

# CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

## Reverence for Life

BY NATHAN

When I saw the news headlines this weekend about another war and a tally that included over a thousand individuals who have been killed, my heart sank. I learned of this event after I had spent a wonderful day with my family and friends enjoying the outdoors, laughter, and food together.

That evening, I was reading a book by Zen Master Thich Nhat Hahn in which he wrote, "Life is both wonderful and dreadful." I underlined the sentence and realized that I had seen how life can be so wonderful and yet so dreadful in one day. I had a worry-free day while humans across the globe experienced violence, destruction, and the loss of innocent lives.

For centuries, many religious and spiritual traditions have been advocates for peace, nonviolence, and have spoken out against senseless acts of violence around the globe. Many traditions speak about liberation and freedom from oppression, violence, and harm. They proclaim there is a Divine nature within each human being.

At the same time, however, other religious traditions throughout time have misused their religion as a means to advocate for violence. Some have misused religion to justify oppression, harm, and negating the Divine nature within each human being.

Oftentimes, our spiritual and religious traditions can be both wonderful and dreadful.

In the Buddhist tradition, the Five Mindfulness Trainings represent the Buddhist vision for a global and spiritual ethic. The first mindfulness training, reverence for life, reads,

*Aware of the suffering caused by the destruction of life, I am committed to cultivating the insight of interbeing and compassion and learning ways to protect the lives of people, animals, plants, and minerals. I am determined not to kill, not to let others kill, and not to support any act of killing in the world, in my thinking, or in my way of life. Seeing that harmful actions arise from anger, fear, greed, and intolerance, which in turn come from dualistic and discriminative thinking, I will cultivate openness, non-discrimination, and non-attachments to views in order to transform violence, fanaticism, and dogmatism in myself and in the world.*

The events of this past week have shown the ugly and awful "suffering caused by the destruction of life" and have forced me to reflect on how I can "transform violence...in myself and in the world."

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Sympathies, Concerns,  
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Upcoming Interfaith  
Holidays and  
Dates to Remember

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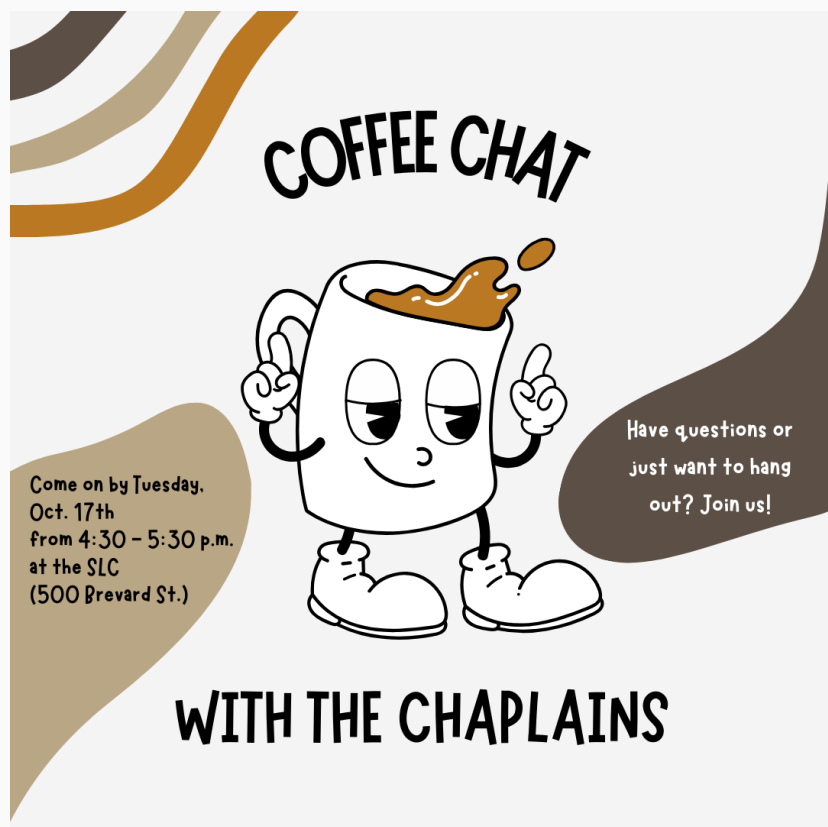
"When do you feel safe?"

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# Reverence for Life (cont'd)

I think this includes lamenting, praying for peace, committing to peacemaking, liberation, and non-violence, acting with compassion, and honoring the Divine light that is within every human being.

My hope is that you might be able to find a moment today to do the same, honoring that life can be both wonderful and dreadful, while trusting you have a part to play in advocating for peace, non-violence, and reverence for life.



## *Living on a Prayer*

**What:** Write down your prayer requests  
(can be anonymous)

**When:** Wednesdays, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**Where:** Dining Hall

**Why:** Catholic Community prays over requests  
Wednesdays and at Sunday Mass. Requests may also  
be emailed to Kayla (serratore\_KR@lynchburg.edu).  
Confidentiality is always respected.

For more information about the Spiritual Life Center, including info on our student groups, go to our webpage - link in the email signature. You can also visit our Linktree (Link is in email).

# Interfaith Holidays

October 15-24  
Navratri (Hinduism)

October 16  
Birth of Baha'u'llah (BaHá'í)

## Dates to Remember

Weekly on Sundays in Snidow Chapel:

- 11 a.m. Worship with Church of the Covenant
- 4:30 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass  
(No Mass on October 15)

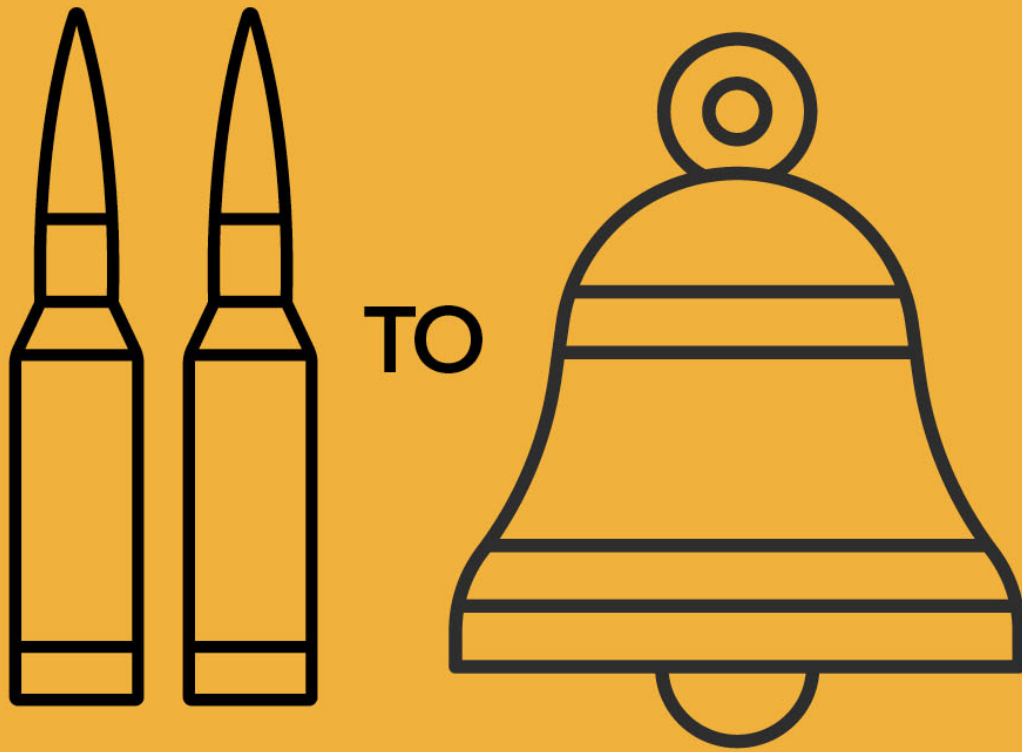
Friday, October 20

WHEN DO YOU FEEL SAFE?

- 12 p.m. Lunch panel - East Room
- 3 p.m. Bullet melting ceremony -  
Outside Dillard Fine Art Center
- 5 p.m. Artist reception - Daura  
Museum of Art
- Through Dec. 7 - Exhibition - Daura  
Museum of Art

(See details on page 3 poster)

The week of October 23-27  
is LAVENDER WEEK  
See next week's issue  
for details



**FRIDAY  
OCT. 20  
2023**

**WHEN  
DO  
YOU  
FEEL  
SAFE?**



Mercedes is a Washington, D.C.-based artist who melts down weapons and turns them into musical instruments,

installations, and public works of art. She has exhibited and performed at The Bronx Museum, Queens Museum, the Smithsonian Institution, the Kennedy Center, and the National Gallery of Art.

"When do you feel safe?" was created in response to the current crisis of school shootings in the U.S. The project and installation will tour the country until school shootings stop.

"When do you feel safe?" is sponsored by the Roger C. Dowdy and Janie Wineman Dowdy Endowment for Initiatives in Peacebuilding through Spirituality and the Arts, the Spiritual Life Center, the Daura Museum of Art, and the Student Government Association.

PHOTO: AMIR POURMAND

**Four events will be held at the University of Lynchburg:**

- **Lunch panel discussion**, noon  
Burton Dining Hall, East Room  
(Lunch provided by Spiritual Life Center, campus community only)
- **Bullet melting ceremony**, 3 p.m.  
Loading dock outside Dillard Fine Arts Center
- **Artist reception**, 5 p.m.  
Daura Museum of Art
- **"When do you feel safe?" exhibition**, through Dec. 7  
Daura Museum of Art

For more information,  
email [spirituallife@lynchburg.edu](mailto:spirituallife@lynchburg.edu).



University of Lynchburg