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# The Challenge of Peace:



God's Promise  
and our Response

25th Anniversary of the US Bishop's Pastoral

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**Cover Photo:** Carol Gonzalez (pictured on left) along with Lois Campbell and Henry Gonzalez (both of whom are not pictured) from Pittsburgh CLC walked together this year, in Pax Christi's annual "Stations of the Cross" marking Good Friday in various downtown areas of cities such as New York and Pittsburgh. They march with signs and prayers at various "station-locations" highlighting the need for an end to war and violence, and the promotion of peace.

*This photo was originally published in April 2008 issue of The Newpeople, Pittsburgh's Peace and Justice Newspaper, published by the Thomas Merton Center.*

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## EDITORIAL FOREWORD

FROM DOROTHY ZAMBITO

“There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens.”( Ecclesiastes 3:1)

The national community of CLC-USA and the many other readers of *Harvest* have for over seven years enjoyed and benefited from the dedicated, efficient, informed and graced leadership of Dolores Celentano, as Coordinating Editor of CLC-USA’s primary publication. I am certain Dolores feels a sense of relief to know others will be doing the service that was hers to give through those many years. I am sure she will miss some of the connectedness that occurs when you need to be closely in touch with CLC’s happenings – internationally, nationally, regionally and locally. What can we say to you, Dolores? Thank you so very much for all you have done for each of us. You leave us as Coordinating Editor to be ready for what the good Lord is calling you to at this ‘appointed time’ in your life. We wish you the blessings of peace, good health and fruitful service as you continue your journey with the Lord.

Now is the appointed time of transition as the Locust Valley CLC servant community responds to the call to work as Coordinating Editors of *Harvest*. Although three of the six members of the community, Nancy Head, George Willett and I, will do the actual work of soliciting information and editing, the rest of our community (John Bellamente, Carol Meringolo and Ray Zambito) have pledged their support in many ways. This is truly a communal effort, and we ask your prayers as we endeavor to be good and faithful servants.

One of the first responsibilities of the servant community was to identify a theme for this issue. Soon after we realized that the Summer issue would be our first, I was drawn to choose the topic of peace, especially since 2008 is the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the U.S. Bishops’ Pastoral, *The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response*. The national community and our local community approved. Besides remembering the document, I felt compelled and passionate to awaken thoughts of peace in a world that seems to have become almost casual about the absence of peace in our world, in our country, in our cities and even in our personal lives. There are days I want to cry out, “What step have you (have I) taken today to bring about a more peaceful world?” I am pleased to say that there were others in CLC who were willing and able to share their reflections with us. Read on.



*Harvest Editorial Team:*  
Dorothy Zambito  
George Willett  
Nancy Head

FROM GEORGE WILLETT

We are fortunate indeed to be able to offer peace related articles from authors of different backgrounds and perspectives. Since our readership is similarly diverse, it would seem that an interesting and beneficial exchange of ideas should occur. There is something here for everyone! There is plenty here for everyone!

Note Ann Marie Brennan’s **The Grace of Peace**, wherein she acquaints us with several current CLC initiatives and interests. Desiring peace, cultivating a culture of peace and working for peace and justice are discussed. The influence of our Ignatian tradition is mentioned and the identity of several websites is offered for follow-up by those particularly interested.

Fr. Donald J. Moore, S.J. (not a CLCer...yet) offers **A View from Jerusalem**, a stirring, heart-rending account of some manifestations of the Jewish-Palestinian situation. He gives insight into peace and justice problems in the Holy Land and describes some remarkable men and women who, against all odds, persevere. Despite terrible personal hardship and losses, they continue to work for change — for a peace they may hardly remember. Fr. Moore’s nine years at his present post in Jerusalem afford him an ideal point of vantage from which to give us this report.

Please note too the piece by Dorothy Zambito, **Graced History: A Local CLC Response to the Bishops’ Peace Proposal**. She recounts what the Locust Valley CLC did in 1983 — and possibly this may be the influence needed to produce a 2008 reprise!

Fr. Benjamin Urmston, S.J. gives us **Creating a World Community**, wherein he presents his vision and his hope for global turning away from war and toward peace. Fr. Ben deals with the attainment of peace in the broadest sense of the concept. He mentions Maritain’s World Council of Conscience, and Pope John Paul II’s *Challenge*

*of Peace*. He seeks some base from which a proper consideration of the just war concept, for example, could be undertaken. Rather than the United Nations, Fr. Ben puts forward the idea of another entity, a Global Democratic Authority. He believes this type of venue would better allow for the proper consideration of the great concerns of our day — weapons of mass destruction, peace keeping, promotion of the common good and true security for all.

Another facet of peace is shown by Fred C. Leone's **The Conscientious Objectors (CO)**. Three of Fred's sons, opposed to war, had to become conscientious objectors. They detail the difficulties encountered when they refused to be swayed. Their firm moral foundation kept them steady and true to their consciences.

Barbara Bedolla's **Promises and Possibilities** offers yet another view of peace, or rather the absence of peace. The scene is a border war between Ecuador and Peru over twenty-five years ago. She describes dangers and hardships, including those endangering women and children — even some which continued after the cessation of hostilities!

#### FROM NANCY HEAD

The appointed time has also arrived to bid a fond farewell to John LeVecke, S.J. who has served for four years as our National EA as well as EA for the Western Region. John has been instrumental in helping to bond closer ties between CLC and the Jesuits as well as assisting CLC to become more of a true Apostolic Community. Be sure to read the tribute and comments from those who worked with him and look at the pictures.

The new National EA is Robert "Cos" Costello, S.J. He is a Missouri native who taught at Rockhurst University and worked as counselor at the US Penitentiary at Leavenworth. He was the National EA for England and Wales. His article is about *Projects 134 to 137* and our blessed CLC history. Additional insights from Monika Hellwig on gratitude and reverence derived from the Exercises and one of Pope Benedict XVI's homilies about knowing

Christ and speaking to others of our friendship with him round out where we are today as we prepare for Fatima.

The regions have been busy with retreats and leadership conferences. The Cura Personalis Leadership Conference for college/university students and campus ministers was held at Loyola University in New Orleans from May 27 to June 1. The New England region held its annual retreat in May with the Fairfield Jesuit Community. The Missouri Region CLC's will be hosting an evening get together during the Ignatian Spirituality Conference in St. Louis in late July. The MAR "alumni group" of the Guides – Coordinators Training (2007) is still meeting monthly via phone conference. Read about Metro NY CLC's Day of Mission and its Apostolic Groups.

Other regional news includes: The MAR KCLC has scheduled their annual silent retreat from August 9 to 13; Metro NY KCLC member Young Sook Clare Maing was elected as the new President of the Korean National CLC; Jemma Hae-Ja Hong was elected as the new Atlanta Regional CLC President. We send our best wishes and prayers as these two ladies and "Cos" take on their new responsibilities.

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*Nancy Head is a systems analyst for a major Long Island corporation. She is a Graduate of the Just Faith Program and the Diocese of Rockville Center Pastoral Formation Institute with an additional ministry track in evangelization. She serves her parish, St. Gertrude's, as a lector, Eucharistic Minister, Liturgy Committee member, and as a past member of the Pastoral Advisory Council. She has been a member of the Locust Valley CLC since 1998, making her Permanent Commitment in 2006. Nancy has one daughter and three grandchildren.*

Bios of Dorothy Zambito and George Willett can be found with their articles.

*The field of CLC mission knows no limits: it extends to both the Church and the world, in order to bring the Gospel of salvation to all people. (GP 8)*

# The Grace of Peace

A typical evening at my house is usually chaotic: assuring hungry children that dinner will be ready soon, shushing the barking dog who wants his evening walk, fielding telephone calls, negotiating carpools, preparing for sporting events and attending to homework demands. Add to this an occasional family disagreement, children blasting the television or stereo, and a last minute scramble to tidy up before all arrive home for dinner. Needless to say, peace is a grace which is not always apparent.

Still, we are confident that we hold Christ's peace in our hearts. Especially consoling are Christ's words, "...in Me, you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) Also reassuring are Paul's words to the Philippians, "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:7)

In Christian Life Community®, we strive for peace in all aspects of our lives - first of all, in our own hearts, then in our families, communities, country and world! The Preamble to the CLC General Principles states, "The Spirit of the Gospel and the interior law of love...challenge us to...work with the whole People of God for...peace."

In thinking about this article, three aspects of peace currently being addressed in CLC come to mind:

- Desiring Peace
- Cultivating a Culture of Peace
- Working for Peace and Justice

## DESIRING PEACE

In the words of Oscar Arias Sanches, President of Costa Rica and 1987 Nobel Peace Prize winner, "Peace consists, very largely, in the fact of desiring it with all one's soul."

One of my favorite stories that expresses this desire takes place during a lunch with Frs. Ben Urmston S.J. and Dan Fitzpatrick S.J. and some of the participants of the CLC UN Immersion this past April at Fordham University. After the entrée, Dan asked if anyone wanted anything else like dessert or coffee to which Ben requested, "I want World Peace." So Dan says, "He has been asking for World Peace all week and I haven't been able to deliver! Would you settle for a chocolate chip cookie?"

In our Ignatian tradition, we cultivate the desire for peace in our prayer life, meditating on scripture, and in our practice of the daily awareness examen. We reflect on those moments in our everyday life where we experience turmoil and desolation, consolation and peace. In our practice of discernment, once we have made a decision, we seek confirmation of that decision by a deep sense of peace in our hearts, a sign of Christ's revealing affirmation in our lives.

From the brochure for CLC UN YYA Immersion: *As a member of a Christian Life Community®, you are a part of a national and international network of Christians actively working to live a life consistent with the Gospel of Christ. Part of that life involves a commitment to "thinking globally" and recognizing the interconnectedness of our communities, our nations, and our world as a whole. We are called to be a force that brings about peace throughout the world, a peace born of justice.*

How purely, how strongly do we desire this call to be a peace-bearing force?

*Continued on page 6*



*Ann Marie Brennan  
President*

*How purely, how  
strongly do we  
desire this call to  
be a peace-bearing  
force?*

## CULTIVATING A CULTURE OF PEACE

The United Nations has defined this decade 2001-2010 the “Decade of the Culture of Peace” and has rallied many organizations to join efforts to cultivate ways to do this. A culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations. “Cultivating peace is like cultivating plants in that they both take root and grow. It begins within oneself and the home, spreads out to the community, then on to the regional, national and international levels.” For more information, go to: <http://cpnn-world.org/> or <http://decade-culture-of-peace.org/>

The culture of peace is much more than just peace. It includes the full range of positive alternatives needed to replace the culture of war and violence: respect all life, reject violence, share with others, listen to understand, preserve the planet, rediscover solidarity, work for women’s equality, and participate in democracy.

Some examples of CLC engagement in cultivating a culture of peace include:

***CLC World Umbrella Priority: Multi-cultural Respect, Dialogue, and Advocacy.*** CLC World developed this priority before forming the two existing working groups in Geneva and New York. This priority includes positive steps toward creating peace in our community. In CLC-USA, as we are currently participating in the Diversity and Organization national process, we are in fact actively engaged in multi-cultural respect and dialogue amongst our own membership — getting to know one another, developing relationships, learning from one another — all of which go a long way as we strive to work together as one apostolic body.

***International Day of Peace – September 21:*** Established by a United Nations resolution in 1981, the International Day of Peace provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations and nations to create practical acts of peace on a shared date. Annual celebrations of Peace Day highlight the Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001 to 2010. Several CLC groups have organized gatherings in their respective communities and towns on this day and have found that at the grassroots level, there is very often an upswelling of interest in working together on this—schools, libraries, municipal leaders, local churches, businesses, yoga teachers, etc. From our World CLC, we are all encouraged to participate in solidarity with people around the world to create a culture of peace on this day. For more information and ideas on how to observe this day, go to: [www.internationaldayofpeace.org/](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org/)

***Pax Christi Stations of the Cross on Good Friday:*** In NYC as well as in Pittsburgh, CLC has had a long tradition in co-sponsoring with Pax Christi and other organizations a Good Friday Stations of the Cross march, raising awareness of social justice issues of the day and praying for peace. A parade of people in prayer for peace along 42 Street is quite a counter cultural scene!

Also worth noting at the national and world governmental level is ***The United States Institute of Peace*** which was recently established by our US Congress as an independent, nonpartisan institution. Its goals are to help prevent and resolve violent international conflicts, promote post-conflict stability and development, and increase conflict management capacity, tools, and intellectual capital worldwide. For more information, go to: [www.usip.org](http://www.usip.org).

## WORKING FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE.

As Catholics we have a long tradition of promoting peace and justice in our world through our Catholic social teaching. This teaching has also served as a model for other organizations including the UN, especially in their Declaration of Human Rights written in 1948 and which established that: recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. See also: [www.un.org/Overview/rights.html](http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html).

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops has a well-developed website with much information on Catholic social teaching. The latest document on Faithful Citizenship calls us to act in the political arena. See: [www.faithfulcitizenship.org/](http://www.faithfulcitizenship.org/) which includes resources for families, young people, parishes, etc. While at times many of us feel insignificant and ineffective in responding at the political level, we are in fact called to speak up boldly on behalf of the most vulnerable in our society. We can remember the words of Mother Teresa who said, “God has not called me to be successful, He has called me to be faithful.” The rest is up God.

*“Now to him who is able to accomplish far more than all we ask or imagine, by the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” (Eph.3:20-21)*

I would encourage all to reread the CLC document, Our Common Mission which was written after the XIII General Assembly in Itaici, Brazil in 1998. This document can be found on the World CLC website: [www.cvx-clc.net/doc.html](http://www.cvx-clc.net/doc.html). In it is a fairly in depth discussion of social analysis, bringing the freeing power of Christ to our social reality including to all our varied cultures and to every aspect of our daily life.

*Continued on page 8*

# A View From Jerusalem

*Donald J. Moore, S.J.*

Several years ago, BBC broadcast a retrospect on the life of the late Margaret Hassan, the head of CARE in Iraq, who was abducted, held hostage, and then executed in 2004. In an interview with Ms. Hassan, made shortly before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, she expressed her own opinion about the oncoming violence: “No, no, no — war will only bring grief to the most vulnerable in society.” Margaret Hassan did not know how tragically personal her forebodings about war would become. Yet how true her insight about war and violence in the Middle East: it has brought only suffering and grief to the most vulnerable in society.

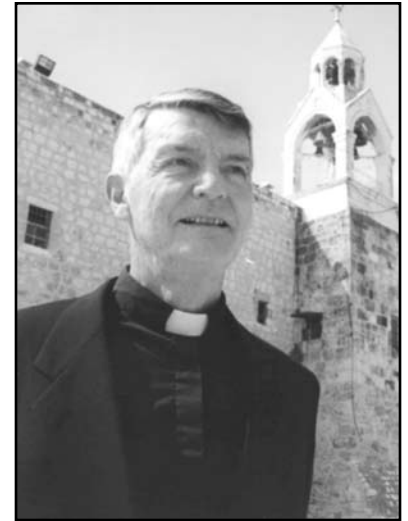
Having spent much of the last nine years at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Jerusalem, I have often reflected about the possibilities of peace in this region. For many the cycle of violence is so deeply rooted and so complex in its origins that all efforts to establish a lasting peace appear doomed to failure. As a priest and a Jesuit I cannot share that opinion. My response comes not simply from a faith perspective, although that certainly enters into the picture, but also from my experience with the people of the Holy Land whom I have come to know and respect and love over the last nine years. My experience is admittedly limited. My judgments are fallible. Perhaps, however, they can shed some light on the darkness of the violence that engulfs that region.

In responding to the problems of the Holy Land I would like to make my own Margaret Hassan’s stand against war and violence. It is the stand taken by every Pope from John XXIII to Benedict XVI, and it is the stand taken by the American bishops 25 years ago in their ground-breaking document, *The Challenge of Peace*. In any war the most vulnerable are always its victims. War and violence are always a defeat for humankind.

Here in the Holy Land there are many Jews and Palestinians who are adamant in seeking non-violent ways to resolve the problems that confront them, convinced that they can succeed, but their efforts, for the most part go unnoticed in Western media. One such group is the Bereaved Families’ Forum, Israeli and Palestinian families who have lost loved ones in the violence and have come together to protest the continuing cycle of violence. My first contact with the Forum was in 2002 through George and Najwa Sa’ada, a Christian Palestinian couple in Bethlehem whose eleven year old daughter, Christine, had been killed by Israeli troops in a case of “mistaken identity” during an incursion of the IDF (Israeli army) into Bethlehem.

I first met the Sa’adas four months after Christine’s death. It was an extraordinary visit. There was no hate, no rage, and no call for revenge. They had accepted this family tragedy with the profound faith that ultimately God would bring good out of their pain. Najwa was almost crushed by her grief — she longed so much for her Christine. George had a total of nine bullets and shrapnel pieces removed from his upper body. One would never guess that this was a man who had spent two months in an Israeli hospital, his life hanging in the balance. He seemed strong, resolute, determined to grow from this tragedy. They showed me their family album with photos of Christine from early childhood through her 11th birthday, two months before she was killed. In all of them she was bubbling over with joy and laughter. She must have been a great consolation to her parents, which underscores the tragedy and loss they have suffered.

They recalled the day of the shooting. After visiting grandparents, they were driving through the center of Bethlehem. Israeli troops had been warned of gunmen driving in a car that was the same model and color as the Sa’ada car. Christine saw the soldiers



*After ordination in 1960, and tertianship in Dublin 1961-2, Donald Moore started teaching theology at Fordham U in 1963, taking time off to complete doctoral studies at U of Strasbourg (France). He specialized in the thought of two 20th century Jewish religious thinkers, Martin Buber and Abraham Joshua Heschel, and has published and lectured widely on their work. He has served as superior of the West Side Jesuit Community in Manhattan and as rector of the Jesuit Community at Fordham. In January 2000 he was invited to move to Jerusalem where he serves as director of interfaith relations at the Jesuit-run Pontifical Biblical Institute. He is now Professor Emeritus at Fordham U., but he still returns to Rose Hill to teach one or two courses each fall semester.*

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and cried, “Daddy, they are going to shoot us.” George had scarcely told her “Oh, Christine, there is no danger of that,” when suddenly the firing began. George was hit in the side with six bullets. Christine fell to the floor of the car, a bullet behind her left ear. Her elder sister, Marianne, was hit twice in the leg and still carries a bullet in her right knee. As they retold the story, I listened for the anger, the rancor, the bitterness, especially since they had four months to filter through all the horrible details of “mistaken identity.” There was none. I was awed to be in their presence. If forgiveness is a necessary component of justice and peace, then justice and peace will again flourish in this land.

George and Najwa told me that earlier in the day they had met in nearby Beit Jala with two Israeli families who had suffered similar losses. They found it helpful to know that they are not alone. The shared grief across the racial and religious divide was a way of strengthening their resolution and their hope. The suffering of these parents points to the absurdity of turning to violence to solve political problems or to protect “national security.”

A few weeks after the above meeting, I had supper with Rami Elhanan, an Israeli member of the Bereaved Families’ Forum. He shared with me one of his lectures. As he explains it, “darkness descended” upon his family on September 4, 1997 at 2 PM when his 14-year old daughter, Smadar, “sparkling and full of life” and walking in the street with friends, was killed by a Palestinian suicide bomber who was “insane with rage from humiliation and the lack of hope.” Even as a five year old, Smadar had begun protesting the Occupation. At the age of nine she wrote a letter to an Israeli paper expressing her hope that the leaders of Israel and of the Arab nations would sit down and come to an agreement for peace and a division of the land of Israel. And then she added, “I don’t understand why just because we returned here after 2000 years we want once again to rule, and that this land will be the Land of Israel for Jews and not for anyone else (it’s sort of like racism)... If Abraham loved Hagar who was the mother of the Muslim people, and that story is well known, how can it be that we don’t live in peace with the Muslims?” [It should be noted that the letter was never published.]

Rami explains how the tragedy of his daughter’s death placed him in a crisis. He could either “sink into the depths of hatred, depression, emptiness,” or he could try to overcome the tragedy, to understand and help others to understand “that not only is it possible, but it is necessary, once and for all, to break this seemingly endless cycle of bloodshed.” He then continues, “I am very distressed that two peoples are losing their sanity. Fired by hatred, revenge, retaliation and retribution, they rush head over heels to mutual destruction.... I believe that we don’t have to surrender to our basest instincts.... After all, we are human beings, not animals. We lost our children, not our reason. We must maintain the hope that there are other possibilities, that there is someone to talk to and something to talk about. Both sides must enter a dialogue in order to prevent more tragedies. Otherwise, after the tragedy happens there is nothing left.”

In his comments Rami adds that one of the basic premises of the Forum is that “we are all human beings.... We suffer equally. For a Palestinian mother the pain of losing a son is neither less nor more than for an Israeli mother. The tears of an Israeli father are as bitter as those of any other father.... We have suffered an unbearable tragedy and it places upon us a responsibility to tell our truth, to do everything we can to prevent other families from suffering the same fate.”

The influence of the Family Forum on the political process between Israel and the Palestinians is admittedly minimal. Rarely is it ever mentioned in the Western media. Yet if the bereaved can cry out against the absurdity of violence, it is one sign of hope for this Holy Land . There are others.

Machsom Watch is a group of Israeli women who sit quietly by some 40 of the more than 600 Israeli checkpoints and barriers that tightly control all travel of Palestinians. Most of these checkpoints are located completely within the Occupied Territories. They are among the most visible and disturbing reminders of the Israeli occupation. For Palestinians the checkpoints are a constant source of harassment and humiliation, of degrading and often brutal treatment. The Israeli soldiers at the checkpoints can prevent Palestinians from reaching work or school or medical assistance or families or their own orchards or their places of worship. The checkpoints have been condemned by human rights organizations, but often justified in the Western media as “necessary inconveniences” for Israel’s security. By their presence the women of Machsom Watch hope to mitigate some of the more inhumane aspects of the mistreatment of Palestinians. I have met several of these extraordinary Israeli women and have come to admire their dedication and tenacity. Their monthly reports often read like a chronology of mindless brutality. For example in the report of March 2004 they write, “The phenomenon of the ‘omnipotent soldier’ has made the checkpoints sources of humiliation, maliciousness, arbitrariness and, moreover, sites that generate frustration, hatred and a strong sense of vengeance. So the checkpoints have become a major factor in the erosion of security. Anyone who is able joins in this ‘jamboree’ of making the Palestinians’ lives miserable.”



*A Hebron street through an armored windshield of an IDF military vehicle. Photo from Breaking the Silence web site.*

Their report of June 2005 is bitter and blunt as it strongly criticizes the actions of many of the soldiers assigned to the checkpoint: “These examples of sadistic behavior that we have been witnessing at Qalandiya (checkpoint north of Jerusalem) for some time should sound a warning alarm. To what depths of behavior will they sink? Who is guiding all this sadism? It’s not enough to say ‘The Occupation corrupts’ — because even in the framework of an occupation, this degree of brutality and evil is unconscionable.”

Month after month these women report their experiences not only with the hope of alleviating the treatment of the Palestinians but also because of their fear of what is happening to the young men and women who serve in Israel’s army. One final example of their distress is taken from their report for January 2006. They point out that “the Palestinians’ freedom of movement is inexorably being reduced to total paralysis. Cases of hardheartedness, humiliation and malevolence are multiplying. Dehumanizing and disregarding the humanity of others are fast becoming the norm, and a whole generation of soldiers is learning how to ‘carry out orders’ because ‘there is no other choice’.” They conclude this report with the words of a Palestinian man, perhaps a teacher, who had just been treated at a checkpoint in a contemptuous and insensitive manner, “They should behave with more politeness — like human beings — we too are human beings.” The experiences of these dedicated women receive occasional notice in Israeli media, and almost no notice outside of Israel . Yet Machsom Watch is another reason for hope in the Holy Land .

Liv Grinberg, a noted Israeli political sociologist, points to the reawakening of the voice of Jewish conscience as yet another reason for hope. It is a voice that “can link Jews, Christians and Muslims brought up on the sacred principle that all human beings are created in God’s image.” For Grinberg one of the clearest expressions of this voice is in those members of the military, past, present and future, who are expressing their refusal to serve.

In the fall of 2002 twenty-seven Israeli Air Force pilots signed a letter in which they refused to fly attack missions into civilian population centers. Rather than prosecuting them for their “disobedience” and giving their stand more publicity, the government quietly dismissed them from service. A spokesman for the pilots, Yonatan Shapira, defended their action by insisting that Israel must abide by the values of Judaism

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. *The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been an on-going problem for many, many years. Are there areas of tension in your own life, even with the best intentions, which have led to little progress of healing? What approaches might be taken to solving both situations?*
2. *Father Moore tells stories of real people on both sides of the hostilities – stories we rarely read or see in the local media. What can we do to promote the messages of peace and hope that these people have demonstrated? How can we influence the media to bring these stories to light?*

and cannot continue on a path that violates the commandment, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Sending the army into the Occupied Territories and degrading millions of Palestinians in order to protect Jewish settlers is undermining the soul of Israel .

Writing in *The Nation* for March 15, 2005, a former member of the IDF, Shamaï Leibowitz, reflects on his service in the Occupied Territories from 1986-1991. He was "shocked and disgusted" at the way he and his comrades were ordered to "brutalize" Palestinian civilians. He continued to serve only because he was persuaded by Israel 's leaders that they were in the midst of a "peace process." So effective were the politicians "in their lectures on how Israel 'only wants peace' that we were blinded from seeing the reality of how the state is brutally oppressing, subjugating and dehumanizing the Palestinian people." And then he adds, "Many of us who live in Israel and visit or serve in the occupied territories recognize the truth: Israel is continuously intensifying its military rule in the West Bank while stealing more Palestinian land and building more illegal Jewish-only settlements." This is a truth that many Israelis and many peoples in the West simply do not wish to hear.

To these voices could be added the many former IDF members who have banded together in a group called "Breaking the Silence." Its purpose is to give the former soldiers a venue to speak about the inhumanity of the actions they witnessed or were themselves ordered to perform. Their testimony may well add credence to the charges of war crimes that have already been made, or are being prepared, against some Israeli generals. The founder of Breaking the Silence, Yehuda Shaul speaks of his breaking into Palestinian homes in the middle of the night and waking everybody up. "You do not treat Palestinians as equal human beings. It's like putting all your morality and all your education into a blender. After a minute there is nothing left." This is the fear which many have expressed previously, that the enforcement of military rule in the Occupied Territories comes at the cost of the erosion of those values which are essential to a Jewish state. There will be nothing left. Again the voices of these present and former IDF members speaking out against the Occupation are seldom heard or seen in the Western media.

These voices complement a plea raised last year by Father Manuel Musallam, pastor of the Catholic parish in Gaza City. "The people in Gaza are suffering unbelievably. They are hungry, thirsty, have no electricity, no clean water... I sent the Sisters of the Baby Jesus to Jabalyia Camp to check on some poor families. They returned to me crying at the unspeakable horror they saw; the cries of hungry children, the sullen faces of broken men and women who are just sitting in their hungry emptiness with

no light, hope, or love.... Those outside of Gaza must care about us here in Gaza , Muslims and Christians. There are no differences here in religion. A hungry child is a hungry child. A sick person is a sick person.... When I cry out as a priest, I beg you, we do not need pity. We only need justice. Without justice there will be no peace."

One final voice belongs to the various church leaders here in the Holy Land who issued a statement in May 2008: "We therefore urge all those working for peace and justice in Israel/Palestine to consider that any lasting solution must be built on the foundation of justice, which is rooted in the very character of God. After all, it is justice that "will produce lasting peace and security" (Isaiah 32:17). Let us commit ourselves in prophetic word and practical deed to a courageous settlement whose details will honor both peoples' shared love for the land, and protect the individual and collective rights of Jews and Palestinians in the Holy Land."

There are many other groups and individuals, Israeli and Palestinian, Jewish, Muslim and Christian, who have been working diligently and nonviolently for peace, justice and reconciliation. Their nonviolent protests more often than not are met with harsh repression by the military, whether the protestors are Israeli or Palestinian or internationals. The impoverishment and destruction and repression will continue. More homes will be demolished. More humiliations will be inflicted. Yet hope continues to be rooted in the many individuals and groups who seek to speak the truth and bring reconciliation to the peoples of this land: Rabbis for Human Rights, Gush Shalom, B'tselem (Israeli Information Center for Human Rights), Sabeel (Palestinian Center for Liberation Theology), Palestinian Center for Rapprochement, and Holy Land Trust. These are just some of the organizations that are devoted to bringing about peace through nonviolent means. Their efforts receive very little media attention, but their commitment and determination are clearly fixed. The violence and the injustice continue, but the voices of those seeking justice and peace in this Holy Land will not be silenced. ☸

#### ***Related Sites***

*Bereaved Families Forum:*

<http://www.mideastweb.org/familyforumactivitiesbackground.htm>

*Machsom Watch:*

<http://www.machsomwatch.org/en>

*Breaking the Silence:*

[http://www.breakingthesilence.org.il/index\\_e.asp](http://www.breakingthesilence.org.il/index_e.asp)

# Graced History: A Local CLC Responds to the Bishops' Peace Pastoral

By Dorothy M. Zambito



*Dorothy Zambito has been a member of Sodality/CLC since the late '50s and has tirelessly promoted CLC during those years along with her husband, Ray. She is a member of Locust Valley CLC in the New York Region, had served as Coordinating Editor of Harvest for five years and served as President and Past President of CLC-USA. She is part of the Servant Community that will serve as Coordinating Editor of Harvest. Dorothy was one of three delegates to the World Assembly in Nairobi.*

*In addition to involvement at her local parish, Dorothy spends time at the local soup kitchen and with the winter homeless shelter in the next town. Among her special blessings are husband, Ray, her six children and her children in marriage and the twelve grandchildren.*

The publication and distribution of the Pastoral Letter on War and Peace, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*, took place May 3, 1983 by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. Soon after it appeared, the Locust Valley CLC, a community of about twelve members at the time, undertook an in depth study of the document with Father Francis K. Drolet, S.J. as our guide.

Father Drolet synthesized the pastoral and produced an unofficial summary of the lengthy document (over 100 pages). The Locust Valley CLC financed and distributed 10,000 copies of this outline. In August of 1983, Father presented two courses on the contents of the pastoral at the NFCLC Convention in Washington.

In the community, there was a felt need to go beyond digesting the contents for ourselves alone. The Locust Valley CLC began a communal discernment on next steps. After prayer and discussion, it was decided that we would promulgate the message of *The Challenge of Peace* in our diocese, Rockville Centre, New York.

We brainstormed about how best to do this. The result was a full day's program, *The Call for Lay Collaboration*, to be held at the diocesan Seminary of the Immaculate Conception on October 29, 1983, to be hosted and funded by the Locust Valley CLC. We discerned the wisdom of having some guest speakers who would bring expertise and greater credibility to our efforts. Among those who presented papers were: **Dr. Robert G. Muller**, Assistant Secretary-General at the United Nations; **Rev. J.P. Fitzpatrick, S.J.**, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Fordham University; and **Ms. Jane Blewett**, Center of Concern in Washington, DC. Members of the Locust Valley CLC participated as master of ceremonies, moderators of the plenary sessions, group facilitators and ministers of welcome and hospitality. The community 'imported' other CLCers from the region to assist in the day's program.

The initial hope was that the program would host representation from every parish in the diocese of Rockville Centre. (Three mailings had been sent to all the parishes announcing and encouraging participation.) The hope was not realized, but there were about 200 people who attended, some from other Christian denominations. One comment summed up how many felt about the day, "I came here looking for reassurance of the possibilities of hope and peace so that I may share it with my community. I received that and much more. I received the knowledge that I'm not alone." ☸

## Questions for Discussion

1. Dorothy Zambito shares the fact of Locust Valley CLC's communal discernment after study of the Bishops' Pastoral, *Challenge of Peace*. "Has your CLC entered into a formal communal discernment? What was the subject of the discernment? What were the results?"
2. Explore your own community's "graced history." Identify some of the blessings and the struggles.

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Kingdom. We listened together, prayed quietly and shared one to one. Meditations on the Kingdom and the Beatitudes resulted in a spiritually fruitful day.

During the lunch break of the Day of Prayer, the region's Apostolic Groups met for a meeting. The Lay Spirituality Group is promoting growth in praying in the Ignatian way. The Social Justice Group is working on setting up a chat room or blog for dissemination of information on social justice issues.

The annual Day of Mission at the Little Sisters of the Assumption Center in East Harlem was another success. Thirty members of the region cleaned, painted, repaired and planted for the Sisters. Others who could not attend donated funds for materials that were needed. The morning ended with Mass and a pizza lunch.



FATIMA, PORTUGAL  
"OUR LADY OF FATIMA"

*The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, appeared six times to three shepherd children; Lucia, Francisco, and Jacinta; between May 13 and October 13, 1917.*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**World CLC Assembly**  
Fatima, Portugal  
August 8-21, 2008  
<http://www.fatima2008.org/>

**Leadership Conference II**  
Pittsburgh, PA  
March 26-29, 2009

## NEXT ISSUE

**JOURNEYING AS AN APOSTOLIC BODY:  
OUR RESPONSE TO THIS GRACE FROM GOD"**

## Excerpts from The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and our Response

23. Because peace, like the kingdom of God itself, is both a divine gift and a human work, the Church should continually pray for the gift and share in the work. We are called to be a Church at the service of peace, precisely because peace is one manifestation of God's word and work in our midst. Recognition of the Church's responsibility to join with others in the work of peace is a major force behind the call today to develop a theology of peace. Much of the history of Catholic theology on war and peace has focused on limiting the resort to force in human affairs; this task is still necessary, and is reflected later in this pastoral letter, but it is not a sufficient response to Vatican II's challenge "to undertake a completely fresh reappraisal of war."<sup>[11]</sup>
25. A theology of peace should ground the task of peacemaking solidly in the biblical vision of the kingdom of God, then place it centrally in the ministry of the Church. It should specify the obstacles in the way of peace, as these are understood theologically and in the social and political sciences. It should both identify the specific contributions a community of faith can make to the work of peace and relate these to the wider work of peace pursued by other groups and institutions in society. Finally, a theology of peace must include a message of hope. The vision of hope must be available to all, but one source of its content should be found in a Church at the service of peace.