

# On Line and On Point

**MARY MOTHER OF JESUS INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY**

[marymotherofjesus.org](http://marymotherofjesus.org)

**A WAY FORWARD IN HAITI**—A network of Haitian diaspora faith and community leaders, launched a new advocacy campaign called **“U.S. Hands Off Haiti’s Democracy.”** With a petition and organizational sign on letter, the campaign asks for one fundamental change in U.S. policy toward Haiti: allow Haitians to lead their own democratic process.

“We call on the United States to stop supporting Prime Minister Ariel Henry, and the PHTK party and its political affiliates, so that a Haitian solution to the crisis can emerge,” the petition and letter read.

“There hasn’t been an election in years and gangs rule the land,” said campaign leader Johnny Celestin.

The Haitian activist described the crisis during a meeting with faith groups to introduce the campaign: “There is no parliament, no elected officials, so looting is happening...and the World Food Program says more than 45% of Haitians face hunger, even before the Ukraine crisis.”

“Haitians need to talk to each other and find a solution to the crisis that has everyone at the table. **This campaign is**



**to ask the United States to step away and allow Haitians to control their own destiny,”** Celestin said.

“We in Haiti can do it,” said Leslie Voltaire of the Montana group, a powerful Haitian opposition group that has demanded the United States withdraw its support for the government of Prime Minister Ariel Henry in Haiti, saying the administration has lost legitimacy by delaying elections.

Faith leaders at the meeting, many of whom signed a letter to the U.S. State Department calling for U.S. support of free and fair elections

in Haiti.

“We need united advocacy to be effective,” said Melinda Miles, an expert on human rights and the environment in Haiti. In addition to the petition and organizational sign on letter, Miles said the campaign plans to offer an advocacy tool kit building up to a Day of Action on Haitian Flag day on May 18.

**Faith in action: Sign the petition at** <https://bit.ly/3vtWaoY>. Follow the latest updates from the Maryknoll Lay Missioners in Haiti: <https://mklm.org/category/haiti/> [offered by Maryknoll]

## **Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community Mission Statement**

We are a Christ-centered community of equals, consisting of women and men, ordained and non-ordained, empowered by the Spirit whose mission is to worship, to serve, to promote compassion, justice and care for creation. Come join us.

Send articles/info by Wed to be published on weekend: [rjbannerusa@gmail.com](mailto:rjbannerusa@gmail.com)

**OFFERINGS**—If you have made a recent donation to our community, we thank you for your generosity. We are most grateful for your demonstrated care and concern. Please remember to make your regular donations to MMOJ by sending your check to MMOJ % St. Andrew UCC, 6908 Beneva Road, Sarasota. FL 34238.

**Remember:** *MMOJ continues to donate 5% of all received offerings each month to Outreach, which will continue to focus on real issues of food and hunger in our surrounding communities.*

**OUTREACH**—The current recipient of our offered financial support is All Faiths Food Bank of Sarasota [AFFB] in its task of providing food for hungry and needy families and children.

From AFFB:As the cost of living surges in the face of growing inflation, local children are even more at risk of hunger during the summer.You can help us keep them full until fall.

## MOVIE CORNER

Mark and Barb Anderson winter above me [Russ] and recently drew up a list of movies they thought I might like. From the Anderson List: Dunkirk [2017] Amazon—Excellent depiction of the British saving their troops at Dunkirk with a civilian naval rescue. Send your comments, criticisms, suggestions, to ponce.beth@gmail.com

## MOVE INTO ACTION [a series to accomplish]—Finding Your Why?—

People like me [editor of Agitator, newspaper of the LA Catholic Worker] like to get into justice work because we are angry that systems and structures are unfair. However, when the going gets

tough, too many of us drift away, consumed by other cares and concerns in our lives. Yet our skills, energy, and commitments are needed for the long haul. What WILL sustain us is having a personal stake, understanding why it is in our personal interest to struggle for a better world.

When it comes to the climate crisis and the threat of nuclear war, our personal stake is pretty obvious: heat, floods, and famine will make the world uninhabitable for most living beings, and the short and long-term effects of nuclear war will speed all of these up—if anything still exists.

But our personal stake in this work goes much deeper. Take a few minutes to jot down some thoughts to the following prompts:

- How do unjust systems [racism, sexism, etc hurt people you love?
- How do these systems hurt or dehumanize you?
- What are the needs/struggles you [or those you love] have that do not always get met or prioritized in our current society?
- What would it mean for you to live in a society where all your needs [and those of your loved ones] were met without question?
- How does a world where others can be thrown away put us at risk of also being thrown away?
- What might it mean for our society if everyone's needs were met?

## ELDERSPIRIT

We are the mentors, the wisdom keepers. We are the ones who bestow the blessings of spiritual legacy. We are the survivors with a story to tell that can save others.

**STAFF**—Russ Banner, editor; Joan Pesce, Lee Breyer, Anna Davis, text review; Beth Ponce and Dotty Shugrue, features

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We are the ones who serve notice  
it is possible to transcend “doing”  
in favor of “being.”

We are the models of what it means to  
arrive wounded and triumphant at the  
end.

We are the mapmakers for the final  
uncharted part of the journey.

We are the elders.

*Author unknown*

*[ed note: I had to include Joan Pesce’s  
tribute to elders simply because I know at  
my age I am in among them and humble  
enough to admit it.]*

## SPEAKING OF

**ACTION**—Florida  
folks who install solar  
panels on their roofs  
can sell any excess  
electrical power they  
produce back to the  
grid at the retail rate.  
This practice is called  
“net metering” As you  
might guess, net  
metering offers a major

financial incentive for power company  
customers to switch to solar. Selling the  
power back to the grid helps the users  
defray their installation costs. The State  
Legislature saw reason to change that.  
HB 741 aimed to end that practice, thus  
destroying the incentive. Its intent was to  
kneecap the solar industry just as solar  
usage is finally on the upswing. The anti-  
solar bill was definitely the least popular  
bill the Legislature passed this year. The  
Miami Herald revealed that the first  
version of the bill was written by a big  
utility company, not legislators. The  
company behind all these dark doings is  
Florida Power & Light.

Despite the public’s widespread disdain  
for this bill, the House passed HB 741 by  
a vote of 83-31, and the Senate by 24-15



—along party lines. Yet last week, to  
everyone’s astonishment, DeSantis  
vetoed HB 741.... what intrigued me  
[about this news coverage on the veto in  
the Miami Herald] was one detail. The  
paper noted that prior to announcing his  
decision, “DeSantis received 16,809  
emails, letters, and phone calls opposing  
the net metering bill. The number in  
support: 13.”

All the above was reported by Craig  
Pittman of the Florida Phoenix in  
Tallahassee, FL, For us, in our peace  
and justice work, he teaches/reaches  
quite a lesson.

Concluded Craig in his press release:

What if we bombarded  
the governor’s office  
with another 16,000 or  
so letters and emails in  
hopes of pushing him  
[on social justice  
issues]? He just might  
listen, as long as we do  
it before November. I  
would encourage  
everybody in Florida to

give this a whirl. What have you got to  
lose?

The governor’s email address is  
[GovernorRon.DeSantis@eog.myflorida.c](mailto:GovernorRon.DeSantis@eog.myflorida.com)  
om. If you prefer snail mail, send your  
letters to him at Office of Governor Ron  
DeSantis, State of Florida, The Capitol,  
400 S. Monroe St., Tallahassee, FL.  
32399-0001

Here are some pointers if you write to  
him: 1) Address him in r  
espectful terms. 2) Keep it short. 3)  
Couch your complaint in conservative  
buzzwords if possible. .”

—quoted in part from *Craig Pittman’s  
article, “With solar bill veto, Florida Gov.  
DeSantis slips into something more  
liberal,” published on Florida Phoenix in  
Tallahassee, FL.*