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Volume 2, Issue 5

# WE COMMIT OURSELVES:

A social justice newsletter of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Third Order St. Francis



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- Cleveland Hosts TWO Conventions



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Sr. Donna Wilhelm, Sr. Dorothy Pagosa, Sr. Marjorie White, Maxine Smith, Sr. Rose Grabowski, Sr. Shannon Fox—Social Justice Committee

## Conventions, conventions, conventions: What are we to do?

by Sister Donna Wilhelm

If you ask me, so far this political season began too early, is lasting too long, had too many unqualified candidates, and the whole show has sunken to a new low. I've said a number of times in the past few weeks, "The whole thing feels like a reality show to me." And on a global scale it doesn't help me to be a "proud American."

That said, we're on the verge of two national political conventions: Republicans in Cleveland and Democrats in Philly a week later. The pre-planning and publicity has been non-stop, at least from the vantage point of this Clevelander.

People of faith are also preparing. In Cleveland

there will be a People's Peace and Justice Convention, an event to "Circle the City" in prayer prior to the RNC. Area faith communities are planning opportunities to join with others in prayer and activists are planning marches: for Trump, to Stop Poverty, and others.

### What's a Franciscan to do?

Perhaps it's simple: Prepare – pray, read, talk with others, participate in those events to which you feel called, and ask the Holy Spirit to guide all those in various contests and to hold our country with compassion and forbearance.

As most of us are aware Francis wasn't afraid of politics. He jumped into

the fray between the Bishop and the Mayor of Assisi and wrote a special stanza in his Canticle to reflect his prayer for them. After his encounter with Sultan El-Kamil in Damietta, he wrote a *Letter to the Rulers of Peoples* and shows in that short missive that he was influenced by his visit.

Our hope is that this June issue of our Social Justice Newsletter, *We Commit Ourselves*, will help each of us sisters and associates continue our conversations, along with our prayer and research, as we prepare to participate in perhaps the most important responsibility we have as citizens of a democracy – as we prepare to vote. ■

## Cleveland Hosts TWO Conventions

The fact that the Republican National Convention meets in Cleveland, OH July 18-21, 2016 is creating a lot of media attention.

Other groups are also vying for news clips. As of this writing many groups

have applied for permits to demonstrate during the convention. A few of the groups who plan to demonstrate are:

- *Support Donald Trump March;*
- *Stop Poverty Now March;*
- *A Tour for the delegates of Cleveland Neighbor-*

*hoods: Another view of the City of Cleveland.*

The ACLU is even threatening to sue the city for not publishing the march routes that will be available and the list of

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## Cleveland Hosts TWO Conventions

those who will be awarded demonstration permits.

One group is “getting a jump” on all of this. The Cleveland Nonviolence Network is planning to hold **The People’s Justice and Peace Convention** July 15-17, 2016, just prior to the RNC.

The purpose of this convention is to challenge both political parties to propose real solutions to the social, economic and environmental problems that confront the United States.

The convention delegates will craft a policy platform that outlines how we can construct peaceful, secure, and sustainable communities that are grounded in respect for human rights and an appreciation of the environmental qualities necessary to generate prosperity for all.

**Michael Eric Dyson**, best-selling author, popular Sociology professor at

Georgetown University, and a person whose bio states that “*he takes on the toughest and most controversial issues of the day including race, politics, and pop culture with fearless and fiery rhetoric*” will open the convention.

Interest groups such as Economic Justice, Racial Justice, Rights of Immigrants, and Environmental Justice will craft planks of the convention platform which will be carried to the delegates of both the RNC and the Democratic National Convention meeting one week later in Philadelphia.

Organizers have invited representatives from local, state, and national justice groups.

This convention is open to **all** who wish to participate... including associates, sisters, and friends of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis!

During its meeting the People’s Convention hopes to:

- focus media attention on issues not addressed at the national political party conventions;
- initiate an exchange of ideas among participants that will facilitate new ways of thinking about the convention’s target issues and forge new alliances that can better marshal resources and make progress towards peace and sustainability;
- be a demonstration of peaceful resolve that the target issues not be ignored and must be incorporated into the future governance of the United States.

**The People’s Justice and Peace Convention** opens on Friday July 15, 2016 at Olivet Institutional Baptist Church, 8712 Quincy Ave, Cleveland, OH.

Registration begins at 6:00 PM. ■

## The March for Our Lives at the Democratic National Convention

The Poor People’s Economic Human Rights Campaign is announcing the next “March for Our Lives” which will take place on the Opening Day of the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. They call on

the poor of all colors, generations, genders, and other divisive labels to join them in the ongoing battle against poverty.

The march will draw attention to the **economic** issues that are decimating our cities and country.

Some of these issues include—but are unfortunately not limited to—ending homelessness with a zero tolerance for its continuation, providing living wage jobs for all, ending hunger, providing

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## Celebrating Laudato Si' on Social Media

The **Catholic Climate Covenant** is inviting participation in their June social media campaign celebrating the one year anniversary of *Laudato Si'*.

In their invitation they state:

"The campaign is simple: print a poster and write either what you **have** done or what you **will** do because you were inspired by *Laudato Si'*."



"Then post it to your social media accounts, using the hashtag #CreationCare and challenging your friends and colleagues to do the same." (sample below)

The campaign will be running from June 1-17. It will culminate on June 18, when they will be inviting everyone to **thank Pope Francis** for the encyclical.

They will be launching a "landing page" for the campaign on June 1, which is where you'll find the posters and a step-by-step. ■



Website for the Catholic Climate Covenant:

[www.catholicclimatecovenant.org](http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org)



Sample

## March for Our Lives at DNC... *continued from page 2*

affordable, accessible housing, fighting for a livable minimum wage, increasing access to education, and fully restoring city services for the people. In short, these necessities of life should be considered a **right**, which the Democratic Party must openly acknowledge and quickly **resolve**.

This march is necessary to demonstrate that the poverty-stricken people do not feel repre-

sented by the Democratic Party. The party has been labeled as the poor people's party; but this group **demands** that they earn it.

On both sides of the political aisle parties have furthered the criminalization and alienation of the poor and homeless—a phenomenon that **must** end.

- **Place:** South Side of Philadelphia City Hall, marching down Broad Street (1401 JFK)

- **Time:** Assemble at 3 pm, on Monday, July 25<sup>th</sup>

**For Further Information Contact:**

Cheri Honkala by phone or text at 215-869-4753, or email at [cherihonkalappehrc@gmail.com](mailto:cherihonkalappehrc@gmail.com)

**Note from Sister Dorothy:**

*The SSJ-TOSFs might remember Cheri Honkala from her presentation given during the Heart of the Matter Gathering several years ago.*





## Materials that may be of Interest...

Below is a listing of some films and a book that may be of interest.

- **The Fixers:**  
7 short films; a team of film-makers has followed Fixers, Clevelanders Tanese Horton, Naudia Loftis, RA Washington & Jacqueline Greene, Friends from Cleveland's Nearwest Side, Vel Scott, Marvetta Rutherford and Maria Miranda & Susan Greene.

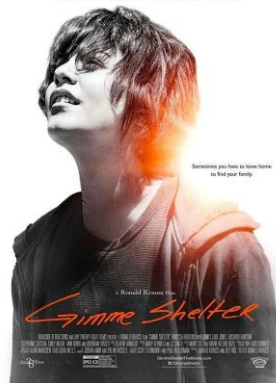
Find the first film at <http://www.thefixerscleveland.com>.

- **The 33:** A True story. Chilean miners grapple with greed, despair, and find redemption.



- **Gimme Shelter:**  
The true story of a pregnant teenager who flees her abusive mother in search of her father, only to be rejected by her stepmother and forced to survive on the streets until a compassionate stranger offers a hopeful alternative, a special shelter for young mothers that still exists today.

BASED ON THE INSPIRING TRUE STORY  
VANESSA HUGGINS JAMES EARL JONES ROSARIO DAWSON ...BENEDICT WEAVER  
"VANESSA HUGGINS IS A COMPLETE REVELATION!"



- **The Sultan and the Saint:**

A film still in production that tells the story of Francis and the Sultan.

To see a trailer go to [https://www.launchgood.com/project/the\\_sultan\\_and\\_the\\_saint\\_film#](https://www.launchgood.com/project/the_sultan_and_the_saint_film#)



- **Super Better:**  
*For all those who disparage video / digital games. Are games a distraction or a path to personal growth?*

In this book, the author Jane McGonigal, PhD reveals a decade's worth of scientific research into the ways all games—including videogames, sports, and puzzles—change how we respond to stress, challenge, and pain. She explains how we can cultivate new powers of recovery and resilience in everyday life simply by playing games like Angry Birds, Farmville, Tetras and adopting a more "gameful" mind-set. ■



*"We continue to influence our public officials to pass legislation that supports the human rights of all through email campaigns, public meetings, letter writing, phone calls, etc."*

SSJ-TOSF Congregational Commitments  
26<sup>th</sup> General Chapter

### REMEMBER...

We welcome your submissions in the form of

- "Sightings"
- Brief write-ups of your activities, "prototypes," suggestions for workshops, books, articles, films, resources.

**You can send items** to any member of the Social Justice Committee for inclusion in the next issue of our newsletter, *We Commit Ourselves*.

~Your Social Justice Committee