



JUST Love

JULY 2018



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF PEACE, JUSTICE AND
ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF SAINT ELIZABETH

ARTISTS for PEACE and JUSTICE

The Great Emancipator of Ireland, Daniel O’Connell, used to say, “Let whoever wants to, write Ireland’s laws. I want to write Ireland’s songs.” O’Connell knew that revolutions for social change need more than good ideas. They need compelling visuals and music and poetic words that fire the imagination, provoke new thinking, and move people to action. We hope the summer time affords us some leisure to savor beautiful images and to listen to heart stirring music. In this issue of *JustLove* we share a reflection by artist and activist Jackie Allen-Doucot, co-founder of the Hartford Catholic Worker. And we suggest for your contemplation some images and music that we hope will engage your imagination and fill your hearts with dreams of a world of peace, justice and the flourishing of life.

Art: Love Creating a New World
Jackie Allen-Doucot

“Art is love creating a new world and justice is love rolling up its sleeves to heal the old one.” ~ N.T.Wright

I love this quote. It speaks to three of my favorite pastimes -art, justice and healing. I am a firm believer that art heals and that every one of us was created by God to co -create. As Pablo Picasso used to say “All of us are born artists...the problem becomes how to stay one as you grow up.” I think that God waits patiently for us to call the creativity of our source into ourselves. Once we acknowledge that source and begin to use that creativity to heal the broken world, it begins to surge and becomes infectious, a delightful spreading of beauty and joy.

I myself was healed through this process. I loved art and drawing as a child. As one of 9 kids, my parents encouraged me. As a senior in a small Catholic high school I was saddened to learn that without a portfolio there would be no art school application. I asked my 74 year old guidance counselor to help me find a way to get a degree in art therapy. It was 1979 and he told me there was no such thing. I went to a huge university and took as many art classes as I could, but it was hard to be with kids who had taken art classes for years and not feel like a failure so I dropped out after 3 semesters. I did not do any art for a whole year. My mom watched all this and let me be for a while but then, in her amazing way, drew me back to both God and art with one small trick. She was very active with Pax Christi and asked me to make a banner for her to bring to a demonstration at the Electric Boat shipyard where the Trident first strike nuclear submarines are made. The banner came out beautiful. I went with her to the demonstration and other folks began asking me to make banners. My art and joy returned in this new activism. A few years later it brought me to the Catholic Worker in Hartford.

Now I do art almost every day-many times with very young children traumatized by poverty, institutionalized racism and the violence that accompanies the lives of those who self medicate with drugs and alcohol to numb the pain. I never did get that degree, but God and those kids don’t seem to care.

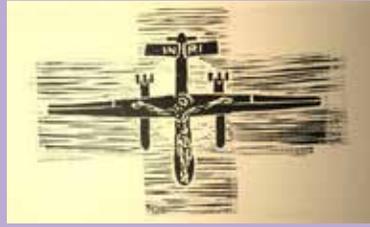
There are so many ways to use art in the making of justice. Use a pillowcase to make a small banner to hang off your porch. Volunteer to work on a mural with a community group in your area. Buy some art from places like *Bread and Puppet Theatre* or *Syracuse Cultural Workers* that use beauty to educate. Hang them in your home or school or give them for gifts. Volunteer at an afterschool program and make art with kids! Look at tutorials on YouTube that can help you make a peace pole...then invite others in on the project and build community (a wonderful by-product of art). Take a beginners class and make YOUR statement. Trust that God will begin to lead you to where your art is needed. Go to a poor school and ask to be an art helper. Look for a MAKERSPACE or art collective nearby. These places encourage community and collective resources. Spend 20 minutes a day drawing or coloring...like you are exercising your art muscle!

If you need a little help in calling your creativity forward I would recommend a wonderful book called *THE ARTIST’S WAY (A Spiritual Path To Higher Creativity)* by Julia Cameron. One of her best sayings is “Creativity is God’s gift to us...using our creativity is our gift back to God.”

I end this with a prayer for you: that your creativity can be called forth and that with it you will find healing for yourself and the world! Dostoevsky and Dorothy Day knew that “the world will be saved by beauty”. The need for art and beauty is from the Divine Source and is waiting patiently for you. Don’t be long!



“Our Lady of Ferguson and All Those Killed by Gun Violence.” by Mark Dukes
In the icon, Mary is depicted as a black woman with her hands up. Where her womb would be is a small black silhouette of Jesus in a similar posture, but in the crosshairs of a gun. The posture, while a clear reference to the “Hands up, don’t shoot” slogan birthed in Ferguson, Mo., in response to police violence, is also the “orans” position of prayer.. Orans, which in Latin means “praying,” is a position that designates pleading or supplication to God.



A woodcut by artist Ben Wildflower shows Jesus crucified on a drone, a reminder of how Jesus is crucified today in the poor who are

deprived of necessities by our sinfully bloated military budget and in the innocent civilians who are terrorized daily by drones overhead in the countries where the US exercises its imperial interests.



The famous yet anonymous graffiti artist Banksy depicts the bomb throwing anarchist throwing a bouquet of flowers instead – reminding us of the line of Dostoevsky so loved by Dorothy Day, “The world will be saved by beauty.”

Syracuse Cultural Workers is a good source of posters and postcards on themes of justice and peace <https://www.syracuseculturalworkers.com/>

Try some music on themes of justice and peace: Emma’s Revolution – two women from Oakland whose music has been described as “beauty, power and ferocity all mixed together with love and hope.” <https://emmasrevolution.com/>

Sweet Honey in the Rock – a soul stirring African-American a capella group <http://sweethoneyintherock.org/>

Carolyn McDade – McDade’s solos and choral music hauntingly invite us to a new relationship with Earth <http://www.carolynmcdademusic.com/>



DATES TO REMEMBER AND CELEBRATE IN JULY

4 Independence Day “A nation can be considered great when it defends liberty as Lincoln did, when it fosters a culture which enables people to “dream” of full rights for all their brothers and sisters, as Martin Luther King sought to do; when it strives for justice and the cause of the oppressed, as Dorothy Day did by her tireless work, the fruit of a faith which becomes dialogue and sows peace in the contemplative style of Thomas Merton.”
Address of Pope Francis to Congress, 2015

14 Feast of St. Benedict The Rule of Benedict says that the tools of the monastery should be treated with the same reverence as the chalices of the altar. Try to bring that spirit of reverence to your work and tasks today.

16 Our Lady of Mount Carmel “Teach me to go to this country beyond words and beyond names. I need to be led by you. I need my heart to be moved by you. I need my soul to be made clean by your prayer. I need my will to be made strong by you. I need the world to be saved and changed by you.” prayer of Thomas Merton to Our Lady of Mount Carmel

26 Feast of Saints Joachim and Anne, grandparents of Jesus. Wish all grandparents a happy feast day!