

DATE: April 30, 2004
TO: St. Mary's University Community
FROM: President's Peace Commission
SUBJECT: Report to the Community

As the 2003-2004 academic year draws to a close, the St. Mary's University President's Peace Commission (PPC) would like to share a brief synopsis of some of our events this year, and express our gratitude to the campus community for the support you have given to the Commission's work.

- **October 2003 Program: *Bioethics: Everything You Wanted to Know About Life or Death, But Were Afraid to Ask***, held October 21-23, was successful. Altogether, more than 1,200 people attended the three-day program. With the remarkable advances in biomedical, environmental, and social sciences, this program was timely in expanding understanding of bioethical issues.
- **International Education Week Program:** On October 30, 2003, the PPC co-sponsored a standing room-only presentation by Francis Bok, an escaped slave from Sudan, and Tommy Calvert, of the American Anti-Slavery Group. Bok described his ten years of captivity, which he documented in his book, *Escape from Slavery*, and increased our awareness of the plight of an estimated 27 million people who are subjected to trafficking or modern-day slavery. Co-sponsors of the program included the International Relations Society and School Sisters of Notre Dame, among others.
- **Invitation to a Better Understanding of Ramadan**, followed by a panel discussion of the significance of fasting in Christianity and Judaism, was held on November 11, 2003. The program was co-sponsored by the Indian Student Association, International Relations Society, International Students Association (INSTA), Study Abroad Society, University Ministry, and the PPC. Ali Zeybek of the Institute of Interfaith Dialog described the significance of Ramadan to the Muslim faith. Judy Lackritz from the Jewish Federation of San Antonio and Rev. Charles H. Miller, S.M. from the Theology department at St. Mary's discussed fasting in their respective faith traditions.
- **March 2004 Program:** More than 1,100 people attended ***Peace through Managing Conflict***, held March 23-25. As St. Mary's University continues to develop its peacemaking (mediation) program available to all university community members, the symposium explored conflict resolution processes, such as negotiation and mediation, and connected those attending to local conflict management resources. The Sixth Annual **Art of Peace Award** was granted to internationally acclaimed poet and writer, Naomi Shihab Nye. Additionally, the **President's Peace Concert** was revived on March 28, now the 16th concert, and featured our university's concert band and jazz orchestra and our choir, Coro Santa Maria.
 - **The Fall 2004 Program, *As We Shape Our Destiny: Where is Your Voice***, focusing on civic engagement, is scheduled for Tuesday, October 26-Wednesday, October 27. Sessions will include: *Civic Engagement: Did You Just Tune Out?; Have Passport, Will Engage: International Opportunities; Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility; My Vote, My Voice-"I Think I Have Laryngitis;" It's Not My Major. Why Should I Care?; Getting Beyond the Headlines: The Media and Social Responsibility; and Finding the Leader within You: Connecting Your Passion with Action.*

Please contact Diane Duesterhoeft at diane@stmarytx.edu or 436-3346 or Lucy Poludniak at lpoludniak@stmarytx.edu or 431-2207 for more information or to participate in this program.

The President's Peace Commission thanks President Charles Cotrell and the University community for their support and participation this year.