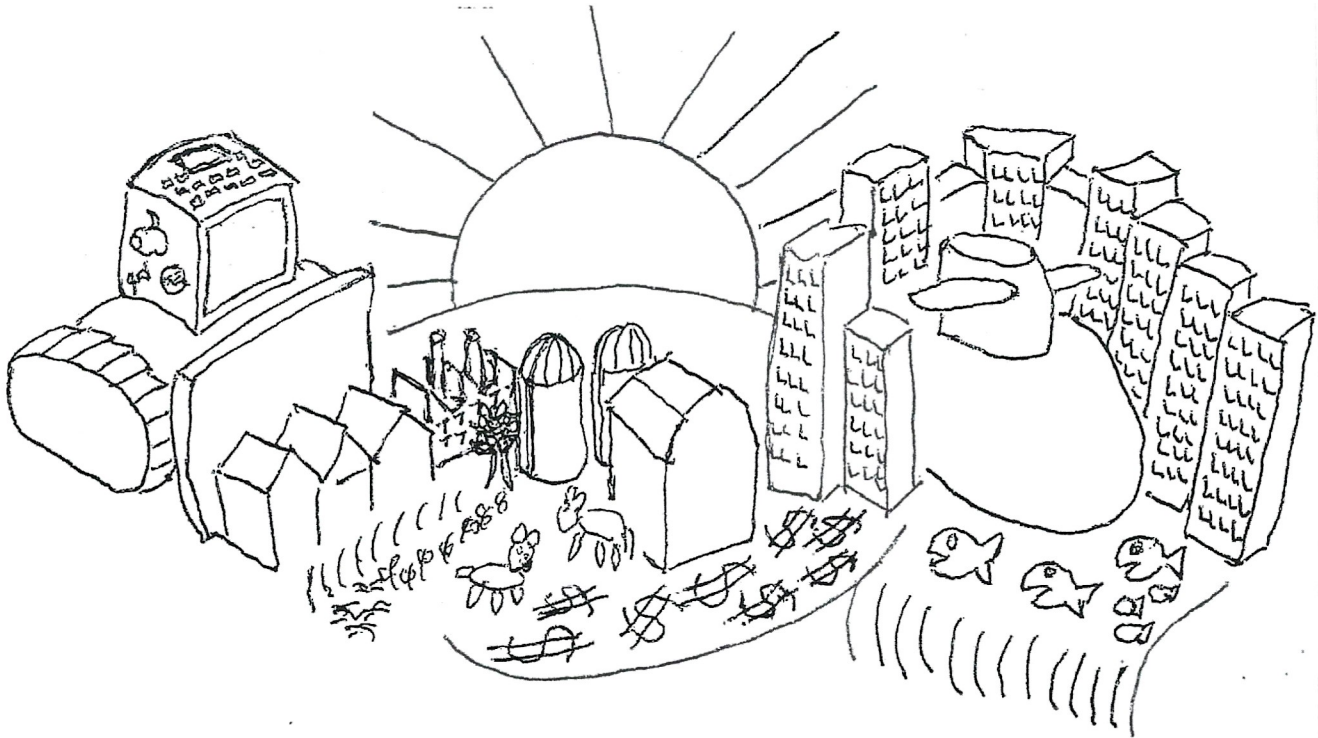


# TROUBADOUR

*A thread of the Good News that we feel called to print*

The Newsletter of St. Francis House, New London, CT

Eastertide 2022



**Luke 12:16-21 (adapted):** There was a rich man whose land produced a bountiful harvest. He asked himself, "What shall I do, for I do not have space to store my harvest?" And he said, "This is what I shall do: I shall tear down my barns and build larger ones. There I shall store all my grain and other goods and I shall say to myself, Now as for you, you have so many good things stored up for many years, rest, eat, drink, be merry!" But God said, "O foolish humanity, this night your life will be demanded of you: do not you realize that it takes only 30 minutes for a nuclear warhead on an ICBM to reach Ground Zero in Groton, Connecticut and only 10-15 minutes if it is submarine-based? And those things you have prepared, to which cockroach colony will they belong?" Thus it will be for those who store up short-term treasure and do not trust in God for security and in their neighbors for help in time of trouble.

The theme of our **Winter-Spring Clarification of Thought** series focused on "Money and Right Relationship: Monetization through Organizations and Each of Us." Written notes from additional Zoom session presentations can be found through our website: [www.stfrancishouseNL.org](http://www.stfrancishouseNL.org).

## ***Trust in God and Love Your Enemies: Monetizing "Defense" and "Security"***

***Notes toward Clarification of Thought*** by Frida Berrigan April 22, 2022

Check-in Question to each Zoom participant: Share something that makes you feel safe and secure, even cozy. People shared: a favorite sweater, "being with my sweetie," solidarity, hot chocolate, being at home, my cat on my lap, meditating. What I noticed in the go round was that most of you mentioned things that cannot be bought.

Now let's list items of bought security. Guns, security cameras and surveillance systems, knives and other weapons, border walls, immigration bureaucracy, the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard, minefields, cluster weapons, prisons, state secrets, nuclear weapons, submarines and bombers.....

In 2023, the fiscal year that starts in June, the United States wants to spend \$813 billion on the military. According to a 3/28 article in *The New York Times* that includes \$4.1 billion for research and development,



\$5 billion for space-based missile warning systems and another \$2 billion for missile defense interception, programs many people thought were abandoned in the Reagan administration. The \$813 billion represents a 4% increase over 2022, or \$31 billion. To put this in perspective, the increase alone is more than double what public health experts asked for to address the coronavirus pandemic.

\$813 billion is more than the next 11 nations combined. It is twelve times what Russia spends, and it is higher than ever before, adjusted for inflation and in real dollars, even at the height of the Cold War or the Vietnam War. As many have pointed out, if militarism were the key to security, we would be there already. This colossal military spending did not dissuade Russia from invading Ukraine. Typically, half of Pentagon funding goes to for-profit corporations. U.S. military contracts totaled \$3.4 trillion over the last ten years. This is staggering. Talk about monetizing security.

Preparing for this Clarification of Thought made me head for my Seymour Melman collection. The works of this Columbia professor and author of *The Permanent War Economy* and *Pentagon Capitalism* (among others) are certainly in the St. Francis House library. [SFH Note: We regret that we do not; anyone have a copy to donate? Thank you!] Melman writes about the permanent war economy and identifies, "large scale, even profligate military spending, as the cornerstone of American prosperity." You see: we have a devil's bargain. You want to criticize military spending and have 8 dollar a pound coffee or avocados from Mexico at 2 for 3 dollars, and cheap manufactured goods. Go ahead, but you can't have one without the other. Our appetites for the American way of life undermine our critique of militarism. U.S. militarism is the key to prosperity, it puts cash in our pockets and the use of that militarism ensures cheap consumables and the mirage of abundance that we need to feel "secure."

Military spending, Melman wrote in 1975 (when the U.S. military budget was a quaint \$100 billion) is a drain on capital. We have the best military in the world, but our infrastructure, our schools, our domestic industrial capacity, our energy sector, etc. are all suffering from decades of "deferred maintenance." He also wrote about what the lack of competition does to the "security" sector. This system became entrenched after World War II. For WWII, Boeing aircraft company built the B-17 flying fortress and the B-29 Superfortress at a rate of 362 planes per month. In total, U. S. companies produced over 300,000 planes for a total of \$45 billion.

In earlier conflicts, the industrial sector temporarily adapted their production to meet the military's needs. This time, they just stayed on a military production footing forever. As Henry Stimson, Secretary of War under FDR and Truman, said: "If you are going to try and go to war, or prepare for war, in a capitalist country, you have to let business make money out of the process or business won't work."

And so, after victory, Boeing and the other manufacturers just stayed working for the military, and in a sense stopped being capitalist at all, because there is very little true competition (the handful of companies mostly collaborate and share), only one customer, and vertical integration. As far as Boeing, Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics, Northrop Grumman and Raytheon are concerned, the United States is a socialist state that supports war monopolism. They are such a fixture in our society that they are barely noticed, but they need new wars and new markets to continue (hence the extension of NATO into former Soviet states and protectorates that Russia used as pretext for war.) As Melman notes, "We have been at war-- somewhere-- every year, in Korea, Nicaragua, Vietnam, the Balkans, Afghanistan," ever since the end of WWII. And we can just update Melman's list.

The More Things Change: In 2019, Politico noted that the CEOs of four of the five top weapons contractors were women. Women are moving into leadership within the Armed Forces and the Corporate side.

Northrop Grumman, CEO Kathy Warden, \$20 million    General Dynamics, Phebe Novakovic, \$19 million

Lockheed Martin, Marillyn Hewson, made \$21.5million in 2018. She retired in 2020.

Boeing's Defense, Space and Security division, Leanne Caret, \$17.9 million (stepped down this year)



Berrigan – continued:

Here is a groaner for you from the latest joiner of Pantsuit Nation: “If I asked everyone in this room to think of the most protective person... you’d think of your mom. We are protectors, that’s what the military does. We serve to protect the rest of you and that’s a very natural place for a woman to be,” Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson before the House Armed Services Committee.

Let’s take a closer look at General Dynamics, our neighborhood military industrial complex representative. Headed by Phebe Novakovic, a former intelligence officer with the CIA. She recently said: “It is our moral imperative to support our nation and support our nation’s allies in the work to keep democracies safe.” She is the 83rd highest paid executive in the U.S.

There is a 2018 opinion piece in *The Day* newspaper by Alex Nunes, then a freelance journalist, that we should all commit to memory and demand that *The Day* update and republish every year. It was titled, “General Dynamics Doesn’t Need Connecticut’s Money.” At the time, GD was pushing for \$150 million from the state to offset their investments in infrastructure and workplace training. The average EB workers trained in these federal and state programs make \$35,600 a year (441 times less than the CEO) and qualify for state health insurance. Novakovic and the four other top staff at General Dynamics took home \$150.3 million between 2013-2016 which is more than what they were asking for from the government. Since 2014, the company has spent \$10.1 billion of OUR money to buy back their own stock to reward shareholders. In the same time period, they spent a paltry \$200 million on pension contributions for their workers.

Boeing makes planes.

Raytheon makes missiles.

General Dynamics makes money.

And New London is supposed to be grateful to be their headquarters. When GD moved to New London in 2010 and bought the Pfizer campus, their lawyers filed five lawsuits against the city contesting the value of their property and the tax burden they were expected to pay. As City Attorney Londregan said at the time, “It is regrettable that they begin their relationship with the city with a lawsuit.”

Kevin Graney is the CEO of Electric Boat. He said recently, “2033 is projected to be one of our peak years of hiring and we are in the run up to 2033 starting now. Many of the people that we hire that year will just be graduating from high school and some of them that will end up joining our work force eventually aren’t even born yet.” They are thinking in terms of the next generation. Are we?

I think monetization seeks to mediate or separate us from one another. Security is pretty high on Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and fear is such a fundamental human reaction that can easily be inflamed and manipulated. We have been put through the wringer by Trump-- a master manipulator- and COVID, a truly fearsome virus and by the media-- which universalizes human tragedy to keep us watching and alone. It makes sense that our security is monetized, militarized and very very expensive. But it does not make us safe!

+ + +

**April 4 Reading of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s  
“Declaration of Independence  
from the War in Vietnam” (Excerpts on page 5)**



Resident members of St. Francis House, board members and friends gathered at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument in downtown New London to read Dr. King’s April 4, 1967 Riverside Church address. From left to right: Jane Bernoudy, Anne Scheibner, Ronna Stuller, Cal Robertson, Ben Abraham, Sharmaine Gregor and her niece Ray, Glennys Ulschak and Joanne Sheehan.



# "Living in the Light of Christ's Peace": A Pastoral Letter of Archbishop John C. Wester of Santa Fe

Reprint from the Hartford Catholic Worker Vol. 30, No. 1 Lent/Easter 2022

Fr. Terrence J. Moran

As I write, two nuclear powers, the United States and Russia, are saber rattling over Ukraine. A January 22, 2022, Connecticut headline gloats, "Electric Boat looking ahead to next-generation attack subs," in an article that is mostly about jobs. And the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists Doomsday Clock tells us we are at doom's doorstep; 100 seconds to midnight. But the prospect of State-sponsored omnicide draws little attention. It seems to perturb the consciences of so few people who profess the religion of Jesus who called peacemakers blessed and proclaimed an ethic of love of enemy.

Pope Francis is forthright about the necessity of moving the Church from its past tentative acceptance of nuclear weapons as instruments of deterrence to promoting complete nuclear abolition. The Vatican was the first nation state to sign and ratify the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Sadly, his words find little echo among the Catholic bishops of the United States.

It has been over forty years since a bishop has said anything even faintly resembling the words of Seattle Archbishop Raymond Hunt-hausen's 1981 speech "Faith and Disarmament," "Trident is the Auschwitz of Puget Sound because of the massive cooperation required in our area — the enormous sinful complicity that is necessary — for the eventual incineration of millions of our brother and sister human beings." All people of good will, but especially Catholics, owe deep gratitude to Archbishop John C. Wester, Archbishop of Santa Fe, for breaking that cowardly and sinful hierarchical silence.

On January 11, 2022, Archbishop Wester released his pastoral letter "Living in the Light of Christ's Peace: A Conversation Toward Nuclear Disarmament." Wester references the influence of his 2017 visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the places where

"humanity crossed the line into the darkness of the nuclear age." I believe that the pastoral letter is the first church document of this level to praise a Plowshares activist, Sister Megan Rice, SHCI."

I also think of Sister Megan Rice, who died in 2021 at the age of 91 and spent several years in federal prison for entering the nuclear weapons facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee while calling for nuclear disarmament. During her widely publicized sentencing, Sister Megan called the U.S. bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki "the greatest shame in history." She said her only guilt was that she had waited 70 years before speaking out publicly and taking action against nuclear weapons."

Wester begins his pastoral letter with a chapter *We Are Called to Be Peacemakers: The Teachings of Pope Francis, the Church, and the Gospels*, grounding his reflections in the recent teaching of the Popes on nuclear disarmament as a return to the nonviolent ethic of Jesus. From this standpoint, he calls the people of his archdiocese and all people of good will, to a conversation: "I invite us to have a conversation together about what it means to follow the risen, nonviolent Jesus who calls us

to be peacemakers, put down the sword, and love everyone, even the enemies of our nation. Certainly, these commandments challenge us to face the violence that is being prepared in our name here in New Mexico, and to start the process of nuclear disarmament so that no one ever again calls down hellfire from the sky. As Dr. King concluded, 'May we hear and follow Jesus' words—before it is too late.'"

Chapter II, *The Ongoing Threat of Nuclear Destruction*, masterfully outlines the current status of nuclear weapons and their economic and cultural consequences. He maintains that our present state, "is arguably more dangerous than the past Cold War." This analysis of reality leads to Chapter III, *A People Living in Darkness Have Seen a Great Light: The Only Real Alternative Is Nuclear Disarmament*. Wester's conclusion is bracing: "In light of these statistics and realities, I agree with Pope Francis and many others that the time has come to commit ourselves globally to the complete abolition of nuclear weapons. We should end all these massive financial investments for building and maintaining these weapons of mass destruction--investments which make only a few individual and corporations enormously wealthy--and instead invest those massive funds in education, healthcare, environmental cleanup, addressing the climate threat, rebuilding our infrastructure, and providing vaccinations for everyone everywhere against future pandemic."

Chapter IV suggests *A Way Forward: Suggestions for Reflection, Dialogue, and Action*: "I invite everyone in New Mexico and across the nation to join this conversation about the urgent need for nuclear disarmament. I invite us to pray together, study together, dialogue together, and take concrete steps together that we might cut back and soon abolish our nuclear weapons."

Appendix I offers valuable resources for this conversation.

Wester's pastoral letter is also beautifully formatted with stunning art including *Christ Breaks the Rifle*, by Otto Pankok, work by the recently





deceased artist John August Swanson, and icons by Fr. William Hart McNichols.

Wester is doubtless aware that he will receive significant pushback from the faithful of his archdiocese for his prophetic pastoral letter. The state of New Mexico has a heavy investment in the nuclear industry. It is home to the Los Alamos and Sandia nuclear weapons laboratories. The nation's largest repository of nuclear weapons is at Kirtland Air Force base in Albuquerque. At a time when bishops are often more motivated by

the interests of their financial benefactors than by the mandate of the gospel, Wester's pastoral is all the more admirable.

After you've read the pastoral letter, you might consider writing a letter of support to Archbishop Wester since he will likely be the object of considerable criticism. His address is Archdiocese of Santa Fe, 4000 Saint Joseph's Place NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120-1714. [archbishop.office@archdiosf.org](mailto:archbishop.office@archdiosf.org)

So this Lent, instead of giving up candy or liquor, do something of

much more benefit for your soul and for the world: download the pastoral letter, gather a few friends, and enter into the conversation and action that Wester calls for: *"I invite us to step into the light of Christ and walk together toward a new future of peace, a new promised land of peace, a new culture of peace and non-violence where we all might learn to live in peace as sisters and brothers on this beautiful planet, our common home."*

(Fr. Terrence Moran is the Director of the Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth and the unofficial chaplain of the Hartford Catholic Worker.)

Note: Fr. Moran spent part of Holy Week on retreat in the Hermitage at St. Francis House.

### ***Excerpts from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s April 4, 1967 "Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam"***

..... To me the relationship of (the ministry of Jesus Christ) to the making of peace is so obvious that I sometimes marvel at those who ask me why I am speaking against the war. Could it be that they do not know that the good news was meant for all (people) – for communist and capitalist, for their children and ours, for black and white, for revolutionary and conservative? Have they forgotten that my ministry is in obedience to the One who loved His enemies so fully that He died for them? What can I say to the Viet Cong or to Castro or to Mao as a faithful minister of this One? Can I threaten them with death, or must I not share with them my life?

..... The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit, and if we ignore this sobering reality we will find ourselves organizing clergy and laymen concerned committees for the next generation. We will be marching and attending rallies without end unless there is a significant and profound change in American life and policy.

..... I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. When machines and computers, profit and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism are incapable of being conquered. A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of past and present policies. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it is not haphazard and superficial. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring. A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth.... This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation's homes with orphans and widows, or injecting poisonous drugs of hate into the veins of people normally humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice and love. A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death...

..... Our only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometime hostile world declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism and militarism..."

From the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute ESSAY SERIES No. 1 which also includes Dr. King's sermon "Loving Your Enemies" and "Letter from a Birmingham Jail."





**Money and Right Relationship:  
Monetization through Organizations and Each of Us**

Bi-Weekly Zoom on Friday evenings starting with 6:45 pm Check In  
Presentation and Discussion 7-8:30 pm

In this time of growing economic insecurity, climate change and a new arms race including a new generation of nuclear weapons, we propose to have a series aimed at clarifying our understanding about Money and its relationship to each of us and our community life and institutions including our various faith communities. We are particularly concerned that areas such as incarceration, health care, education, eldercare, land and housing and war have been monetized i.e. taking something formerly seen as an individual or public responsibility with the idea of generating profits for corporations, a role for government and professionalizing relationships within the church. Let's try to understand what has been happening and in so doing lay the foundation for "building the new society within the shell of the old."

February 25 - **Monetizing the Tree of Life & How Corporations became "Persons"**  
Presenter: **Anne Scheibner**

March 11 – **"Come follow me": Monetizing Personal Life through Credit Cards,  
Health Care, Student Debt, Education and Social Media**  
Presenter: **Geoff Curtiss**

March 25 – **Peter Maurin: The Personalist Alternative  
to Monetizing Work, Wealth and Inequality**  
Presenter: **Norm Faramelli**

April 8 – **Would Jesus Zoom? Monetizing the Public Airways and Public Discourse**  
Facilitators: **Sharmaine Gregor and Anne Scheibner**

April 22 – **Trust in God, Love Your Enemies: Monetizing "Defense" and "Security"**  
Presenter: **Frida Berrigan**

May 6 – **The Year of Jubilee: Monetizing Incarceration,  
Housing and Land, Community**  
Presenter: **Ellen Adams with Sharmaine Gregor and Anne Scheibner**

May 20 – **Wrap Up: What have we learned and where do we go from here?**

**ANNOUNCEMENT: Change!?! Next fall we will have *Clarification of Thought* on **Wednesdays**! Our hope is that this change will make it possible for our Jewish and Muslim friends and colleagues to participate as well as making it easier for those for whom Friday evening is family night or an end of the week music/night out to join as well. We look forward to seeing you. **Mark your calendars: 9/21, 10/5, 10/19, 11/2, 11/16, 11/30, 12/14****