

# Peace, Justice & Conflict Studies

## DePaul University

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Spring 2012-2013

## "I Was in Prison and you Visited Me"

### A Week of Events with Sister Helen Prejean

Sister Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man Walking: An Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty in the United States* will be returning to DePaul University. April 18th through April 25th. Sister Helen will be speaking at a formal luncheon, in several DePaul courses and the Center for World Catholicism and Intercultural Theology Reception. DePaul will also be performing the play adaptation of *Dead Man Walking*.

Sister Helen Prejean has been instrumental in sparking national dialogue on the death penalty and helping to shape the Catholic Church's newly vigorous opposition to state executions. She travels around the world giving talks about her ministry. She considers herself a southern storyteller.

Sister Helen is a member of the Congregation of St. Joseph. She spent her first years with the Sisters teaching religion to junior high school students. Realizing that being on the side of poor people is an essential part of the Gospel she moved into the St. Thomas Housing Project in New Orleans and began working at Hope House from 1984 to 1986. During this time, she was asked to corre-



Photo courtesy of Grant-Guerrero Photography

spond with a death row inmate Patrick Sonnier at Angola. She agreed and became his spiritual adviser. After witnessing his execution, she wrote a book about the experience. The result was *Dead Man Walking: An Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty in the United States*. It became a movie, an opera and a play for high schools and colleges.



Photo courtesy of Grant-Guerrero Photography

Since 1984, Sister Helen has divided her time between educating citizens about the death penalty and counseling individual death row prisoners. She has accompanied six men to their deaths. In doing so, she began to suspect that some of those executed were not guilty. This realization inspired her second book, *The Death of Innocents: An Eyewitness Account of Wrongful Executions*, which was released by Random House in December of 2004. Sister Helen is presently at work on another book – *River of Fire: My Spiritual Journey*.

More about Sister Helen's events on pages 4 and 5!

### A Note from the Director

It's time again to consider December immersion experiences offered through University Ministry in El Salvador and Colombia. The students selected for these can take PAX 212 & 250 courses associated with the trips, to be taught by Joyana Jacobi Dvorak. International experience is important in order for you to grasp global perspectives on issues like poverty and critical development. Do a domestic trip if that works better in your schedule.

TIMELINE FOR COURSES: Check the time line here, given your status in AY2013-14.

WHO PLANS TO GRADUATE BETWEEN NOW (except those in PAX 350 now) AND THE END OF WINTER QUARTER 2015? You MUST do the two senior courses next year in WINTER 2014 and SPRING 2014—they are a linked set, are offered only once a year, and cannot be completed as independent studies. ARE YOU PLANNING STUDY ABROAD? Keep this requirement in mind—maybe go in fall quarter.

Fall Sophomores—take PAX 212 ASAP (offered every quarter) and at least another 200-level core course this year, if not more. PAX 218 has replaced PAX 200, which is no long required (due to the difficulties of sophomore majors getting registered in it). PAX 212 will have 25 service hours (replacing PAX 200's 25 hours). It is important to do PAX 212 ASAP, so that you have the experience of a service placement; for many students this service can become a conduit for internships or involvement in advocacy for an issue.

Incoming Fall Juniors—plan for your internship right now, so you have the greatest flexibility for, e.g., service abroad experiences (possibly in a summer). The PAX 392 is offered in winter and all students doing placements between late March 2013 and January 2014 need to register for that course, either as juniors or seniors. The placement can be done prior to the winter quarter with Director permission or just during the course. The exception is a credit-bearing approved internship experience on the PJC list (e.g., CSS or WGS) or at another university.

-Mary Jeanne Larrabee

# Perspectives on Restorative Justice

## I Came Inspired, I Left Inspired

I first became interested in Restorative Justice when I participated in a peace circle last fall. I attended an event put on by DePaul University's Cultural Center about homophobia, thinking it was going to be a lecture. However, when I arrived, chairs were organized into a circular pattern, and the facilitator began explaining the ground rules of the circle, and what a talking piece is. It was amazing the way our circle cooperated, and respected one another's insightful comments, all of which was very eye opening to me. After realizing how effective a peace circle can be, I began to look further into Restorative Justice opportunities, which led me to the DePaul Inside-Outside Program.

This program and course available at DePaul, is one that brings together DePaul students from the outside and Stateville inmates from the inside, to have a class on Restorative Justice within the prison. DePaul students travel to Stateville Correctional Center every Friday morning for 10 weeks to participate. This class has been the most life-changing experience and has exposed me to many new perspectives regarding the prison system and its relationship and role in society. Additionally, it has given me a new respect for those involved

in the system, including offenders, victims, stakeholders involved and the community.

This class has inspired me to use Restorative Justice techniques and principles to change the world. A few weeks into the class, I was able to facilitate a mock peace circle in which each person from the inside and outside played a role in a

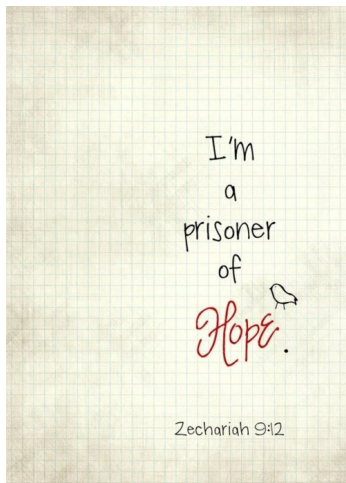
scenario regarding theft in a hospital. Some were offenders and some were victims. I had also arranged some to be community members, hospital patients, judges and politicians. As the circle went on and we all found out exactly what each other's needs were, it was evident that members of the circle were willing to help one another after understanding the background and current situation of those around them. Therefore, I believe that if a mock peace circle works well, a real peace circle will provide people with a new perspective.

I will never forget my experience and the perceptions I have gained through this class. I will always remember and cherish the friendships and memories our class has shared. As one on the outside, I will never stop caring for those on the inside. The kindheartedness that I have had the privilege to be a part of has really shown me that we are all just people with feelings, beliefs, childhoods, ideas, favorite foods and good movie recommendations who have the potential to show compassion and learn from one another. I'll always be grateful that I was able to be a part of such an amazing, intelligent, inspiring class and for the peaceful discussions about the injustices in the world and how together, we can bring change.

I am currently a senior at DePaul University and in the process of applying to graduate schools for Conflict Resolution and Restorative Justice. I aspire to gain a Master's degree in this field, and utilize Restorative Justice techniques in schools in order to prevent youth violence. I also will soon possess certification to facilitate peace circles, in which I will be arranging on-campus circles on various topics such as tuition costs, education and the prison system.

**-Emily Lupo**

**Senior, Peace, Justice & Conflict Studies**



*Photo courtesy of Emily Lupo*

# Spring Break Service Immersion Reflections

## Nonviolence in Maryland

I was honored to go on a service trip to Maryland with the Vincent and Louise house where we learned a lot about Peace. At one point in our trip we were staying at a church in Washington D.C. with Loras College, the Jonah House and the Dorothy Day house. We, the Vincent and Louise house, were participating in a kind of non-violent activism workshop. We were going to get some firsthand experience with what it meant to express our freedom of speech, if we chose to participate. We had the option to participate in three non-violent demonstrations in Washington D.C. which would advocate for non-violent international policies.

I was a little nervous to learn that one protest was at the pentagon, especially when my brother is in the USMC. Would I be stabbing him in the back by actively voicing an anti-military agenda at the pentagon? How could I both support my brother and advocate for non-violence? Is violence absolutely wrong in all situations? What about self defense? Should I support my brother, encouraging him to participate in the causes he believed in, and then turn around only to tell the pentagon that I don't like violence and wish the United States didn't have as many nuclear weapons or strength as it does? I had such a profound internal debate over whether or not I really believed in the protest our group was about to participate in. I had never seen the pentagon before, but should I go on a protest just to see the pentagon or experience protesting? How ironic was it was that the United States military claims to "protect our freedom of speech" and yet I was using that freedom of speech to attack the military? On top of all this was the question of peer pressure, was my decision to protest or not to protest purely out of a desire to be accepted by those around me, or was I doing it for something I really believed in? What would be something I believed in so much so that I'd be willing to run out and fight for that cause?

Overall, I think I learned a lot about the struggles of activism and I have started a conversation with my brother. These questions haven't been answered, but I'm working on them.

**-Thomas Miller**  
**Philosophy**

*More reflections on page 6!*

## Winter Break Service Immersion Trips

Columbia | El Salvador | Los Angeles | Denver | Tuba City  
December 3-10 (Domestic) & December 3-12 (International)

### Attend an info session:

*Sunday, April 14th at 9:30pm*  
St. Vincent's

*Tuesday, April 16 from 12-3pm*  
Student Center

*Tuesday, April 23 at 11:30am*  
Student Center (CCM)

*Wednesday, April 24 at 11:30am*  
Loop DePaul Center Rm 11013

*Thursday, April 25 at 5:30pm*  
Ray Meyer

*Monday, April 29 from 3-6pm*  
Student Center

*Wednesday, May 1 at 6pm*  
Vincent and Louise House

*Thursday, May 2 at 7:30pm*  
Student Center (CCM)

**Submit an Application on ORGSYNC by May 8th**

**\*\*An optional PAX 212 & 250 is available for those interested\*\***



Photo from <https://www.facebook.com/pages/DePaul-Service-Immersion>

# Sister Helen Prejean Events

**Annual Rev. Peter V. Byrne, CM, Lecture --- "I Was In Prison And You Visited Me:" Spirituality And Social Justice.**

**Friday, April 19**

**4:30pm Reception**

**5:00pm Talk**

**Cortelyou Commons**

Join Sr. Helen Prejean, CSJ, anti-death penalty activist and author of *Dead Man Walking*, for a conversation across the disciplines about how spirituality and social justice intersect in the living witness of the Catholic tradition. Brief responses will be offered by Michael Baxter, Catholic Worker scholar and visiting associate professor of Catholic Studies at DePaul University, and Rev. David Kelly, C.P.P.S., restorative justice expert and executive director of Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation in Chicago.



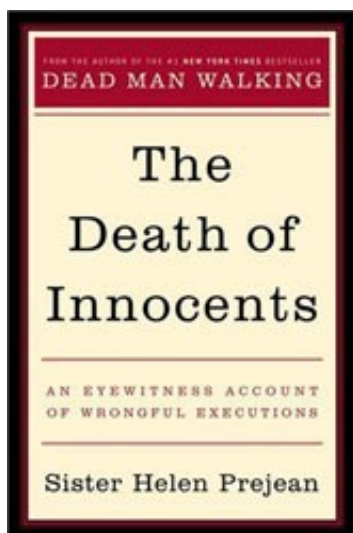
*Photo courtesy of DePaul University*

## Dead Man Walking Play Performance

**Monday, April 22**

**6:00pm Reception | 7:00 Play Performance**

**Cortelyou Commons**



*Photo courtesy of SisterHelen.org*

A staged reading of *Dead Man Walking* by Tim Robbins, Based on the book by Sister Helen Prejean

Co-directed by Fred Wellisch and Phyllis E. Griffin, followed by a discussion led by Sister Helen Prejean.

About *Dead Man Walking*: In 1982, Sister Helen Prejean became the spiritual advisor to Patrick Sonnier, the convicted killer of two teenagers who was sentenced to die in the electric chair of Louisiana's Angola State Prison. In the months before Sonnier's death, the Roman Catholic nun came to know a man who was as terrified as he had once been terrifying. At the same time, she came to know the families of the victims and the men whose job it was to execute him--men who often harbored doubts about the rightness of what they were doing. *Dead Man Walking* is an unprecedented look at the human consequences of the death penalty, a book that is both enlightening and devastating.

The *Dead Man Walking* School Theatre Project integrates the power of theatre arts and academic study into the national discourse on the death penalty to replace ignorance, apathy, and cynicism among young people regarding the death penalty with information, introspection, and inspiration.



## Catholic Studies Breakfast

Wednesday, April 24

8:00am—10:00am

Lincoln Park Student Center 380

Students in the Catholic Studies Department have worked closely with Sister Helen's archives this past academic year to research her activism as an opponent to the death penalty. The students will briefly present their research to Sister Helen and allow her to respond.

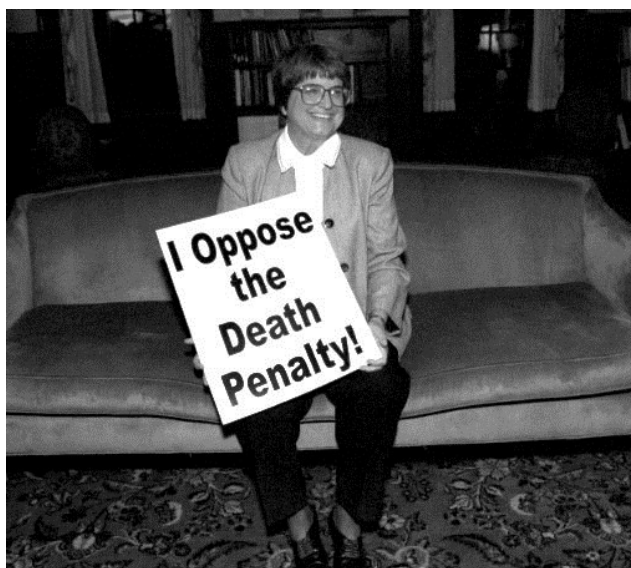


Photo courtesy of SisterHelen.org

## VIA Big 8/Interreligious Celebration

Wednesday, April 24

9:00pm

Lincoln Park Student Center 120

Sister Helen Prejean will join a meeting of Vincentians in Action, an interfaith opportunity for civic learning and spiritual growth. VIA is open to all DePaul students, joining together for faith, service, and justice work on campus.

## Memoir Writing Breakfast & Dialogue

Thursday, April 25

8:30am—10:00am

Lincoln Park Student Center 380

Sister Helen Prejean will be joined on a panel by Professor Michele Morano—director of the Masters of Art in Writing and Publishing program and Professor Ann Stanford—from the School for New Learning, discussing what it means to write one's own story, and in many ways, the stories of others. This event was a great success last year—during which the discussion was focused on two of Sister Helen's texts: "Dead Man Walking" and "The Death of Innocents". This event will focus on the writing process involved in Sister Helen's newest text: "River of Fire"; answering questions such as what a writer hopes to accomplish by writing their memoir, and what are the hopes and fears involved in publication? Attendees will be encouraged to ask Sister Helen, Prof. Morano and Prof. Stanford questions; in this very informal dialogue. Sister Helen's books will also be available for sale, and she will have a few minutes available at the end of the event for book signing. A light breakfast and beverages will be served.

## In Deeds and Words: Sister Helen's Archives at DePaul

Sister Helen Prejean C.S.J. donated her papers to DePaul University Special Collections and Archives in December 2010. Her papers reveal notable moments in Sister Helen's 30 years of advocacy on behalf of death row inmates and her activism to abolish the death penalty. They highlight her relationships and correspondence with individuals on death row as well as the process of writing her bestselling books *The Death of Innocents* and *Dead Man Walking*, which was adapted by Tim Robbins in 1995 for the film starring Susan Sarandon. Since the collection was opened in April 2012, students and faculty have accessed the papers to examine social justice issues surrounding the death penalty. Sister Helen Prejean's papers are open to the public for researchers and students to use. For more information about the Prejean Papers: email [archives@depaul.edu](mailto:archives@depaul.edu) or stop by the John T. Richardson Library, room 314.



Photo courtesy of DePaul University

## Spring Break Service Immersion Reflections Cont'd...

### Little by Little: Restitching a Community

The bone-chilling days over the past quarter would lull anyone into stagnation, would soon be outshined by my spring break plans with the Vincentians in Action. Upon the burn out I was experiencing, I decided the best solution was getting back to the basics in the beautiful city of New Orleans with the UMIN service immersion program. The trip had me excited from the start because we would be giving back to the community by rebuilding houses for citizens still affected by hurricane Katrina.

After already 8 years, I witnessed and discovered the longer term effects of Katrina's devastation. I was astounded by entire neighborhoods where the majority of the houses were still in ruins. Being the one to pick up a brush was so humbling because it brought to light the concept of working progress that I could not observe in a classroom. Every-day going home with tired limbs was a reminder that my group and I were contributing to re-stitching a community that was not going to be built over night, but little by little would become whole again.

For our service to go beyond solely work, we needed outreach on a first name basis with members of the community whose spirits inspired our efforts that much more. Throughout the trip, we were all able to discover the jubilant core



Photo from <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/ministry/serviceimmersions/neworleans.html>

of New Orleans which was in everyone you went. Whether it be in the prideful parades or in the simple inviting 'hello' from a stranger, this bright character is a reminder to remain energized and hopeful for the future. The uplifting self determinism is what keeps people striving. It was absolutely infectious too; if any of our group had felt a little overwhelmed, one of us would cheer up the room in a burst of encouragement that I know wouldn't have been possible if not for the vitalizing atmosphere. Overall it is the heart and soul that should be nourished for collaboration and progress which I brought back from connection to so many fantastic people.

-Ariel J. Wagner

## Vincentian Service Day 2013

### May 4th: SCHEDULE OF THE DAY

8:00 am: Arrive at the Athletic Center (Snacks & T-Shirt Distribution)

8:15 am – 9:00 am: Morning Program

9:00 am: Dismissal to Service Sites

10:00 am – 1:00 pm: Service

1:00 pm: Depart Service Sites

1:30 pm – 3:30 pm: Picnic and Peace Festival!

**Register at:** <http://serviceday.depaul.edu/ind-volunteers.php>

For questions contact [serviceday@depaul.edu](mailto:serviceday@depaul.edu)



Photo courtesy of <http://serviceday.depaul.edu>

## Sweet Home L'Arche

On the very early morning of Saturday March 23, ten Vincentians drove out of Chicago with hopes that during their service immersion trip they would be present, open their hearts, open their eyes to criticism and complaints, and become human. We had no idea then that our hearts and minds would be forever changed by the love and generosity of the L'Arche community in Mobile, Alabama. L'Arche Mobile is one of many L'Arche communities found both in the United States and abroad. This organization began in France in 1964 when a man named Jean Vanier invited two men with intellectual disabilities to share a home with him. Vanier had become increasingly aware of the hardships that people with intellectual disabilities faced in institutions, and so he envisioned an open community that brought those on the margins of society in. Today L'Arche continues as people with and without disabilities come to share, work, and live together all throughout the world.

Vanier writes in his book *Community and Growth*, "All of us have a secret desire to be seen as saints, heroes, martyrs. We are afraid to be children, to be ourselves." Our time during spring break was spent fostering relationships between ourselves and the core members (those with intellectual disabilities), understanding the L'Arche mission and community in Mobile, and fixing up one of the community's new houses that core members will move into sometime this year. We did nothing particularly extraordinary, and yet we were all changed in extraordinary ways. I have realized that the purpose of the service immersion trips is not to save a

community, but to allow ourselves to be changed through learning about the lives of others.

On our final day at L'Arche Mobile, my fellow Vincentians and I stood in a circle as the core members stood around us and raised their hands to bless us. As they recited their blessing, I looked upon people whose beautiful spirits transformed the way I see the world and myself. I saw Larry who taught me that we do not always need to talk in order to communicate. I saw Elmore who taught me that one small gesture of kindness can make somebody's day. I saw Annie Pearl who taught me to always express my happiness and my appreciation for others. And as I looked at these people for the last time in what will be a while, I began to cry. I was not a saint or a hero, but a child, and it never felt so good to be myself. The word "L'Arche" is French for "The Ark". For me L'Arche is more than a refuge; it is a home to celebrate the dignity of each person and the unique gifts that they have to offer. In "Sweet Home Alabama", I found my home at L'Arche Mobile.



Photo from Maureen Maher

**-Maureen Maher**

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## IIRON Student Network

The IIRON Student network is a regional network of college and university student organizations, including Depaul Students for Justice. Each organization is working for community improvement and economic justice in our region.

The IIRON Student Network trains students to understand, build, and exercise power through collective action. We work to address the issues facing us as students today as well as address the issues our communities are facing. We understand that when one part of our community suffers, the whole of our community suffers.

We will be holding our first public meeting Our Future, Our Voice on Saturday, April 13th from 2:00-3:30pm at the Chicago Temple (77 W. Washington Street). We are calling on our university communities and legislative representatives to partner with us in finding solutions to student debt, graduate unemployment, and the perilous condition of our planet. Depaul Student and PAX Major, Missy Rubio, will be speaking at this meeting.

Beginning April 9th, Depaul Students for Justice will be meeting on Tuesday nights, on a bi-weekly basis from 6:30-8:00pm. For more information, please contact Elizabeth Scrafford @ 208.818.4626 or elizabethscrafford@yahoo.com



Photo from iiron.org



## Events Calendar

Thursday, April 25

11:20am-12:50pm

Speaker Series: Race, Class and Reproductive Liberty

Lincoln Park Student Center 120AB

Thursday, April 25

6:00-7:30pm

Speaker Series: The Fatal Invention of Race

Lincoln Park Student Center 120AB

Friday, April 26

1:00-2:30pm

Chicago Movement Builders: Civil Rights to the Present

Location: TBD

Tuesday, May 7

6:00-7:30pm

Speaker Series: Consuming Virtual Queerness— Bite Size Enough for You?

Lincoln Park Student Center 314AB

Thursday, June 6

2:00-5:00

PJC Senior Presentations

Monroe Hall 114-116



Photo courtesy of Hapal

## SPOTLIGHT: New Faculty

*Sarah Colomè, Teaching in the program this Fall*

Sarah is a passionate advocate whose areas of interest include restorative justice, education, sexual health, and identity. Sarah is the SOARS Casting Director for A Long Walk Home, Inc. a non-profit that uses art therapy and the visual and performing arts to end violence against girls and women. She also serves on the board for the Chicago Women's Health Center.



Photo courtesy of Sarah Colomè

Sarah has traveled both nationally and internationally as a competitive collegiate public speaker and debater. Her lecturing experience includes working with Wheaton College, Concordia University, DePaul University, and various Chicagoland high schools teaching topics related to social justice and diversity, health education, domestic politics, advocacy, and persuasive speaking. She also serves as a volunteer Restorative Justice Peer Council Trainer with Alternatives, Inc., working with Chicago Public School students to implement restorative alternatives to suspension and expulsion.

While at DePaul, Sarah served as the President of the Graduate DePaul Advocates for Sexual & Social Health, and as an active member of the Chicagoland Consortium for Safety on College Campuses, working to advance education surrounding empowered care and sexual violence prevention. Through collaboration with a variety of students groups and university administration, G-DASSH successfully advocated for DePaul to expand its university policy on sexual violence to be more inclusive of underserved student populations. Her research focused on assessing the rate of sexual violence at DePaul, as well as the risk factors related to first-generation students. Sarah also spent time as one of the inaugural DePaul Peacemakers, collaborating with Chicago Public Schools in developing and implementing anti-violence curriculum.

## Checking in PJC Alumni

I am currently in my first year of Law School at The University of Illinois College of Law. This summer I will be returning to Chicago to work with Chicago Legal Aid for Incarcerated Mothers (CLAIM). CLAIM's mission is to provide legal and educational services to maintain the bond between imprisoned mothers and their children. While working at CLAIM this summer I will not only be helping women in the Illinois Department of Corrections with their family law matters but also teaching hands on restorative justice seminars for the women directly in the prison system. I will also be returning to my old job at the Law Offices of Ken Flaxman, a small boutique firm that focuses on police misconduct and inmate/detainee rights in the Cook County Jail. Though our criminal justice system is not something that is centered on the idea of restorative justice, I believe that these small steps for prisoner's rights will someday lead to significant change in the penal system.

**-Kaitlyn Willison**  
**PAX Alum 2012**

*The Peace, Justice, & Conflict Studies Program offers students a B.A. major curriculum that helps them reflect on the origins and causes of conflict, violence, and social injustice as well as the wide spectrum of conflict intervention, from armed conflict, through governmental and organizational peace-building, to local and interpersonal conflict resolution. The Program also introduces students to strategies for resolving interpersonal, communal and international conflicts peacefully, as well as tactics that promote the common good in a way that addresses the structural origins of violence.*

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