



a MATTER of SPIRIT

A publication of the INTERCOMMUNITY PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER

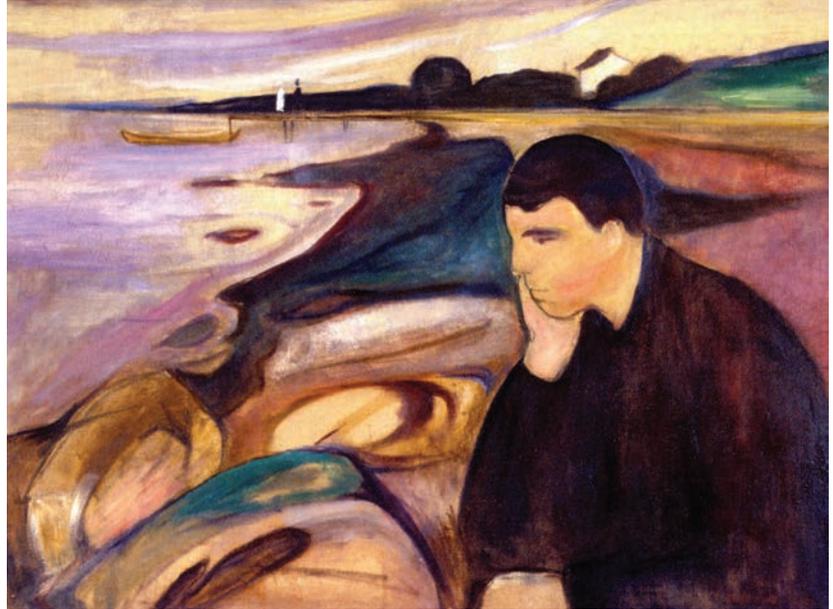
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The Military

In his recent visit to the Peace Memorial at Hiroshima, Pope Francis stated, "In a world where millions of children and families live in inhumane conditions, the money that is squandered and the fortunes made through the manufacture, upgrading, maintenance and sale of evermore destructive weapons are an affront crying out to heaven." It is clear, as the Pope points out, that war and preparations for war take a toll, not only in terms of the casualties of war, but also in opportunities lost.

Sovereign nations surely have the right to defend themselves, but our desire for safety and security should never disregard the value of human life. History reveals to us the sober reality of the deep wounds of warfare on service personnel, combatants, veterans and their families, and innocent civilians. In addition to physical injuries and death, the wounds of warfare cut deep, and lasting effects in the form of post-traumatic stress and moral injury are the spiritual, psychological, and emotional scar tissue of veterans and victims of war.

In this issue of *A Matter of Spirit* we examine the cost of warfare on society at large, from combatants to civilians. We look at the historical context of the Military Industrial Complex and take a look at the economic cost of warfare and the connection to cycles of poverty. We also consider at how our faith calls us to lives of peace. May this issue bring you inspiration to seek ways to turn our swords into ploughshares.



Edvard Munch, *Melancholy*, 1894, Wikimedia Commons

Embody Your Peace, Oh God

BY ANNAPATRICE JOHNSON

Dear God,

We find ourselves in the midst of increasing militarization, and I am weary.

Your patience must be so great; I cannot even comprehend it. I know that Your time is not my time, but still, I grow impatient. Teach me to be Your body in proclaiming peace in this culture of war.

Strengthen my heart, my eyes, my ears, Oh God.

My heart grows heavy and breaks with news of war, even from my privileged place of hearing about it only when I choose, from afar; able to change the radio station, look away from the article, and schedule when I listen to friends or family who are in the military. I pray for Saira, living in Syria under violence and terror for the past 8 years, and Juan, a member of the U.S. Army, who alone bears the burden of what he has lived upon his return stateside.

Help me remain close to these realities: to remember my human responsibility to weep for the pain and suffering of my sisters and brothers around the world.



Tim Mossholder

Strengthen my knees, Oh God.

I pray for the people impacted by wars that my country has waged, either directly or through training, funding, or arms sourcing. For those who have lost security, peace, or loved ones: we deny their human dignity. I pray for the children who cannot play for we stole their security, who cannot learn for we destroyed their schools, who cannot dream for we took their hope—teaching them not to trust the safety of any given moment.

I pray for Mohammed, who as he learned Paint on the computer in his asylum educational course, first drew his home being bombed. I pray for Ana, who after suffering years of oppression under Guatemalan leaders who were trained at the School of the Americas, works long days to send her children to school, still holding the grief of not knowing where her father or brothers are buried.

Help me to change my ways. I fall to my knees in repentance for those I have impacted through my complicity in living in this country; my tax dollars being used to fund this violence; my participation in this economic system rooted in division, power, and a “throw-away culture;” and my inaction in the face of it all. May my actions uphold human dignity of all.

Strengthen my mind, Oh God.

I pray for the loss of our own human dignity. As we increase our military power through contracts, tools of war, and weapons, I fear our minds move into a scarcity mentality, believing that there is so little security that we must steal others’ for the sake of securing our own, so little peace that we must disrupt others’ in order to keep ours, so few resources that we must fight in order to “have enough.” As we pillage the earth to make planes, fuel, weapons, and as war destroys it further, we have moved out of right relationship with creation. I pray for our government as we witness the impacts of militarization mindsets manifesting in our U.S. society through all the systems of division. As we hold the hammer, and pay so much of our national budget towards the hammer, every problem begins to look like a nail. I pray that we may find other tools for peace.

Help me to oppose this “either us or them” mentality ingrained within myself and our culture, so that I may live into the reality that with Your grace, both I and “the other”—who is not really other—can have enough. Help me to have the courage to challenge this way of thinking within our government and our economy.

“Help me embody Your peace into action with Your courage, creativity, and grace.”

Strengthen my hands, Oh God.

Jesus, You wrote in the dirt. As the community armed themselves to stone the woman caught in adultery, they put You on the spot, asking how You would respond to the law in real time, and yet, You did the unexpected. You stooped to draw in the dirt, slowing the moment and everyone around You. You responded with a question, finding a third way in the complexity of a moment when You were asked to respond to a dichotomy.

Christ, as I find myself in moments of deciding to choose violence (physical or otherwise) or not, given only two options, one for each hand, grant me the strength, curiosity, and courage to hold the two options in tension for as long as it takes for a creative third option to emerge. Help me to beckon, to invite others into a sense of wonder over judgement.

Strengthen my arms, Oh God.

Spirit, alive in the world today, thank You for modern witnesses and prophets who find creative third ways. A Black Baptist minister refused to fight violence with violence and led a movement. An anonymous man stood in front of the tank in China choosing to neither flee nor fight, but rather block the way. A young Pakistani girl responded to being shot not by disappearing with fear nor calling people to violence, but rather working, speaking, and writing for education for girls. A Seattle Archbishop prayed for peace and refused to pay for war, so he withheld taxes from militarization, paying money for peace instead.

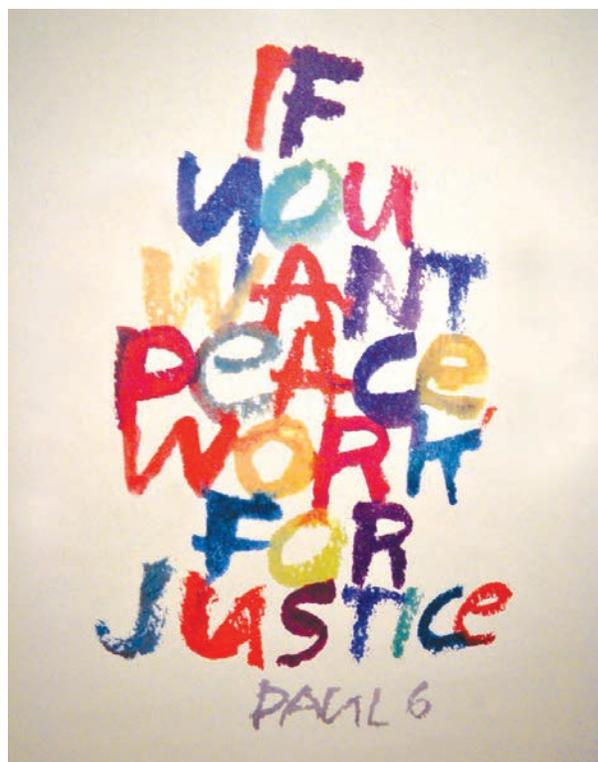
Help me to reach out and embrace community, from prophets, faith, and global sisters and brothers, so that I may be inspired in those times when I think change is beyond my reach, to think outside the box, and not be alone in my work.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

And in this wisdom, Holy Spirit, help me see that my circle of impact is larger than my weary, scarcity-mindset brain and body can comprehend at this time; perhaps

I can change more than I have been conditioned to believe. Help me embody Your peace into action with Your courage, creativity, and grace. Help me be Your body in the world.

Amen.



Corita Kent, Flickr

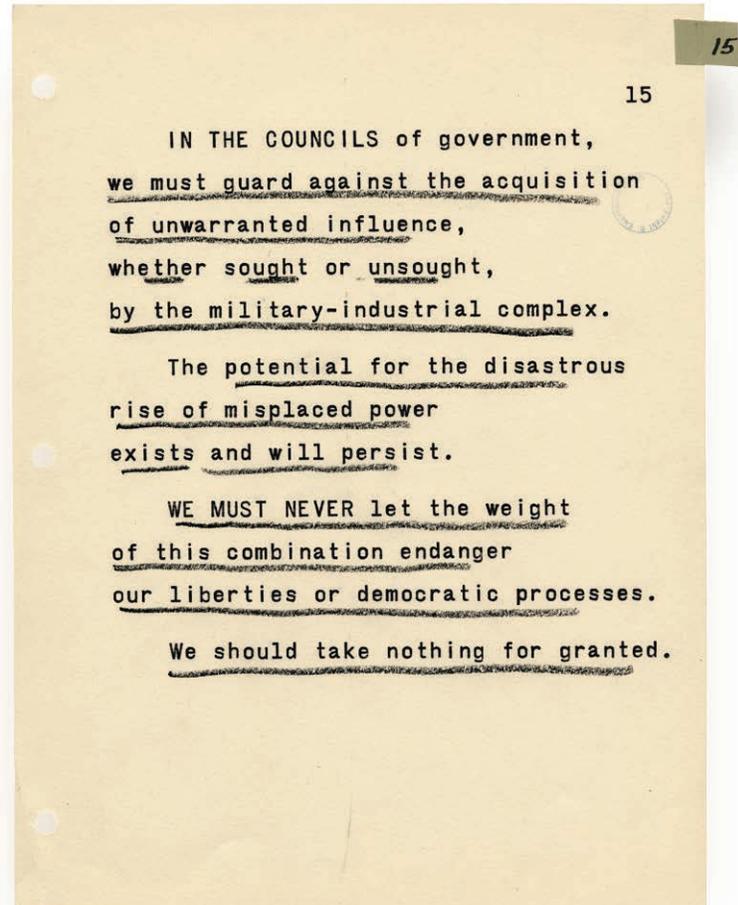
▲ *Annapatrice Johnson is the Western Region Director and Young Adult Empowerment Team Leader for Maryknoll's US Church Engagement Division. She was an Overseas Lay Missioner in Uganda, and leads groups of teachers, catechists, and other faith leaders on immersions in places such as Guatemala and the US-Mexico border. She has a degree in Peace Studies and Political Science from the University of Notre Dame, and now lives in Seattle with her husband, Corbin, and pup, Tilly.*

Militarism in the A Recent History

In his 1961 farewell address, President Dwight D. Eisenhower famously warned of “the military-industrial” complex. According to some accounts, Eisenhower wanted to insert “Congressional” into that phrase but was dissuaded by his political advisors. Almost sixty years later, his warning has not been heeded and the Military-Industrial-Congressional complex has grown to include the entertainment industry and many other elements of U.S. society. Consider, for example, the most profitable films, almost all depicting futuristic weapons, conflict, and mass destruction; the popularity of “shoot-em-up” video games; or the widespread availability of automatic weapons originally designed for use on battlefields. Consider the well-documented militarization of police departments around the country fostered by federal grants of military surplus equipment.

“All the arguments for increased military spending ignore the cost to human beings at home and abroad.”

After the end of World War II, U.S. factories that had produced the planes, tanks and other war material reverted to producing consumer products. A few years later, these factories again switched to manufacturing weapons; after the active fighting in the Korean War ended, the same factories kept on making weapons, fueled by the Cold War competition against the Soviet Union. Older Americans remember the climate of fear promoted by politicians and hawkish military leaders, such as debates about the missile gap. Hawks claimed the missile gap put the U.S. at a numerical disadvantage; in fact, the U.S.S.R. had far fewer missiles than claimed, and the gap was actually in America’s favor. Meanwhile, the nuclear arsenal grew into the nuclear triad of bombs delivered by airplanes, ground-based (siloed) missiles, and submarine-launched missiles. Popular entertainment featured films and television



Notes from President Eisenhower’s address, 1961, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

shows (*Victory at Sea, Combat*) about war, as did comic books (*Blackhawk* and *Sergeant Rock*) and some comic strips (*Steve Canyon*).

During the Cold War, the U.S. developed a permanent defense industry at the urging of politicians and some military officers who wanted the latest technology to fight hypothetical wars. Often hawks cited the “containment policy” proposed by George Kennan, a leading Russian expert and very senior diplomat. Kennan became convinced that the Soviet Union was expansionist and recommended vigorous efforts to contain it, such as the Marshall Plan to rebuild Western Europe. Most government, military, and opinion leaders, however, saw containment primarily as a military strategy. Over time, the need to contain the Soviet Union through integration with other nations’ armed forces created a new profit

United States

BY NICK MELE

sector, the overseas arms trade, which further strengthened coordination and cooperation among the military, Congress, and weapons manufacturers.

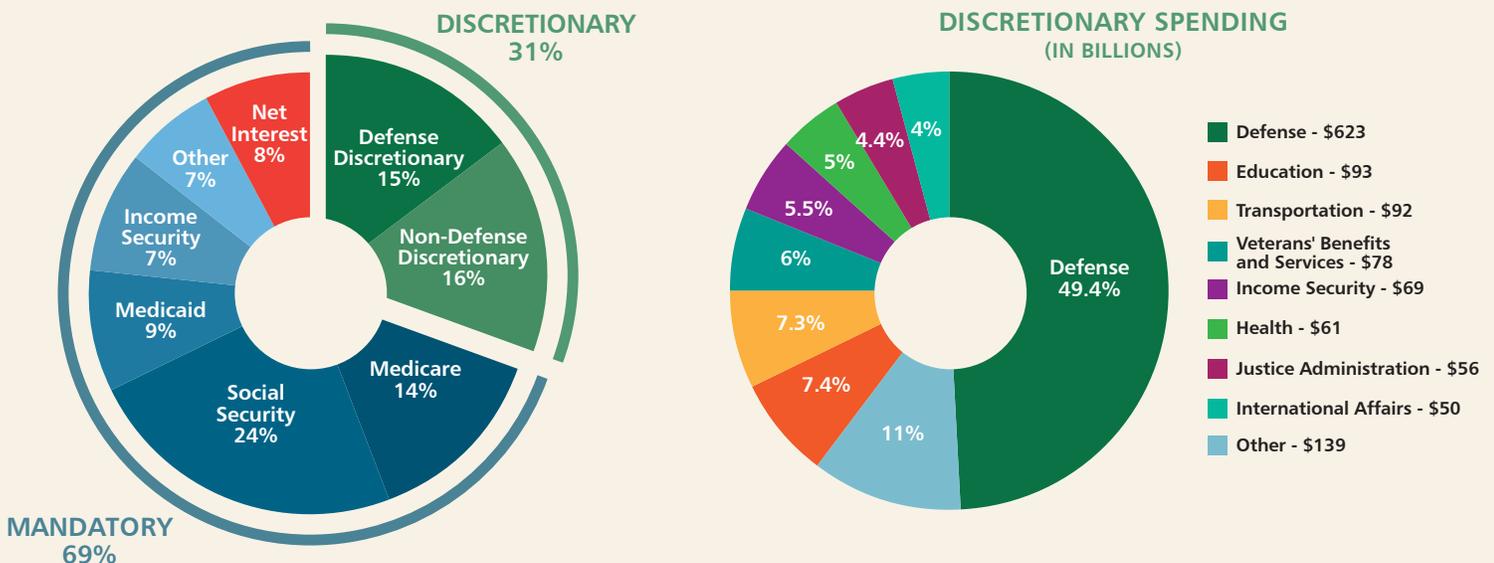
Defense industries were encouraged by Congressional allies and military officers and soon spread their facilities across the country. For several decades now, at least one defense industry establishment has been operating in every single Congressional district.¹ Members of Congress, no matter what their personal views of military spending, are under pressure throughout the election cycle to maintain and expand defense contracts that provide jobs and a measure of economic security to voters in their districts. In parallel, military bases large and small popped up or expanded across the country and the world, and this expansion generated more demand for weapons and other military equipment. Although

there was some reduction of U.S. forces overseas after the Cold War ended, the war on terrorism added bases in other areas of the world like Central Asia and Africa and new kinds of bases for high-tech weapons like drones.

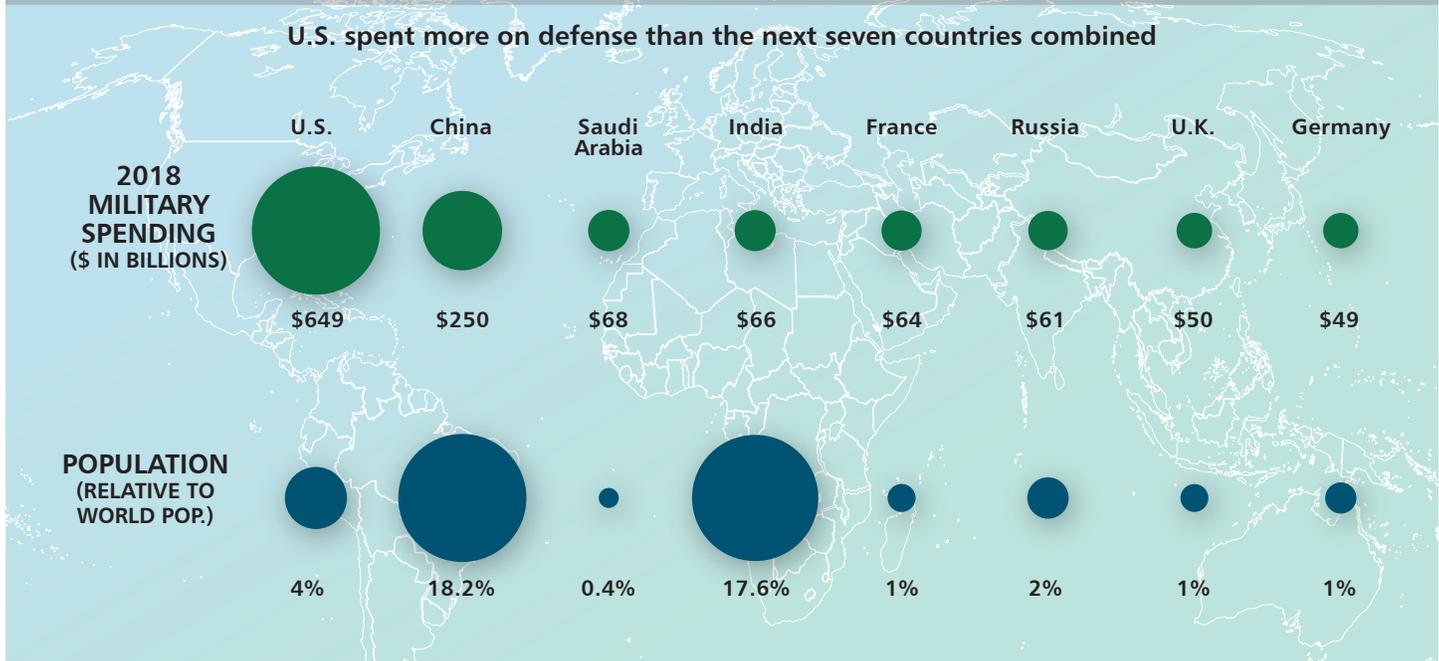
Military commanders frequently cite the adage attributed to psychologist Abraham Maslow, “When your only tool is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail.” Increasingly, our only tool *is* a hammer, military force. As “defense” spending has increased, resources have been diverted away from diplomacy and development efforts as well as domestic programs. The Fiscal Year 2020 Discretionary Budget from the Trump Administration requested a five percent increase in U.S. military spending—already higher than the combined defense budgets of the next seven nations with large military budgets—and a nine percent decrease in non-defense

2018 TOTAL FEDERAL SPENDING

The U.S. federal budget consists of two broad categories: mandatory spending and discretionary spending. Mandatory spending includes items such as Social Security payments, Medicare, and interest on the federal debt. The defense budget comes under the category of discretionary spending. As a portion of the overall federal budget, defense spending is approximately 15%, but it constitutes almost half of all discretionary spending. To put this in context, consider that many of the costs we associate with the federal government—highways, airport safety, federal law enforcement, education, diplomacy and even veterans’ benefits—also come under the discretionary budget. Mandatory spending is what its name implies: these are obligations that are already made. The only flexibility in the federal budget comes in the area of discretionary spending. When more of the discretionary budget is spent on defense, less is available for other needs.



TOP 8 MILITARY SPENDERS AND THEIR SHARE OF THE WORLD POPULATION



Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database

spending which includes domestic programs and diplomatic funding. Diplomacy has also been weakened since President Trump took office due to his withdrawal from arms-limitation treaties, criticism of allies and firing of senior career diplomats.

In an October session with the Ploughshares Fund, Rep. Adam Smith, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, acknowledged that our military budget is funding the development of weapons that we do not need, like low-yield nuclear weapons, because of pressure from the weapons makers. Rep. Smith said: "...the message that is driven: more is better, spend more money, be tougher, be stronger, have more. That message is compelling to a lot of people who are nervous and just want to be reassured. But that message is driven in large part by contractors who want them to believe that so that then they will give them money."² Stated differently, our elected officials are complicit in the growth of the military-industrial complex which now consumes about half of federal discretionary spending.

All the arguments for increased military spending ignore the cost to human beings at home and abroad. To quote President Eisenhower once more, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed." We see this in the reductions in domestic spending on education, healthcare, support for needy families, infrastructure and more. We see this whenever another country purchases expensive weapons systems from U.S. companies, using money that it could have spent on its own people's welfare. Then there is the toll in human lives in conflicts where U.S.-produced arms enable the deaths of innocents and the plague of gun violence in this country.

We all can counter these dismal trends through advocacy, citizen diplomacy efforts—first inspired by President Eisenhower who founded People to People International—and support for movements and organizations committed to nonviolent means to address conflict counters. Some of these are as simple as writing to a pen pal in a different country, while others require more effort from developing a relationship with our members of Congress or participating in People-to-People programs to training for and serving with Christian Peacemaker Teams or Peace Brigades International.

Recent work by academics like Erica Chenoweth offers empirical evidence of the effectiveness of nonviolence; statements by faith leaders like Pope Francis supply moral urgency to disarmament efforts as well as nonviolence. The Hebrew prophets described God's kingdom as free from violence in texts like Isaiah 11:1-9 where the wolf will live with the lamb and the viper does not bite. Jesus, too, saw the Kingdom of God as one of peace and compassion, not one of violence. We are co-creating the Peaceable Kingdom whenever we mobilize public opinion, lobby elected officials to reduce military spending or promote nonviolent methods like diplomacy or arbitration to resolve conflicts.

¹ Center for Security Policy, "Center Releases New Reports Detailing Defense Spending By Congressional District," Center for Security Policy, January 12, 2013, <https://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/2012/08/22/center-releases-new-reports-detailing-defense-spending-by-congressional-district/>

² "Rep. Adam Smith on US Nuclear Policy," Ploughshares Fund, October 31, 2019, <https://www.ploughshares.org/issues-analysis/article/rep-adam-smith-us-nuclear-policy>

▲ **Nick Mele**, a retired U.S. diplomat, spent three decades explaining American government and society to foreign audiences. He still works internationally to prevent war.

COST OF POST 9/11 WARS

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, fighting the war on terror has taken on new dimensions. From one operation in Afghanistan, the war on terror has expanded to the U.S. being involved in actions in 80 countries around the world. The dollar cost to the U.S. for military spending since 9/11 through 2020 has been estimated at \$5.4 trillion, with an additional \$1 trillion for veteran care through their lifetimes. The human cost in terms of human suffering and deaths has been even greater.

DOLLARS SPENT

\$6.4 TRILLION

LIVES LOST

313,000–335,000

CIVILIANS

7,950

U.S. CONTRACTORS

7,014

U.S. MILITARY

254,000–260,000

OPPOSITION FIGHTERS

1,343

JOURNALISTS & NGO WORKERS

770,000–801,000

TOTAL CASUALTIES

Source: Cost of War Project; Watson Institute International & Public Affairs at Brown University

Swords into Plowshares Gun Buyback Program

How can we create a more peaceful world? One answer can be found in our local communities. The town of Newtown, CT formed the Newtown Foundation in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting with the goal of helping “American communities move forward together to create a positive cultural change towards a more peaceful, less violent future.”

The Newtown Foundation collaborated with the city of Norwalk, CT, the police department and the Wilton Quaker Meeting on October 19, 2019 to turn weapons of violence into tools of life and growth. The Gun Buyback for Norwalk received 42 guns—2 assault weapons, 11 rifles and shotguns, and 29 handguns. Those who turned in a gun received gift cards for a local supermarket, purchased through private donations.

The Newtown Foundation and the Swords into Plowshares team will use their forge and anvils to beat the gun pieces into gardening tools, which will be used to plant community gardens.

Norwalk Police Chief, Thomas E. Kulhawik, expressed his gratitude for the initiative, “Any unwanted firearm that we can secure and assure does not get into the wrong hands is a win and makes everyone safer.”



Gun Buy Back in Norwalk, CT Oct 2019

Wilton Quaker Meeting



Wikimedia Commons

Aleppo, Syria

The Endless Cycle

**“Poverty and conflict are locked
in a vicious, reinforcing cycle.”** *BY AUDREY HUDGINS, PHD*

Poverty and conflict are locked in a vicious, reinforcing cycle. Conflict often creates or exacerbates many dimensions of poverty. Globally, income poverty, social and economic inequality, and deprivations in such areas as freedom of speech and political rights can ignite war, which in turn can limit access to basic rights such as safety, security, education, and health as institutions and infrastructure erode in the face of protracted conflict.¹ Examples of the perpetuating cycle abound: civil wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua, ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Darfur, and the endless violence in Afghanistan and Iraq in more recent years.

For the 10% of the world’s population—800 million people—who live in extreme poverty, the way out of the poverty trap is unclear. What is certain is that the solutions must address issues far beyond income. As the World Bank’s World Development Report suggests, violence has become the primary cause of poverty.² In other words, the poverty trap has been eclipsed by the violence trap. Conflict—be it civil war, ethnic conflict, or organized crime—and bad governance combine to perpetuate the cycle of poverty. Peaceful countries, on the other hand, are more likely to move out of poverty. Consistent with Catholic Social Teaching, this should call us to action to advocate for an end to wars around the globe,

the restoration of good governance, and most importantly, the wherewithal to remain committed over the long-term. Research suggests that the most successful countries took an average of 27 years to bring corruption down to acceptable levels³

At home in the United States, the picture is equally complicated. Multiple overlapping deprivations contribute to a perpetual cycle of poverty. Income poverty, the measure the federal government uses to ‘define’ poverty, ignores a host of chronic challenges—including addiction, homelessness, hunger, disabilities, and illness—that affect one’s capacity to survive and thrive. Obstacles such as unstable housing, unreliable childcare, lack of education, criminal records, mental and physical health problems can often be traced to the effects of social institutions and structures that oppress the most marginalized in our society. The resulting structural violence can tie families to an intergenerational cycle of poverty. An oft-cited study finds that a key predictor of military service is income; as family income decreases, the likelihood of serving in the military increases.⁴ For the impoverished, military service provides a path toward stability by expanding opportunities. But the effects of multiple overlapping deprivations may limit one’s chances of qualifying. The most recent esti-

mates indicate that only 29% of people between 17 and 24 years old are mentally, morally, and physically qualified for military service.⁵

A RAND study finds that U.S. Army junior enlisted servicemembers join for family, institutional, and occupational reasons.⁶ Soldiers cite a call to serve and an awareness of the honor associated with service, but also join for adventure, benefits, and pay. TEAMS, one of many acronyms used by the military, lays out the primary reasons for enlisting: Training, Education, Adventure, Money, and Service to Country. While serving, soldiers may face similar challenges to the ones they believed they were leaving behind. More than half of children in Department of Defense-run schools qualify for free or reduced-price lunches—an indication that families struggle to make ends meet.⁷

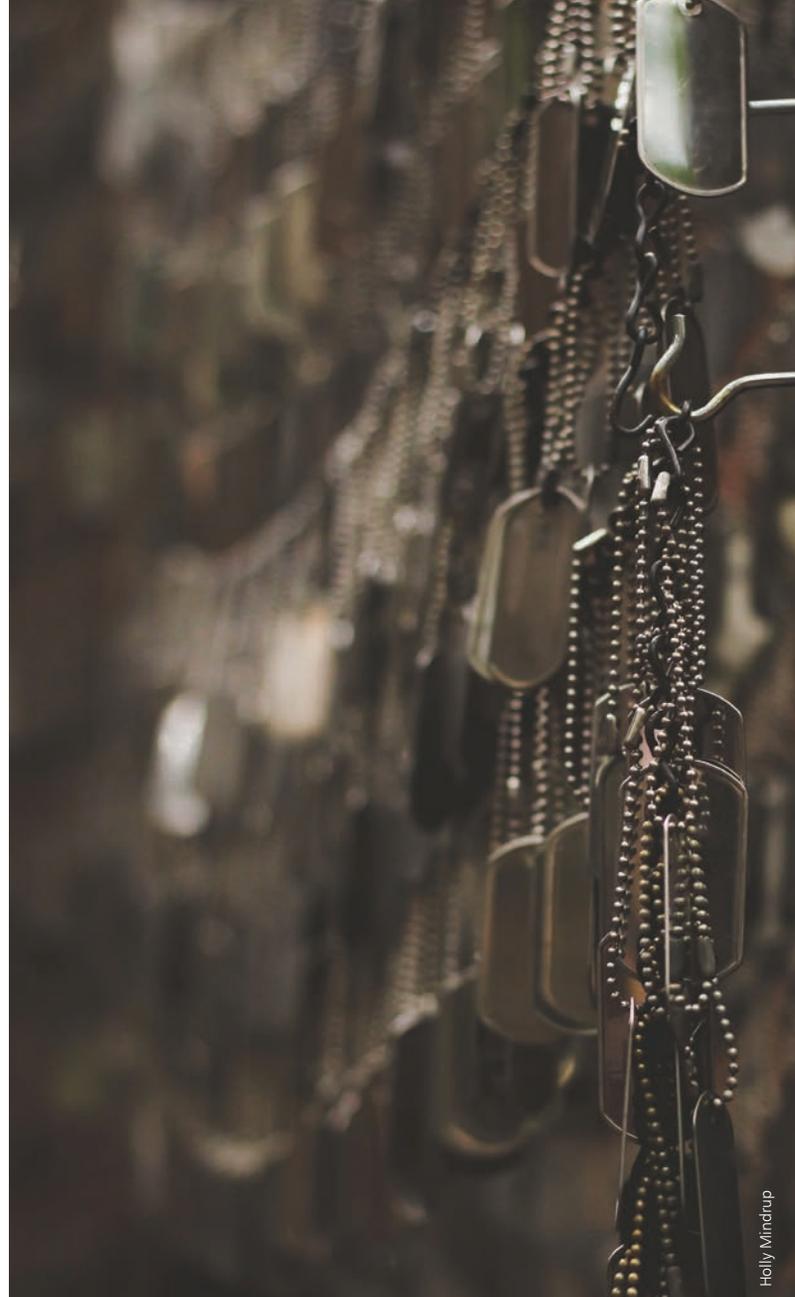
While most members of the military come from middle-class neighborhoods, the fact remains that military veterans can face challenges with government benefits, medical care, and stable housing after their term of service ends. The visible and invisible wounds of war—amputation, other physical injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder, and major depression—can lead to homelessness, food insecurity, addiction, other illnesses, and/or involvement in the legal system.

Although veterans have a lower overall poverty rate than other Americans, 6.9% vs. 14.4%, the veteran poverty rate is rising, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Nearly 1.5 million veterans live in poverty in the U.S., and the poverty rate for veterans between 18 and 34 years old is higher than all other age groups.⁸ Thus, veterans of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq disproportionately suffer the consequences. Many of these veterans don't understand their post-separation benefits through the VA or they choose not to seek such assistance.

Catholic Social Teaching again provides clarity on this complex situation. As Pope Francis has stated, “In imitation of our Master, we Christians are called to confront the poverty of our brothers and sisters, to touch it, to make it our own and

“Conflict often creates or exacerbates many dimensions of poverty.”

to take practical steps to alleviate it.”⁹ We are called to demonstrate compassion for those who have suffered the long-lin-
gering effects of war. Our accompaniment of a veteran through the process of obtaining a Service-Connected Disability (SCD) rating can break the cycle; the poverty rate for disabled veterans with SCD is nearly 18% lower than that for disabled non-veterans.¹⁰ Such action is particularly urgent in areas such as the Pacific Northwest and southeastern U.S., where veteran poverty rates are higher than in the rest of the nation.



Holly Mindrup

Dog Tag Memorial for Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, Boston, MA

Volunteering at a VA hospital is another way to take action, as is helping to educate employers about the protected status of veterans. And as we advocate for less funding of the Military Industrial Complex, we must also push for sustaining or increasing veterans' support services due to the consequences of war and poverty. Contacting our elected officials in support of legislation is crucial. For example, House Resolution 95, the Homeless Veteran Families Act, is presently under consideration in the U.S. Senate.¹¹ If passed, homeless veterans with minor dependents would have access to expanded services. Our actions in support of human dignity can break the endless cycles of poverty and conflict.¹²

Footnotes available online at www.ipjc.org/a-matter-of-spirit

▲ Dr. Audrey Hudgins served in the U.S. Army for 20 years and is a faculty member at Seattle University, teaching courses on poverty, migration, security, leadership, and community engagement.

Moral Injury and its Effect on Returning Warriors

BY COLONEL ROY HARRINGTON, USAR, RETIRED

While assigned to the Pentagon from 2005 to 2008 serving in the section of the Army Operations Center that tracks every single soldier's death and funeral right up to the day of burial, I began to ponder what the trauma of war was doing to our Warriors. The impact of war was clear in the increasing number of Warriors' suicides and I discerned that there was more than just post-traumatic stress at work here. Trying to understand more about what war does to Warriors, I picked up a copy of Methodist theologian Walter Wink's 1998 book entitled *The Powers That Be*.

Let me share a short passage that describes this myth of redemptive violence in its simplest form: "Few cartoons have run longer or been more influential than Popeye and Bluto. In a typical segment, Bluto abducts a screaming and kicking Olive Oyl, Popeye's girlfriend. When Popeye attempts to rescue her, the massive Bluto beats his diminutive opponent to a pulp, while Olive Oyl helplessly wrings her hands. At the last moment, as our hero oozes to the floor, and Bluto is trying, in effect, to rape Olive Oyl, a can of spinach pops from Popeye's pocket and spills into his mouth. Transformed by this gracious infusion of power, he easily demolishes the villain and rescues his beloved. The format never varies. Neither party ever gains any insight or learns from these encounters. They never sit down and discuss

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**“Moral injury is
a wound of the
soul.”**
.....

their differences. Repeated defeats do not teach Bluto to honor Olive Oyl's humanity, and repeated pummels do not teach Popeye to swallow his spinach before the fight.”

This simple description of one of my childhood heroes, Popeye, really hit me hard. I had been raised all my life to admire the hero who uses justified force to take down the bad guys and who always won without any apparent harm to himself. Later I would see the same thing in TV shows like *Combat* that depicted WWII soldiers doing heroic things without much great hazard or damage to their bodies and souls. Our young people today experience the same myth in many violent war-fighting on-line games.

But now the true impact of war and its inherent violence on our Warriors is clearer to me than ever. Reflecting on Wink's concept of this myth of redemptive violence, I know that there are times when we must send our Warriors into harm's way and that they must use force to defend our nation and the lives of those who can't defend themselves. But there is nothing redemptive or life-

giving in the experience of using force or violence, even when it's clearly justified. We who have sent them into harm's way must be ready to help them deal with all the effects that war can have on our Warriors. We have a responsibility to help them fully recover from all their injuries, including post-traumatic stress, moral injury, and military sexual trauma.

Post-traumatic stress is a normal fear response to traumatic events in our lives. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 7-8 percent of the general population will experience post-traumatic stress in their lifetime from events like accidents, natural disasters and violent crime.¹ But moral injury, whose incident rate among combat Warriors is not fully researched, is a wound of the soul. It is felt as a deep soul wound when Warriors participate in, fail to prevent or witness events that are in violation of their deeply held moral beliefs.

Research from the Journal of Neuropsychiatry (2019) reports that 25-34% percent of Warriors suffer from moral injury in addition to experiencing post-traumatic stress.² Dr. Brett Litz, a clinical psychologist, used the term moral injury in a paper published in the Clinical Psychology Review in 2009. Dr. Litz describes a moral injury experience as the extreme distress brought about by perpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to



U.S. Air Force photo/tech. Sgt. Naedine Barclay

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“There is nothing redemptive or life-giving in the experience of using force or violence, even when it’s clearly justified.”

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or learning about acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations. A few examples of these events include taking the life of a civilian believed to be an insurgent, unexpectedly seeing human remains, or seeing wounded women or children whom Warriors are unable to help. Moral injury can be a significant contributing factor in depression, addiction, and violent behavior including domestic violence and suicide. When Warriors can’t forgive themselves for what they have done or have observed, they can’t

share their trauma with those they love for fear of being labeled immoral or worse, and the symptoms of moral injury begin to appear.

In addition to post-traumatic stress and moral injury, some significant percentage of both female and male Warriors are suffering from military sexual trauma. Among women, the number may be as high as 40 to 50 percent and among men, 5 to 10 percent. But this trauma is seldom reported and even more rarely prosecuted. Sexual assault is never acceptable and must be condemned and steps taken to prevent it at every level of command in the military. With women now serving in every military specialty including in front-line combat units, this is a most significant issue for the future. Most of all, we need to make it safe and acceptable for victims of military sexual trauma to come forward to report the assault and seek help for their trauma. This is true throughout the Church and our society.

We need safe places in our communities where returning Warriors can come together by themselves to share their stories of trauma and pain. They need to feel welcomed without the

fear of being judged or criticized in any way. We can offer them pastoral and sacramental reconciliation, both individually and communally, but only when they’re ready. Finally, we need to be ready to help them in every way possible to find jobs, homes, education and, most importantly, to fully reintegrate back into their families and our communities.

To quote retired Army chaplain and Vietnam veteran, Colonel Herman Keizer, Jr., when it comes to returning Warriors we must: “Love them with non-judgmental warmth and positive regard as image-bearers of God. Allow them to realize you are willing to wait with empathy for them until such a time as they will allow you into their struggle for forgiveness and absolution. Give them time to again find joy in their hearts.”

One great resource for healing for these invisible wounds of war is the Reboot Combat Recovery Course, a 12-week, faith-based journey to healing and growth. More information about courses near you can be found at: www.rebootrecovery.com

¹ “VA.gov: Veterans Affairs,” How Common is PTSD in Adults?, September 13, 2018, https://www.ptsd.va.gov/understand/common/common_adults.asp.

² Haleigh A. Barnes, Robin A. Hurley, and Katherine H. Taber, “Moral Injury and PTSD: Often Co-Occurring Yet Mechanistically Different,” *The Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences* 31, no. 2 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.neuropsych.19020036>, p.1.

▲ *Colonel Roy Harrington, a cradle Catholic educated in Catholic schools, resides in Allyn, WA. Roy is a graduate of the University of Washington and the MPA program at Seattle University. He served in the Army Reserve for 30 years and in public transit operations and emergency management for 32 years. He is available to visit faith communities and Veterans groups who want to learn more about the invisible wounds of war including moral injury, post traumatic stress, and military sexual trauma.*

“It takes a massive toll. And life comes to collect...”

THE TOLL

BY ERIC CERTAIN



I reach into my pocket and there is nothing there. It's time to leave home. I won't live on food stamps and welfare just barely scraping by as we've done my whole life. "Volunteer!" they said. "Join and we will provide." So, I raised my right hand and signed on the line. Sure enough, my pockets start to fill. But...then the wars begin. I struggle, spending time away from my family and loved ones. Coming home, I thought I was safe...until I watch a building blow up in front of my eyes in the middle of the country. Dutifully, I volunteer to help but I had no clue of the devastation that occurred, especially inside of me. After many years, the nightmares subside and I think it may be safe to go outside and enjoy life. I am so naïve. Off to another assignment. Time for a fresh start. Just as I settle in, I hear a distant boom and look up to see that devastation is back as a fireball rises from the Pentagon. Here we go again. But this time...I'm not volunteering to help. This time I'm keeping my distance. It doesn't matter, though. Parts of me die—the brave parts, the optimistic parts...mainly, the going outside and enjoying life parts. It takes a massive toll. And life comes to collect... I reach into my pocket, pull out a fourteen-year marriage, and I hand it over. I am drowning in fear, depression, and anxiety. No reason to pull her down with me. So, I let her go. Well... pushed her away is more like it.

But, I'm okay. I can bounce back from this. I will get better just like I did before. It will just take a little time.

Eventually I marry again. Create a family. Things just might be okay!

So naïve.

As I close in on twenty years of service, on my way to thirty, my body decides it is enough.

I reach into my pocket, pull out my health, and I hand it over. I feel like I haven't slept in years, I have massive headaches, my blood pressure is outrageous, and I awake one morning blind in my right eye.

"You are under immense stress!" the doctors say. "You need to relax, so no more deployments for you."

I can't look at some kid and tell them they have to leave family and loved ones to go fight somewhere if I am unable to do the same.

I reach into my pocket, pull out my career, and I hand it over. Apparently I am done with the military life. However, the military life is not done with me.

They never gave me instructions to turn off the vigilance. I see danger everywhere.

So much danger that I don't leave my house because of the fear of the unknown and the anxiety that something will happen.

I reach into my pocket, pull out the relationship with my family, and I hand it over. My wife is doing too much. She goes out alone and shows our children the world while I stay home. My kids tiptoe around me and wonder why dad is angry all the time.

I don't want to live like this anymore. Something has to give. I have to get out and change.

But, life wants that toll...

I reach into my pocket and there is nothing there.

▲ *Eric Certain retired from the Air Force in 2010 after serving for twenty years. His military career was in computer networking, including four years for the White House where he traveled with the President and set up computer networks all over the world. He is currently a stay-at-home dad to two children, ages 8 and 3. He and his wife, Kristi, recently celebrated their ten-year wedding anniversary.*

Eric is a member of the Red Badge Project, which uses the creative process of storytelling to help Wounded Warriors to rebuild their individual sense of purpose and unique individuality. For more information on the Red Badge Project go to: <https://www.theredbadgeproject.com>.

Reflection

Gather as a group to read and reflect on this issue of *A Matter of Spirit*. The following is a suggested process.

Begin with the *Prayer for Peace* by St. Pope John Paul II on the back page.

Leader: In this issue of *A Matter of Spirit*, we examine the complexities of the military. Let us take a moment to pause in prayer for those affected by war and conflict from the combatant to the civilian. Let us also hold in prayer the hidden victims of war—families, refugees, and those whose needs go unmet in favor of military spending.

In our first article, Annapatrice Johnson prayerfully professes, “Help me remain close to these realities: to remember my human responsibility to weep for the pain and suffering of my sisters and brothers around the world.” p. 1

- ☞ Where is God calling me to respond to the sorrows of the world?
- ☞ How might I best use my gifts to help alleviate suffering?
- ☞ How might I offer hope to the hopeless?

Nick Mele writes, “All the arguments for increased military spending ignore the cost to human beings at home and abroad.” p. 6

- ☞ How does our spending on military reflect on our moral priorities?
- ☞ How can prioritizing defense measures ignore the cost to human lives? Where do you see this more prevalent in our society?

Audrey Hudgins cites many statistics on the cycle of poverty and its link to wars and conflicts.

- ☞ Which statistic did you find most surprising? Why?
- ☞ What are small steps that you might take in your life to address this cycle of poverty?

War and conflict leave a lasting mark on everyone. Roy Harrington refers to Moral Injury, a lasting mark, as “wound to the soul.” p.10

- ☞ What wounds of my soul might I be carrying? Am I giving myself the space and time to heal those wounds?
- ☞ How can I be pastorally present to those who might have been touched by the lasting effects of war and conflict?

In our closing piece, Eric Certain shares the toll that his service took on his life. p.12

- ☞ Where in my life am I taking from my sisters and brothers rather than giving?
- ☞ How can I be an agent of peaceful change?

Leader: Jesus teaches us, “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God.” (Matthew 5:9) As we conclude, may we answer Jesus’ call to become peacemakers.





INTERCOMMUNITY

▶ Women's Justice Circles



17th Annual March & Rally Against Domestic Violence

Giselle Cárcamo travelled to New Brunswick, NJ in October to meet with Justice Circle leaders and attend the 17th Annual March & Rally against Domestic Violence hosted by Holy Family Parish and led by the New Brunswick Domestic Violence Awareness Coalition.



In New Brunswick she led listening sessions and conducted a Leadership Development Training where women celebrated their successes during their six years of Justice Circles. The women brainstormed ways to continue to foster grassroots leadership and community engagement in Middlesex County.

While there Giselle was invited by Christian Cousins, former IPJC Justice Educator who now teaches at Princeton Day School, to talk with juniors and seniors about the current immigration crisis and her work as a community organizer.

Justice Circles are currently underway in Sumner, Bonney Lake/Buckley, Burien and New Brunswick.



▶ Young Adult Justice Cafés

Justice Cafés are off to a great start in our 11th year. Young adults have met to discuss the root causes of migration, the feminization of poverty and ethical consumerism in:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Washington DC | Jinga, Uganda |
| Notre Dame, IN | Burien, WA |
| Ottawa, KS | Covington, WA |
| Chicago, IL | Lacey, WA |
| Duluth, MS | Sammamish, WA |
| Bismarck, ND | Seattle, WA |
| San Antonio, TX | Tacoma, WA |

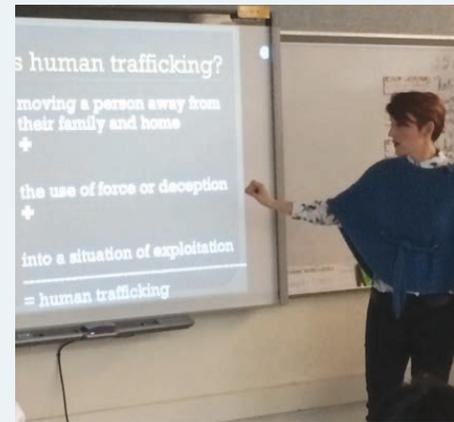
If you are a young adult or work with young adults and would like to start a Café in your community, contact Samantha Yanity: syanity@ipjc.org.

2020 Justice Café Topics

- JAN Modern Day Slavery: Children
- FEB Plastics
- MAR Just Transportation
- APRIL Changing Face of Democracy

▶ IPJC Staff Presentations Fall 2019

- ☞ Care for Creation, Ignatian Spirituality Center, Seattle
- ☞ Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration, St. Anthony Parish, Renton
- ☞ Catholic Social Teaching on Nonviolence, St. Joseph Parish, Seattle
- ☞ Climate Advocacy, St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Burien
- ☞ Collaboration for Social Transformation, Jesuit Universities & Social Ministries, Portland
- ☞ Eastside Community Forum on Homelessness & Poverty, St. Jude Parish, Redmond
- ☞ Human Trafficking, St. Luke School, Shoreline
- ☞ Investing in the Common Good, Skyline, Seattle
- ☞ Laudato Si', St. Anne Parish, Seattle



IPJC Justice Educator, Samantha Yanity, presents on human trafficking to the 8th grade class at St. Luke School in Shoreline, WA.

PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER

NEWS • ANNOUNCEMENTS • UPCOMING EVENTS

▶ Upcoming IPJC Events

Your One Wild and Precious Life: Women on the Road of Ministry

JANUARY 25, 2020

9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

ST. JOSEPH PARISH, SEATTLE

Dr. Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ gave this presentation at Santa Clara University in November 2018. She invites us to consider the astonishing fact that in our day women (and laymen) in remarkable numbers are answering God's call to ministry, past, present, and future.

Modern Day Slavery: In My Backyard?

FEBRUARY 6, 2020

7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

ST. PATRICK CHURCH, SEATTLE

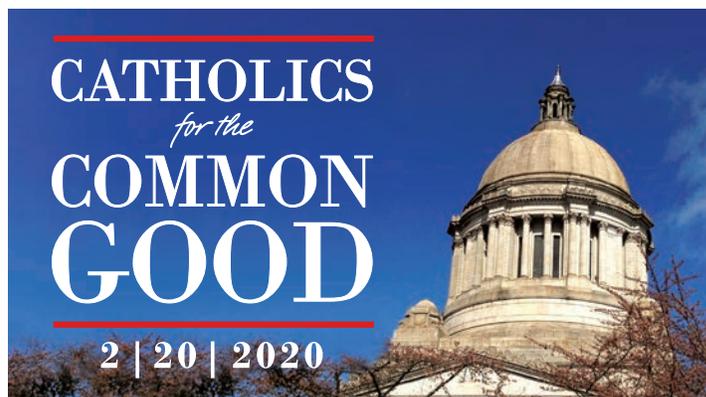
Following on our Justice Café topic for January, IPJC will host a panel featuring speakers from IPJC, API Chaya, Equity in Education Coalition, Seattle Police Department and Seattle Against Slavery.

IPJC Spring Benefit

MAY 13, 2020

SEATTLE UNIVERSITY, CAMPION HALL

▶ Advocacy



Catholic Advocacy Day

February 20, Olympia WA

email: catholicadvocacyday@ipjc.org

Eastern Washington Legislative Conference

Saturday, January 25

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Spokane Valley United Methodist Church

To register: event@thefigtree.org

▶ IPJC Board

From its founding in 1991, the IPJC Board has been composed of a representative from each of our seven sponsoring communities. Following a restructuring of the Board in the spring of 2019, we have welcomed three new board members from our broader IPJC community: Maureen Augusciak, Brenda Fincher, and John Hickman.

▶ Donations

In Honor of:

Megan McArthur Wellings, Norah Wellings, Patty Bowman, Judy Byron, OP

In Memory of:

Hope Ajla Mulder, Maureen Rose, OP, Anne Heger, OP, Michele MacMillan, OP, George Burrows, Mary Sullivan, OP, Peg & Tim Sullivan, Michael Sullivan, Katie Frei



**Remembering
with Gratitude
Katie Frei
1952–2019**

Katie and her husband Dan have been part of our IPJC community for over 20 years. As leaders of their St. Rose Parish Social Justice Commission they have walked with the two feet of Service and Justice. The Commission was honored with the Raymond G. Hunthausen Humanitarian Award in 2013. Its inscription speaks of Katie:

*To one who has sought justice,
Loved kindly, and
Humbly changed our world.*



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Prayer for Peace, Hiroshima, 1981

St. Pope John Paul II

Thirty-five years after the bombing at Hiroshima, St. Pope John Paul II visited the Peace Memorial Hall at Hiroshima, and offered this Prayer for Peace.

*To you, creator of nature and
humanity, of truth and beauty,
I pray:*

*Hear my voice, for it is the voice of
the victims of all wars and violence
among individuals and nations.*

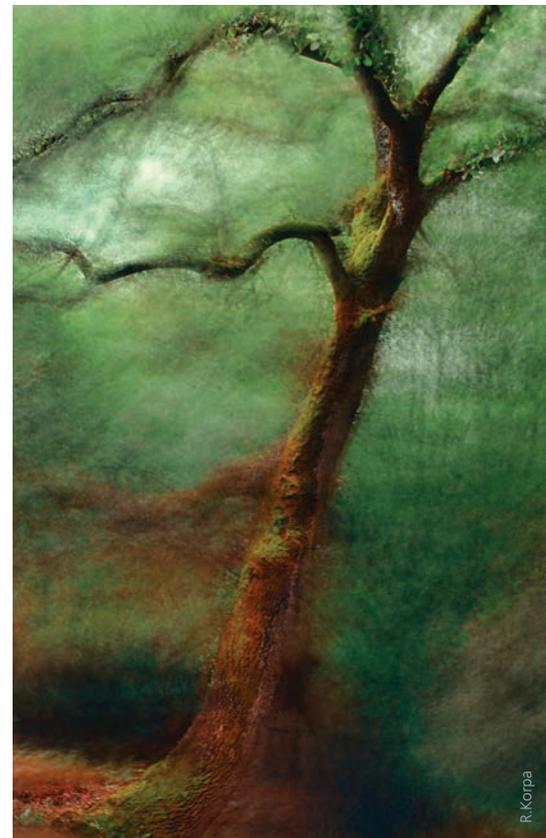
*Hear my voice, for it is the voice of
all children who suffer and who will
suffer when people put their faith in
weapons and war.*

*Hear my voice when I beg you to
instill into the hearts of all human
beings the vision of peace, the
strength of justice, and the joy of
fellowship.*

*Hear my voice, for I speak for the
multitudes in every country and in every period of history who do not
want war and are ready to walk the road of peace.*

*Hear my voice and grant insight and strength so that we may always
respond to hatred with love, to injustice with total dedication to justice,
to need with the sharing of self, to war with peace.*

O God, hear my voice, and grant to the world your everlasting peace.



R. Korpa