



## October 15th Fall Assembly of Pax Christi Metro NY

October 15's Fall Assembly of [Pax Christi Metro NY](#) reenergized and renewed the spirit and vision of peacemaking of the nine Sisters of Charity and one SC Associate and about 45 other people that attended. The Convent of Mary the Queen, where staff and sisters offered a gracious welcome, great space and delicious food, became a gathering place where presenter Tom Cordaro and participants shared and dialogued on "Be Not Afraid, An Alternative to the War on Terrorism". (There is also a book same title authored by him.) Tom emphasized that we need an alternative narrative to the current narrative based on suspicion, lies and power over people that sees war as a solution.

This second narrative is based on gospel values. Tom called us as people of faith to go beyond our faith groups and dialogue and collaborate with others who have similar values and principles. We need to engage with civil society and bring out the best of our civic values such as fairness, justice and compassion. As Sister Suzanne Wallin puts it, "I appreciated Tom Cordaro's talk calling for a "new narrative" in our politics and American policies. Instead of a "war on terror", we need a narrative based on peacemaking, stressing virtues and principles of truth, honesty, compassion and positive dialogue with other people and nations." Tom reminded us that, even though it looks like we as a country have chosen a narrative of violence, there have always been groups working throughout U.S. history that have opposed violence and focused on peacemaking, truth telling and concern for common good. Sr. Winifred Goddard said of Tom's presentation, "I found Tom's message in sync with how I feel and think – the responsibility to continually re-examine how I think and act and not to fall into the trap of 'this is how I've always thought'."

Of the morning Sr. Ellen Rose O'Connell says, "I found the information and the formal and informal discussion very stimulating, especially the information about the NGO at the UN." The morning session focused on efforts of area Pax Christi groups, Pax Christi USA and Pax Christi International, especially its work as an NGO at the United Nations.

Hosting the Fall Assembly at the Queen was one way the Sisters of Charity Initiative on Spirituality and Healing recognized their goal of having a Fall event focused on nonviolence. The planning group knew that to best accomplish this goal, collaboration was necessary. We are grateful that Rosemarie Pace, director of Pax Christi Metro NY, and their Board decided to have their Fall Assembly at the Queen. The planning group of SC Initiative on Spirituality and Healing looks forward to future collaborative endeavors that will strengthen our narrative, skills and practices in nonviolence and peacemaking – values-in-action that deepen healing and spirituality in ourselves and the world.

Carol De Angelo, SC, October 23, 2011