Skip to Content
Cal Poly

News

Search Cal Poly News
Go

California Polytechnic State University

April 10

Contact: Patricia Harris
(805) 756-2582
Sister Mary Pat White
(805) 543-4105

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cal Poly Campus Catholic Center Director Travel to Afghanistan On 'Mission of Peace, Reconciliation'

Sister Mary Pat White of Cal Poly's Newman Catholic Center was invited by Global Exchange, an international human rights organization, to take part in an interfaith delegation to Afghanistan, June 17-July 1.

Sister White is one of 15 members of the clergy who will undertake "a journey of compassion and reconciliation to bear witness to the human cost of war and promote peace and cooperation in Afghanistan," she said.

The delegation will seek to establish ongoing relations between congregations and religious groups in the United States and mosques and schools in Afghanistan.

"A key purpose of the delegation is to enhance cultural and religious understanding and concretely support economic development and humanitarian projects at the community level," Sister White said. "Delegates will visit families devastated by 23 years of war, talk with government and community leaders involved in reconstruction efforts and hear from non-governmental organizations that are working on human rights and development campaigns."

The group will also visit women who ran underground schools for girls under the Taliban regime, and meet with religious leaders and communities of faith to establish long-term relationships and explore ways to offer moral and material support for community development. "In this time of escalating preparations for war and intensified religious conflict, it is essential that religious leaders like Sister Mary Pat come together with other people of faith and conscience in a concrete gesture to sow the seeds of peace," Sister White said.

Sister White is a member of a local committee that is exploring the development of a sister city relationship between cities of San Luis Obispo County and the village of Bazarak in the Panjshir Valley in northeastern Afghanistan. "Participation in this delegation will enhance my understanding of the needs of the people there and enable me to contribute meaningfully toward the development of the project," Sister White said.

When she returns, she will be available to talk to community groups about her experiences in Afghanistan.

Anyone interested in supporting her as she prepares for her trip, and those interested in advancing the local effort to establish a sister city relationship with the village of Bazarak, should call her at 543-4105.

- 30 -

Cal Poly Public Affairs
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
805.756.7266
polynews@calpoly.edu