

ALTERNATIVES SPRING/SUMMER 2013

From Our Director:

Which one? That's the question I'm asking myself about which article in this edition of *Alternatives* to feature in my message to you here. There's the informative and poignant Peacemakers Gang Intervention and Outreach interview with Pastor James Giles that will engage you and move you. There's the article on our successful fundraising event, "Believing in Miracles: From Violence to Love and New Life" with Edwina Gateley which includes some great photos. There's the Peaceprints Project update with thank-you notes from Nardin girls that will warm your heart. There's a report on our work in the Math, Science, and Technology Buffalo public school which is challenging yet hopeful. You'll want to learn about Alternatives to Violence Project workshops continuing in the community and in the prisons and perhaps even register for an upcoming workshop. There are four new Advisory Board members to get to know. And Camp Peaceprints is coming right up in July.

Guess you'll just have to read the whole newsletter!

With much enthusiasm,

Vivian

Vivian Ruth Waltz
Director



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The Peacemakers of Buffalo Gang Intervention and Outreach Program:

An Interview with Pastor James Giles

By Vivian Waltz

What is the Peacemakers of Buffalo program?

The Peacemakers of Buffalo program is a coalition of community-based organizations that specialize in youth intervention programs and strategies. They are already on the ground working with the young people that may be on the borderline of joining gangs. The Peacemakers is a concept bringing all of us together under one umbrella to coordinate and expand our efforts in a collective and unified way.

Who are the Peacemakers?

I am the President and CEO of Back to Basics Outreach Ministries. The Peacemakers involve my organization. It also involves the Stop the Violence Coalition of which Murray Holman is the President, Buffalo United Front whose President is George Johnson, MAD DADS President Dwayne Ferguson, F.A.T.H.E.R.S. President Lenny Lane and a women's organization called No More Tears where the President is Tina Sanders. The six groups have linked up and formed a partnership to start addressing those areas or community events where the youth would start chaos. We would be there to make sure that we supervise the activities and deter violence from erupting.

How do you see God's hand in the evolution of this program?

We are all men and women of God first. The type of work that we do sometimes is risky and we would not do such a thing without believing that we have God on our side. So we are people of faith believing that our efforts are not only authored by God but also blessed by Him.

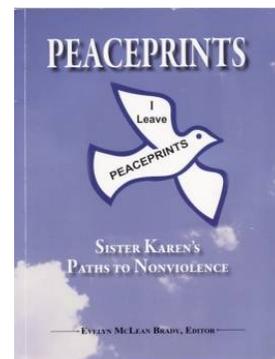
Could you talk about the structure of the Peacemakers organization?

We have an eleven-person team. I am going to be the coordinator of the Peacemakers so I will be responsible for supervising 10 other Peacemakers. Five Senior Peacemakers will be the heads of the other organizations and they each will bring in a Junior Peacemaker from their group. So two individuals from each organization will be paid peacemakers and on call, producing at least 20 hours of work per week. We will be documenting the work to measure the metrics, outcome and effects in the community so that we have reports for our Advisory Board.

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The Peaceprints Project Continues

The Peaceprints Project uses the book *Peaceprints: Sister Karen's Paths to Nonviolence* and its accompanying lessons to bring themes of peace, reconciliation, forgiveness, alternatives to violence, tolerance and "second chances" to students in grades 7-12. Through discussions, art work, readings and writing of poetry, stories and reflections, the project encourages the students' desires for peace and nonviolence within themselves and in their circles of family, friends, schools, and society.



The Peaceprints Project is made possible by a grant from the Western New York Writing Project at Canisius College. Educators are Evelyn Brady, Margaret Cusack, and Vivian Waltz.

Among six schools, the Peaceprints Project went to the Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart this year. Following is an article written by religion teacher Sheila Lyons:

The Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart was honored to have members of the Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence Peaceprints Project spend a week in April with the junior Religion classes. Since most of these girls were only ten years old when Sr. Karen died, they have little or no memory of Sr. Karen or her ministry. All they see are the "I Leave Peaceprints" white doves all over Western New York! The goal of the project is to educate students on Sr. Karen's life and legacy.

Evelyn Brady, Vivian Waltz and Margaret Cusack focused on nonviolence and forgiveness. Using Peaceprints: Sister Karen's Paths to Nonviolence and The Return of the Prodigal Son as inspirations as well as interactive games, the project leaders illustrated how these Gospel messages of peace and forgiveness, an essential part of Catholic Social Teaching, are tools teens need in order to live out Martin Luther King, Jr.'s belief, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." What ensued were incredibly personal, thoughtful discussions on the difficulty but the necessity of genuine forgiveness in our daily lives. Peace in our world follows peace from within.

Students reflected on the forgiveness theme in their own lives by writing a paper in which they recalled instances when they both gave and sought forgiveness. These very personal, honest accounts focused on their emotions when forgiveness was given and when they forgave, too.

The Peaceprints Project has come to Sacred Heart for the last two years, and it is now an established piece of the Religion 11: Catholic Social Teaching curriculum. We look forward to their return next year!





Excerpts from thank-you notes for the Peaceprints
Project from students at Nardin Academy:

“Even the smallest choices and actions can make the world a better place. A simple smile or hug or even just loving one another helps to get rid of violence. Nonviolence seems to be a chain reaction...Thank you, Ella”

“I was touched the most by learning about Sister Karen’s character and the actions she did for people, even the ones who did not treat her with respect. My worldview is challenged by the corruption in the world but I am inspired by what Sister Karen accomplished...Thank you again! Beth”

“Sister Karen’s story was phenomenal. I’ve always been stubborn. I never really forgive people. But I’ve realized I need to learn how to forgive...From Rachel”

“I learned how important forgiveness is in life and especially how we are all at different points in accepting/actually using the concept. We need to learn how to forgive even those who do not share our opinions, ideas, and beliefs...Sincerely, Grace”

“It is always inspiring to find that things in life that we consider complicated and impossible to resolve are actually within our power to change...Sincerely, Lily”

“I realize now that violence is so much more than physical abuse, it is any action taken that hurts another...I am going to make a conscious effort to reflect Christian values in my life more than I ever have before and be a steward of nonviolence...Sincerely, Monica”

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Peacemakers Interview with Pastor James Giles (continued from page 2)

*What is the oversight that will be in place?*

There will be a community Advisory Board made up of people that have a vested interest in seeing violence being reduced in our community. They have a vested interest in our work being a proactive approach as opposed to a reactionary one that most often is done by law enforcement. But we work along with law enforcement. The community Advisory Board will have an advisor from law enforcement to make sure that we are not violating people’s rights when we go out there. They will be our governing board.

*What has been your relationship with law enforcement?*

We’ve worked right alongside law enforcement for the major festivals: Juneteenth, Gus Macker, Hispanic Festival, even the Italian Festival. We sit and do strategic planning with them in terms of how we’re going to set up and what’s going to be the rules of engagement, what role each organization is going to play.

*With your relationship with the police...what about the youth? Won’t they be afraid that you are going to snitch on them?*

No, actually. The youth know us as advocates for them. We’re not trying to get anybody locked up. We’re saying we’re just not going to allow you to come here and be disruptive at this community affair. If we have to put you out of the park, the police may take you out of the park, take you down to the police station, ask you a few questions and let you go. Whereas in times past if they had to take you out of the park you were going to jail.

*continued on page 9*

## Introducing...New Members of the Advisory Board of the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence



**Matthew Becton** has worked as a Sales Manager for Verizon Wireless for 4 years. He graduated from St. John Fisher College with a Bachelor's degree in Business Management. He is an avid reader, and loves weight lifting, basketball and football. His favorite thing to do on a Sunday afternoon is "relaxing with my beautiful wife Asia."

**Sister Elizabeth Savage** is a Sister of St. Joseph who spent most of her career teaching English at Medaille College. She has also held positions in the administration of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Currently, Sister Liz is Assistant Manager at The Claremount, an apartment complex for low-income senior citizens.

Sister Liz enjoys reading on a variety of topics, cooking, walking and cats!



**Maureen Satchell** is an Associate of the Sisters of St. Joseph. She retired after 30 years working for New York State, most recently in the Dept. of Motor Vehicles.



Maureen has four daughters, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She spends as much time as possible with her family and loves to plan family functions. Maureen is a member of the choir, prayer group, and Bible study at St. Martin de Porres Church.



**Judy Major** received a B.S. in Education from St. John's University, a MA in History from Niagara University, a MAPM in Pastoral Ministry from Christ the

King Seminary and a certificate in Biblical studies from the Catholic Biblical School. Judy taught social studies for the West Seneca Central School System. She is an Associate of the Sisters of St. Joseph who enjoys gardening, bowling, golfing, attending concerts and plays, and traveling. Judy was Sister Karen Klimczak's executive assistant at Hope/Bissonette House.

**Members of the Advisory Board of the  
SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence are:  
Matthew Becton; Jean Klimczak, OSF; James Mang, SSJA;  
Judy Major, SSJA; Bea Manzella, SSJ; William F. Marx; Marilyn Peterson;  
Maureen Satchell, SSJA; Elizabeth Savage, SSJ and Jean Marie Zirnheld, SSJ**

## Believing in Miracles: From Violence to Love and New Life An Afternoon with Edwina Gateley

"Don't you see what God is doing?" was Edwina Gateley's urgent question to those of us who gathered at Medaille College on April 7<sup>th</sup> to raise funds for the Sister Karen Center and be inspired by the woman one audience member called the "poster child of God." Edwina is a renowned theologian, artist, writer, Catholic lay minister, and modern-day mystic and prophet whose life bears compelling witness to the Good News that God Is With Us. Edwina believes we just need eyes to see that God is present transforming violence to love and new life all around us.

Although the sobering forms of violence in the world – war, domestic violence, sexual abuse, economic injustices – make us want to hide far away, Edwina testified to the reality that God comes into the darkness "to stir us and bring us out, to seduce us to a bigger vision that protects us from feeling so hopeless and helpless." She used Sister Karen Klimczak as a shining example of someone who had that bigger vision, in whose heart God's grace was at work transforming violence (of incarcerated men) into love and new life.

The one thing that is required of us is that we take action as God calls us out of helplessness. We are not to be the "cheerleaders" for others. "God is to be the cheerleader!" Edwina emphasized. Lest we feel discouraged by the heroic work of martyrs and saints like Sister Karen, Edwina assured us that our acts don't need to be dramatic, just inspired. Just authentic. Just real.

Inspired, authentic, real AND dramatic describe the stories Edwina related from her own experience. The potential for hope and new beginnings in the human spirit is always present, even in a war-ravaged soldier in Uganda who intended to harm Edwina but was pacified by her genuine inquiry about his family left behind. A former prostitute Edwina ministered to in Chicago used beach stones to describe the miracle of nonviolence: like the jagged edges that the waves had worn smooth, so her life transformed could help smooth the sharp pain of others in the throes of violence. Brenda even collected beach stones and prayed with Edwina over them, turning them into "serenity stones" that were given to women who entered the recovery program.

Susie was a formerly homeless member of the Latin Queens gang from whose new apartment window Edwina stretched and strained to see a tiny glimpse of the shimmering Lake Michigan. It wasn't the wide expanse of water she'd expected to see when the newly employed and gang-free woman excitedly told her about the view. Edwina counseled us against expecting to see "the whole lake" - a complete end to the violence in our world. "But let us cultivate the eyesight that sees that little bit here, that little bit there. It's not the whole thing, but isn't it good? Don't you see what God is doing?"

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A monthly prayer group has been meeting in response to Edwina Gateley's belief in the power of prayer to "affect the universe and make a difference in some dark place you may never know." Write to [vivian@sisterkarencenter.org](mailto:vivian@sisterkarencenter.org) or call 362.9688 for more information.

*Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Young women from T.R.Y. (Teaching and Restoring Youth); Sisters Loretta and Virginia Young; Audience joins in singing "1,000 Grandmothers"; Sister Jean Klimczak, Edwina Gateley and Vivian Waltz; Edwina Gateley, Sister Michele Beiter and Sister Mary Jo Colucci; Mary Lynch and Mary Ann Logue (with book purchases!); Reception buffet; Edwina Gateley and Lucille Gervase; Jim Mang and Bill Marx.*



*Believing in  
Miracles:  
From Violence  
to Love and  
New Life*



## ***Alternatives to Violence Project News***

### ***Alternatives to Violence Project Community Workshops***



Since our previous newsletter last fall, four AVP community workshops which included 112 participants have taken place. Basic (Level I) workshops were held in November and April and an Advanced (Level II) workshop was held in March. In addition, Mt. Mercy Academy chose the Alternatives to Violence Project for their junior retreat, which took place during two school days in January. This was the second year that we provided a retreat, and they were so impressed they've already scheduled one for next school year!

The recent April workshop included students from Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora. The AVP Niagara Frontier Council has had a relationship with Christ the King Seminary since Kathy Castillo, Director of Theological Field Education for CKS, took a Basic workshop along with seminarians back in 2007. Over the years, Kathy has sent students from the seminary to AVP workshops and even brought a Basic workshop to the CKS campus.

A big THANK YOU goes out to our volunteer facilitators: Jan Burns, Sarah Haykel, Heidi Jones, Cynthia Lehman, Audrey Mang, Kate Mang, and Suzanne Montalalou. We also appreciate help with meals provided by Jim Mang and Tino Bellanca.

**GOOD NEWS! A Basic (Level I) workshop will be offered on September 13-14 and an Advanced (Level II) workshop is coming up on November 8-9. Write [vivian@sisterkarencenter.org](mailto:vivian@sisterkarencenter.org) or call 362.9688 to register.**

### ***Alternatives to Violence Project Prison Workshops***

*by Bill Marx*



We have held two Basic workshops and one Advanced workshop at Wende Correctional Facility in Alden since last fall, with a total of 61 participants. One of the most gratifying aspects of working with Tino Bellanca and Suzanne Montalalou to bring the AVP program to the inmates at Wende is knowing that we are doing God's work, made possible by folks and businesses who support the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center For Nonviolence. Our time at Wende means that we as facilitators and inmates in the AVP workshops are confirming Sister Karen's belief that "*Nonviolence Begins With Me.*"

Our society tends to diminish the humanity of those among us who have been found guilty of a crime punishable by incarceration. Conversely, supporters of AVP affirm the worth of prisoners, as did Pope Francis I at Easter time by washing the feet of prisoners, loving all of our sisters and brothers.

AVP brings awareness to inmates that, "if I had known some of these things before I did what got me in here, I wouldn't be in here." It may be difficult for you and me to think that anyone would not be aware of common-sense alternatives to violence, but that lack of awareness is common in Wende. The inmates at Wende send their appreciation to us for what you, the supporters of the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence, have made available to them.

## Peacemakers Interview with Pastor James Giles (continued from page 4)

realize what our role is. We know many of the players. They tend to listen to us. They recognize that we care about them.

*What kind of training will the Peacemakers receive?*

One of the trainings will be based on a best practice philosophy [*the Alternatives to Violence Project*] run by the Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence also brought to us by Teny Gross [*of the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence*] in Providence, Rhode Island. They'll need to understand nonviolent philosophy and tactics for engagement. Not just the principle Peacemakers but also all the volunteers and the youth themselves need to learn alternatives to violence. There's also a training relative to law enforcement. There are rules of engagement about personal rights and shared or confidential information and other tenets that law enforcement must operate by. Then there's a training relative to street patrol. There's some mechanics that are adopted by MAD DADS that we've been utilizing in the past. Number one is that we have the right attitude and motivation – we'll get that from the Sister Karen Klimczak Center.

*How is the Peacemakers program being funded?*

In part through the City of Buffalo through forfeiture funds. The Mayor himself has put up \$100,000 toward this project. The project is going to cost between \$280,000-\$290,000 per year. We've sent in an application to the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation. It looks very hopeful that we'll get a substantial amount from them as well as the Oshei Foundation which also made a verbal commitment that once we get some of the other pieces in place they will come in and fill in the gap.

We are establishing partnerships with churches and we've collected about \$3,300; we're looking for that to expand. Ideally we'd like the ecumenical community to consider this project as part of their missions. We're calling it "Mission for Buffalo" because this is going to bring not only the wellbeing of citizens, but it's going to bring a measure of peace to this community that has an inordinate number of shootings daily. This will have to be a concerted effort on behalf of everybody to make sure it's a success.

*Can the Peacemakers get to work before the whole budget is raised?*

We'll be doing those special events, but if the budget is not in place we won't have the infrastructure or strategic plan for what it is we want to do on a daily basis. But we'll be driven by the need. We'll come together like we always have in the past to make sure that the community is safe.

*How can supporters of the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence help?*

One area is the specific program designed to do training [*Alternatives to Violence Project*]. We'd like to have the Center set up as a hub so that as we begin to grow and expand the volunteer base they can do the training piece. Another way is to help us in the fundraising. Whatever contributions can be made. There are things that are not in the base budget that we'll certainly need to raise extra funds for. Things such as radios, or apparel that we didn't have in the original budget. Those things will be very helpful.

I don't want to omit prayer. Keep us up in prayer. The whole project as well as the City. Keep it up in prayer.



## ***Adventures in the Peace Education Project***

7<sup>th</sup> Graders at The Math Science Technology Preparatory School

By Victoria Ross

It's been quite a year at MST working with the 7<sup>th</sup> Graders! This year MST moved back to its beautifully renovated building on East Delavan near Grider, putting the children back in their own neighborhood. We were at MST for Say Yes's announcing full scholarships for Buffalo Public School students, and what a thrilling day it was! But it leaves the onus on students doing the work, which requires focus and determination.

We've spent the last year with weekly groups trying to instill the desire and ability to focus and maintain a positive attitude. Drum circles – "jamming" – great for listening and cooperation, have been a mainstay. So have "go-rounds" with each student answering a given question, creative construction projects, and the ever-present Peace Agreement guiding the process (including any conflicts to be peacefully resolved). We've had the students participate in the Global Days of Listening of PeaceJam Afghanistan/Afghan Peace Volunteers, so they've gotten to talk with youth in that war-torn country. Our own PeaceJam Buffalo has also come to work with the afterschool youth

(grades 5-8) for another successful and fun series of exercises and games that build on the basics for Peace Education and – indeed – Education.



The Peace Education Project – a collaboration between the Interfaith Peace Network, the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence, and the WNY Peace Center, with superb contributions from the Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse (ECCPASA), as well as Stop The Violence Coalition, Women Against Violence Everywhere (WAVE), and others – is an effort to heal our beloved communities and build for the future. Thanks for making it all possible.

Our gratitude goes out to the following Sisters of St. Joseph who folded, stuffed, labeled, sealed and stamped our last mailing. You're the best!

*Sisters: Joan Carroll, Phyllis Connors, Cecile Ferland, Ruth Haselbauer, Eileen Joyce, Rita Kane, Marie Kerwin, Anna Kessen, Mary Lintner, Carol McTigue, Meg Norris, Marian Schwenk, Joan Wagner, and Laurenita Zogby.*



SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence  
Interfaith Peace Network of Western New York  
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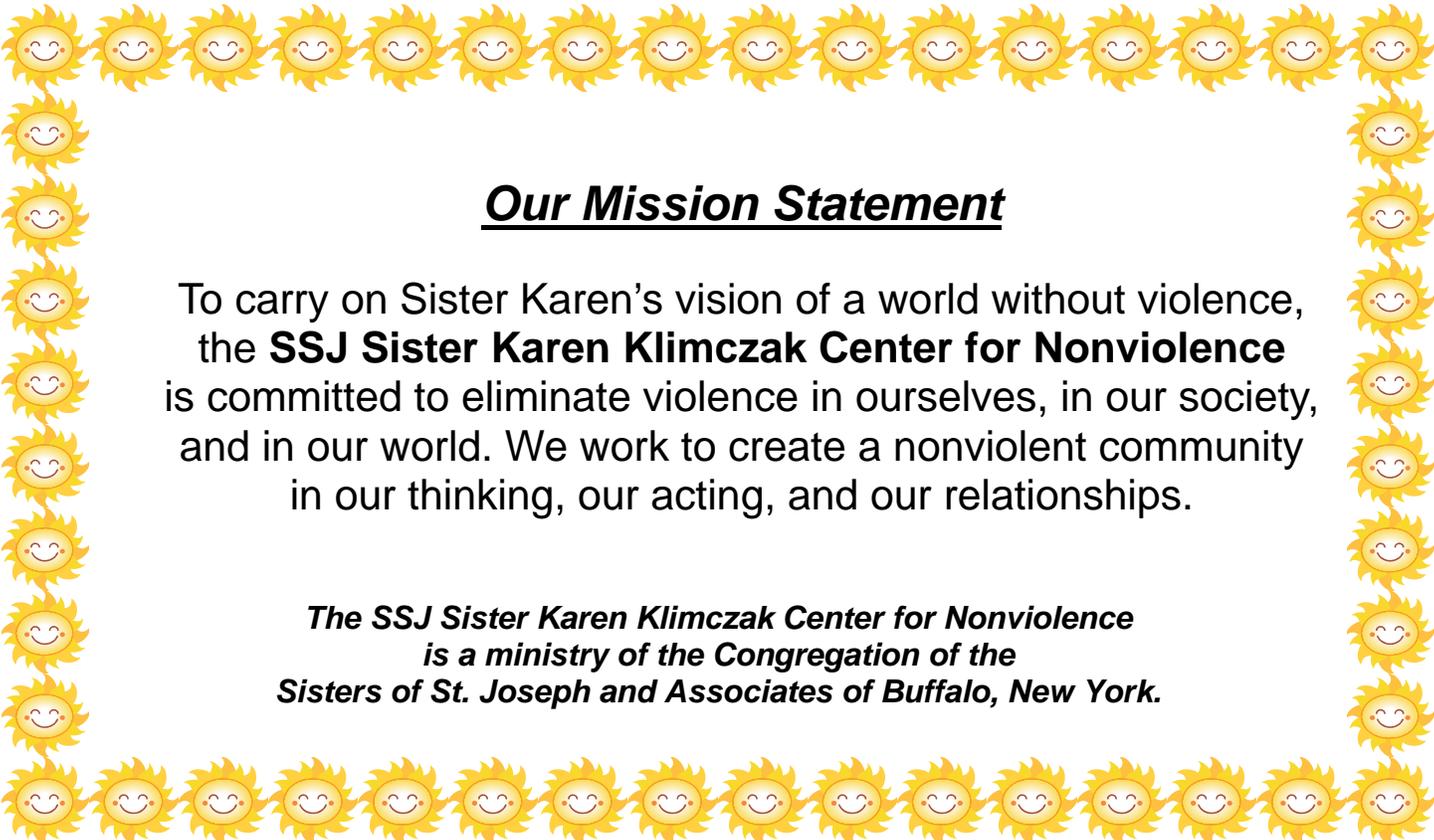
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## **Our Mission Statement**

To carry on Sister Karen's vision of a world without violence, the **SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence** is committed to eliminate violence in ourselves, in our society, and in our world. We work to create a nonviolent community in our thinking, our acting, and our relationships.

***The SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence  
is a ministry of the Congregation of the  
Sisters of St. Joseph and Associates of Buffalo, New York.***