



Church and Peace Newsletter Autumn 2014

Dear Friends,

This autumn newsletter has turned into an Advent edition. It has been a full and eventful year. You can read all about it in the following pages.

This year in particular has been of special significance for Europe. The beginning of World War I has been remembered far and wide. How can we remember without opening up wounds anew? In our West European context there has been a sensitive discussion about guilt and reconciliation. We return to the horror and grief of the past and seek new words and gestures which will enable us, as we face up to the reality of this past war, to take responsibility for today. The important question seems to be whether or not we can acknowledge our shared responsibility. The new war in Eastern Europe makes this question especially pertinent. When the year began there was still plenty of hope that solutions could be found which would avert military conflict. Since then far too many people have been killed or injured or have become refugees.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” (Proverbs 29.18) Luther’s translation of this verse reads: “Where there is no prophecy, people go wild and crazy; but he who keeps to the law is blessed!” It is not for nothing that we pray for God to teach us the ways that lead to life, the paths of peace, reconciliation, and common security, where people take care of one another. It is not for nothing that we take action together to promote respect not only for human rights, but also for the laws which are based on

centuries-old wisdom about the place of guilt, redemption and forgiveness in the relationship between God and human beings. We need a clear vision which, especially in chaotic situations, will serve as a foundation for our prayer and action.

We hope that something of this is to be found in the following articles and in the reports on the Church and Peace General Assembly in Baarlo, the anniversary celebrations of the Wulfshagenerhütten Base Community and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, and the action against the Eurosatory arms fair.

We send warm greetings for Advent and Christmas. And may the New Year be full of God’s blessings!

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Davorka Lovreković

The Gospel of Jesus Christ: a bright light in a dark sky

Impressions from this year's General Assembly, held 23–25 May in Baarlo, near Venlo, Netherlands.

The black cattle grazing in the meadows looked like buffaloes. And there was a sign which said «Nie aaien!» – Do not stroke! This seemed to me to relate to the theme of the gathering, «Accounting for the basis of our hope» (1 Peter 3:15). This is not something nice and harmless or something to make us feel comfortable. It is part of our unlimited discipleship of the peacemaker, Jesus Christ.

About sixty participants came to Kasteel de Berckt, an old water castle on the banks of the Maas, in Baarlo, Netherlands. They came from all parts of Europe: Germany, England, France, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Russia, Serbia, Macedonia, Kosovo; and from the USA. The delegates from southeastern Europe gave moving reports of the catastrophic flooding and the damage it had caused. Donations can still be made through Church and Peace to help those who have been affected. (See back page for details of the bank account. Donations should be earmarked “flood relief”.)

Our member Kees Nieuwerth represented Church and Peace, the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, and European Quakers at the Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Busan. He and others were able to provide input from a peace church perspective. And the hearts of 5,000 participants from 245 member churches gathered in the assembly hall were gladdened and moved by “Laudate omnes gentes...” and other songs from two Brothers from Taizé. God's presence was tangible.

The word “transformation” played a key role in Busan. It gave rise to the idea of a “pilgrimage of justice and peace” during the next few years with the call to “join the pilgrimage of justice and peace”. Part of the message to the churches reads:

“2. In the city of Busan, we journeyed together on a road of transformation – we pray that as we are being transformed ourselves, God will make us instruments of peace. Many of us travelled to other parts of Korea where we witnessed the open wounds of a society torn by conflict and division. How necessary is justice for peace; reconciliation for healing; and a change of heart for the world to be made whole! We were encouraged by the active and committed churches we encountered; their work bears bountiful fruit....

“We intend to move together. Challenged by our experiences in Busan, we challenge all people of good will to engage their God-given gifts in transforming actions. This Assembly calls you to join us in pilgrimage.

May the churches be communities of healing and compassion, and may we seed the Good News so that justice will grow and God's deep peace rest on the world. 'Blessed are they who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times!' (Psalm 106:3) God of life, lead us to justice and peace!”

We were pleased that Church and Peace, under the leadership of our new General Secretary, Davorka Lovrekovic, is planning such a pilgrimage to Pristina. Church and Peace has long been active in southeastern Europe/the Balkans, so it is a good decision to accept the invitation to hold the next international conference of Church and Peace in Pristina (see the announcement elsewhere in this newsletter). Other people are thinking of a pilgrimage to the next climate conference in Paris in 2015, or a pilgrimage through Voivodina along the Danube. It is the empowerment which is important: we do not journey alone, but as part of a great company of many other believers. Pilgrimages don't have to be physical. The theme (pilgrimage for justice and peace) will be considered at gatherings of the new Evangelical-Lutheran Church in North Germany in the various church districts in the course of the next seven years, for example. A "pilgrimage" could be an existing project of a community which, instead of coming to an end, is to be continued and needs renewed encouragement.

Imagine a map: A large number of pilgrimage routes from sources of power to places of pain forms a network of roads and pathways. They are spiritual paths. Their purpose is to build coalitions with other people. There are witnesses from various places of pilgrimage, and a prophetic vision of the future. In the end, it is about being a missionary presence: living according to what we profess, wherever we happen to live. This is how we get involved in the struggle for justice and peace. We were enthused by seeing this vision through the eyes of our friends from Church and Peace.

A panel discussion between James Jakob Fehr from the German Mennonite Peace Committee and Jonathan Frerichs, WCC Programme Director for Peacebuilding and Disarmament raised two important questions. First, to what extent can 'just policing' lead us out of opposing positions for or against using force as the 'last resort'? Secondly, is it still possible to cooperate in practical terms despite different attitudes to the use of force?



Jonathan Frerichs



Jakob Fehr

Jonathan Frerichs showed that there is broad field of commitment to counteracting violence when it takes the form of human rights violations, poverty or war. At the level of practical solidarity, these options include peace missions to protect endangered population groups or practical work for reconciliation as in Serbia, about which Church and Peace members reported. Other measures are political advocacy for individuals or groups, and not least, intervening in favour of standards and treaties at the UN level, which is part of the ongoing and occasionally successful working areas of the WCC.

Jakob Fehr focused on the 'spirituality of reconciliation'. "As long as people mistrust or hate their neighbours (the neighbouring social or political group), they will not attain peace." He drew attention, firstly, to historical and current examples of nonviolent political and social processes of transformation, and, secondly, to the work of dedicated small groups in conflict regions, such as the Christian Peacemaker Teams. Well trained in nonviolent conflict management, they go into crisis areas and are able

to help in resolving confrontations and to protect and encourage the people. “We have not yet invented all forms of peaceful conflict intervention,” Fehr noted. “I think that there is lots of room for new ideas to come.” The full text of J.Frierich's and Jakob Fehr's presentations can be downloaded on the Church and Peace website <http://www.church-and-peace.org/conference-2014.html>

Finally, it is worth mentioning the relaxed evening of celebration with many good contributions and the closing worship. During the sermon we were told about the distressing situation of a family which had been torn apart by the war in Afghanistan. This is the dark sky in which the peace message of the church of Jesus Christ shines forth. Once again, the most valuable aspect of the gathering was the network of personal friendships which were deepened during our time together. We return home greatly encouraged.

Hans and Ursula Häselbarth, Selbitz

“Bashkësia e Popullit të Zotit”

The “Bashkësia e Popullit të Zotit”(Fellowship of the Lord’s People), also known as the International Church of Pristina, has become a member of Church and Peace.



The International Church in Pristina, Kosovo, has already been in existence for more than thirty years. It survived the difficult years before and during the war. And during the early years of the last decade the first contacts were made with members of Church and Peace. Ties were strengthened by visits from the Church and Peace team. Artur Krasniqi, the pastor of the

church, has attended several Church and Peace conferences – Whenever he could get a visa. He gave us insights into the situation of the churches in Kosovo and their role in society. As a result of these encounters, there have been good and important exchanges and the congregation eventually felt moved to apply for membership. The church has now been a member of Church and Peace since the last general assembly in Baarlo, where it was introduced by Vjollca, a member of the congregation. She used photos and stories to bring the church close to the assembled members of Church and Peace.

What makes the church a peace church? One has to listen to the quiet notes and the stories which people tell when they talk about their journeys to and through faith. In addition to the church’s work with children and young people, work with poor and marginalised people in Kosovar society plays an important role. Cooperation with international partners makes it possible to share skills such as sewing, carpentry, and speaking English, and thus to improve people’s chances of finding work. The benefit of two second-hand shops is twofold: They not only provide employment but also give poor people the chance to buy things at affordable prices. We are pleased to welcome the church into the Church and Peace network and look forward to further intensive encounters in the future.

God's Task for Us Here and Now

40 Years of the Wulfshagenerhütten Base Community

The invitation to Wulfshagenerhütten's 40th anniversary celebration stated: "We are unable to plan the celebration – it will take shape when we come together." Ernst von der Recke reports on how this prediction was fulfilled.

During the initial welcome, Martin Klotz–Woock quoted Martin Buber: "I require a Thou to become." Clemens Weber, whose parents founded the Base Community, reflected on the Hebrew number 40 and pointed out: "By looking back over the experience of the past 40 years, we prepare ourselves for the future."

Anthony Gwyther continued this line of thought by giving thanks to God for healing and for providing for the Community. He invited all those present to join in the celebration with sincerity. When we look back, he said, and see that there was loyalty as well as betrayal, courage as well as resignation, light as well as darkness, we see that we fulfilled the calling to be a Bible–based community. He mentioned a number of phenomena which raise questions for the Base Community: the future of their workshop, for example. Sales of play and gymnastics equipment are growing faster than ever. Twenty–five people from outside the Community are employed in the workshop. How can the Community avoid becoming a capitalist enterprise? Another phenomenon is the increasing average age of the Community. The older members are no longer able to do so much. The Community is less open to accommodating individuals who need help. Is this a natural adjustment in response to the increasing average age? Or is it creeping indolence? There is also a question around the struggle to find unity. Is the principle of consensus still valid? These questions pose a challenge again and again to one's trust in God and in the Community.



*Worship service at the Basisgemeinde
Wulfshagenerhütten*

There was worship on the Saturday morning. Exegesis of the story of Elijah was sandwiched between pieces from the Elijah Oratorio, performed by members of the Base Community. The subject of the sermon was the impulse given to Elijah by the angel. The long journey to Horeb – 40 days and nights – has to be completed, because "the liberation must continue". We heard that Elijah was "touched" by the angel in the same way that Jacob was, when he received a blow to his hip during his night–time wrestling match with an angel. Something more than a gentle touch is required to bring us out of a state of division and resignation.

We were able to view an exhibition about the development of the Base Community and the carpentry workshop. In the afternoon Markus Baum gave us an insight into his research on Gerhard Weber, the founder of the Base Community, research which is intended to serve as the basis for a book. Lore Weber, Gerhard's widow and a long–

serving member of the administrative committee of Church and Peace, explained why this is important to the Community.

The evening was filled with music, words of greeting, and lively dancing until late at night. Three women from base communities in El Salvador, with whom the Wulfshagenerhütten Base Community has maintained close contact since the 80s, spoke with great gratitude of their closeness to Wulfshagenerhütten. "Solidarity is stronger than egoism!" They told us how they had been deeply hurt by the massacre in the 80s, in which 600 people lost their lives. They spoke of martyrs rather than victims. "The martyrs are sacred to us." "The God of life is the God of the martyrs."



Founder Gerhard Weber's widow Lore talks about the history of the Basisgemeinde

The bishop (of the German Protestant church) with responsibility for communities, Jürgen Johannesdotter, took up the remembrance of the martyrs in his speech. He spoke about his association with Saint Egidio in Rome and the way in which they honour martyrs, especially those of the 20th century. "Communities have the task of honouring the legacy of the martyrs."

Wolfgang Krauss, from the intentional community Bammental, added to these reflections by reading a text which the 16th century Anabaptist Leonhard Schiemer wrote shortly before he was executed. Leonhard Schiemer takes up the accusation that the Anabaptists

brewed a magic potion which made people obedient to them. He draws a parallel between the potion in a phial and the chalice at Jesus' last supper and makes this a declaration of faith for the persecuted congregation.

Marie-Noëlle von der Recke brought greetings from the Laurentiuskonvent and from Church and Peace, of which Wulfshagenerhütten has been an active member since 1981. She brought us all back into the here and now by inviting everyone to support a petition against the presence of the armed forces and arms companies in German schools and institutions of further and higher education.

This is the way in which a celebration grew out of the gathering of a disparate group of people together with their common friends in the Base Community. The celebration was a wonderful encouragement to us all and a signpost pointing the way for the Church and Peace network. Forty years of persistence in the struggle for unity on the way of Christian discipleship, can set energy free, so that the witness of friendship can penetrate the society in which we live and all its institutions. Now, at this time, when the temptation is so great to use violence in the face of so many conflicts, it is up to us to persist in maintaining our friendship with God. Our task cannot be summed up in the exhortation "to stop things getting worse" (in the immediate future). Our task can only be fulfilled by patient listening, reaching out to others, and including those whose voices are not heard and who are excluded.

“We are one in Christ and can never be at war.” 100 years International Fellowship of Reconciliation

When pastor Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze and Henry Hodgkin, a Quaker, said goodbye to each other in Cologne in August 1914, they promised to continue to work for peace and reconciliation in their own countries, even though their governments had declared war. One hundred years later this declaration remains valid, even in a broader inter-religious context. We are united in our reverence for life and the whole of creation. We know that a different world is possible – one that is nonviolent, respectful, peaceful, cooperative. Members and friends gathered for the centennial in Constance, held 1–3 August 2014, to affirm and celebrate this vision, to mourn the victims of violence and to practise resistance. Stephan Hünninger, Protestant pastor and a member of the European Ecumenical Affairs Committee of the Rheinland Protestant Church shares his impressions.

On 1 August 1914, in the midst of preparations for war, Christian theologians, following the initiative of the Hague peace conferences of 1899 and 1907, came together for an international conference. The intention was to bring church peace initiatives in Europe and the USA together for joint discussions. The outbreak of war brought the conference to an end prematurely. But pastor Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze from Berlin and the British Quaker Henry Hodgkin, amongst others, made commitments which led to the creation, after the war, of the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches and the official founding, in 1919, of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR). The centennial celebration reminded of the origins of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation – IFOR.



IFOR members demonstrate in Konstanz

There were more than 300 participants from 30 countries, including more than 45 delegates from 23 sections and a large number of international as well as German guests. By coming together, they reminded us that, in the midst of all the chaos since the First World War, there have been and still are people who take on the task of reconciliation with persistence. They do so by engaging in initiatives which are supported by their communities and for which they take personal responsibility.

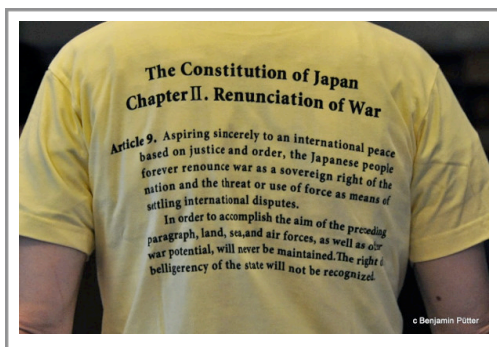
“Our goal is always the nonviolent resolution of conflict,” said Baptist pastor Lukas Johnson from Atlanta, USA, the newly-appointed international coordinator of IFOR. “That is a process which can take years and can be very tough.”

The centennial, 1–3 August 2014, became an empowering gathering of IFOR groups which are active throughout the world and are represented now in all the world religions.

Two groups of cyclists, from Cologne and Vienna, arrived the day before the celebrations began on 1 August. The participants from Germany and Austria stopped in various places along the way and engaged in action for peace. Their arrival demonstrated that, through new forms of local practical engagement, now and in the future, action for reconciliation can bring people out of isolation into connection.

Remembered past and present reality were already brought together on a walk at the start of the conference on Friday, 1 August. Within sight of the Inselhotel, where the 1914 conference was held, a wreath was laid at the memorial to Count Zeppelin as a warning against the fatal association, already evident in 1914, of German engineering ingenuity with warfare. The regional initiative www.waffenvombodensee.com revealed the way in which companies all around Lake Constance are involved in the international arms trade today. There was direct action at the local branch of the Commerzbank, which – contrary to its own ethical standards – continues to finance the modernisation of nuclear weapons. The walk ended at Constance Minster, where this year’s Fast for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons began. Matthias Engelke, a pastor from the Rhineland and Chairperson of the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Germany, was a leading participant in the fast.

The bishop of the Protestant church in Baden, Cornelius Bundschuh, in his greeting during the celebration in the Martin Luther Church on Friday evening, stressed that the



Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution

churches are grateful for being able to depend on IFOR and other initiatives: “You remind us of the promise and task of peace.” He affirmed that “During the next years, the Protestant church in Baden will become increasingly committed to being a Just Peace Church and also to becoming more recognisable as a Just Peace Church.” Nobel Peace Prize laureates from amongst the ranks of IFOR, such as Mairead Corrigan Maguire from Northern Ireland (1976), participated in the celebration. They embodied patience and persistence in working actively and nonviolently for genuine reconciliation.

On Saturday, 20 workshops gave people an opportunity to witness the practical work of the regional and national branches. The spectrum stretched: from initiatives working with child soldiers in post-conflict Congo-Brazaville to an initiative of the IFOR branch in Japan for the maintenance of Article 9 of the constitution in which the Japanese people renounce waging war and keeping an army; and from the protective accompaniment of peace villages in Columbia over many years, provided by IFOR groups in the USA, Great Britain, and Austria, to a presentation of IFOR’s work at the UN in New York, Geneva, Vienna, and Paris. It became clear that personal commitment and mutual support and networking at both local and international levels make long-term engagement possible.

In the historic town hall on Sunday 3 August, the mayor of Constance reminded that this year marks the beginning of three years of commemoration of the 600th anniversary of the Council of Constance. He took up the challenge to help Constance become a place of remembrance, reconciliation, and peace. IFOR members from each of the world religions gave moving accounts of the spiritual roots which sustain their personal engagement. Two things became clear: the multitudinous resources available for the reconciliation work of IFOR and other movements; and the magnitude of the tasks which lie ahead.

Eurosatory 2014 : An unacceptable trade

Eurosatory, the international arms fair which takes place every two years, was held 16-20 June 2014 at Villepinte Exhibition Centre. Anne-Marie Dtilly, a member of the Mennonite church in Châtenay-Malabry, reports.

This year 12 organisations (MIR – Réseau Franciscain Gubbio – Pax Christi – Quakers de France – Commission de Réflexion pour la Paix, Mennonites de France – Union Pacifiste – Association Réseaux Espérance – Church and Peace – Coordination à l'Action Non Violente de l'Arche (CANVA) – Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire – Mouvement de la Paix – Mouvement pour une Alternative Non-violente) formed the "No To Eurosatory" coalition. The petition which was circulated on the internet gained more than 2,000 signatures, compared with 70 two years ago.

The coalition organised actions on June 12th, June 16th and June 17th.

1/ Submission of the petition at the Elysée – I arrived very early, and couldn't see anyone else, except for the police who were already there. Then, little by little, people came along, including journalists from LaTelelibre.fr, who were covering our action. Only Monsignor Gaillot, Maurice Montet (Pacifist Union) and Josette Gazzaniga (MIR), were authorised to enter the Elysée, under a large police escort, to hand in the petition.

When Alexandre Nussbaumer (Châtenay-Malabry Mennonite Church) arrived, we displayed our banner in the square of Chassigne-Goyon and stayed there whilst the petition was being handed in. Several passers-by asked why we were there, and we received a visit from two representatives of the Services généraux (French intelligence service).



*Demonstration in front of the arms fair
Eurosatory in Villepinte*

2/ Demonstration in front of Eurosatory – At 7.30 several people were already there (from Lamorlaye Mennonite Church and Coordination de l'Action Non-Violente de l'Arche – CANVA – in particular). We made our way towards the entrance to the Exhibition Centre and two of us managed to get in. All of a sudden we saw police coming at us from all directions. They surrounded us and stopped us going any further “until the leader of the group comes with the authorisation”.

Members of all our organisations arrived. We were then allowed to position ourselves several meters away from the entrance to the Exhibition Centre. We displayed our banners and handed out leaflets. Each of us approached the visitors to the arms fair in our own way. Many of them took our leaflets.

I, personally, was not subjected to any verbal abuse or violent reactions. I was simply met with indifference. Unfortunately, it seems that popular opinion can be summed up by the following statements: “If you want peace, prepare for war.”; “Peace can only be achieved by force of arms.”; “We need weapons to protect ourselves and other people.” This is sad and worrying. When one visitor threw the comment at me: “You’ll never

save the world by yourself!", I responded: "No, not by myself, but with the help of our Lord...". (I don't know whether he heard me. He was in a great hurry.)

3/ Demonstration at Invalides – The organisations belonging to the «No To Eurosatory» coalition were more or less well represented. I found that I was the only person representing the Mennonites. (Oh, dear! I'd better not let the side down!)

We displayed our banners and handed out leaflets. More than a few people asked us to explain why we were there and what we were doing. We were forced to note that hardly anyone knew about Eurosatory because there was no mention of it at all in the media.

MY CONCLUSION: The heads of government associated with the arms fair really don't seem to want the public to know about Eurosatory. In spite of two demonstrations in the middle of Paris on 12 June and 17 June, both of which were accompanied by large numbers of police, there was no mention of the arms fair in the media, which is surprising, don't you think?

Letter to Cardinal Marx on situation in Northern Iraq

Last summer, several Church statements were published about stopping the "Islamic State." Joseph Rottmayr (Pax Christi and Fellowship of Reconciliation Germany reacted to the declaration of the European bishops on the 13th of August. Here are large extracts of his letter to their chair Cardinal Marx.

Dear Cardinal,

The news below, which I am reluctant to believe, is so upsetting that I feel that it is my Christian duty to write to you, in your capacity as my bishop.

«Iraq: European Bishops Support Military Intervention – Church leaders appeal to the UN to authorise the use of "all legitimate means" to put an end to the tragedy in Iraq – including military force, if necessary.»

Church leaders usually call for peace – but this time is different: Europe's Catholic bishops spoke out in favour of military intervention by the Western powers to protect the persecuted Christians and Yezidis in Iraq. Military action should be undertaken only within the framework of a UN resolution, however.

In northern Iraq Christians and Yezidis are being persecuted by the terrorist militia, "Islamic State" (IS). Hundreds of people have already been killed, many of them in bestial ways.

The chairmen of the European bishops' conferences addressed their appeal to the current chairman of the UN Security Council. They called on the Security Council to "Take the decisions which are now necessary in order to stop these acts of brutality." The appeal, which is signed by the members of the Council of European Bishops Conferences and the chairman of the Commission of the Bishops Conferences of the EU, Cardinal Reinhard Marx, includes a call for the use of "all possible legitimate means" to put an end to the tragedy in Iraq.

My thoughts in response to this: We are deeply shocked by the magnitude of the suffering which is being inflicted on Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq and parts of Syria. Most people in the world want to save these minorities. In the face

of such awful news reports, they fall back on what people have trusted since we left the Garden of Eden, i.e. violence.

It is evident from the above news report that the focus is no longer on supplying these minorities with the necessities of life and enabling them to find a home in our own countries. The focus is on the fighters of Islamic State (IS). The only thing that can stop them is military force. This includes, of course, supplying weapons to other fighters who themselves employ violent means to achieve political ends.

This is a prime example of an action which uses evil means (military force against people) to achieve a good end, an action which follows the logic of this world, but stands in contrast with the beatitude: "Blessed are the meek (i.e. those who renounce violence), for they shall inherit the Earth." The Catholic catechism states clearly: Evil may never be used to serve good ends. (1789 – It is never permitted to do evil that good may come of it.) This principle can only be negated by a lie: that the use of military force is justified because it prevents evil. The use of violence may be right from a military point of view. It may be legal and legitimate and justified by a large or small majority of people. But this does not make it Christian, because it causes blood to flow – though only the blood of the "enemy", admittedly.

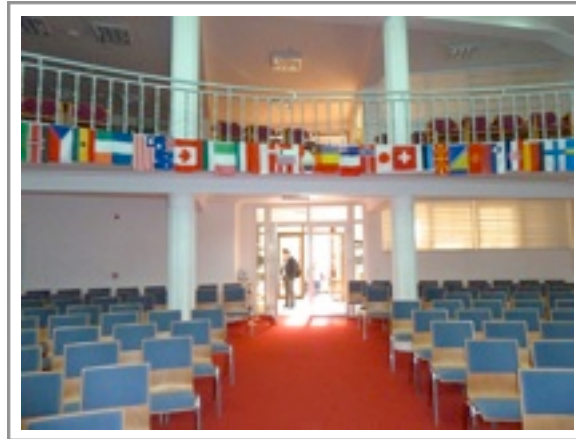
Without the use of violence, we feel powerless. In our hubris we believe, however, that, by using violence as a last resort, we can prevent evil and get everything under control. If we think this through to the end, we see that we have substituted faith in violence for faith in God. And we believe that this is God's will. But it cannot be the will of the All-Merciful. For even the IS-fighters who are seduced by error are embraced within the bounds of God's mercy. Just as these people are seduced by error, so we, on the other hand, are seduced by violence, when we put our trust in it as a means of preventing and remedying evil. Just as the bishops were mistaken when they gave their assent to the First World War and were equally mistaken when they gave their assent to the Second World War, so history will show that they err now when they assent to military violence and are untouched by the beatitudes of Jesus. Once again, upright Christians in the mould of Franz Jägerstätter will be led to doubt whether this church is the true church, given the way in which its leaders are seduced by violence. Nevertheless, I, personally, will hold fast to this church, not least because of St Francis and St Martin of Tours, who, as an officer in the Roman army and then as a Christian, having seen the killing and destruction perpetrated by the German hordes, openly refused to assent to military conflict. These saints serve as examples for many Christian conscientious objectors.

The global community should do all it can to save these minorities without using violence. This includes not only offering these people hospitality, and providing them with the necessities of life, but also trying in every possible way to make contact with IS and to influence this group towards the humane (Islamic) treatment of minorities. Let no-one say that this is impossible, in a world which can organise airlifts and put men on the moon, in a world in which love of enemies has been proclaimed.

I therefore ask you to refrain from assenting in any way to the use of military force – especially when the situation, as in this case, is a test of commitment to "just peace". And I ask you not to allow yourself to be seduced into putting your faith in violence.

With best wishes, Yours sincerely, Josef Rottmayr

Save the date -- à vos agendas -- Vorankündigung - Obavijest



Church and Peace
International Conference - Conférence Internationale
Internationale Tagung - Međunarodna konferencija
Pristina,
October 7 - 11, 2015
Pre-conference planned
Programme pré-conférence prévu
Vorprogramm geplant
Program pred konferencije u planu

Church and Peace

European, ecumenical network of Peace Churches and Peace Church-oriented congregations, communities and service agencies.

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