News



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Editor's note: Welcome to NCR's Justice Action Bulletin, where every Tuesday we bring you the latest news on active nonviolence in the service of peace and justice. Do you have news you would like to share? Contact Maria Benevento at mbenevento@ncronline.org.

MINNESOTA — Hundreds of faith leaders led by Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light and the Minnesota Poor People's Campaign oppose Enbridge Energy's proposed Line 3 pipeline project in northern Minnesota, warning that the project threatens the local environment and the Anishinaabe indigenous people, Twin Cities Pioneer Press via AP reported June 2.

This week, the group will deliver a letter to the state Public Utilities Commission and to Gov. Mark Dayton expressing their concerns, including the risks continued dependence on fossil fuels poses to the global climate.

Local indigenous people and other groups have opposed the project for months; a gathering of Midwest Catholic Workers held a retreat in Duluth during early April focusing on the issue which culminated in nonviolent civil disobedience at a pipeline storage yard.

LINCOLN, MASSACHUSETTS — Faith-based activists were among about 40 people who participated in a May 27 protest against nuclear weapons at the gate of Hanscom Air Force Base in Lincoln, Massachusetts, which resulted in six arrests, the Nuclear Resister reported May 28 from Massachusetts Peace Action.

The Program Executive Office for a program known as Nuclear Command, Control and Communications (NC3) is located at Hanscom. The program works on improving the communications system that would be used by the U.S. in case of nuclear war.

Massachusetts Peace Action organized the event, which included a flash mob where participants froze for two minutes in front of a Minuteman Statue and a march from Lexington Battle Green to Hanscom.

As they attempted to deliver an anti-nuclear weapons letter to the base commander, John Bach of Arlington and Cambridge Friends Meeting, John Schuchardt of the House of Peace in Ipswich, Pat Ferrone of St. Susanna Parish in Dedham, Laura Evans of Unitarian Universalist Society of Rockport, Jerald Ross of Chelmsford, First Parish Bedford, and Dan McLaughlin of Cambridge were arrested for trespassing.

NOGALES, ARIZONA — During a conference sponsored by the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (known as CLINIC) in Tucson, Arizona, a group of participants including Bishop Kevin Vann of Orange, California, made a trip to a port of entry in Nogales, Arizona, to offer advice to migrants seeking admission to request asylum.

According to a May 31 press release from CLINIC, the trip coincided with a visit to the Nogales Customs and Border Protection facility by Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen. Jill Marie Bussey, CLINIC advocacy director, said the group hopes Nielsen will meet with faith and community organizations that provide services for migrants, in addition to the members of the business community, ranchers and law enforcement with whom she already met.

Although it is perfectly legal to seek asylum at a port of entry, migrants attempting to do so face days-long waits before they are allowed to enter and families are sometimes separated, Jennifer Bibby-Gerth, an immigration attorney with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington, said in the press release. The group witnessed the slow-moving line of migrants waiting to be admitted.

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WASHINGTON — Art Laffin, Mike Walli, and Dominican Srs. Ardeth Platte and Carol Gilbert — all part of the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker in Washington, D.C. — were among hundreds of people nationwide to be arrested May 29, the day after Memorial Day, as part of a Poor People's Campaign day of action focused on gun violence and militarism.

According to an email report from Laffin May 20, at the action in Washington, about 150 people processed to the Russell Senate Office Building and went to Sen. Mitch McConnell's office with a folded American flag "in remembrance of the U.S. war dead and the countless victims of U.S warmaking and violence worldwide." The group also left carnations and offered reflections and information about U.S. war and gun violence.

Other faith leaders that were arrested for "Crowding, Obstructing, or Incommoding" after refusing to disperse include the Rev. Nelson Johnson, Joyce Johnson, Poor People's Campaign co-chair the Rev. Liz Theoharis, the Rev. William Lamar IV, the Rev. Chuck Booker, Shane Claiborne, Jean Stokan, Bob Cooke, Mary Liepold, Paki Wieland and members of the group "About Face —Veterans Against the War."

The protesters could choose to pay a fine of $50 or request a court day to be arraigned. Walli, Platte, Gilbert and Laffin will be arraigned in D.C. Superior Court June 27.

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