



Our Speakers and Awardees

KEN BUTIGAN serves on the executive committee of Pax Christi International's *Catholic Nonviolence Initiative*. A professor in the Peace, Justice and



Conflict Studies Program at DePaul University in Chicago, he also works with Pace e Bene, where he co-founded Campaign Nonviolence and has led numerous nonviolence trainings, including annually at the Great Lakes Initiative Leadership Institute in Kampala, Uganda. Ken has worked with numerous social movements for three decades, including movements for a nuclear-free future, an end to homelessness, and freedom for East Timor. From 1987 to 1990, he was the national coordinator of the *Pledge of Resistance*, a nationwide network that organized coordinated nonviolent action for

peace in Central America. He was a founder and lead organizer with the *Declaration of Peace* and *Christian Peace Witness*, two nationwide grassroots campaigns that worked to end the US war in Iraq. His books include *Nonviolent Lives* and *Pilgrimage through a Burning World: Spiritual Practice and Nonviolent Protest at the Nevada Test Site*. Ken lives in Chicago with his spouse Cynthia Okayama Dopke and their daughter Leah.

JEAN STOKAN is the former vice-Chair of the National Council and Policy Director for the



Pax Christi USA. She serves as Justice Coordinator for Immigration for the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, whose work focuses on non-violence, immigration, anti-racism, Earth, women and poverty/economic inequality. She has led many dozens of delegations to Central America and the U.S.-Mexico border, and advocates on immigration policy issues in Washington, D.C. Jean and her husband - Scott Wright - were honored with the *2019 CRISPAZ Peace Award*, which recognizes individuals or organizations that embody the preferential option for the poor in their work for the promotion of peace and social justice. Jean & Scott have a daughter - Maura - who is a Social Work major at Loyola University in Chicago.

MARIE ADELE GROSSO starts and stops each day engaged in the people, world, and politics around her. As a



Junior at East Lansing High School, she brings a passion for justice with her to school each day. She especially enjoys history, literature, and economics. Her involvement with Model UN helps too. She serves on Student Council and participates in student groups addressing human rights, gender equality, racial justice, and more! She has lived in Palestine, Mali, France, and Canada which has contributed to her appreciation of cultures beyond the United States. She volunteered with the Warren campaign and looks forward to doing more of this kind of work. She has also volunteered with Meta Peace Team and is a big fan of their work, seeking to integrate their vision into her school life. Pax Christi Michigan proudly recognize Marie Adele Grosso as our **2020 Young Peacemaker Award winner** (and our newest State Council member!). Congratulations!

FR. GERRY BECHARD was born in Detroit, the oldest of five children. While still a Junior in High School, Gerry



enlisted in the Navy Reserve and after graduation served on active duty for two years. In 1974, he entered Sacred Heart Seminary and was ordained a priest by John Cardinal Dearden in 1980. His first parish was St Williams in Walled Lake, home to Williams International— manufacturer of cruise missile engines. It was here that Fr. Gerry began his peace advocacy. He was instrumental in creating Elephants in the Living Room, and has served on the boards of Future Church, the American Catholic Council, and the Association of U.S. Catholic Priests. Fr. Gerry has devoted nearly 40 years to the causes of peace and justice. Pax Christi is honored to present the **2020 Purple Ribbon for Peace Award** to Fr. Gerry Bechard, a man who proclaims and lives the Gospel message of peace and justice!

COLLEEN JOY MILLS was born and raised in Detroit. She attended St. Lawrence School and Rosary High School. She



received a Master of Education Degree from Wayne State University. Colleen became a teacher and taught in Detroit for 35 years. When she retired, her husband George planned a trip around the country for the month of September, so she would not miss seeing her students. That October, she decided to attend a meeting to organize Michigan to lobby for a Department of Peace in the federal government. She was asked, and agreed, to be the leader of the 11th District, and with that, being a peace advocate became Colleen's second career. In November 2003, she co-founded **Citizens for Peace**, where she works non-stop to raise awareness of many peace issues and chairs the organization's monthly educational meetings. In 2016, *Peace Action of Michigan* presented Colleen with its annual **Peace Builder Award**. In addition to *Citizens for Peace*, Colleen has served on the Board of the *Michigan Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence*.

Citizens for Peace, the state of Michigan, and indeed the world have all benefited from Colleen's unquenchable thirst for peace with justice. Congratulations, Colleen, on this well-deserved recognition: Our **2021 Purple Ribbon for Peace Award**.