



NevadaDesertExperience.org

1420 West Bartlett Avenue, Las Vegas, NV 89106

(702) 646-4814

NEWS RELEASE

RELEASE DATE: April 24th 2011

CONTACT: Jim Haber, 702.646.4814

Easter Sunday Services End in 16 Arrests at Nuclear Test Site

At 12 noon today, April 24th 2011, 38 people gathered near the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS). The group held interfaith prayers and then eight women and eight men were arrested for alleged trespassing onto the NNSS. The prayer-action included local members of the Western Shoshone National Council, Buddhist Nipponzan Myohoji monks from Washington state and Catholic Workers from Nevada. Other demonstrators came from Arizona, California, Illinois, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Wisconsin, The Netherlands, and Japan. Today's Easter services were the climax of a 60-mile walk from Las Vegas to Mercury along US Highway 95. The annual pilgrimage is the interfaith "Sacred Peace Walk", which included a musical ritual at the NNSS.

The demonstrators include members of Nevada Desert Experience (NDE) and Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service, including Fr. Jerry Zawada who celebrated Mass at less than half an hour prior to the ritual line crossing. NDE is an interfaith group based in Las Vegas which resists nuclear weapons and war. NDE has a long history of activity in this region near Creech Air Force Base, and NDE's work helped lead to a cessation of full-scale nuclear testing in the early 1990's.

The prayer-action today focused on stopping the flow of money into nuclear weapons development, protecting the Nevada Desert, and protecting all people from nuclear disasters such as the recent one ongoing in Fukushima, Japan and the Chernobyl incident from April 26th 1986. One of the demonstrators from The Netherlands, Annabelle Parker said, "It's a terrible crime that the US government has committed by stealing and contaminating this beautiful land from Western Shoshone people. I found this week's Sacred Peace Walk to be a very strong spiritual action—I felt very much connected to the earth and everyone else."

Another demonstrator, Iris Wolfe from Arizona, went further, "We must also consider the powerful effect of nuclear radiation on the earth and her capacity to support life including ladybugs, bees, earthworms and others. We are wholly dependent and cannot survive without the interaction of all life forms together." Tomorrow and Tuesday, April 25th and 26th, NDE will hold 7:00AM vigils at Creech AFB and the NNSS respectively, in concert with global events commemorating the Chernobyl disaster.

###