



## **NewsNotes**

### **January, 2022**

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**Greetings Friend!**

Happy New Year!

Most of us hope for a year that improves over 2021. In that spirit, Eileen was preparing New Year's eve treats for a celebration at the Peace House of Hospitality when our first in-house case of Covid was revealed. Our New Year's routine now included gloves, masks, disinfectant sprays and Covid rapid test kits. I pray New Year's eve is not a harbinger of what this year will bring.

At Mass yesterday, the feast of the Epiphany, the priest ruminated with the congregation over whether the light that led the Wise ones was a star or an angel. It did not take long for his voice to fade from my consciousness as I was led to gratitude for the fact that God chooses to be revealed to us and in so many varied ways. For Joseph it was in his dreams. Do I even dream any more? For the visitors from the East it was the light that drew them. (I began to hear "Lean in toward the light.")

Our church teaches Jesus is the revelation of God. How do I meet and engage with Jesus? And what to I learn of God when I do?

In his ministry Jesus pulled a child toward him and said: "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me" (MK 9:37). Not always easy as recent experience revealed! Or we are reminded that when feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, visiting those in prison, we are feeding, welcoming and visiting Jesus himself.

Pope Francis challenges us regularly to see Jesus in the faces of the poor and marginalized. Yes, that is true, I have met Jesus in the experiences of stepping

out of my comfort zone with Black teens in riot-ravaged Newark in the early 1970's and today among the immigrant guests in PHOH. That does not mean such encounter are always easy, but they would not happen if I did accept some of the paths God places before me.

I left the church yesterday more convinced than ever that to do the work I have been offered it takes a prayer life that allows time to look for how God is being present, and a community that can offer support when the going is rough.

My hope for this is that we all look beyond the cases of Covid and see the hand of God, less in the suffering but rather in the love and support being offered.

Peace,

**Frank**

**Frank McCann**  
Peace through Justice Facilitator  
Congregation's NGO Representative to the UN

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## **Pope Francis Peace Day message 2022**

Pope Francis gives his assessment of our current state of affairs in the second paragraph:

*Today the path of peace, which [Saint Paul VI](#) called by the new name of integral development, remains sadly distant from the real lives of many men and women and thus from our human family, which is now entirely interconnected. Despite numerous efforts aimed at constructive dialogue between nations, the deafening noise of war and conflict is intensifying. While diseases of pandemic proportions are spreading, the effects of climate change and environmental degradation are worsening, the tragedy of hunger and thirst is increasing, and an economic model based on individualism rather than on solidary sharing continues to prevail. As in the days of the prophets of old, so in our own day the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth constantly make themselves heard, pleading for justice and peace.*

Francis goes on to offer three paths to build peace and restore our relationships to each other and with creation.

First, he urges dialogue between generations where he notes “*The loneliness of the elderly is matched in the young by a sense of helplessness and a lack of shared vision about the future.*” The elderly are called “keepers of memory” and the youth are “those who move history forward.” A dialogue is necessary to heal wounds, especially those inflicted on the environment, which is on loan to us from generation to generation. It begs the questions what can we do as a congregation, especially in light of our LSAP planning to engage in such dialogue?

Teaching and education are the second step and are “*drivers of peace.*” The