President’s Peace Commission Mission Statement

The President's Peace Commission fosters an ethical commitment to participate in the establishment of world peace and social justice. The Commission encourages respect for human rights and dignity of all people. The Commission annually hosts symposia that offer opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to grow in their active pursuit of peace and justice. Through the symposia and other activities, the Commission seeks to build within the St. Mary's University community a greater awareness of the Roman Catholic and Marianist perspectives on peace and justice. The President's Peace Commission reflects the University community through student, staff, and faculty representatives appointed by the University President.

For more information, please see our website:
http://www.stmarytx.edu/ppc

Faculty: Marcella Lesher; Leona Pallansch; Richard Pressman; Brian St. John

Staff: Bro. Brian Halderman, SM; Krystina Irvin; Irene Quesnot

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Artwork by Mark Tovar

St. Mary’s University
President’s Peace Commission

“The Other”:
The Challenge of Human Diversity

March 30 – April 1, 2010
University Center, Conference Room A
“THE OTHER”: THE CHALLENGE OF HUMAN DIVERSITY

Within societies, groups of people tend to define themselves in terms of qualities or characteristics that set themselves apart from others. However, problems emerge when a dominant group views its qualities and characteristics as superior, which can lead to fear and hatred of “The Other.” The Church has consistently upheld the rights and dignity of the human person calling us to the obligation to “love our neighbor.”

In the 21st Century we have adopted the term “diversity” and acknowledge the multifaceted, globalized world in which we live. However, recognizing diversity does not automatically result in acceptance. Thus we are challenged to understand and embrace “the other” so as to be enriched, enlightened, and empowered as a people, to be friends and not strangers. As the Church reminds us, we as people realize our dignity and rights in relationship with others, in community. These panels will help us explore the difficult work of building a human community of love and acceptance.

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

9:45 am
Invocation
Rev. Rudy Vela, SM, DMin, Vice President, Mission and Identity, St. Mary’s

9:45 am–11:00 am
The Other: Exploring the Creative Spirit
Speakers
Carol Ann Brodersen, San Antonio Deaf Dance Company
Anthony Flores, Grand Slam Champion, PuroSlam
Cristina Gonzalez, Student, St. Mary’s
Charles Peters, band member, Mojoe
Moderator
Jordan Thomas, St. Mary’s, PPC

11:10 am–12:25 pm
Historical Perspectives of Diversity Through the Eyes of Women
Speakers
Kirsten Gardner, PhD, History, UTSA
Prof. Annie Hubbard, Sociology, St. Mary’s
Teresa Van Hoy, PhD, History, St. Mary’s
Moderator
Keily Rivero, St. Mary’s, PPC

12:35 pm–1:50 pm
Ready, Willing, Enabled: Disabilities in America
Speakers
Gordon Hartman, Founder, Gordon Hartman Family Foundation
Ali Meyer, Student, St. Mary’s
Rhonda Rapp, PhD, Disabilities Coordinator, St. Mary’s
Moderator
James Wolff, Banner/Oracle DBA, St. Mary’s

Wednesday, March 31, 2010

9:20 am–10:10 am
Embracing Love: A Dialogue with Lesbian and Gay Alumni
Speakers
Nieves “Snow” Montemayor, St. Mary’s 1998 Alumnus
Jessica Ramirez, St. Mary’s 2009 Alumna
Fr. Eddie Bernal, Pastor, St. Benedict Catholic Church
Moderator
Bro. Brian Halderman, St. Mary’s, PPC

10:20 am–11:10 am
Science, Technology, and Human Diversity
Speakers
Students from the High Technology and Society class
Rafael Moras, PhD, Engineering, St. Mary’s
Moderator
Prof. Khushbu Patel, Political Science, St. Mary’s

11:20 am–12:10 pm
Catholic University Life from a Non-Christian Perspective
Speakers
Punit Bhakta, Student, St. Mary’s
Lorna Cruz, Student, St. Mary’s
Vi Nguyen, Student, St. Mary’s
James Hopkins, St. Mary’s, PPC
Moderator

12:20 pm–1:35 pm
Employment Obstacles for the Other
Speakers
Luther Ortega Luper, Minority Business Enterprise, UTSA, Institute for Economic Development
Elsa Ybanez, Human Resources, St. Mary’s
Christian Ekleberry, St. Mary’s, PPC

Thursday, April 1, 2010

9:45 am–11:00 am
Life of Resettlement: Refugees in the US
Speakers
Hisham Batar, Catholic Charities, Refugee Services
Jonathan D. Ryan, Executive Director, RAICES
Moderator
David Zapata, St. Mary’s, PPC

11:10 am–12:25 pm
Persecuted People: Finding Healing and Understanding
Speakers
Barbara Hardin, PhD, Director, Counseling and Testing Center, St. Mary’s
Matthew Zamarripa, St. Mary’s, PPC
Moderator

12:35 pm–1:50 pm
Art of Peace Award Presentation and Luncheon
Recipient
Terri Hendrix, Folk Singer and Song Writer
Recipient
Lauren N. Sanchez, St. Mary’s, PPC