

“No” to Blessing Killer Drone Warfare at Hancock AFB, Syracuse, NY

For Immediate Release:

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6/2/24 Syracuse~ In an April 5 letter from Wing Chaplain Mathew Hallenbeck (Lt. Col. USAF), an invitation was extended to local clergy to attend “Clergy Day” activities at Hancock Field Air National Guard Base from 9 AM to 1 PM on Tuesday, June 4th. The base *“chapel team”* is seeking to nurture a *“...partnership with local faith communities and institutions”* to help in *“...providing spiritual care to our military members and their families.”*

According to the NYS National Guard Report 2023, the 174th Attack Wing at the base operates the MQ-9 Reaper drone, which flies *“operational sorties”* world-wide, and trains MQ-9 aircrews and maintenance personnel for the USAF and foreign air forces. 315 drone pilots were trained in FY 2023.

Drone whistleblower Daniel Hale revealed that nine of ten drone kills were not the intended targets during a certain period in the Afghan War. The military considers the MQ-9 a true *“hunter killer”*. MQ-9s have conducted surveillance flights to assist Israel’s genocidal attacks on the people of Gaza. Day by day, the fruit of Hancock’s drone program is unspeakable evil.

Spiritual care for those who participate in remote warfare must include warning about the moral injury that results and counsel to refuse to kill via drone attacks.

Members of Upstate Drone Action (UDA) have opposed weaponized drones since they first came to Syracuse in 2009 when Hancock pilots began flying 24/7 operations in Afghanistan. Pax Christi Upstate NY, Ithaca Catholic Workers, and Veterans for Peace will join UDA to pray in repentance for US drone war crimes and the religious justification given to them. We call for an end of the killer drone program in the US and globally.

We will gather at the main gate, 6001 E. Malloy Rd., Mattydale, 13211 on Tuesday, June 4th, at 8:30 AM. Some will stay till the end of "**Clergy Day**" at 1 PM. We invite all committed to nonviolent resistance to militarism and war to join us.

"To learn more about Upstate Drone Action:

About Upstate Drone Action

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