Reflections for Nonviolent Community

A BOOK OF READINGS

The Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance

October - November 2015
About this booklet

This booklet, published bi-monthly by the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance, embraces many members of our peace community. The booklet is intended to build spiritual community. It is available for no charge to those who request it. Those who are using the book are asked to participate by contributing readings to it.‡

The common thread in these reflections is the struggle of human beings to improve the world. In OREPA, our struggle to end bomb production in Oak Ridge is part of that struggle. In these reflections, we join ourselves with the larger community that works to heal the world.

From the outset, the reflection booklet has been provided free of charge. If you are able to make a donation to cover the cost of your booklet, it would be greatly appreciated. A gift of $20 would cover the cost of paper, printing and mailing for one year. If you are unable to make a donation, please continue to accept the reflection booklet and use it.

Each Thursday, in addition to our reflection, you will find the name of a member of our community who is using this reflection booklet. This is an opportunity to think a little about that person and all those who work for peace on her/his day.

‡ contributions, suggestions, requests can be sent to OREPA, P O Box 5743, Oak Ridge, TN 37831 or by e-mail to orep@earthlink.net

front cover:

August 8th: Marchers in Oak Ridge, TN, marked the 70th observance of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Japan by the United States; More than 250 people walked to the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex where the US produced the highly enriched uranium for the Little Boy bomb—and continues to produce thermonuclear weapon cores today.
One day a colleague and I were walking along the crowded waterfront in San Francisco. Coming toward us was a trio of young African-American men who were joking and playing. When we passed, I greeted them. Just as the last person walked by, I heard him say “Thanks for seeing us.” It took a minute for that to register. My companion said, “Did you hear what I heard?” It took me a moment before I could respond with, “Yes.” My heart was breaking. How could it be that I would be thanked for merely seeing someone? It took all of my self-control not to run back to those young men, gather them in my arms, and apologize for every person who had ever overlooked them, averted their eyes, or turned away. What must it be like to move through a world that refuses to meet one’s eyes, that refuses to acknowledge one’s very existence?

What could happen if every day, we were to greet each human as though he or she were worthy of notice and respect? What would happen if every day you were greeted as though you were worthy of notice and respect? What could change?

~ Akaya Windwood
Friday, October 2
1869 : GANDHI’S BIRTHDAY

It’s the action, not the fruit of the action, that’s important. You have to do the right thing. It may not be in your power, may not be in your time, that there’ll be any fruit. But that doesn’t mean you stop doing the right thing. You may never know what results come from your action. But if you do nothing, there will be no result.

~ Gandhi

Saturday, October 3

Human qualities often come in clusters. Altruism, inner peace, strength, freedom, and genuine happiness thrive together like the parts of a nourishing fruit. Likewise, selfishness, animosity and fear grow together. So, while helping others may not always be “pleasant,” it leads the mind to a sense of inner peace, courage, harmony with the interdependence of all things and beings.

~ Mattieu Ricard

Sunday, October 4

Faith is not a series of gilt-edged propositions that you sit down to figure out, and if you follow all the logic and accept all the conclusions, then you have it. It is crumpling and throwing away everything, proposition by proposition, until nothing is left, and then writing a new proposition, your very own, to throw in the teeth of despair.

~ Mary Jean Irion

Monday, October 5
1923 : PHIL BERRIGAN BORN

Unbridled violence against the Earth in war-making, nuclear armament, and militarization of our police, is destroying both the Earth and our humanity. Racial hatred and unwillingness to engage in dialogue which moves us towards reconciliation destroys all of us.

~ Peggy Chappell
Tuesday, October 6
1917: Fannie Lou Hamer born
1987: Oscar Arias Sanchez wins Nobel Peace Prize

I cannot accept that to be realistic means to tolerate misery, violence and hate. I do not believe that the hungry person should be treated as subversive for expressing his or her suffering. I shall never accept that the law can be used to justify tragedy, to keep things as they are, to make us abandon our ideas of a different world. Law is the path of liberty, and must as such open the way to progress for everyone.

~ Oscar Arias Sanchez

Wednesday, October 7
1879: Joe Hill born
1931: Desmond Tutu born
2001: US begins bombing Afghanistan

Reconciliation is actually a demonstration of strength. It takes incredible courage to go through the process that will lead you to reconciliation—to tell the story, to be able to articulate how you have been injured in ways that may feel excruciatingly painful and shameful. To name the hurt: shame, feeling disdained, feeling belittled or demeaned. And then to be able to grant forgiveness.

~ Mpho Tutu

Looking forward to a future free of nuclear weapons: Ardeth Platte, Erik Johnson and Carol Gilbert at the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex on August 6, 2015 at the conclusion of the Names and Remembrance Ceremony.
Wisdom is not knowledge. Knowledge deals with the particular and the actual. Knowledge is the domain of science and technology. Wisdom is about transcendence. Wisdom allows us to see and accept reality, no matter how bleak that reality may be. It is only through wisdom that we are able to cope with the messiness and absurdity of life. Wisdom is about detachment. Once wisdom is achieved, the idea of moral progress is obliterated. Wisdom throughout the ages is a constant.

Systems of power fear and seek to silence those who achieve wisdom, which is what the war by corporate forces against the humanities and art is about. Wisdom, because it sees through the façade, is a threat to power. It exposes the lies and ideologies that power uses to maintain its privilege and its warped ideology of progress.

Wisdom connects us with forces that cannot be measured empirically and that are outside the confines of the rational world. To be wise is to pay homage to beauty, truth, grief, the brevity of life, our own mortality, love and the absurdity and mystery of existence. It is, in short, to honor the sacred. Those who remain trapped in the dogmas perpetuated by technology and knowledge, who believe in the inevitability of human progress, are idiot savants.

~ Chris Hedges
Friday, October 9
1919 : FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION FOUNDED

Racism is like that local creeping kudzu vine that swallows whole forests and abandoned houses. If you don’t keep pulling up the roots it will grow back faster than you can destroy it.

~ Alice Walker

Saturday, October 10

Our privileges can be no greater than our obligations. The protection of our rights can endure no longer than the performance of our responsibilities.

~ John F. Kennedy

Sunday, October 11
1884 : ELEANOR ROOSEVELT’S BIRTHDAY

When will our consciences grow so tender that we will act to prevent human misery rather than avenge it?

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

Monday, October 12

Love your crooked neighbor with your own crooked heart.

~ W. H. Auden

Tuesday, October 13
1999 : US SENATE REJECTS COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY

Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all others.

~ Cicero

Wednesday, October 14

To the degree that we live and suffer, we slowly go about discovering who we are. In the final analysis, we are expressions of that background (the image of God?) that sustains and directs everything.

~ Guimaraes Rosa
Thursday, October 15
Theresa Tems
1969 : 2,000,000 PARTICIPATE IN MORATORIUM AGAINST VIETNAM WAR

To be able to love material things, to clothe them with tender grace, and yet not be attached to them, this is a great service. Providence expects that we should make this world our own, and not lie in it as though it were a rented tenement. We can only make it our own through some service, and that service is to lend it love and beauty from our soul. Your own experience shows you the difference between the beautiful, the tender, the hospitable, and the mechanically neat and monotonously useful. Gross utility kills beauty. We now have all over the world huge productions of things, huge organizations, huge administrations of empire—all obstructing the path of life. Civilization is waiting for a great consummation, for an expression of its soul in beauty. This must be your contribution to the world.

~ Rabindranath Tagore
Patriotism is a kind of religion; it is the egg from which wars are hatched.

~ Guy De Maupassant

Patience is power: With time and patience the mulberry leaf becomes silk.

~ Chinese proverb

Whiteness in a racist, corporate-controlled society is like having the image of an American Express Card stamped on one’s face: immediately you are “universally accepted.”

~ Manning Marable

The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, and wiser people so full of doubts.

~ Bertrand Russell

Don’t let the things you can’t do interfere with the things you can do.

~ John Wooden

Poetry is an act of peace. Peace goes into the making of a poet like flour goes into the making of bread.

~ Pablo Neruda
I loved Malcolm because Malcolm never lied, unlike the schools and their façade of morality, unlike the streets and their bravado, unlike the world of dreamers. I loved him because he made it plain, never mystical or esoteric, because his science was not rooted in the actions of spooks and mystery gods, but in the work of the physical world. Malcolm was the first political pragmatist I knew, the first honest man I’d ever heard. He was unconcerned with making the people who believed they were white comfortable in their belief. If he was angry, he said so. If he hated, he hated because it was human for the enslaved to hate the enslaver, natural as Prometheus hating the birds. He would not turn the other cheek for you. He would not be a better man for you. He would not be your morality. Malcolm spoke like a man who was free, like a black man above laws that proscribed our imagination. I identified with him. I knew that he had chafed against the schools, that he had almost been doomed by the streets. But even more, I knew that he had found himself while studying in prison, and that when he emerged from the jails, he returned wielding some old power that made him speak as though his body were his own. Perhaps I too might live free. Perhaps I too might wield the same old power that animated my ancestors, that lived in Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, Nanny, Cudjoe, Malcolm X, and speak—no, act—like my body were my own.

~ Ta-Nehisi Coates
Friday, October 23

The existence of nuclear weapons presents a clear and present danger to life on Earth. Nuclear arms cannot bolster the security of any nation because they represent a threat to the security of the human race. These incredibly destructive weapons are an affront to our common humanity, and the tens of billions of dollars that are dedicated to their development and maintenance should be used instead to alleviate human need and suffering.

~ Oscar Arias Sanchez

Saturday, October 24

UNITED NATIONS DAY COMMEMORATES FOUNDING OF UN

Nothing does more than darkness to isolate us from the sense of human support and understanding which, whether we’re commonly conscious of it or not, is the human being’s main source of self-definition. Darkness separates us from reality. It disorients a person both physically and psychologically.

~ Joan Chittister

Sunday, October 25

1955 : SÁDAKO SASAKI DIES
1983 : UNITED STATES INVADS GRENADA

It’s quite simple—we live on a little round ball with limited resources that are all connected to one another. The concept of eternal growth is a fantasy concocted in the brains of greedy or just small minded currency crunchers. If you tap all the water to create wealth upstream, the land downstream will be dry and poor. If you burn fossil fuels that took millions of years to form in a matter of decades, you put yourself on a multi-million year payback schedule.

~ Sven Eberlein

Monday, October 26

2001 : US CONGRESS PASSES PATRIOT ACT

The prophet is one who feels fiercely. We ourselves witness continually acts of injustice, manifestations of hypocrisy, falsehood, outrage, misery but we rarely get indignant or overly excited. To the prophets a minor, commonplace sort of injustice assumes almost cosmic proportions.

~ Abraham Heschel
Tuesday, October 27

America has the laws and the material resources it takes to insure justice for all its people. What it lacks is the heart, the humanity, the Christian love that it would take.

~ Shirley Chisholm

Wednesday, October 28

The world’s problems cannot be analyzed or explained in isolation. There are regions now at high risk, and aside from all doomsday predictions, the present world system is certainly unsustainable from a number of points of view, for we have stopped thinking about the goals of human activity.

~ Pope Francis
Never forget that for 250 years black people were born into chains—whole generations followed by more generations that knew nothing but chains.

You must struggle to truly remember this past in all its nuance, error, and humanity. You must resist the common urge toward the comforting narrative of divine law, toward fairy tales that imply some irrepressible justice. The enslaved were not bricks in your road, and their lives were not chapters in your redemptive history. They were people turned to fuel for the American machine. Enslavement was not destined to end, and it is wrong to claim our present circumstances—no matter how improved—as the redemption for the lives of people who never asked for the posthumous, untouchable glory of dying for their children. Our triumphs can never compensate for this. So you must wake up every morning knowing that no promise is unbreakable, least of all the promise of waking up at all. This is not despair. These are the preferences of the universe itself: verbs over nouns, actions over states, struggle over hope.

~ Ta-Nehisi Coates
Friday, October 30
1961 : USSR DETONATES 58-MEGATON ATMOSPHERIC TEST, LARGEST EVER

The “American Dilemma” is the ever-raging conflict between, on the one hand, the valuations preserved on the general plane which we shall call the “American Creed,” where the American thinks, talks, and acts under the influence of high national and Christian precepts, and, on the other hand, the valuations on specific planes of individual and group living, where personal and local interests and all sorts of miscellaneous wants, impulses, and habits dominate his or her outlook.

~ Gunnar Myrdal,

Saturday, October 31
1952 : US DETONATES FIRST HYDROGEN BOMB, ENIWETOK ATOLL, MARSHALL ISLANDS

Art is both love and friendship, and understanding; the desire to give. It is not charity, which is the giving of things, it is more than kindness, which is the giving of self. It is both the taking and giving of beauty, the turning out to the light of the inner folds of awareness of the spirit.

~ Ansel Adams

Sunday, November 1
1989 : DIANNA ORTIZ TORTURED IN GUATEMALA
1995 : SOUTH AFRICA HOLDS FIRST ELECTION FOR ALL RACES

My mother said to me, “If you become a soldier you’ll be a general; if you become a monk you’ll end up as the pope.” Instead, I became a painter and wound up as Picasso.

~ Pablo Picasso

Monday, November 2
1920 : EUGENE DEBS, IN PRISON, RECEIVES 1,000,000 VOTES FOR PRESIDENT

I am not a Labor Leader; I do not want you to follow me or anyone else; if you are looking for a Moses to lead you out of this capitalist wilderness, you will stay right where you are. I would not lead you into the promised land if I could, because if I led you in, some one else would lead you out. You must use your heads as well as your hands, and get yourself out of your present condition; as it is now the capitalists use your heads and your hands.

~ Eugene Debs
Tuesday, November 3
1883 : US SUPREME COURT DESIGNATES NATIVE AMERICANS AS ALIENS

How a society channels male aggression is one of the greatest questions as to whether that society will survive. That’s why I am not against violence in the media; I am against the glorification of immoral violence.

~ Dennis Prager

Wednesday, November 4
1992 : RUSSIA RATIFIES START TREATY

Last, but by no means least, courage—moral courage, the courage of one’s convictions, the courage to see things through. The world is in a constant conspiracy against the brave. It’s the age-old struggle—the roar of the crowd on one side and the voice of your conscience on the other.

~ Douglas MacArthur

The house was packed when Gar Alperovitz came to the East Tennessee History Center in Knoxville in early August to talk about the historical record that documents the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima was not made to end the war, but for other political reasons.
Thursday, November 5
Coleman Smith

I write you in your fifteenth year. I am writing you because this was the year you saw Eric Garner choked to death for selling cigarettes; because you know now that Renisha McBride was shot for seeking help, that John Crawford was shot down for browsing in a department store. And you have seen men in uniform drive by and murder Tamir Rice, a twelve-year old child whom they were oath-bound to protect. And you have seen men in the same uniforms pummel Marlene Pinnock, someone’s grandmother, on the side of a road. And you know now, if you did not before, that police departments of your country have been endowed with the authority to destroy your body. It does not matter if the destruction is the result of an unfortunate overreaction. It does not matter if it originates in a misunderstanding. It does not matter if the destruction springs from a foolish policy. Sell cigarettes without the proper authority and your body can be destroyed. Turn into a dark stairwell and your body can be destroyed. The destroyers will rarely be held accountable. Mostly they will receive pensions. And destruction is merely the superlative form of a dominion whose prerogatives include friskings, detainings, beatings, and humiliations. All of this is common to black people. And all of this is old for black people. No one is held responsible.

There is nothing uniquely evil in these destroyers or even in this moment. The destroyers are merely men enforcing the whims of our country, correctly interpreting its heritage and legacy. It is hard to face this. But all our phrasing—race relations, racial chasm, racial justice, racial profiling, white privilege, even white supremacy—serves to obscure the fact that racism is a visceral experience, that it dislodge brains, blocks airways, rips muscle, extracts organs, cracks bones and breaks teeth. You must never look away from this. You must always remember that the sociology, the history, the economics, the graphs, the charts, the regressions all land, with great violence, upon the body.

~Ta-Nehisi Coates
Friday, November 6

For most of us change is anxiety-producing. I suspect that most white folk would be in favor of marked progress for people of color if they could be guaranteed that their own lives would not be significantly affected. But that is not in the cards. We all must change if we are to promote racial healing and aspire to racial justice. Abandoning old attitudes and familiar patterns of belief is not easy.

~ Harlon L. Dalton

Saturday, November 7

Peace is not a matter of prizes or trophies. It is not the product of a victory or command. It has no finishing line, no final deadline, no fixed definition of achievement. Peace is a never-ending process, the work of many decisions.

~ Oscar Arias Sanchez

Sunday, November 8

1897 : Dorothy Day’s birthday!
1972 : Trail of Broken Treaties March occupies Bureau of Indian Affairs in DC

Hell on earth for a brilliant innovator is spelled s-c-h-o-o-l. Inventor Dean Kamen found himself at odds with his public-school teachers because he noted that his wrong answers weren’t really wrong. For instance, when asked to select the word that didn’t belong to the set “add, subtract, multiply, increase,” Kamen might choose “add” because all the others had eight letters.

~ Steven Levy

Monday, November 9

1989 : Berlin Wall falls to nonviolent protests

Resilience is the ability to recover from challenges in a manner that leaves an individual or community more flexible and better able to meet future challenges. Resilience involves an ability to react creatively and constructively to change while recognizing that change is an ongoing part of life.

~ A.J. Zutra
Tuesday, November 10
1938 : KRISTALLNACHT

Peace is not something which exists independently of us, nor is war. It is true that certain individuals—political leaders, policymakers, army generals—do have particularly grave responsibilities in respect to peace. However, these people do not come from nowhere. They are not born and brought up in outer space. Like us, they were nourished by their mother’s milk and affection. They are members of our own human family and have been nurtured within the society which we as individuals have helped to create. Peace in the world thus depends on peace in the hearts of individuals.

~ The Dalai Lama

Wednesday, November 11

Peace consists, very largely, in the fact of desiring it with all one’s soul. The inhabitants of my small country, Costa Rica, have realized those words by Erasmus. Mine is an unarmed people, whose children have never seen a fighter or a tank or a warship.

~ Oscar Arias Sanchez
Now at night, I held you and a great fear, wide as all our American generations, took me. Now I personally understood my father and the old mantra—“Either I can beat him or the police.” I understood it all—the cable wires, the extension cords, the ritual switch. Black people love their children with a kind of obsession. You are all we have, and you come to us endangered. I think we would like to kill you ourselves before seeing you killed by the streets that America made. That is a philosophy of the disembodied, of a people who control nothing, who can protect nothing, who are made to fear not just the criminals among them but the police who lord over them with all the moral authority of a protection racket. It was only after you that I understood this love, that I understood the grip of my mother’s hand. She knew that the galaxy itself could kill me, that all of me could be shattered and all of her legacy spilled upon the curb like bum wine. And no one would be brought to account for this destruction, because my death would not be the fault of any human, but the fault of some unfortunate but immutable fact of “race,” imposed upon an innocent country by the inscrutable judgement of invisible gods.

~ Ta-Nehisi Coates
Friday, November 13

Beauty takes us beyond the visible to the height of consciousness, past the ordinary to the mystical, away from the expedient to the endlessly true.

~ Joan Chittister

Saturday, November 14

No farmer ever plowed a field by turning it over in his mind.

~ George E. Woodbury

Sunday, November 15

1887: Georgia O’Keeffe born

Prejudice is a burden which confuses the past, threatens the future, and renders the present inaccessible.

~ Maya Angelou

Monday, November 16

1989: Salvadoran death squad (trained in US at School of the Americas) murders six Jesuit priests, housekeeper and daughter in San Salvador

Healthy children will not fear life if their elders have integrity enough not to fear death.

~ Erik Erikson

Tuesday, November 17

It’s a good thing to have all the props pulled out from under us occasionally. It gives us some sense of what is rock under our feet and what is sand.

~ Madeleine L’Engle

Wednesday, November 18

1787: Sojourner Truth born

Of course I’ve got lawyers. They are like nuclear weapons, I’ve got them cause everybody else has them. But as soon as you use them they screw everything up.

~ Danny DeVito
You would be a man one day, and I could not save you from
the unbridgeable distance between you and your future peers and
colleagues, who might try to convince you that everything I know,
all the things I’m sharing with you here, are an illusion, or a fact of
a distant past that need not be discussed. And I could not save you
from the police, from their flashlights, their hands, their nightsticks,
their guns. Prince Jones, murdered by the men who should have
been his security guards, is always with me, and I knew that soon
he would be with you.

In those days I would come out of the house, turn onto
Flatbush Avenue, and my face would tighten like a Mexican
wrestler’s mask, my eyes would dart from corner to corner, my
arms loose, limber, and ready. This need to be always on guard
was an unmeasured expenditure of energy, the slow siphoning of
the essence. It contributed to the fast breakdown of our bodies. So
I feared not just the violence of this world but the rules designed
to protect you from it, the rules that would have you contort your
body to address the block, and contort again to be taken seriously
by colleagues, and contort again so as not to give the police
a reason. All my life I’d heard people tell their black boys and
black girls to be “twice as good,” which is to say “accept half as
much.” These words would be spoken with a veneer of religious
nobility, as though they evidenced some unspoken quality, some
undetected courage, when in fact all they evidenced was the gun
to our head and the hand in our pocket. This is how we lose our
softness. This is how they steal our right to smile. No one told
those little white children, with their tricycles, to be twice as good.
I imagined their parents telling them to take twice as much.

~ Ta-Nehisi Coates
Friday, November 20

The blundering history of the human race is always given coherence by power elites and their courtiers in the press and academia who endow it with a meaning and coherence it lacks. They need to manufacture national myths to hide the greed, violence and stupidity that characterize the march of most human societies. For the United States, refusal to confront the crisis of climate change and our endless and costly wars in the Middle East are but two examples of the follies that propel us toward catastrophe.

~ Chris Hedges

Saturday, November 21

It’s time for the creative people of the world to reclaim the meaning and definitions of terms so closely guarded by the keepers of the gate. Time to take economic discourse to a higher level, making it part of our shared language, away from the towers of power. Time to replace profit and consumption with wisdom and imagination indexes, invest in soil and soul, value the Tao over the Dow. After all, the word economy comes from the Greek work oikos, meaning “one who manages a household.” Last I checked, we all live here, not just the fat cats.

~ Sven Eberlein

Sunday, November 22

Confronting the paradoxes of life around us and in us, contemplating the meaning of them for ourselves, eventually and finally, leads to our giving place to the work of the spirit in our own lives.

~ Joan Chittister

Monday, November 23

We can reject every form of religion but we can’t reject and cast off compassion and peace of mind.

~ The Dalai Lama
Tuesday, November 24

Hope is the strongest driving force for a people. Hope which brings about change, which produces new realities, is what opens the road to freedom. Once hope has taken hold, courage must unite with wisdom. That is the only way of avoiding violence, the only way of maintaining the calm one needs to respond peacefully to offenses.

~ Oscar Arias Sanchez

Wednesday, November 25

Indian civilization has been distinctive in locating its source of regeneration, material and intellectual, in the forest, not the city. The culture that has arisen from the forest has been influenced by the diverse processes of renewal of life, which are always at play in the forest, varying from species to species, from season to season, in sight and sound and smell. The unifying principle of life in diversity, of democratic pluralism, thus became the principle of Indian civilization.

~ Rabindranath Tagore

Wylie and Carol put the finishing touches on a peace lantern at the Riverside Nonviolent Catholic Worker house in south Knoxville in early August.
“We would prefer to say that such people cannot exist, that there aren’t any,” writes Solzhenitsyn. “To do evil a human being must first of all believe that what he’s doing is good, or else that it’s a well-considered act in conformity with natural law.” This is the foundation of the Dream—its adherents must not just believe in it but believe that it is just, believe that their possession of the Dream is the natural result of grit, honor and good works. There is some passing acknowledgment of the bad old days, which, by the way, were not so bad as to have any ongoing effect on our present. The mettle that it takes to look away from the horror of our prison system, from police forces transformed into armies, from the long war against the black body, is not forged overnight. This is the practiced habit of jabbing out one’s eyes and forgetting the work of one’s hands. To acknowledge these horrors means turning away from the brightly rendered version of your country as it has always declared itself and turning toward something murkier and unknown. It is still too difficult for most Americans to do this. But that is your work. It must be, if only to preserve the sanctity of your mind.

~ Ta-Nehisi Coates
Friday, November 27

When people experience “moments of grace,” or “magical moments” in daily life, while walking in the snow under the stars or spending a beautiful moment with dear friends by the seaside, what is really happening? All of a sudden, they have left their burden of inner conflicts behind. They feel in harmony with others, with themselves, with the world. It is wonderful to fully enjoy with magical moments, but it is also revealing to understand why they feel so good: pacification of inner conflicts; a better sense of interdependence with everything rather than fragmenting reality; and a respite from the mental toxins of aggression and obsession. This will lead not just to a few moments of grace but to a lasting state of well-being that we may call genuine happiness.

~ Mattieu Ricard

Saturday, November 28

It is thinking through life alone, by ourselves or as communities of seekers with no particular or immediate instances in mind, that may save us from giving ourselves up to the enigmas of life in despair.

~ Joan Chittister

Sunday, November 29
1908 : THURGOOD MARSHALL’S BIRTHDAY!

The encounter with the face of another is one of the fundamental experiences that awaken moral consciousness and responsibility.

~ Archbishop Silvano Tomasi

Monday, November 30
1835 : MARK TWAIN BORN

Stay loud. Every single day. Stay loud for the generations who came before you and for those who will come after you. Stay loud and drown out the silence of indifference. Stay loud until we have justice for all, and then get louder.

~ Nina Flores
Many things are necessary to have peace—including training ourselves to be nonviolent. On Friday, August 7, 2015, we gathered at Church of the Savior in Knoxville to prepare for the August 8 demonstration in Oak Ridge.

Dozens of people learned to fold peace cranes and learned the story of Sadako Sasaki in 1000 Cranes held August 4 in Krutch Park in downtown Knoxville. Here Betty Coleman and Linda Ewald provide origami lessons as part of the effort to fold one thousand cranes in one day.
Sources

Readings for the reflection booklet this month were contributed by Linda Ewald, Mary Dennis Lentsch, and Tom Egan. Readings were drawn from Ta-Nehisi Coates’ *Between the World and Me*, from *Sustainable Happiness: Live Simply, Live Well, Make a Difference*, edited by Sarah van Gelder and the staff of YES! Magazine, and from *Between the Dark and the Daylight: Embracing the Contradictions of Life* by Joan Chittister.