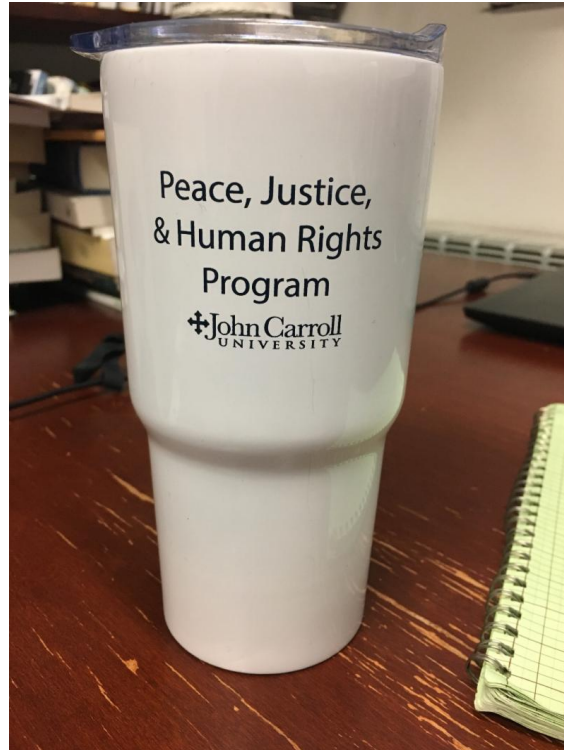


The Peace, Justice, and Human Rights (PJHR) Program at John Carroll University



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From the Director's Desk (Dr. Philip Metres)

This past summer, my family and I had the chance to go on a cruise to Alaska, to encounter the great beauty there and to learn about the impact of global climate change on the region. I came away awed by nature and wanting to change some things about my life--as the saying goes, to live simply so that others can simply live.

So I made an investment in some PJHR swag to help out: a metal travel mug that keeps your coffee hot and your cold ones cold. Will you make a pledge with me to stop using plastic water bottles and disposable coffee cups and use this instead? Why? 8 million metric tons of plastic are thrown out annually. Why? THERE IS AN ISLAND OF PLASTIC IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN THE SIZE OF TEXAS. It's truly absurd how we're treating the planet. Future generations will be astonished at our foolishness. **All PJHR faculty committee, students, and allies can get one of these travel mugs from me. My office is OC219. Come on by and get yours as a holiday gift. Thanks to Dr. Ed Peck for assisting with funding.**

Finally, I'm wishing you light in this dark season. This is the Jewish Kabbalah's story of creation, and the role of the people: tikkun olam--to repair the earth. God created the earth, and the light, which came forth in holy vessels of light. "Had they all arrived intact, the world would have been perfect. But the vessels were too fragile to contain such a powerful, divine light. They broke open, split asunder, and all the holy sparks were scattered like sand, like seeds, like stars....

That is why we were created — to gather the sparks, no matter where they are hidden. God created the world so that the descendents of Jacob could raise up the holy sparks. That is why there have been so many exiles — to release the holy sparks from the

servitude of captivity. In this way the Jewish people will sift all the holy sparks from the four corners of the earth. And when enough holy sparks have been gathered, the broken vessels will be restored, and tikkun olam, the repair of the world, awaited so long, will finally be complete. Therefore it should be the aim of everyone to raise these sparks from wherever they are imprisoned and to elevate them to holiness by the power of their soul."

Think about this work as our work. Repairing the world by gathering the holy sparks in each of us.

This fall, we had a great lineup of talks, events, and workshops to supplement our studies and our work: a kickoff poetry reading to raise awareness about the plight of refugees and immigrants, two events to raise awareness about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a day-long conference on the integral ecology and Catholic social teaching. We collaborated with the Catholic Diocese, the Cleveland Jewish Federation, the Northeast Coalition for the Homeless, the Center for Service and Social Action, the Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion, the JCU Office of Mission and Identity, the Departments (Communications, English, History, Political Science, Sociology, Theology and Religious Studies), Arrupe Scholars Program, Honors Program, Leadership Program, Black Students in Action, Students for Social Justice, Hillel, Middle East Students Association, Latin American Students Association, and other organizations across campus and beyond. A review below!

Drop me an email (pmetres@jcu.edu) or come by my office at O'Malley 219. Let's make this campus, and our world, a place of hope. Love. Study. Struggle.



The Events: A Review

August 30, 2018

"Welcome Home! Poetry Reading To Raise Awareness for Refugees and Immigrants"

I still remember the hush that overtook the crowd of over sixty people in Rodman Hall when Autumn Franz read the first poem of the evening, "Home" by Somali-British poet Warsan Shire: "no one leaves home unless / home is the mouth of a shark / you only run for the border /when you see the whole city running as well." Special thanks to all the poets and readers tonight, who brought the world (and the plight of refugees and immigrants) to John Carroll! In the photo, from left to right: Zeljana Opacak (from Croatia), Christ Gnassingbe (from Togo), Zach Thomas, Philip Metres, Autumn Franz, Sophia Maltese, Wesley Olin, and George Bilgere. Thanks as well to JCU grad Andy Mathay for representing Catholic Relief Services and sharing about their mission.



September 24th

Writers Zach Savich and Hilary Plum shared their poetry and prose to a packed audience at Rodman Hall, talking about the role of the writer in a time of language manipulation and disinformation, and later advised students to embrace the messiness of the writing process as part of



finding your theme.

Two events that struck that same week: **The Mock Border Wall and the Visit by Irish artist Brian Maguire**. Organized by Students for Social Justice, the three leaders--PJHR workstudy Julie Whitmore, PJHR major Katie Burns, and PJHR minor Liz Nies—reflected on the experience: <https://ignatiansolidarity.net/blog/2018/11/28/building-solidarity-not-walls-at-john-carroll-university/>. A host of programs to provide opportunities for learning, debating, and engaging in the issues around immigration happened that week. One of these events was a PJHR-sponsored film showing of “Blood Rising,” about the mysterious killings of women in the border town of Juarez, and the Irish artist Brian Maguire’s attempt to honor and remember the dead by painting their portraits. Over forty students and faculty attended the film screening. (Brian's portraits on the left.)

September 29th Caring for Our Common Home: Laudato Si and Integral Ecology Conference

The all-day conference on the intersections between Catholic social teaching and care for the planet brought together over 100 people, including an inspirational youth panel led by JCU student presenters Sophie Kocheff, Rachel Schubert, and Spencer Kale. Many organizers coordinated, including PJHR, Campus Ministry, JCU Environmental Issues Group, and especially Jeff Campbell of the Catholic Church’s Diocesan Social Action Office. It was eye-opening and heart-opening. One JCU class live-Tweeted the event https://twitter.com/laudato_si_jcu. I was particularly moved by the keynote speech by Dr. Vince Miller. Two quotes from his talk struck me fiercely: “Our senses don’t tell us what the problem is. How can we expand our (ecological) awareness to match our [technological] power?” And: “The [light] outlet doesn't tell you, ‘if you want light, we’ll blow up a mountain in Appalachia for you.’” We came away with a variety of resources, signed on to the Catholic Climate Covenant (<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/>), and recommitted to living more simply.

October 4th Northern Ireland’s Journey to Peace and the PJHR Inaugural Peace Leadership Award for Raymond Lennon. This panel reflected on the

Reconciling God, Creation and Humanity: An Ignatian Examen

In *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis asked us to care for creation and to reconcile our relationship with God, creation and one another.

Borrowing from the great Ignatian tradition of exams, this Ecological Examen asks you to reflect on your personal relationship with creation, to acknowledge and amend your ways and to promote ecological justice by standing in solidarity with those most impacted by environmental harm.

Begin the Examen by placing yourself or your group in a posture that allows you to be open to the ways the Spirit is working in you. There are six steps in the Examen:

I give thanks to God for creation and for being wonderfully made.
(Where did I feel God's presence in creation today?)

I ask for the grace to see creation as God does – in all its splendor and suffering.
(Do I see the beauty of creation and hear the cries of the earth and the poor?)

I ask for the grace to look closely to see how my life choices impact creation and the poor and vulnerable.

(What challenges or joys do I experience as I recall my care for creation? How can I turn away from a throwaway culture and instead stand in solidarity with creation and the poor?)

I ask for the grace of conversion towards ecological justice and reconciliation.

(Where have I fallen short in caring for creation and my brothers and sisters? How do I ask for a conversion of heart?)

I ask for the grace to reconcile my relationship with God, creation and humanity, and to stand in solidarity through my actions.

(How can I repair my relationship with creation and make choices consistent with my desire for reconciliation with creation?)

I offer a closing prayer for the earth and the vulnerable in our society.

ecexamen.org



journey to peace and our Ireland Peacebuilding Program, where students annually spend two weeks in Ireland engaging with architects of the unfolding peace there. Participants included students Anne-Cecilia Byrne, Tony Penk, Maddie Mooney, Kendra Cundiff, alums Rory O'Neil and Jeannie Kidera, and faculty Dr. Richard Clark, Dr. Dianna Taylor, and Dr. Philip Metres. I was moved by the beauty of the testimonies of everyone about the amazing journey toward peace happening there. I was reminded again why Dr. Andreas Sobisch called this the crown jewel of study abroad programs.

Here is part of my citation: "Our first recipient for the Peace Leadership Award is Raymond Lennon. Raymond, whose skills as the logistics coordinator of the JCU Ireland Peacebuilding Program are matched only by his ability to befriend quite simply everyone in Northern Ireland, to include all manner of voices in our program. Raymond is equally gracious to a former Red Hand Commando—who during the Troubles could have killed him in the street just for being Catholic—as to a victim of the Enniskillen bombing, whose father's passing forty years ago is still as raw as yesterday. Raymond has been the crucial coordinator on the ground for John Carroll University. Our program simply could not have happened without him.... He represents the steadfastness of the everyday citizen, who does the work of peacebuilding one relationship at a time, behind the scenes and outside the view of the camera. These are the secret heroes of Good Friday, and indeed of any vibrant society. A paragon of what John Paul Lederach calls the moral imagination, Lennon shows compassion, curiosity, creativity, and courage in the world often saturated with hate, close-mindedness, stubbornness, and cowardice."

[And here's Raymond's acceptance speech.](#)

October 16th and 24th

In two programs that dealt with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, **Palestinian American poet Deema Shehabi** shared her poetry from *Thirteen Departures from the Moon* to thirty students, and talked with students in classes about her experience and perspectives on seeking beauty and justice through creative writing and activism from a Palestinian perspective. A week later, **Israeli American Yossi Klein Halevi**, the English Department Hopkins fellow, and

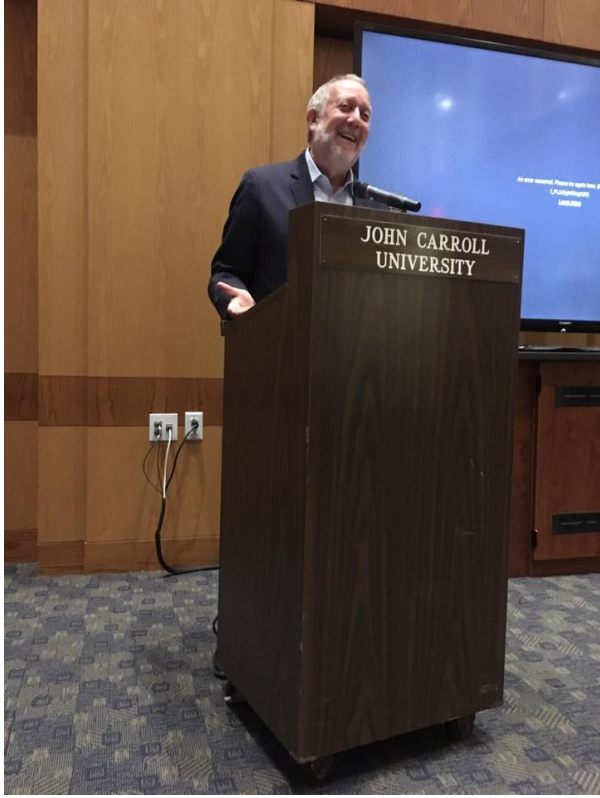


author of *Letters to My Palestinian Friend*, offered his own perspectives on the Israeli narrative and the prospects for peace. Special thanks to Dr. Debby Rosenthal for her work bringing him and the Jewish community out! Klein Halevi delivered his talk on his journey to an enthusiastic standing-room-only crowd in Donohue Auditorium. Both writers were open, generous, and thought provoking, despite having very different ideas about how to move toward a just peace that would account for the narratives of both Israelis and Palestinians. For those who'd like more information, the course EN280 Israeli and Palestinian Literatures, is offered annually. I'd be happy to provide lists of books, films, and online resources for a variety of perspectives.

November 8th

The panel "**Live and Direct (Poverty and Homelessness in Cleveland)**" was organized by Chris Knestrick, who is adjunct faculty in the PJHR department, teaching the inaugural "Poverty and Social Justice" course. Knestrick, the executive director of the Northeast Coalition for the Homeless, gathered Joyce Robinson, Loh, Toni Johnson, and Bishop Chewy to talk about the predicament of poverty, impacting 50% of the children living in Cleveland. "Why are 2/3rds of Clevelanders functionally illiterate? Why, tonight, will every homeless shelter in Cleveland be filled to capacity tonight?" Chris asked us. Over 100 people packed in to Rodman Hall to hear the panelists, whose lived experience of homelessness and poverty offered a window into the difficult reality faced by far too many of our fellow citizens. Many themes emerged about the causes of poverty: racism, isolation, lack of education, racist lending and real estate practices, trauma and mental health issues, environmental factors.

Finally, the **Shepherd Summer Interns** from the past two years made presentations to interest a new cohort to spend the summer working for social justice and to ameliorate poverty. Here is PJHR minor Caitlin Matthews presenting on her experience as an intern. We will be choosing our new interns later this month! Special thanks to Maryellen Callanan for organizing, Dr. Peggy Finucane for her initiating and leading the partnership with the Shepherd program, and Sister Katherine for her leadership at CSSA.





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PJHR Allies: Laura Boustani, Dr. Mona DeBaz, Sister Katherine Feely, Anne McGinness, Paul Murphy, Julie Myers, Dr. Ed Peck, Solomon Rodezno, Dr. Debby Rosenthal, David Shutkin, Colin Swearingen, Megan Wilson-Reitz.