

ALTERNATIVES

SUMMER 2016

From Our Director:



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Greetings Sister Karen Center Friends!

Speaking at our annual event, "Legacies of Nonviolence: From Gandhi to Sister Karen" in April, Arun Gandhi likened anger to electricity, which is useful and powerful but can cause great damage if abused. In this election season where anger seems rampant, we need to learn ways to transform conflict into a force for good. The ministry of the Sister Karen Center is all about that kind of transformation. From our work in the schools with children and youth, to our involvement in the Peacemakers Gang Intervention and Outreach Program, to ongoing events that commemorate the 10th year of Sister Karen's passing, to Alternatives to Violence Project workshops in the prison and in the community, to the interfaith focus of Camp Peaceprints this summer, your support is powerfully transforming real people who make a difference in the world around us. This is the legacy of nonviolence: from Sister Karen to YOU!

Grateful to be building a legacy together,

Vivian

Vivian Ruth Waltz
Director



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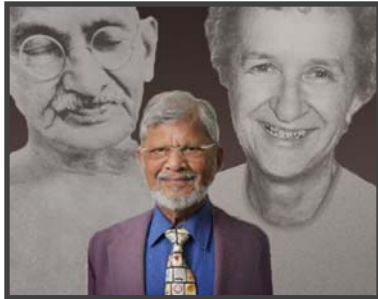
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"Legacies of Nonviolence: From Gandhi to Sister Karen"

With Arun Gandhi



Both Sister Karen Klimczak, SSJ, and Mahatma Gandhi had an profound understanding of the philosophy of nonviolence according to Arun Gandhi, the featured speaker at the ninth annual fundraising event for the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence. Held on April 24th, a lovely spring Sunday at Immaculata Academy in Hamburg (Sister Karen's alma mater), over 200 people in attendance learned about the striking parallels in the ways Gandhi and Sister Karen planted seeds of peace in their lives.

After an opening prayer offered by Sister Roz Rosolowski, CSSF, Sister Karen Center Director Vivian Waltz welcomed supporters and highlighted the recent work of the Sister Karen Center. Next, in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of Sister Karen's passing, a video was shown which included archival footage of Sister Karen speaking passionately about her ministry with formerly incarcerated men. At the conclusion of the video, the text of the "Dear Brother" letter Sister Karen wrote forgiving her killer scrolled slowly to quiet music.

Sister Liz Savage, SSJ, introduced Arun Gandhi, who began by saying that both his grandfather and Sister Karen allowed love, respect, understanding and compassion to rule their lives instead of all the negativity that dominates our society today. They both believed and demonstrated that "serving the needy is the best form of worship."

Having lived with his grandfather in India between the ages of 12 and 14, which were the last two years of Gandhi's life, Arun (he wanted us to call him by his first name) learned simple lessons that, on reflection as an adult, were life-changing experiences. Two important lessons were about anger and the philosophy of nonviolence. Arun avowed that Sister Karen's life affirmed both these teachings.

Through humorous stories about his grandparents' early marriage, Arun shared how his grandfather taught him about understanding anger and using it constructively. He likened anger to electricity, which is useful and powerful but can cause great damage if abused. He asserted that both his grandfather and Sister Karen, in her ministry to formerly incarcerated men, knew that uncontrolled anger can lead to death and destruction, but transforming that anger can be a powerful force for change, both in personal lives and in the lives of nations. We should not be ashamed of anger but instead learn to channel our anger into a force for good.

Young Arun was told by his grandfather to make a genealogical tree of violence on the wall of his bedroom with the intention of finding a solution to the problems he encountered each day. One "parent" was physical violence and the other passive violence. As his wall became filled, he learned that passive violence is much more prevalent and insidious than physical violence.

A small pencil stub that young Arun threw away (and was made by his grandfather to retrieve in the dark with a flashlight) was the instrument his grandfather used to teach that violence is not just against people but can be against nature through affluence and overconsumption of the world's resources. Our "throw-away" mentality creates passive violence that can fuel physical violence when people who don't have enough become angry and fight for justice.

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Our culture is violent: in language, religion, entertainment, sports and relationships, and Arun quoted his grandfather in explaining that we need to "become the change we wish to see." We work toward a culture of nonviolence one person at a time.

Arun recognized that this was the power of both his grandfather's and Sister Karen's life and message: working person-to-person and taking small steps that are seeds for transformation. He called himself a "Peace Farmer" and, on behalf of Sister Karen and his grandfather, he offered each of us a symbolic grain of wheat. His hope is that we would learn from these two great practitioners of nonviolence and not keep the seed inside our hearts, but plant it and nurture it to achieve the dream of nonviolence throughout the world.

While all were inspired by Arun's vision of a world without violence, the presentation ended with Sister Liz Savage, SSJ, informing the audience that on April 14th, the ten-year anniversary of Sister Karen's death, the Buffalo Peacemakers Gang Intervention and Outreach program presented Sister Karen Center Director Vivian Waltz with an award recognizing her part in the birth of a citywide collaboration promoting peace (see page 5 of this newsletter). Then an enthusiastic rendition of the song "Peaceprints," played on the piano by composer David Granville and led by original singers Linda Martin and Bonnie Lockwood, was followed by a reception in the gym enjoyed by all.



Arun Gandhi speaks to
Sr. Karen Center supporters



~more photos on page 6~



Sr. Liz Savage recognizes Buffalo
Peacemakers award given to Vivian Waltz

The Call of Nonviolence

"The time has come for our Church to be a living witness and to invest far greater human and financial resources in promoting a spirituality and practice of active nonviolence..." This statement comes from a document issued at a historic conference held recently at the Vatican: The Nonviolence and Just Peace Conference. The conference was organized to consider how the Church can deepen its understanding of the "centrality of active nonviolence to the vision and mission of Jesus." The focus was to promote the idea of shifting to a "just peace" approach and to move the Catholic Church away from its reliance on the theory of "just war." Pope Francis has said that "Faith and violence are incompatible" and has urged the "abolition of war."

As Arun Gandhi shared, no matter what our faith tradition, learning ways to live nonviolently can change the world. Your support of the Sister Karen Center helps to fulfill that call.

Diocese Sponsors School Contest for "Legacies of Nonviolence"

Along with the Sister Karen Center, the WNY Catholic Schools sponsored an opportunity for seventh- and eighth-graders in diocesan schools to celebrate how Sister Karen lived the gospel message of Peace. After learning about Sister Karen, the students tapped their creativity to convey their own understanding of peace through writing or other artistic expressions. Three winners were chosen from the entries submitted and the students and their parents were invited to a "Meet and Greet" with Arun Gandhi before the main presentation at "Legacies of Nonviolence: From Gandhi to Sister Karen." Following is a winning poem; the other two entries will be shared in upcoming newsletters.



*Arun Gandhi and Sr. Carol Cimino,
Superintendent of WNY Catholic
Schools with contest winners*



*Arun Gandhi with Maeve
McDougall and her parents*

*Peace is happiness
Peace is joy
Peace is love
Peace is serenity
Peace is tranquility
Peace is harmony
Peace is nonviolence*

*Peace can be found almost anywhere at all
Peace can be found in music
Peace can be found in reading
Peace can be found in friendship*

We must follow the example of peacemakers, like

*Mother Teresa
Pope Francis
Sister Karen
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Father Baker
Mairead Maguire and Betty Williams
Jesus Christ*

*As a nation, we can pray for peace
As individuals, we can pursue acts of peace*

If we work together, we can bring peace to our world

*By Maeve McDougall, Grade 8
Immaculate Conception School, East Aurora*



Vivian Waltz Receives Award from Buffalo Peacemakers

Sister Karen Center Director Vivian Waltz received a special award at the Buffalo Peacemakers Gang Intervention and Outreach Program fundraiser on April 14th at the Traf Music Hall. This day was the tenth anniversary of Sister Karen's death so the recognition was especially meaningful. The award was a shadowbox with a Peacemakers t-shirt inside and the plaque reads: "Rev. Vivian Ruth Waltz – We appreciate your contributions that have led to the birth of a citywide collaboration promoting peace. Buffalo Community Peacemakers 2016." This award was presented by Peacemaker Murray Holman right after Vivian gave a thank you speech to Mayor Byron Brown for his role in the formation of the Peacemakers. Later, Vivian was told that she was asked to thank Mayor Brown so that she'd be on the stage for her surprise award! In accepting the award, Vivian gave credit to the Sisters of St. Joseph for supporting her and the ministry of the Sister Karen Center.



2016 "I Leave Peaceprints" Event Calendar



In commemoration of the 10th anniversary of Sister Karen Klimczak's passing, there have been events every month of 2016 to mark this special year. There was a memorial mass at Christ the King Seminary, the Peaceprints of WNY annual dinner and our own event with Arun Gandhi. One highlight thus far was a "Musical-Poetic Journey Honoring Sister Karen Klimczak" by Concerts for the Soul with Cory and Amy Gallagher. According to Sister Jean Klimczak, it was *"an awe-inspiring work of art. It enfleshes and enflames the essence of Karen"* with *"original reflections, interwoven with Karen's writings, expressions, spirituality-humor-energy, and the Spirit's lead in her life. It really [was] phenomenal."*

Upcoming Events

June 29, Wednesday 7 pm, Ephesus Cathedral across from ECMC, "This Little Light of Mine—The Life of Sister Karen Klimczak, SSJ" play. Contact joanalba123@gmail.com to reserve. Free.

July 18-29, Camp Peaceprints (see page 11).

August 21, Sunday 8 am, Delaware Park Ring Road, Peaceprints of WNY Annual Hike of Hope and 5K Run. Contact 856.6131.

September 11, Sunday, 2:30 pm, Canalside, 3rd annual Peace-Justice-Nonviolence Festival and Walk.

October, details TBA, B.O.U.N.C.E. Community Birthday Party celebrating Sister Karen's birthday.

November, details TBA, Remembrance Concert.

December, details TBA, Peaceprints Prison Package Project and Peaceprints Bissonette Christmas Party.



Legacies of Nonviolence: From Gandhi to Sister Karen with Arun Gandhi

Photos clockwise from top left: Arun and Vivian; Autograph; Sister Jean Klimczak, OSF, with Arun; Sisters Janet DiPasquale, SSJ, and Mary Augusta Kaiser, SSJ, with Arun; Center supporter Fred Rieber with Vivian and their daughters Rosemary and Charlotte and Arun; Sisters Mary Jo Colucci, SSJ, and Michele Beiter, SSJ, with Arun; "Peaceprints" composer David Granville with Arun



We thank Nancy Orsini, SSJ Associate, for her professional photographs.

Alternatives to Violence Project News



The mission of the Alternatives to Violence Project is to empower people to lead nonviolent lives through affirmation, respect for all, community building, cooperation, and trust. Founded in and developed from the real-life experiences of prisoners and others, and building on a spiritual base, AVP encourages every person's innate power to positively transform themselves and the world.

Interview with Kali Williams and Dennis ("Dove") Tremblay Alternatives to Violence Project Facilitators

What would you say is the most important thing you've learned from AVP?

Dove: Having a well-rounded personality, dealing with personalities that are around us. If they are negative, we have tools that we utilize to deal with everybody in a really positive fashion all the time.

Kali: AVP is like a tool belt with many different tools. The main tool is transforming power. It's about respect, caring for others, everyday dealing with people and situations. I try to empower others by understanding that they might be in a bad situation that I don't even know about. I don't need to dominate, but instead I can empower them to just be who they are without judgment or criticism from me. It's about having faith and trusting the process of AVP both within and outside a workshop.



Kind Kali and Daring Dove

To carry on Sister Karen's vision of a world without violence, the Sister Karen Center's mission is to eliminate violence in ourselves, in our society and in our world. How do you think AVP can fulfill our mission?

Dove: An example is going to the communities and the neighborhoods where Sister Karen used to walk the streets. Just to let people know, "Nonviolence begins with me, what about you?" I did that when I first got out [of prison]. I deal with everybody positively and transparently with no hidden agenda.

Kali: I think about the mission and about AVP. If we could have AVP everywhere, it would transform lives and eliminate violence. It has transformed my life. It should be in every home, every school, every boardroom, every presidency.

Sister Karen worked with men like yourselves coming out of prison. How can AVP help in that situation?

Dove: Because of Audrey [Mang, a longtime AVP volunteer at Wende Correctional Facility]. She allowed me to be a part of Sister Karen's network and to be involved at Bissonette House. I want to follow in Sister Karen's footsteps. My goal is to be part of her work.

Kali: Sister Karen showed the care and concern for us on the inside [of prison]. AVP gives us the ability to not just express ourselves on the inside, but also on the outside. We have to be an example so that when we come out we want to stay out. AVP gives us a lot of principles to help with that. We have to stand with our facilitators and do the same work on the outside that we did on the inside.

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~ Interview with Kali and Dove, AVP Facilitators, continued from previous page~

In the past year we have provided four AVP workshops at Compass House. How can AVP help young people?

Dove: Seeds are given to young people to cultivate because young people become old people. How can you not take one of those seeds and learn something from it? If you learn AVP, you have the right seeds that will be unearthed later. AVP is about building community based on honesty, respect and caring. Why can't we give respect to young people? That's what it is to build community. It's planting seeds.

Kali: I have the honor and pleasure of working with the kids at Compass House. I believe it is very important that they have access to AVP. The more AVP can be in their reach, those seeds start to blossom. It gets everybody to feel comfortable enough to take off their masks, and kids wear them too even if they don't know it yet.

What is the hardest teaching of AVP for you to follow?

Dove: None of it. There is nothing hard about it. Not even the personalities. If people have an idiosyncrasy or old baggage, we make sure that they leave with a Gucci bag! We help people to work with conflict to the point that they can control it and it is no longer an overwhelming situation. Kali and I have been a dynamic team.

Kali: I agree but if I could say something was hard, it's probably trust. This was at the beginning of AVP for me, not now. But as you become involved in AVP, trust becomes easier. It's our instinct not to trust people sometimes but through the different trust exercises of AVP you begin to first and foremost trust yourself and then it is easier for you to trust others.

Anything else you'd like to say?

Kali: I love AVP!

Dove: I echo that. Personalities don't change. The bars do. However, everyone has their own prison. So we take it upon ourselves to eliminate the concept of being imprisoned. AVP frees us. That freedom is there forever.

AVP Training

Level I BASIC AVP Workshop

Friday, July 22, 5:30 - 9:30 pm and

Saturday, July 23, 9:00 am - 6:00 pm

Sr. Karen Center at St. Columba-Brigid Church

75 Hickory Street, Buffalo

For more information or to register:

Vivian Waltz ~ 716.362.9688 ~ vivian@sisterkarencenter.org

***** Save the Center's resources for the work of nonviolence! *****

Request our newsletter in full color via email.

Send request to vivian@sisterkarencenter.org

AVP Continues at Compass House Resource Center

A third Level I Alternatives to Violence Project workshop was held in November and December at the Compass House Resource Center in Buffalo. The Resource Center provides non-residential support to youth ages 14-24 years old who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. Facilitators for this workshop were Caring Kathy Essek and Valuable Vivian Waltz. Inspired by the workshop, youth participant Thoughtful T'zayah created an impressive rap about nonviolence and shared it with the group. Super Shelby told the facilitators that she felt more confident about herself and her ability to keep peace among her friends as a result of the workshop.

A fourth Level I workshop is currently in progress. In addition to Compass House clients, this workshop also includes youth referred by Erie County Juvenile Probation. Kind Kali Williams, Caring Kathy Essek and Valuable Vivian Waltz are on the facilitation team. Some of the youth participants challenge the facilitators with their history of aggression, but the skills taught in the workshop are helping them to incorporate nonviolence into their lives.

The Sister Karen Center and our AVP facilitators are planning a Level II workshop at Compass House Resource Center this summer.



Reflections on Violence and Nonviolence ***by Bill Marx, Lead Facilitator at Wende Correctional Facility***



The April 2014 event of the SSJ Sister Karen Center for Nonviolence with Rev. John Dear, SJ, gave us much to consider about nonviolence. In his latest book at the time, *The Nonviolent Life*, he writes, "If we do not want any more bombings here at home, we must stop bombing people abroad and figure out a way to live in peace with everyone on the planet."

If we justify our all-American violence and war-making, why shouldn't millions of our victims feel justified to do violence against us? The predicament that we all find ourselves in these days is a world of total violence – with 30 wars, a billion people starving, 3 billion people living in poverty, 20,000 nuclear weapons on alert, corporate greed ravaging the world's poor, and catastrophic climate change threatening us all. This world of permanent war, greed and destruction has become normal, routine and legal. We have grown used to it. Violence is everywhere, and we typically come to the conclusion that there's nothing that can be done about it.

A vision of nonviolence is not a pipe dream. It is the message of all spiritual traditions and all peacemakers. It is certainly the message of the nonviolent Jesus who calls us to love our enemies.

The Sister Karen Center continuously works to implement Jesus' message of nonviolence with our community and prison programs of the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). Workshops have been conducted at Wende Correctional Facility for 28 years and we will be adding Orleans and hopefully Collins CFs this year. Our AVP leaders, like Jesus, Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day and Rev. John Dear, encourage us to actively participate in programs like AVP. Email or call our Director, Vivian Waltz, to let her know that you would like more information about AVP. Thank you.

Sisters of St. Joseph Participate in Love Trumps Hate Rally



*Sr. Mary Jo Colucci, Sr. Bea Manzella,
Sr. Bette DiCesare, Audrey Mang and Sr.
Linda Glaeser at Unity and Solidarity rally*

We in WNY have been busy! The Network of Religious Communities, the WNY Peace Center and the Muslim Public Affairs Council worked with the Sister Karen Center to organize rallies in a matter of days in the fall—one with over 200 people and another with more than 300 people—in groundswell of support for refugees, Muslims, and people of color. When certain fear- and hate-mongering rallies were going to be held in Buffalo, we countered with a Unity and Solidarity Love Trumps Hate rally, which brought an estimated 800 out, including Sisters of St. Joseph and Associates.

Our questions in Buffalo first led to the new national group Stand Together Against Racism & Islamophobia (STARI). You can sign on at unityandsolidarity.org.

Come join us at our third annual Peace-Justice-Nonviolence Festival and Walk on September 11 at Canalside, starting at 2:30 pm. As the WNY Coalition of Peace and Nonviolence Advocates (associated nationally with Pace e Bene and STARI), currently including more than 80 local partners, we'll gather to share inspiration, information, and action for pursuing real Nonviolence - stopping the violence of racism (and Islamophobia), poverty, war, and the desecration of our beloved Mother Earth. We'll walk, talk, sing, dance, and build a movement for a sustainable culture of peace, where we all win. To get involved with planning, or sign up as a partner, contact Tom Casey (caseytpc@aol.com), Vicki Ross (716-931-3520), or Vivian Waltz (vivian@sisterkarencenter.org).





This school year, as part of the Peace Education Project, the Sister Karen Center has been a partner in providing weekly PeaceJam sessions right around the corner at the Delavan-Grider Community Center. PeaceJam is an international organization with 13 Nobel Laureates on its board that uses fun activities to provide youth with inspiration, education, and action. For this year's Global Call to Action, PeaceJammers decided to focus on anti-discrimination as part of the issue area "Ending Racism and Hate."

After Kind Kenneth expressed an interest in psychology, the teens learned about the psychology of prejudice and racism, especially how cross-group friendships reduce negative stereotypes and social prejudice. A program was presented on June 11th which included a talk about discrimination by Energetic Evelyn, an interactive discussion, a jam session, and PeaceJammers' artwork interpreting the antidiscrimination theme.

Interfaith Peace Network of Western New York
SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence
Western New York Peace Center
Women Against Violence Everywhere (WAVE)

CAMP PEACEPRINTS

Alternative Summer Camp for Youth 8 - 13 years old

"Pathways to Peace"

LEARN ABOUT

Nonviolence

Activism

Community

Social Change



GET TO DO

Fieldtrips

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and much more!

Monday-Friday, 10 am-3 pm

July 18 - July 22, 2016

July 25 - July 29, 2016

St. Mary's School for the Deaf
2253 Main Street in Buffalo
\$125/week sliding scale and
scholarships available

Contact:

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716.362.9688

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WNY Peace Center

716.884.0582

victoryross9@gmail.com

Seeking Adult Volunteers

For information and forms: sisterkarencenter.org

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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 eliminating 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.***