

PEACEWEAVERS

If we are together nothing is impossible. If we are divided all will fail.
Winston Churchill

Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland

December, 2011

Social Justice Office

News from Mary Ellen

I am always reminded of the invitation to new life in the season of Advent...waiting..coming..birthing. This is a time for patience and attentiveness. It is a time when God becomes not only one of us but one with us, and we are assured once again that we are born out of an unfathomable love of our God, creator.

And so as we read and ponder the beginning of this miraculous love story in the following poem, let us ask with Meister Eckart, *What good is it if Mary willingly gave birth to God, if we are not willing to repeat that 'yes' each day of our lives?*

Annunciation

*Hail space for the uncontained God
from the Agathistos Hymn, Greece, Vic*

We know the scene: the room, variously furnished, almost always a lantern, a book: always a tall lily. Arrived on solemn grandeur of great wings,
The angelic ambassador, standing or hovering, whom she acknowledges,
a guest.

But we are told of meek obedience. No one mentions courage. The engendering spirit did not enter her without consent. **God waited!**
She was free! To accept or to refuse, choice – integral to humanness.

Aren't there annunciations of one sort or another – in most of our lives? Some unwillingly undertake great destinies,
Enact them in sullen pride, Uncomprehending.

More often these moments when roads of light and storm open from darkness in a woman or man are turned away from in dread, in a wave of weakness, in despair and with relief.
Ordinary lives continue. God does not smite them.

But gates close and the pathway vanishes.

She had been a child who played, ate and slept like any other child –
But unlike others, wept only for pity, laughed in joy, not triumph; compassion and intelligence fused in her, indivisible.

Called to a destiny more momentous than any in all of **time**,

She did not quail, only asked, *How can this be?*
And gravely, courteously took to heart the angel's reply, perceiving instantly the astonishing ministry she was offered.

To bear in her womb infinite weight and lightness:
To carry in hidden, finite inwardness, nine months of **Eternity**.

To contain in slender vase of being the sun of power – in narrow flesh, the sun of light.

This was the moment that no one speaks of, when she could still refuse.

A breath unbreathed Spirit, suspended, waiting.

She did not cry, *I cannot, I am not worthy*. Nor, *I have not the strength*. She did not submit with gritted teeth, raging, coerced.

Bravest of all humans, consent illumined her.
The room filled with light, the lily glowed,
And the iridescent wings.

Consent, Courage unparalleled, Opened her utterly.

From Your Ursuline Green Team

Zero Waste

Have you heard lately from your neighborhood *garbologist*? When is the last time you downcycled? Ever participated in a *dumpster dive*? Interested in *dematerialization*, *ecodesign* or *simple living*? The vocabulary list for waste management and elimination grows daily as more and more people try to live into the waste disposal hierarchy of; reduce, reuse and recycle. But despite many sincere efforts, better programs, and greater awareness, our trash continues to mount.

Nature does not waste, resources are reused. Zero Waste is a philosophy that invites the redesign of resource life cycles so that all products are reused. The ZW framework minimizes refuse sent to incinerators and landfills. According to the Zero Waste International Alliance in 2004: "Zero Waste is a goal that is ethical, economical, efficient and visionary, to guide people to change

their lifestyle and practices to emulate sustainable natural cycles, where all discarded materials are designed to become resources for others to use.”

Learn more: Go to <http://www.zerowasteinstitute.org> or <http://www.zerowastenetwork.org> or <http://www.zerowaste.org/>.

Network

The following was sent to the Congregation for our Social Justice efforts:

Your commitment to **Network** makes a strong impact in our national movement for economic and social transformation. On Capital Hill, in the White House and as we lead and partner in coalitions around Washington, D.C. you are playing a critical role. Thank you for helping us to magnify your voice, and the voices of people living in poverty on Capital Hill. As people gather around the world and demonstrate in support of economic justice, your participation in Network’s mission places the needs and voices of people struggling with injustice at the center of decision making. Thank You

Take Action

Every day 900 million people around the world go without water – one of the most basic necessities. The struggle to source water is great and the consequences of going without can be fatal. Nearly 2 million children die each year due to lack of access to clean water.

Congress is currently considering massive funding cuts to programs that provide potable water to the world’s poorest people. These programs only comprise less than .002% of the federal budget and are incredibly important in helping millions survive.

* Tell Congress that we have a moral responsibility to help those 900 million people and urge them to preserve this vital funding.

Ohioans Travel to Georgia

Dozens of northeast Ohioans, including Srs. *Diane Pinchot and Anne Marie Diederich* joined thousands of others at the main gate of Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia to remember those tortured and killed in Latin America at the hands of soldiers trained by the U.S.

They transformed the chain-linked barbed wire fence into a memorial wall with crosses, stars and flowers, as well as images of human rights victims including the 4 American Churchwomen killed in 1980.

The SOA provides the military muscle to protect the greed of the 1% at the expense of the 99% throughout the Americas. The surge of social justice activism in the U.S. is fueling the call for the closure of this notorious institution.

In August, 2011, 69 Members of the House of Representatives, including Fudge, Kucinich and Ryan, delivered a letter to Pres. Obama, calling on him to shut down the WHINSEC, formerly called the SOA by executive order. In November, **HR 3368**, a bill to close the SOA/WHINSEC, was introduced into the U.S. House.

Good News

Congress recently passed the FY 2012 agriculture appropriation bill (HR 2112) without major cuts to programs vital to hungry and poor people. This victory would never have happened without all the letters, phone calls and e-mails which were sent.

Bread for the World

Open or Closed?

When most retailers are announcing they will be open at midnight or earlier on Thanksgiving Day, both *Sears and J.C. Penny* announced they will stay closed to let their employees have the day off. A petition started on Change.org’s website by a Target employee with 7,000 signatures on Monday morning had more than 58,500 signatures by 5 pm.

Sears and J C Penny deserve a thank you note for allowing their employees to enjoy Thanksgiving Day with their families.

EcoWatch

EcoWatch in partnership with Waterkeeper Alliance is launching a 24/7 news service that works to unite the voice of the grassroots environmental movement and mobilize millions of Americans to take an active role to protect human health and the environment.

The website www.ecowatch.org will focus on five critical issue areas – water, air, food, energy and biodiversity.

EcoWatch, Oct/Nov, 2011

The current assault on America’s environmental laws, like the Clean Water Act, creates a pressing need to educate and engage people to protect our infrastructure, the air we breathe and the water we drink.

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr, founder and president of Waterkeeper Alliance