer and Bob Podzikowski gave us in their wonderful planning and organizing the weekend. - Mary & Bill Carry



***WE LOOK FORWARD TO HAVING YOU ALL JOIN US FOR THIS YEAR'S RETREAT: Oct 14/15/16, 2016 AT MARYVILLE RETREAT CENTER IN HOLLY. SAVE THE DATES, AND LOOK FOR DETAILS SOON! ***

Pax Christi Michigan Statement on Flint Water Crisis

The water crisis in the poverty-stricken, African-American-majority city of Flint, Michigan has its roots in decades of waste dumped by corporations into the Flint River, and more recently, surface runoff from roads, lawns and farmers' fields. The water in the Flint River contains significant levels of chlorides, making it highly corrosive to lead pipes. In addition, state revenue sharing cutbacks for Michigan cities have exacerbated the negative impact on budgets already stretched thin by deindustrialization and the sharp decline in tax revenue.

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder took office on January 1, 2011. With his accounting background, he brought to state government a corporate philosophy that was highly bottom-line oriented. One of Snyder's first actions was legislation expanding an earlier law by giving the state sweeping powers to take over failing municipalities and school boards by appointing "emergency managers" with unchecked authority to replace democratically elected officials. In December 2011, Flint was placed in receivership under an emergency manager. After rejecting use of the Flint River for drinking water, Flint emergency manager Ed Kurtz notified Detroit emergency manager Kevyn Orr in April 2013 that Flint had opted to switch from the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) to a new source of water by 2016 as a cost cutting measure. Orr gave a one-year termination notice on the city's contract to supply Flint with water. A March 2014 letter reveals then-Flint emergency manager Darnell Earley declined a DWSD offer to continue selling water to Flint after the April contract expiration. ACLU investigative reporter Curt Guyette noted, "You cannot separate what has happened in Flint from the state's extreme emergency manager law." That law, says Guyette, "is about the taking away of democracy and the imposition of austerity-fueled autocracy on cities that are poor and majority African-American." In April 2014, Flint, which had for decades purchased Lake Huron water treated by the DWSD, began drawing its water from the Flint River. Almost immediately, residents began complaining about the water's color, taste and odor, and to report rashes and concerns about bacteria.

From the start, Snyder administration officials discounted concerns about water quality. It was not until late in 2015 that state officials finally conceded what critics had been contending: that Flint was in the midst of a major public health emergency, as tap water pouring into families' homes contained enough lead to show up in the blood of people in the city. Even small amounts of lead can cause lasting health and developmental problems in children. And, for more than a year after the switch to Flint River water, workers assigned to manage the city's water system failed to lower lead risks by adding chemicals to prevent old pipes from corroding and leaching lead and other metals into the water supply.

The Flint water crisis is the latest manifestation of disturbing trends, in which low-income urban citizens are disenfranchised, uprooted, and denied the human right to safe water. Another serious injustice in Michigan began in 2014 with water shutoffs to tens of thousands of Detroit households. After a complaint charging violation of human rights was filed with the United Nations, UN Special Rapporteurs expressed concern regarding the "unprecedented scale" of the Detroit water shut-offs where, they said, the "most vulnerable and poorest" of the city's population were being disproportionately affected, including a predominant number of African-Americans. Policies like the water shutoffs and mass tax foreclosures effectively make life unlivable in certain areas of the city, driving out long-time residents.

Officials only acknowledged the problem in Flint after a handful of courageous individuals stepped forward. Flint mothers LeeAnne Walters and Tammy Loren; the EPA's Miguel Del Toral, who discovered deficiencies in Flint's water testing; Virginia Tech professor and lead corrosion expert Marc Edwards, whose team conducted field tests in Flint, and who revealed that Michigan



Department of Environmental Quality officials repeatedly and falsely stated that no spike in blood lead levels of children had occurred; Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, a pediatrician at Hurley Medical Center, who researched blood lead levels of Flint's youngest children and made the alarming results public in September 2015; and, the ACLU's Curt Guyette, winner of the Michigan Press Association Journalist of the Year award for his reporting on the crisis.

Catholic Social Teaching maintains that water is a human right, not a mere commodity. The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church states: 484. "The principle of the universal destination of goods also applies naturally to water, considered in the Sacred Scriptures as a symbol of purification (cf. Ps 51:4; Jn 13:8) and of life (cf. Jn 3:5; Gal 3:27). 'As a gift from God, water is a vital element essential to survival; thus, everyone has a right to it.' [1009] Satisfying the needs of all, especially of those who live in poverty, must guide the use of water and the services connected with it. Inadequate access to safe drinking water affects the well-being of a huge number of people and is often the cause of disease, suffering, conflicts, poverty and even death. For a suitable solution to this problem, it 'must be set in context in order to establish moral criteria based precisely on the value of life and the respect for the rights and dignity of all human beings.' [1010]" And, 485. "By its very nature water cannot be treated as just another commodity among many, and it must be used rationally and in solidarity with others. The distribution of water is traditionally among the responsibilities that fall to public agencies, since water is considered a public good. If water distribution is entrusted to the private sector it should still be considered a public good. The right to water, [1011] as all human rights, finds its basis in human dignity and not in any kind of merely quantitative assessment that considers water as a merely economic good. Without water, life is threatened. Therefore, the right to safe drinking water is a universal and inalienable right." Pope Francis, in his encyclical *Laudato Si*, amplifies the theme: "One particularly serious problem is the quality of water available to the poor. Every day, unsafe water results in many deaths and the spread of water-related diseases, including those caused by microorganisms and chemical substances." (Section 29) And, "Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity. (Section 30, *italics in original*)."

Pax Christi Michigan believes the Flint water crisis represents a tragic amalgam of racial and economic inequality as well as political exploitation and corruption. State officials, up to and including Governor Rick Snyder, have demonstrated a callous disregard for people and their lives. This indifference amounts to gross negligence, and is conceivably a criminal offense. Now an entire city of children, many of whom already faced challenges due to the high poverty rate in Flint, may have been irreparably harmed. Even with dedicated medical, financial, and social support, the ravages of lead will still be seen and felt for many years to come. It is our collective responsibility, in light of Catholic social teaching, to enforce the Constitutional imperative to "establish justice," and as concerned citizens, to ardently remind government officials of their moral obligation to serve people above all, and to make certain that a preventable tragedy of this magnitude never happens again.

- Bob Podzikowski on behalf of the Pax Christi Michigan State Council (February 2016)



● Bob Podzikowski, Chair of the PCM State Council, spoke to the Mercy High School Social Justice Class in November, at the invitation of teacher Ann Lusch (long-time PCM member). Bob presented Dr. King's Six Principles of Nonviolence and their impact on the lives of those courageous individuals who choose love instead of hate and seek to defeat injustice, not people. Bob also discussed the guiding principles posed by Christ, which ultimately challenge us to forgive, "not seven times, but seventy times seven", and to love our enemies. Bob's informative presentation encouraged the students to see and understand how Dr. King's Six Principles and the Gospel inform our approach to nonviolently confront the forces of evil in our world today. Bob has had the privilege of speaking to Ann's classes over the years, and is always impressed with the students' passion for peace and justice. **DETAILS ON BOB'S PRESENTATION CONTENT ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE...PLEASE READ MORE ON THIS WONDERFUL EVENT.**

● This Fall, PCM Council Members Ed & Marilyn Lorenz helped host a series of events at Alma College, where Ed teaches. Aimed at trying to promote understanding of Middle Eastern inter-group tensions, they also hosted a showing of Lisa Gossels' **"My So-Called Enemy,"** and later of

Local Group Updates

IHM's Form Study Group for Laudato Si



In our IHM reflection group of 12 we choose to reflect, pray and discuss "Laudato Si" for 3 sessions. We were delighted with Pope Francis' invitation to Ecological Conversion (III #216-#221) The process raised our consciousness of this integral ecology and brought a greater awareness of the Common Good as part of our Simplicity of Lifestyle. We desired to respond to the call to a more contemplative lifestyle, "to create a culture of shared life and respect for our surroundings"(#213). ... "In this way, the world, and the quality of life of the poorest, are cared for, with a sense of solidarity which is at the same time aware that we live in a common home which God has entrusted to us." (#232) We are each looking at our own lifestyle, our IHM Community, our work environment and the world to see how we can follow through on living the invitation of Laudato Si.

Next we are going to reflect on "Laudato Si and the Third Vatican Council." (NCR Global Sisters Report) will be our topic for our January session. - Submitted by Pat Soltesz, IHM

News from Pax Christi Muskegon

Pax Christi Muskegon participated in the second annual "Muskegon Thirty Days of Peace" during the month of September 2015. Inspired by the Newaygo County's Thirty days of Peace, many organizations, churches, and interest groups in Muskegon County sponsored events and projects all focusing on peace/non-violence, justice, and equality. Pax Christi Muskegon focused on involving the children of Muskegon County . One project was **Pinwheels for Peace**. Pax Christi provided directions and materials to students from many area schools and churches - all encouraging the creation of pinwheels decorated with their thoughts about "war and peace" and "living in harmony with others" on one side; and creative designs expressing their feelings on the other side. The pinwheels were "planted" or given to neighbors on Sept. 21st - The International Day of Peace.

The second project was the purchase and distribution of the book: **The Peace Book** by Todd Parr to area elementary schools. Discussions and follow-up was encouraged. With children returning to school in September, many teachers used the book to promote harmony and tolerance in their new classrooms. Counselors and Principals told us that it was the perfect introduction to lessons on "anti-bullying" and "conflict-resolution" in their elementary schools.



- Submitted by Rick and Nancy Peters (nancyjpeters@comcast.net)

Pax Christi Lansing Celebrates the New Year with Ecumenical Prayer Service

On January 1, 2016, Pax Christi Lansing held their Annual Interfaith New Year Peace Service at St. Therese Church in Lansing. PC-Lansing members Dave Borzenski, Joan Tirak, Joe Droste, Gary Ashby, Fred Thelen, Mary Hanna, and Pat Valaer were joined by 35 other “brave the weather” participants. Pope Francis’ encyclical, *Laudato Si*, was incorporated into the theme of environmental stewardship. A compelling video—*Prayer of the Cosmos*—was shown and prompted thoughtful discussion. Statements by other religions regarding the state of “Mother Earth”, and how we must all act now to stop the devastation, were read.

The service concluded with a toast to the New Year as many shared their hopes for a more peace-filled, earth-friendly 2016.



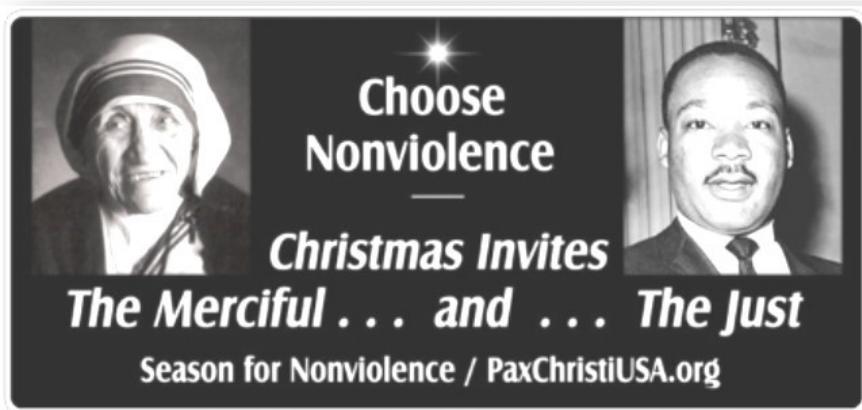
Prayer of the Cosmos

- Submitted by Dave Borzenski (borzenskid@aol.com)

Blue Water Pax Christi Advertises for Peace

For the seventh year, Blue Water Pax Christi, a Catholic peace and justice organization, has purchased one billboard in Port Huron to remind residents and visitors to keep non-violence in their lives during the Christmas season and the New Year. Beginning December 23, 2015, the billboard was displayed for one month, above the Blue Water Area Chamber of Commerce building in Port Huron. The black and white artwork includes recognizable photos of Mother Teresa and martyred U.S. civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“The wording says ‘Choose Nonviolence. Christmas Invites the Merciful ...and ...The Just,’” said Mike McCarthy, a leader of Blue Water Pax Christi who has spearheaded this outdoor advertising program since 2008. “Some may think of this billboard as part of a ‘public service campaign,’” he noted. “We pay the costs like any advertiser because we feel the message needs to be out there. For weeks, consumers are bombarded with commercial messages about the secular part of Christmas. Our Pax Christi group believes we need to be mindful of Christ’s teachings about non-violence at this time of the year.”



Listed along the bottom of the billboard is the Season for Non-Violence and Pax Christi USA, national groups working to promote peace, for anyone who wants to explore ways to adopt non-violence to resolve conflicts. The message of the billboard directly supports the 2016 Catholic “Year of Mercy,” as proclaimed by Pope Francis. The year-long observance, or Jubilee, is “a privileged moment so that the Church may learn to choose only that which pleases God most: forgiveness

and mercy.”

- Submitted by Michael McCarthy (mccpax@gmail.com)



Pax Christi Michigan Outreach—Cont'd from Pg. 7

"*Girl Rising*," and finally a panel discussion looking at "*Islam vs. ISIS.*" They hope to continue this focus in Winter 2016.

On October 7, 2015, PCM Coordinator Mary Hanna accepted an invitation from Michigan State University "Writing and Rhetoric" professor, Jon Ritz, to share with his students all the types of writing and presentation modes utilized by nonprofits, and in particular, how Pax Christi Michigan uses different modalities for outreach and education. The presentation was very well received, and many students asked for more information about Pax Christi Michigan specifically. It was a wonderful opportunity to reach many college students and introduce them to the progressive work of Pax Christi.

Pax Christi Michigan's 35th Annual State Conference

BREAKING THE SILENCE: CONFRONTING RACE, POWER & PRIVILEGE



Saturday, April 23, 2016

Cristo Rey Church—Lansing, MI

Visit www.paxchristimi.org for details & registration

**Stay Connected
to PCM!**

Pax Christi Michigan also has a wonderful 'virtual' presence. Check us out!

Our website: www.paxchristimi.org

Our blog, PeaceTalk: paxchristimi.wordpress.com/



PCUSA/PCM MEMBERSHIP JOIN or RENEW NOW!

I believe that "peace is possible" and want to join Pax Christi USA – also giving me regional membership in Pax Christi Michigan:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

The regular membership fee for Pax Christi USA is \$40 per year—more if you are able—or whatever you can afford. We rely on the generosity of our members. Please consider enclosing a membership contribution to Pax Christi USA for:

\$40 \$50 \$100 \$500 other

At this time I can only contribute _____

Check any of the following:

I would like more information about joining or starting a local group in my area or school.

I would like more information about the Parish Sponsorship Program.

MAIL TO: Pax Christi USA
415 Michigan Ave. NE, Suite 240
Washington D.C. 20017

