

On Line and On Point

MARY MOTHER OF JESUS INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

marymotherofjesus.org

50 ANNIVERSARY—Pax Christi USA, a branch of the international Catholic peace movement, celebrated its 50th anniversary with a conference this past week just outside Washington, DC. Johnny Zokovitch, *[photo]* the group's executive director, told NCR the 50th anniversary is an opportunity both to celebrate the vision of the founders, who understood "how much the church needed an organized peace witness," and to focus on "looking forward and building on that legacy" by engaging young people in the movement.

Marie Dennis, who was co-president from 2007-19 of Pax Christi International, an umbrella group of Pax Christi groups across the world, said: "Pax Christi USA was founded in the middle of the Cold War and began with a recognition that the United States was a central, very important player in what would happen during the Cold War and where we would go in terms of war or peace in the future, so the responsibility of Pax Christi USA began with, I think, a very deep



and serious commitment to pulling the United States back from the brink of war."

Retired Detroit Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, a founding member of Pax Christi USA, said that the organization had a difficult start until Erie, Pennsylvania Benedictine Sr. Mary Lou Kownacki became executive director. He said the Benedictines built Pax Christi USA into "a strong movement." "Without that change, we would have just sputtered out, I think."

The organization faced another inflection point when other peace organizations faded away at the end of the Cold War. But Pax Christi USA remained, which Zokovitch credits to the "multi-issue and intersectional" focus of the movement. Pax Christi endured because, instead of a "war/peace axis," the movement was built around "an oppression/liberation axis," he said.

Charlene Howard, current National Council chair for Pax Christi USA emphasized this perspective, saying, "What does peace really mean? It's

Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community Mission Statement

We are a Christ-centered community of equals, consisting of women and men, ordained and non-ordained, empowered by the Spirit whose mission is to worship, to serve, to promote compassion, justice, peace and care for creation. Come join us.

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not the absence of war. It is living in an environment in the way that God intends for it so that everyone can thrive."

This understanding of peace led Pax Christi to make a commitment to internal anti-racist work in the mid 1990s. "If we were going to be authentic about calling ourselves the national Catholic peace and justice movement," Zokovitch said, "we needed to better reflect the experience and the contributions of the US Catholic church," which was much more racially diverse than the movement at that time.

This anti-racist work continues with the Pax Christi Anti-Racism Team and throughout the organization. "Anybody who does anti-racism work will tell you it's not a comfortable place at all. It's a place of great tension and discomfort," said Zokovitch, who has led Pax Christi USA since 2019 and previously worked for both the U.S. and international organizations.—*NCR*

OFFERINGS—We are grateful for your continued contribution toward the growth and development of our community. Please remember to make your regular donations to MMOJ, by sending your check to MMOJ % St. Andrew UCC, 6908 Beneva Road, Sarasota, FL 34238.

OUTREACH—The current recipient of our offered financial support is the **Community Foundation of Sarasota Season of Sharing**. Over the campaign's 20-year history, this time-tested and trusted resource has distributed more than \$30 million to more

than 38,000 families and individuals who have been able to get back on their feet thanks to our community's generosity.

Remember: MMOJ continues to donate 5% of all received offerings each month to Outreach, which will continue to focus on real issues of food and hunger in our surrounding communities.

MOVIE CORNER

Not only does Ben Affleck marry Jennifer Lopez in 2022, he also stars most recently (2021) in his career-best performance as Uncle Charlie in **The Tender Bar**. It's a delightful coming-of-age story in which multiple generations of family move into grandfather, Christopher Lloyd's, home. Directed admirably by George Clooney, it features wonderful performances by two actors playing J.R., Affleck's nephew, as a young boy and college student. Affleck runs a bar named The Dickens and doles out sage advice to J.R. that he refers to as "male science." The Rotten Tomatoes score for this movie does not reflect the enjoyment Suzanne and I had watching it. Available on Prime Video. *Many thanks to Jerry for this week's movie review—Beth Ponce.* Send your suggestions of movies to watch, to ponce.beth@gmail.com

TIMES HAVE NOT CHANGED—From its inception, Pax Christi has promoted a spirituality of nonviolence that engages individuals, communities and nations in the long-term search for peaceful resolutions to conflict. The signs of the times that were current in 1972 remain, even if circumstances and particulars have changed.—*Bishop John Stowe of Lexington, Kentucky, PCUSA president.*

STAFF—*Russ Banner, editor; Joan Pesce and Dorothy Sadowski, text review; Beth Ponce and Dotty Shugrue, features*

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