

The Journal of Social Encounters

Volume 6
Issue 2 *Peace Bishops: Case Studies of
Christian Bishops as Peacebuilders*

Article 1

2022

Introduction - Volume 6, Issue 2

Ronald Pagnucco

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, rpagnucco@csbsju.edu

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Recommended Citation

Pagnucco, Ronald (2022) "Introduction - Volume 6, Issue 2," *The Journal of Social Encounters*: Vol. 6: Iss. 2, 1-2.

Available at: https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/social_encounters/vol6/iss2/1

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Peace Bishops: Case Studies of Christian Bishops as Peacebuilders

We are very happy to bring together in this issue presentations and case studies of Christian bishops who have worked, or are working, for peace and justice. We are especially honored to include the opening plenary address of H.E. Cardinal Charles Bo, Cardinal of Myanmar and President of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, and the closing keynote by H.E. Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations at the Catholic Peacebuilding Network's international conference "Catholic Peacebuilding in Times of Crisis: Hope for a Wounded World" (June 20-22, 2022). Please note that the video recordings of the presentations by Cardinal Bo and Archbishop Caccia, as well as all of the other conference presentations, are available in the conference summary with recording links in the essay by Gerard Powers. These are excellent, informative presentations on various aspects of peacebuilding by a truly international group of scholars and practitioners, church leaders and grassroots activists. Gerard Powers and Caesar Montevecchio of the Catholic Peacebuilding Network, and, I am honored to say, members of this journal's editorial board, are to be hardily congratulated for putting together what I believe is an historic conference.

My goal in putting together this collection of essays on Peace Bishops is to tell the stories of these courageous, religious leaders, two of whom, Archbishop Oscar Romero and Bishop Juan Gerardi, made the ultimate sacrifice of their lives., and to learn about how they worked for peace and justice. I also hope this collection of essays will contribute to the growing body of research on religious leaders and peacebuilding, and encourage more research on the work of Christian bishops, especially Catholic bishops, as a subcategory of religious leaders.

I want to thank the invited authors for all of their work on their essays, and to thank Langham Global Library and David Tarus for permission to reprint his essay that discusses the successes and failures of Protestant and Catholic bishops during the ethnopolitical conflicts in Kenya in the 1982-2013 period. I want to give a special thanks to Gerard Powers and Caesar Montevecchio for their help with this collection of essays. They were the first people I talked to about the idea of this issue, and their support and encouragement helped me to move forward with it. They also provided possible author contacts, and procured the permission to publish the addresses by Cardinal Bo and Archbishop Caccia. I also want to thank the Journal of Social Encounters (JSE) editorial board for their approval and support. Because of authors' schedules and the large number of Peace Bishops we want to discuss, we will be publishing more essays on Peace Bishops in our March 2023 issue. In that issue we also will have an essay by Dan Philpott, co-author of *God's Century*, that will provide a framework for thinking about the peace and justice work of bishops as religious leaders.

I also would like to note here that we have created a team of co-editors that now includes JSE editorial board members Jon Armajani, Patricia Mische, Eddah Mutua, Elias Opongo, and Maria Power, along with Joseph Okumu. I will continue in my role as Coordinating Editor. The team of co-editors will help with the questions and issues that arise in working on the Journal at a more granular level. A special thanks to each of them for agreeing to join the team of co-editors. All of

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them have been with the JSE from its beginning, and have continuously made valuable contributions to it over its five years of existence.

Last but certainly not least, a special thanks once again to Assistant Editor/Production Manager and editorial board member Sheila Hellermann. Her work is invaluable and we literally could not produce this journal without her. We are very thankful for her!

Ron Pagnucco, Coordinating Editor