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CPN ACTIVITIES

Event: Colombia: The Church and the Peace Process

Cardinal Rubén Salazar Gómez, the Catholic Archbishop of Bogotá and President of the Colombian Episcopal Conference, will speak at the University of Notre Dame on the Church and the peace process in Colombia. The event will be held April 4, 2014 at 12:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, USA and will be [streamed live](#) online. [Read more.](#)

CPN PARTNERS

Syria: Pax Christi “Encountering Peace” Solidarity Campaign

This Lent, Pax Christi International has launched a worldwide campaign called Encountering Peace, “to express solidarity with the people of Syria and to promote a negotiated solution to the extreme crisis gripping that country.” They encourage individuals and organizations to pray, fast, raise awareness, and advocate for peace in Syria. [Learn more](#) (available in multiple languages).

Colombia: Lenten Workshops on Reconciliation

The Colombian Episcopal Conference has released a series of workshops to be held throughout Lent with the theme “Reconciliation in Colombia is Possible.” “Through these workshops, designed in the order of the Sundays in Lent, the *Secretariado Nacional de Pastoral Social* wants to contribute, through the spiritual dimension of reconciliation, to the national dialogue about the conditions which Colombia must have in order to make possible the achievement of a stable and lasting peace.” [Click here](#) for more information and outlines of the workshops (PDF, in Spanish).

Catholic Relief Services Workshops for Peace in Central African Republic

Responding to the conflict in the Central African Republic, Catholic Relief Services has held workshops for both Christians and Muslims to promote peace in the country, where about 20% of the population is displaced. “The workshops create space for people to individually and collectively reflect on their situation and discover opportunities to start addressing issues suffocating their harmonious relationships,” explained John Katunga of CRS. Participants take what they have learned and hold workshops with others in their communities. [Learn more](#).

University of Notre Dame Student Peace Conference: March 28-29, 2014

This year’s Notre Dame Student Peace Conference, “Building Peace: Integrating Two Decades of Progress,” will be held March 28-29, 2014, at the University of Notre Dame. The conference will center on the question, “What have we learned about building peace since the end of the Cold War, and how should we develop this knowledge into future strategies?” The event is sponsored by the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.

Catholic Relief Services Workshop for Justice and Peacebuilding

CRS held its annual SIP workshop for Justice and Peacebuilding staff in Nyeri, Kenya, March 10-13. Over 30 participants from all eight CRS Regions participated in discussions on how to improve monitoring, evaluation, accountability and practical learning in projects promoting peace, good governance and gender equality. A learning document with workshop highlights will be available by mid-April. Contact tom.bamat@crs.org for a copy.

A PEACEBUILDING CHURCH: NEWS

Syria: Caritas Broadens Fields of Action

Caritas workers from throughout Syria gathered this month to discuss the current crisis and needed response, according to an article by Fides News Agency. The Chaldean Bishop of Aleppo and President of Caritas Syria, Antoine Audo, stated that, "In addition to food parcels, health care and relief to the poor, we have identified two new fields of action: psycho-social assistance and the help to engage young Syrians in micro-work projects, especially in villages and in the countryside." Caritas Syria will work with Caritas organizations in other countries to support these new fields of action. [Read more.](#)

Philippines: Cardinal Quevedo of Mindanao Continues Work for Peace

Mindanao's first Cardinal, Orlando Quevedo, says that he wishes to continue working for peace in the region, and he hopes to "stay in the background" as a contributor whose name rarely appears. Cardinal Quevedo has been quietly involved in the peace process for many years. "I hope to be a man of peace in this broken land... to promote harmonious relationship not only among the tri-peoples of Mindanao but also with members of other faiths. I have to be a promoter of integral development," he said. [Read more.](#)

Central African Republic: UN's Ban Ki-moon Meets with Religious Leaders

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said he was "honored" to meet with three religious leaders from the Central African Republic, Mgr. Dieudonné Nzapalainga, Archbishop of Bangui, Imam Oumar Kobine Layama, President of the Islamic Council in the Central African Republic, and Reverend Nicolas Guérékoyame-Gbangou, President of the CAR's Evangelical Alliance. In [his statement](#) before meeting with the religious leaders, he emphasized that the conflict in the CAR is not about religion and praised them for their promotion of peaceful coexistence. He called on the international community to extend greater support to the country and asked the Security Council to act on his recommendations for a UN peacekeeping operation.

Sri Lanka: Clergy Call for Investigation of Human Rights Violations

205 Tamil clergy, including Mgr. Rayappu Joseph, Bishop of Mannar, submitted a letter to the United Nations Human Rights Council asking for an investigation of human rights violations in Sri Lanka. "Disappearances, sexual abuse, arrests, detention and torture under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, restrictions and attacks on freedom of assembly, expression, association and movement continue to date. Collective commemoration of dead and disappeared and religious freedom is restricted. Those who criticize, question and challenge government policies and practices, and those who engage with the international community on human rights issues, are branded as terrorist supporters / traitors. ... We are aware that writing this letter and engaging with the UN HRC itself can make us vulnerable to risks, and several of the more vulnerable clergy are not signing onto this, even though they agree with the contents." [Read the full letter.](#)

Pope Francis: "War destroys!"

In his homily on February 25, Pope Francis spoke of how "the spirit of war has taken a hold of us." As [reported by Zenit news](#), "While the First World War scandalized many, the Pope said that there is a great war occurring now, in various parts of the world that

is 'hidden' and it does not scandalize everyone. 'So many die for a piece of land, for an ambition, for hate, for racial jealousy. Passion brings us to war, to the spirit of the world,' he said." Pope Francis asked people to pray for peace. "May the Lord help us understand this and save us from getting used to news of war."

Sant'Egidio: 'Common Pact' to Promote World Peace

The Community of Sant'Egidio's recent conference, Religions and Violence, culminated in an appeal for "A 'common pact' of religions, cultures and diplomacy to eradicate violence and build peace in the world." "To achieve the goal of peace in the post-ideological globalised world where we live, traditional diplomacy needs new tools involving all dimensions of life: religion in the first place, then politics, culture, the fight against underdevelopment," said Marco Impagliazzo, president of the Community of Sant'Egidio. [Read more](#).

RESOURCES

Call for Applications to M.A. in Peace Studies and International Relations

The [Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations](#) (HIPSIR) is now accepting applications for an [M.A. degree in Peace Studies and International Relations](#). HIPSIR is part of Hekima College, which is a constituent college of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) and is run by the Jesuit order. Applications are due by June 30, 2014.

Blog: Pax Christi Peace Stories

We hear stories of violence all the time, but less often do we hear stories of peace. "[Pax Christi Peace Stories](#)," Pax Christi International's [new blog](#), "aims to be a special forum where selected voices within our international movement reflect and share their experiences as peacemakers. It is a blog dedicated to feature peace voices around us... More, it is an effort to encourage us to pay more attention to those existing peace voices."

Book: Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies

Edited by Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Gil Loescher, Katy Long, and Nando Sigona, "This authoritative [Handbook](#) critically evaluates the birth and development of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, and analyses the key contemporary and future challenges faced by academics and practitioners working with and for forcibly displaced populations around the world." The book will be published this summer and includes an essay on "Religion and Forced Migration" by David Hollenbach, SJ, of the Center for Human Rights and International Justice at Boston College. [Click here](#) for information on the book and an online discount (PDF).

Conference/ Call for Papers: Church, Theology and War, September 8-11, 2014

The Catholic Theological Association of Great Britain will hold its annual 3-day conference on "Church, Theology and War: Remembrance and Collusion" September 8-11, 2014. The CTA invites scholars to join the conversation on the historical,

theological, and contextual issues of war, and the Great War in particular. Click [here](#) for the call for papers (PDF) and [here](#) for the schedule.

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The Catholic Peacebuilding Network (CPN) is a voluntary network of practitioners, academics, clergy and laity from around the world which seeks to enhance the study and practice of Catholic peacebuilding, especially at the local level. The CPN aims to deepen bonds of solidarity among Catholic peacebuilders, share and analyze “best practices,” expand the peacebuilding capacity of the Church in areas of conflict, and encourage the further development of a theology of a just peace. While it is a Catholic network, the CPN believes that authentic and effective Catholic peacebuilding involves dialogue and collaboration with those of other religious traditions and all those committed to building a more just and peaceful world.

Gerard Powers, Coordinator
Cathy Laake, Program Assistant
Catholic Peacebuilding Network
Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies
100 Hesburgh Center
Notre Dame, IN 46556, USA
[574.631.6970](tel:574.631.6970) (ph)
[574.631.6973](tel:574.631.6973) (fax)
www.cpn.nd.edu