



JUST Love

MARCH 2019



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

The Beloved Community

Sr. Rosemary Moynihan, SC



Students of the College of Saint Elizabeth and Sisters of Charity join in the Multi-Campus March for Peace organized by The Beloved Community

The Beloved Community effort in Madison began a few years ago in the mind and heart of Rev. Craig Dunn, the new young pastor of the First Baptist Church. On his arrival he was deeply touched by the racial tensions between youth and the police and polarizing social and political issues in general. He had a dream based on Dr. Martin Luther King's work on the Beloved Community which integrated relationship, reconciliation and a realistic acceptance of the human condition.

I met Rev. Dunn at an interfaith breakfast two years ago. He was seeking a venue for a prayer service to celebrate Rev. Martin Luther King Day and asked if the Sisters of Charity would be interested in partnering with the Baptists. Shortly after, a wonderful prayer service was held at Holy Family Chapel by clergy and faithful from the Baptist, AME, Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches as well as the YMCA. Each focused remarks on one of Dr. King's talks. Afterward, people, including many of our sisters, shared thoughts and faith over coffee. It was a significant beginning.

Over the past two years the Beloved Community effort has moved forward organically gathering diverse groups of interest such as municipal leaders, health care, fire and police departments, mental health resource groups, educators, women religious, neighborhood groups, parishes and local churches, RAMP, immigrant support groups, and leaders from the three local colleges and universities. Activities have included in-depth open community discussions on social issues, joint religious services with immigrant advocacy groups, educational sessions on Islam with Iftar meals, annual joint peace marches by the colleges into Madison, and multiple "Coffee with a Cop" programs to name a few. The Sisters of Charity continue to host the MLK Interfaith service, participate in discussion groups, attend religious services and dialogues, and support the College of Saint Elizabeth's growing role in this effort.

The Beloved Community effort calls us to consciously choose to love, to look to our right and to our left to see the face of God. It is a blessing.



The traditional Ash Wednesday Prayer reminds us that we are dust and unto dust we shall return. However, the current burial practices in the United States, both traditional burial and cremation, are not very gentle on the Mother Earth to which we return. Green burials are becoming increasingly popular as a way of reverencing our mortal remains in a sustainable way. 12% of the Catholic cemeteries in the US currently offer this option.

For further reading:

Green Burial in Marycrest Cemetery, Mahwah, NJ https://www.rcancem.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/JULY_Catholic-Cemetery-Magazine.pdf

Climate Change and Green Burial: The Case of the Loretto Community
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/cros.12172>



The education and advocacy work in Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is guided by a committee who posed for a group photo after a recent meeting (left to right) Sr. Marie Russo, Sr. Patricia Mennor, Sr. Jacquelyn Balasia, Sr. Margaret Welch, Mr. Gerard Gannon, Sr. Elizabeth Kremp, Mrs. Mary Gannon, Sr. Mary Canavan, Sr. Mary Spano, Sr. Roberta Feil, Sr. Maria Goetschalckx. Many thanks to them for their service and enthusiasm.



The Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth work against human trafficking in a variety of ways-We donate to the Newark, NJ Special Victims Unit that responds to the immediate needs of trafficking victims. We have distributed thousands of informational cards on trafficking in English, Spanish, and Creole with a prayer that has been used around the world. We hold educational workshops on trafficking in our educational institutions, we co-sponsor a retreat for formerly trafficked women every summer. The Vatican has recently issued Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking. Check it out at this link and reflect on how you might join the campaign against modern day slavery <https://migrants-refugees.va/2019/01/23/pastoral-orientations-on-human-trafficking/>



On February 4, the Sisters of Charity Ecospirituality Reflection Group enjoyed a presentation by Sr. Elena Colicelli, SC on the meaning of carbon footprint and ways to reduce it. Each participant completed an individual carbon footprint assessment. Let's all try to conserve water, fly less, eat less red meat, avoid single use plastics, and vote for candidates that have vigorous environmental platforms. For more ideas check out 52 Ways to Care for Creation <http://www.creationjustice.org/blog/52-ways-to-care-for-creation>



We invite you to use our Lenten calendar https://www.scnj.org/images/justicepeace/Savoring_Lent_2019.pdf for reflection and action during the season of Lent.