

via pacis

—The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

April, 2008

www.desmoinescatholicworker.org

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DM Worker, Kirk Brown, far right, stands next to valiant volunteer Mark Lindahl, with other volunteers and guests spreading gravel behind Dingman House

Hospitality: A Little Love Covers a Multitude of Pain

By Mona Shaw

"I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you cared for Me; I was in prison, and you visited me.... Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it for the least of these our brothers, you did it for me."

Jesus, Matthew 25:35-40

Doing for "the least of these" is a soft and innocuous sentiment until it is actually practiced. Then it becomes radi-

cal, transformative, and may even be called dangerous. Just consider the ramifications if everyone in Des Moines tomorrow, spent only one hour doing the most for those in their lives considered the least.

Here at Dingman House, on any given day, one of our regular guests, Annie will be seen holding forth in our dining room. Her face is smooth and sweet and usually framed by the hat or scarf *du jour*. She comforts James for this or teases John for that and picks up after

those less conscientious than she. If trouble is brewing, and we miss it, Annie will let us know. If someone has died or been hospitalized, she delivers that news as well. While praying isn't required, we do say grace before our evening meal. If no one else offers to lead the prayer, Annie will. And, her prayer is always thankful for the blessings we share in that place.

The notion that one would do the most for or give their best to those considered "the least" in society is the

notion that drives all the work done by the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community. And, the tangible effect of this work is most easily witnessed in the work we do that we call "Hospitality" or loving our neighbor as ourselves.

"Hospitality" in our community includes opening our home five days a week to anyone who needs us. We serve two meals a day, as well as offer a place to shower, receive mail, and make phone calls. We also provide free stores of clothing, toiletries, bedding, groceries and fresh produce. We don't require proof of need or identification. We give what we have to anyone who asks. A phenomenon eerily similar to the fish and loaves story in the Bible happens all the time; and so we find that we are able to give a great deal.

We serve nearly 40,000 meals, provide hot water, clean towels, soap and shampoo for about 5000 showers, distribute groceries and fresh produce to about 6000 families, give clothing and toiletries to another 3500, and we do this on annual cash budget of less than \$50,000 per year.

This is accomplished because our food, sundries, and labor are donated. While about ten workers who choose to live and work in community full-time do receive a free room, no one is paid a salary. Workers and volunteers may also eat the same donated food prepared and served to our guests. We receive no grants or government

funds. Nor are we sponsored by or under the umbrella of any church or other sponsoring organization. Cash donations (our \$50,000 budget) are used to pay taxes, utilities, repairs, and other necessary things.

It is not fiscal efficiency, however, that makes this work impressive. Hospitality at Dingman invokes another notion, the notion that Peter Maurin gave Dorothy Day seventy-five years ago when he said we should make places where it is easier to be good. It works. While it is not necessarily always easy to be good in Dingman, it is *easier* than most places one will enter. And, not just easier for those of us who work or volunteer there, but for our guests as well. Kindness is contagious. Once one person expresses it to another, it spreads like a brush fire. This is proven in Dingman House every single day.

We are frequently asked to describe a typical guest at Dingman. This cannot be done. Each person who crosses our threshold is unique with a unique story to tell. Joe is not John. John is not James. C.J., Mike, Faye, Cheryl, Angela, David, Cal, Jimmie, Paul, Little Eddie, Craig, Aldo, Carlos, Pumpkin, KenRoy, and Rick are just a few of the special and irreplaceable friends who enrich our lives.

Sometimes guests become live-in workers, and workers may move out of the community and return as volunteers; or like Charles,

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via pacis

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The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community, founded in 1976, is a response to the Gospel call to compassionate action as summarized by the Catholic Worker tradition. We are committed to a simple, nonviolent lifestyle as we live and work among the poor. We directly serve others by opening the Dingman House as a daytime drop-in center for those in need of food, clothing, toiletries, use of a phone, toilet, a shower or just a cup of coffee and conversation. We also engage in activities that foster social justice.

Mailing address:
PO Box 4551
Des Moines IA 50305

Bishop Dingman House (Hospitality)
1310 7th St.
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-243-0765

Worker Residents: Kirk Brown, Mohamed Elkhanda-gawi, Fran Fuller, and Jacob Olsen

Phillip Berrigan House (Social Justice)
713 Indiana Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-282-4781
Worker Residents: Frank Cordaro and Mona Shaw

Msgr. Ligutti House (Worker Residence)
1301 8th St.
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-280-1216
Residents: Jackie Robinson, Ed Bloomer, Norman Searah, and Mike Fuller

Lazarus House (Guest Residence)
1317 8th St.
Des Moines, IA 50314
Guest Residents: Carla Dawson, Josh Dawson, Jordan Dawson, Irving Schroeder

Weekly Lectionary Bible Study

Mondays, 7pm. Berrigan House
Call to confirm.

Weekly Mass or Scripture Service

Fridays, 7:30pm, Dingman House
All are welcome!

The Chiapas Project

Chiapas, Mexico
Richard Flamer
flamerrichard@hotmail.com



As for ourselves, we must be meek, bear injustice, malice, and rash judgment. We must turn the other cheek, give up our cloak, go a second mile.

-Dorothy Day

Tamar Hennessy dies at 82

Tamar is held by her mother.

Tamar Teresa Batterham Hennessy, of Springfield, Vt., the daughter of Catholic Worker co-founder Dorothy Day, died on Tuesday, March 25, 2008, in Lebanon, N.H. She was 82.

Born in Manhattan in 1926, she was baptized at Our Lady Help of Christians R.C. Church in Tottenville that same year. Tamar witnessed the inception of the Catholic Worker when she was eight-years-old and conceded this life could be difficult for a child.

"She [Dorothy Day] was traveling a lot, and I was left to be taken care of by various peo-

ple, and I got very ill. It was hard for both of us. She had her work, and yet at the same time she had me. She was very devoted. She was torn," Hennessy told a reporter in 2003

Still in the same interview, Ms. Hennessy expressed no regrets, "I loved the Catholic Worker. It was so exciting. I wouldn't have missed a moment of it," and her admiration for her mother was unwavering, "She loved her family so much, and in so many, many ways she kept me going. She missed understanding the material side of it. She expected a lot of going without. At the same time, she supported me a lot, and I can't say enough good about that."

Ms. Hennessy graduated from the Academy of St. Dorothy in Grasmere, and studied at the Farmingdale Agricultural School on Long Island, as well as the workshop of artist Ade Bethune in Newport, R.I. She married Wil-

liam David Hennessy, a farmer and bookseller, in Easton, PA, in 1944. The couple settled in West Virginia, and eventually returned to Staten Island, where they lived near the Catholic Worker Farm on Bloomingdale Road in Rossville.

Her great delights were her children and grandchildren, welcoming visitors, caring for animals, discussing politics and listening to jazz and classical music. Her husband, William David, died in 2005.

Surviving are her two sons, Eric and Hilaire Hennessy; her five daughters, Rebecca Houghton and Mary, Margaret, Martha and Catherine Hennessy; 18 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. Ms. Hennessy's daughter, Susanna McMurry, died in 1986, and her son, Nicholas Hennessy, died in 1987. Her grandson, Justin Houghton, died in 1979, and grandson, Joshua Hennessy died in 2004.

Richard Flamer talks with Bishop Ruiz about the Chiapas Project in Mexico. Richard will travel to the U.S. to present a workshop on his work in Chiapas with the Mayan Indians at the Midwest Catholic Worker Retreat that will focus on immigration issues on April 26-28, 2008. For more about Richard and the Chiapas Project go to www.bishopruizproject.org.

**JustFaith receives 2008 Dingman Peace Award**

JustFaith Ministries was given the Peace Award at the Thirteenth Annual Bishop Maurice J. Dingman Peace Award Celebration on Saturday, April 12, 2008, at Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Church in Ankeny, Iowa. The annual event is sponsored by Catholic Peace Ministry in Des Moines.

JustFaith Ministries [www.justfaith.org] develops and offers workshops and programs that open eyes and hearts to the message that all hu-

mans deserve to live in peace and to have access to the basic necessities of life. Over 10,000 people have participated in JustFaith programs across the country.

Keynote speaker at this year's celebration was Elizabeth "Liz" McAllister

McAllister is a writer, artist, mother, and long-time peace activist. With the late Philip Berrigan, she helped establish Jonah House, a community of men and women who dedicate their lives to

peace and social justice. [www.jonahhouse.org]

She has served prison time for engaging in what she calls acts of "divine obedience." Liz has inspired, and continues to inspire, people in this country and throughout the world to resist war and to struggle against racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination.



Liz McAllister

Community News



By Frank
Cordaro

Living in community with others is enriching and fulfilling and challenging and difficult. The opportunities for personal and spiritual growth that living in community brings may even be more profound and require more from us than the growth found from performing Works of Mercy, embracing voluntary poverty, or even doing time in jail. This past quarter has certainly had its share of blessings, challenges, and changes.

After nearly twenty years of giving so many the incomparable blessing of her spirit and work, Carla Dawson is taking a well-deserved year-long sabbatical to devote more time to her two sons, Josh and Jordan, who are still living at home. Carla and her sons will continue to reside at Lazarus House as beloved guests of the DMCW community.

Bill Petsche and his son Jack, after many years with us, left at the end of January to pursue new adventures. We miss them both and send

our prayers with them as they embark on this new phase of their lives.

John Tuczu, a remarkable young man who spent several months with us has left to spend some time in Turkey in order to revisit his national heritage. He gave us a great deal during his short time here, and we miss him.

Jackie Robinson continues to hold down her full-time job at the Drake University Student Health Clinic while doing a share of hospitality and coordinating student groups that come to help at the DMCW.

Ever-popular columnist Norman has taken to writing novels and short stories. I read a couple of them, and they are very good. If you like his v.p. articles, you'll love his fiction. He could use a good editor and someone to type his short stories into an electronic format so we can post them on our web page.

Ed Bloomer continues to outshine us all as our holiest and humblest DMCW. His most recent civil disobedience arrest was March 19, (the fifth anniversary of the war in Iraq) at a Des Moines Military Recruiting Office.

Mike Fuller still works

at Kum and Go, does his share of hospitality, and maintains the Berrigan House Peace and Justice Library. Mike is always looking for donations of books, audio CDs or videos to add to our library.

Fran Fuller, still an active member of the community, since December, has been living with her aging mother, who died March 17. Do keep Fran and her family in your prayers as they grieve their loss. We look forward to Fran's return to living with us soon.

Mohamed Elkhanda-gawi has also been busy doing Hospitality shifts at Dingman. Mohamed is a Muslim refugee from Sudan and active in his Mosque. Thanks to a generous donation from Marilyn and Duane Sand, he is able to drive to his Mosque in a little green Honda Roadster. We marvel at how much Mohamed has learned and mastered in this foreign land. His English vocabulary continues to grow, and his grasp of the cultural differences between Sudan and the United States is truly remarkable. Some of this is demonstrated in the article he wrote for this issue of v.p. We are so blessed to have him in our community.

Jacob Olsen has switched roles in the community from being

the Berrigan House resident computer wizard to being a full-time DMCW hospitality worker. We still call on Jacob when our computers need attention. Jacob still has a job with and is a student at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC).

Kirk Brown has shown admirable commitment to our work this past quarter that includes becoming a trustee on the DMCW Land Trust. He has also managed to get himself arrested twice since our last issue. First the Guantanamo Action held in Washington, D.C. in January, and then with Ed Bloomer at a military recruiting office in Des Moines on March 19. Kirk was also with Mona Shaw in Iowa City on March 9, when the

two attempted to place Karl Rove under citizen's arrest.

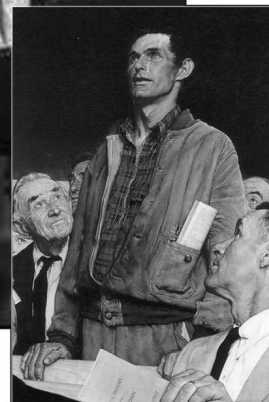
We are grateful for the short stays of John Baker and Diane Wiggins. While they were with us, their contributions were appreciated.

Mona Shaw has joined me as part of the Berrigan House peace and justice organizing team. Working with Mona at Berrigan House, with its special focus on peace and justice concerns, is truly a great privilege for me. Mona brings many skills and life experiences to our community. As a lesbian, social activist, writer and spirit seeker, she brings a unique and welcomed perspective to DMCW. Since joining our com-

Continued on page 8



Kirk Brown attempts a Citizen's Arrest of Karl Rove on March 9 in Iowa City, while bearing an uncanny



resemblance to Normal Rockwell's "Freedom of Speech."



Norman's Whereabouts

As the song (though I can't remember who wrote or sang it) goes, "It's a strange, strange world we live in Master Jack. No hard feelings if I never come back."

If there were another world we could travel to, I imagine there would be many people going there (leaving a lot room, empty homes, businesses, etc.), and many wanting to come back. I find our world, yours, mine and ours to be always changing, whether we like it or not.

A changing world surely affected the young J.R.R. Tolkien, author of *Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien said the Industrial Age invaded his world. When he became older,

and World War I began. He and his classmates were taken up by the nightmares of war, and Tolkien wrote about them.

There have been many authors, painters, and other artists who have served in wars on all sides. Sometimes I find it interesting to listen to a group of old soldiers talking about their war days. I wonder what it was like since they're old and can't hurt anyone now. But, they're still being hurt by their memories.

A lot of movies have been made about war. I find these movies interesting, but I still would like to know how soldiers really feel about war and how it affected humanity.

For example, after and/or during World War I, many returning troops had

influenza, gave it to others, and many, many died. I wonder what other diseases and habits people bring home from a war. Think about it, or just take a close look at this war and what our troops are bringing home.

Wouldn't it be better if we could talk with each other rather than fight? Before the next war, we need to start talking now and not after it begins.

If we need something to do instead making war all the time, we might try working together on the planet we call home. It's my home too, and it's all we've got. We keep telling the next generation this will be their world, but look at what we're passing on to them: a big mess, such as nuclear waste that will be around for centuries or dump sites that contain

chemicals that seep into the water table forcing some places with only bottled water to drink. (I wonder if this water is much better to bathe in.) Litter is everywhere. We throw trash and smash cigarette butts on the ground figuring someone will clean up after us. I often see farmers picking up trash on farm land like a city street cleaner.

The Earth cries to us for help, and where are we? We are only thinking of ourselves.

We build more homes than we need and take up so much land that wild life are living on city streets. It would be interesting to see how we'd think about this if we were the animals, and they were the people. If we thought about this hard enough, we might stop having wars.

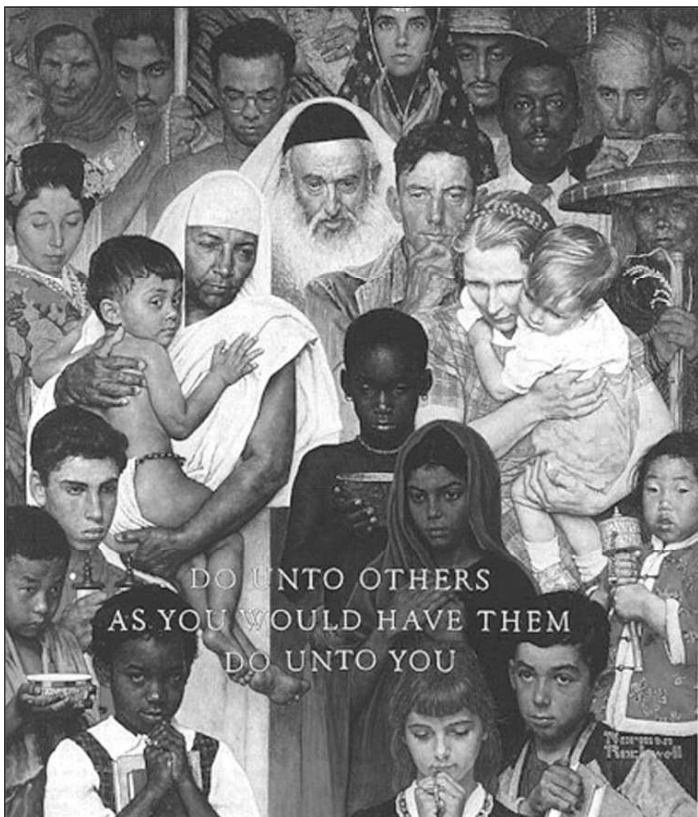
By Norman Searah

I'm not a scientist. Like some of you, I am a simple person. But, if I can do my best as a poor person, can't a rich person do the same? I'm a diabetic who has had a stroke, and I know how to change to survive. As a diabetic needs to change to live, so must we all.

Earth is calling. She's calling all of us. We need to deal. We need to deal with global warming, poverty, and suffering, and all that hurts us. We need to end war. I care.

Will you?





Thank you

We remain blessed and grateful for all the help and support you give us. We know that those who give to the Des Moines Catholic Worker are truly extraordinary souls who give from their hearts and for the sake of giving. You love your neighbor and this work, and we love you for loving them.

As the national economy becomes increasingly stressed the number of those who need us is increasing as well. We are committed to remaining available to them all.

We will continue because we trust in you and the heart you continue to share with us. A list of those things we always need is printed on the back of this newsletter. Cash donations may be mailed to our post office box listed on page 2.

Each gift we receive is cherished, but not as much as we cherish one another.

*May God shine love and blessings on us all,
The Des Moines Catholic Worker*

Living with sisters and brothers in this land.



By
Mohamed
Elkhandagawi

Why has Allah created mankind in such different characteristics, nations, tribes, languages, cultures and religions? I find an answer in this verse from the Qur'an in which Allah said:

"O, mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other (not that you despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted with all of you."

Allah reminds us that we are all from one

family and we all are brothers and sisters and we are favored by Allah when we remember this as Allah said in this verse.

"This day all good and pure things are made lawful to you. The people of the book are lawful to you, and yours are lawful to them."

We are told that we may lawfully join our families and marry Muslim believers as well as non-believers. And, that any separation between believers and non-believers is decided by Allah in the hereafter. Furthermore in my faith Allah ordains us to believe in all his prophets and messengers and to find wisdom and guidance in all four books including the Torah of Moses (first five books of the Old Testament), the Zabur (Psalms of David), the

Injil, (the gospel of Jesus) and the Qur'an.

Let us learn from the tradition of the prophet Mohamed who taught us by example how to be with each other when he married Maria of Egypt. Also, he was given refuge and help in his flight by a Jewish family whose invitation of help and a meal he accepted without hesitation. In doing so, he taught his followers how also to be with those of other faiths and cultures.

These verses of the teaching and tradition of the prophet indicate there should be harmony in life among us all regardless of our traditions or wherever we may live.

Mohamed is a Muslim refugee from Sudan and has been a member of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community for three years.



**Annual
Sugar Creek
Midwest Catholic
Worker Retreat**
September 19-21, 2008
More information soon!

Visit our new and improved web site!

There is a wealth of information on our frequently updated web site including recent news, photos, videos, educational materials, activities, and upcoming actions and events. Check it often.



Hospitality, continued from page 1.

one person may be all three. As Fran Fuller, a worker here for many years puts it, "Once you've done this work for awhile, it ruins doing anything else, because nothing else ever makes as much sense."

Our volunteers are equally special and unique. Chuck Galeazzi with HOPE (Help Other People Everyday) Builders is here at least once each week. He and his partner David Costello are bringing wood chips this week to spread on the common areas in our backyard. They always bring things. Sometimes they bring new tents for

our homeless guests or warm coats or salt for sidewalks in the winter. When we need something our budget can't afford, they have a way of finding it somehow.

The Booth family from Pella and the Ellen Miller gang bring a dinner and help other ways each month, as do many other families, churches, synagogues, mosques, and other groups. Students from Grinnell and Simpson come weekly to clean and do maintenance work. Iowa State and University of Iowa students lodge in our attic from a few days to a few weeks and make

themselves available to us. Elementary school children from the most economically stressed neighborhood in our city do an annual food drive that keeps our food pantry stocked for months.

Just yesterday, Helen Oster donated a load of gravel for our parking area, and regular volunteer Mark Lindahl spent the afternoon with the help of our guests spreading it out.

And, just yesterday, one of our guests brought us a bag of very nice t-shirts someone was about to toss in the landfill and explained, "I was gonna throw my worthless self

in the river one day, and I walked in here instead. Some guy squeezed my shoulder, gave me a cup of coffee and made me feel like I counted. We all gotta share."

None of us, workers, volunteers, or guests, are saints. We're regular folks with demeanors always somewhere shy of divine. Still when a student asked Catholic Worker Kirk Brown one day, if he thought what we did in our house really mattered, Kirk did a pirouette, scanned our care-swathed, humming dining room, and said, "Um, duh."

Or as Sam Walter Ross wrote:

"Let me live in my house by the side of the road, Where the race of men go by; They are good, they are bad; they are weak, they are strong, Wise, foolish,-- so am I; Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat, Or hurl the cynic's ban? Let me live in my house by the side of the road, And be a friend to man."

If you are interested in sharing hospitality with us as a worker, volunteer, or a guest, at Dingman House, our contact information is on page 2.

And it's still going on...



Book review

by Brian Terrell

The Catholic Worker after Dorothy: Practicing the Works of Mercy in a New Generation by Dan McKanan, Liturgical Press, 2008

A few years before Dorothy Day's death in 1980, I overheard a journalist ask her if she thought that the Catholic Worker movement she cofounded with Peter Maurin in 1933 would survive her. "Why shouldn't it?" Dorothy replied, "It has already survived more than forty years of me!"

Several historians who had studied the movement up to that time had already decided that the Catholic Worker's best days were long past, presenting it as an artifact of Depression-era radicalism. More recently, some observers both inside and outside the movement have expressed the belief that Dorothy's death stands as a dramatic and sharp boundary between a better, more orthodox past and a very different, less coherent present and suggest that the Worker today has largely abandoned the original vision of Day and Maurin.

Dan McKanan's new book, *The Catholic Worker after Dorothy: Practicing the Works of Mercy in a New Generation*, gives a more optimistic perspective than these and belies its title by presenting the history of the Catholic Worker as a living tradition in an unbroken sweep from its founding to the present. McKanan successfully offers what he calls "a general account of the Catholic Worker movement that takes the last few decades as seriously as the founding generation and that takes the houses and farms spread across the nation as seriously as the New York houses of hospitality." (page 3) His conclusions that present trends in the movement are not a departure from its foundations and that

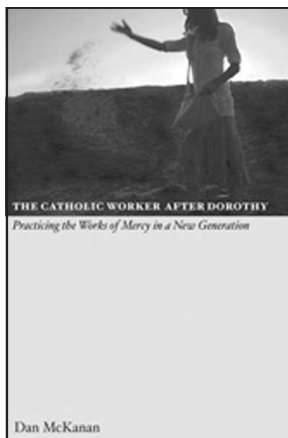
the movement has experienced phenomenal growth in recent years are amply documented and certainly resonate with my own experience of the Catholic Worker in various places from 1975 to the present.

Not only have the number of houses of hospitality and farms doubled in the years since Dorothy's death, McKanan notes, but the number of communities that are more than 25 years old has increased tenfold! Such resiliency is rare in the histories of communal movements with charismatic founders. I sometimes wonder if the many reports of the movement's disintegration might be because a breakdown like that is so much expected that it is perceived even against all evidence to the contrary. "Yet herein lies the key to the Catholic Worker's endurance: it has never really tried to endure." (page 22)

Dorothy "consistently took more interest in the people who were drawn to her movement than in the preservation of the movement itself." (page 4)

McKanan understands that the Catholic Worker was never intended to be a formal institution or school of theology but rather an organic network of relationships and as such it endures and thrives. Paradoxically, it is precarity—the state of existing on the brink of extinction—that is feared and fended off at all costs by most institutions and movements that has proved to be the natural and healthy condition of the Catholic Worker.

Catholic Worker personalism—valuing the person over the institution—extends beyond the intentional communities of Catholic Workers to those who come to the movement's houses of hospitality out of need for food, clothing and shelter. Dorothy and Peter Maurin had no interest in founding a charity but rather they intended to change a society. McKanan quotes Dorothy's realization after she joined the church that her strong sense of human dignity made her "resent rather than feel



proud of the sum total of Catholic (charitable) institutions."

"Charity," Dorothy insisted, "was a word to choke over," and she recommended "the spiritual and corporal works of mercy and the following of Christ to be the best revolutionary technique and a means of changing the social order rather than perpetuating it." (page 9)

These "works of mercy" commended by Dorothy and that McKanan places at "the heart of the Catholic Worker movement" (page 6) are based on the vision of judgment in the 25th chapter of Matthew's *Gospel*, where it is revealed in the end that whatever was done for (and whatever was neglected to be done) for the "least of these" was done for (or not done for) Christ Himself. By the Middle Ages a standard list of seven "corporal works of mercy": feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick, freeing the prisoner and burying the dead was established, along with seven "spiritual works of mercy": instructing the ignorant, counseling the doubtful, admonishing sinners, bearing wrongs patiently, forgiving offenses, comforting the afflicted and praying for the living and the dead.

The Catholic Worker has never held that the only way to live out the works of mercy is in the context of the large urban hospitality house that the movement is best known for, or, indeed, that this is even the best place to live them. "We always have more to feed, and to house, and to clothe than we can humanly handle," Dorothy critiqued her own house in New York,

"Breadlines are a disgrace." (page 138) Meeting and knowing Christ in the poor, living in solidarity with the poor and serving at a personal sacrifice can be done in many ways. The "Christ room" that St. John Chrysostom suggested every family provide for a stranger in need has often been cited by Dorothy as an ideal, "We must never cease emphasizing the fact that the work must be kept small." (page 43)

"As a hermeneutical principle, the works of mercy help account for the extraordinary depth of the Catholic Worker movement," McKanan suggests. (page 11) The practice of the works of mercy must be interpreted more broadly than simply providing direct service to those in need. The one time that Dorothy Day mentioned me in her "On Pilgrimage" column was when I was arrested with a group blocking rail-shipment of plutonium into a nuclear weapons' factory. "I rejoice to see the young people thinking of 'the works of mercy' as a truly revolutionary, but nonviolent program. The spiritual and corporal certainly go together," she wrote, "and often involve suffering. To oppose the nuclear buildup has led to the imprisonment of two of our workers, Robert Ellsberg and Brian Terrell, in Rocky Flats, Colorado." (*The Catholic Worker*, June

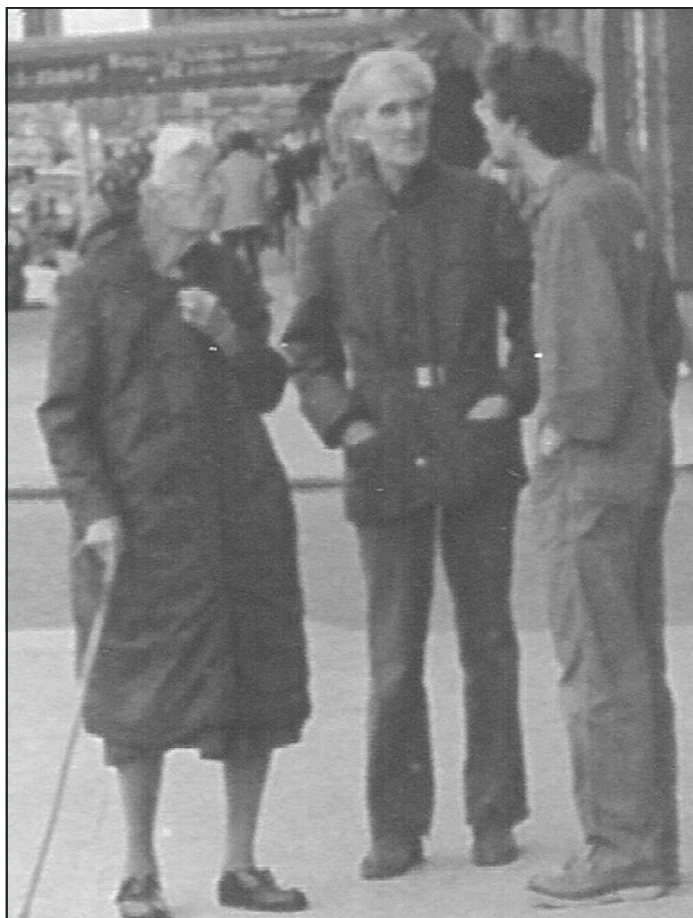
1978, 2)

McKanan corrects several misconceptions about the Catholic Worker and its founders that are held not only by scholars who study the movement but are also widely accepted among those who have dedicated their lives to living it. He makes and supports these challenges gently and with generosity and good humor toward those whom he sees as mistaken.

My hope is that many who are attempting to live the Catholic Worker but who feel alienated by what has been presented as the Worker tradition in various books and newsletters will find the clarifications McKanan offers reassuring. To parents who are raising children in Catholic Worker communities and have always heard that Dorothy Day never welcomed families, McKanan shows that "she always believed that it was possible to combine family life with the works of mercy" (page 5) and gives examples from around the country and over the generations, including Dorothy's own family, where this has been done.

For those troubled to read declarations such as "presently the Catholic Worker movement is suffering from the post-

Review continued on page 7



This blurry, but precious photo was taken in NYC in April, 1978. Left to right, Dorothy Day, Frank Donavan, and Brian Terrell. Photo by Stanley Vishnewski

A Direct Distinction of Dignifying Struggle



Part One

By Kirk Brown

Lounging in distraction, in the shaping of hype, and under the cover of routine, sometimes I find indifference. Sometimes I find these and/or other actions to be characteristic of some social response to tragedy, catastrophe and/or abhorrent circumstances. Defined by the energies of responsibility, sorrow and suffering--the alternatives of indifference--translate into wearing garments of hostility.

Somewhere in my time I got the notion that I have and could be having the good life without caring for others/loving my neighbor. Inevitably I was shaped by a warping view, a depraving view, an evil-viewing of love and, as it follows, the world and its inhabitants. Love is seasoning with the hope of redemption, which flavors life through caring for others/loving neighbor, and is cooking inside the good life.

When the lid rises I don't know of any dish in the world that reveals topicality as inherent to life. Language is bound. Still, in putting together some meals, it is helpful to use the function of topics. Lately the topic of the American war in Iraq (aka Bush's war) has been on my plate.

There is no such thing as America. America is like an organic science experiment in that it is devoid of any-

thing inherent. Neither common interest nor common disinterest necessitates exclusive nationality. Living commonality is growing world community from/for the interpersonal to the universal way of life. It's not that I see annihilating nationality as a productive means for doing reparative work. Making good out of the practice of evil will involve a story, and stories involve characters.

Quite distinct, yet in some bits similar, there is no such thing as a "state of war" inherent to life. War is an alternative to the usual state of things. A general overview of American history ought to reveal the tyrannical action that wars, spurred by common interest, have been demonstrated and are being demonstrated by the concept of nationality.

For instance, in his book *A Power Governments Cannot Suppress*, referring to the bombing of Hiroshima, Howard Zinn writes, "To question Hiroshima is to threaten a precious myth that we all grow up with in this country. According to the myth, America is different from other countries of the world; other nations commit unspeakable acts, but we do not."

Later Zinn writes, "And yet it is absolutely essential for our political leaders to defend the bombing because if Americans can be induced to accept that, then they can accept any war, any means, so long as the war makers can supply a reason."

Common interest manifested through war is uncommon to humanity and sovereignty often is a distraction of conscience to mask struggles with the illusion of dignity. In Shakespeare's

King Henry V, Henry speaks of the "pleasant prince (of France) and his soul."

Shall stand sore charged for the wasteful vengeance

That shall fly with them; for many a thousand widows

Shall this his mock mock out of their dear husbands;

Mock mothers from their sons, mock castles down;

And some are yet ungotten and unborn

That shall have cause to curse the Dauphin's scorn."

Isn't misusing routine an alternative to the grain of life? Isn't the shaping of hype an alternative to an appropriate viewing of humanity? Isn't lounging in distraction an alternative to the flourishing of life? Collateral violence allowed through greed is practicing evil on humanity. Priority is probably depravity when life is invested in topical conversation at the expense of relieving the tangible suffering, displacing and breaking the yoke of oppression in the world. A budget blind to images of need, translates surplus as provision for luxury, consumes luxury at the expense of the hungry and provides for a warping consumption of luxury that leads to blindness.

Enough food coming out and the lid rising up is the coming around again of old news anew. Time for feeding the hungry is as topical as any season. The DMCW is receiving and offering some of this surplus. To our many contributors: good work!

Assuming that displacement, homelessness and poverty are unnatural. In some cases obeying the "state" is simply contradictory to loving God. I want more images of godly examples, those which provide health, encouragement and the comfort of hope to the whole world and toward the restoration of humanity.



Midwest CW Resistance Retreat



Maryada Vallet

The Catholic Worker Communities of Kansas City, (Holy Family House, Shalom House, and Cherith Brook) invite you to the annual Midwest CW Faith and Resistance Retreat, April 26-28, 2008. This year's retreat, "Beyond Walls of Fear" will explore faith resistance to unjust immigration policies and practices. The retreat will take place at De La Salle Education Center, 3740 Forest Avenue, Kansas City, MO.

Keynote speakers will be Maryada Vallet and Walt Stanton, Tucson, Arizona border activists with No More Deaths. Both Maryada and Walt live at the Casa Maria Catholic Worker in Tucson and provide hospitality to migrants crossing the desert. Maryada and Walt are active in the struggle against unjust immigration policies.

The retreat will also include roundtables and guests from Cross Border Solidarity Network, Legal Aid of Western Missouri, and the The New Sanctuary Movement. On Monday, April 28, those willing and able will participate in a direct action confronting the unjust immigration policies that need to change.

Meals will be provided, and sleeping will be available on the gym floor. Please bring necessary bedding including mats, cots, etc.

To RSVP, raise a fuss, or ask questions, contact: Cherith Brook, 816-241-8047; Shalom House, 913-321-2206; Holy Family House, 816-753-2677; dawnwillenborg@yahoo.com.

Annual STRATCOM Vigil remembers Hiroshima and Nagasaki

The Des Moines and Omaha Catholic Worker Communities invite you to join us for our annual 3-1/2-day "shake and bake" vigil at the gates of Offutt Air Force Base, in Bellevue, NE, home of the Strategic Nuclear (StratCom) and the US Military Space Commands.

This year's vigil begins at the Kinney gate and main entrance of Offutt Air Force Base, Wednesday, Aug 6, 2008, at 8 a.m., the hour the United States dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. The vigil ends Saturday, Aug 9, at 11 a.m., the hour the USA dropped the second atomic bomb on Nagasaki.

Come stand, pray and do penance with us. Share our hope for peace as on the anniversary of the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, on August 6 and 9, 1945. Contemplate with us the work and mission Offutt AFB's horrific Commands, the challenges they pose to all life on our planet, and the evil claim the hold on the soul and spirit of our nation.

The vigil starts at 8 a.m. and stops at 6 p.m. each day except August 9. On

the final day, August 9, the vigil concludes with a prayer circle and possible line crossing at 11 a.m. We also hope to join others in Omaha for evening programs focusing on the commemoration of the A-bombings of 1945 and related concerns of today.



Overnight hospitality is available starting Tuesday evening Aug 5th. Call and let us know you are coming. Expect floor space and bring your own bed roll. If you need a bed, contact us early to ensure we find one for you.

Everyone is welcome. Come for an hour or for the entire three days.

Contacts: Frank Cordaro, DMCW, (515) 282 4781, E-mail: frank.cordaro@gmail.com

Jerry Ebner, Omaha CW, (402) 502 5887, E-mail: omahacw@hotmail.com

And it's still going on...

Continued from page 5

Vatican II quagmire of thought" (*Houston Catholic Worker*, March 1995) or that "Dorothy Day would turn over in her grave!" (Stephen Hand, *Traditional Catholic Reflections and Reports*) McKanan establishes that vigorous discussion of the controversial issues facing the church has been going on all along and that the tensions around these discussions are not new but have "existed within many Catholic Worker communities, both during and after Day's lifetime." (page 184)

Diversity and dissent on these issues are "certainly *not* a drift away from the unambiguous sense of Catholic identity that prevailed during Dorothy Day's lifetime," but represent instead "communities across the ideological spectrum ... struggling valiantly to sort out the spiritual ambiguities that Dorothy Day had tolerated." (page 142) As much as the movement cannot be separated from its Catholic origins and context, it is also

true that "the Catholic Worker has never been exclusively Catholic in its inspiration or its membership" and that "from the beginning, the Worker's blend of Catholicism and radicalism also leaves plenty of space for Catholics who aren't especially radical and radicals who aren't Catholic in the slightest." (page 17)

McKanan remembers that "when Dorothy Day became a Catholic in 1927, she was not attracted by the church's orthodoxy but by the fact that it was the religion of the masses." (page 182) When Jack Cook, an associate editor of the *Catholic Worker* challenged the assumption of monolithic doctrinal orthodoxy in the movement by writing in that paper, as McKanan reports, that "criticism of such defined dogmas as the perpetual virginity of Mary was not 'unthinkable' in the Worker... but rather 'irrelevant in the face of war, poverty, starvation, oppression and nuclear holocaust,'" and insisted that "the most profound criticism of the ecclesial

establishment is the very existence of the Catholic Worker- in words and acts, past and present," (page 184) Dorothy was *not* turning in her grave as some might suggest she should have been. For one thing, this was published in 1968 when Dorothy was still alive and vitally involved as editor and publisher of the paper. It was under Dorothy's editorship that Ammon Hennacy's harsh criticism of the church and articles challenging church teaching on birth control and in favor the ordination of women were published. "Such commentary has actually been less common in the pages of the *New York Catholic Worker* since Day's death." (page 192)

Many who are critical of what they see as present day Catholic Workers succumbing to the secular confusion of the age might find themselves uncomfortable with some of Dorothy Day's own attitudes as well. The chapter title, "Wrestling with the Church," aptly describes not only the relationship of contemporary Workers with the Catholic Church but also that of Dorothy with the church that she

loved with all her heart yet still found to be "a scandal at times" and that she often counseled to others that one must live with in a "state of permanent dissatisfaction." (page 185)

Another quite different book about the Catholic Worker and its founders, *The Catholic Worker Movement- Intellectual and Spiritual Origins* (2005) by Mark and Louise Zwick, two good people who began their Worker "pilgrimage" in Houston in 1980, the year that Dorothy died, laments a "leadership vacuum" left in her absence. She and Peter Maurin, they write "were the acknowledged leaders, visiting other Catholic Worker communities and approving leaders for new houses. After their deaths, however, there was the question of what would happen regarding leadership of the movement." (Zwick, 316) This question, along with "Who Will Inherit the Mantle of Dorothy Day?" (*Houston Catholic Worker*, May, 1994) would not, I think, occur to many who actually knew Dorothy. McKanan holds a larger and better informed view and recog-

nizes that Dorothy had wisely and most deliberately abrogated that kind of leadership role decades before she died.

"On those occasions when she tried to 'lead' directly by appointing subordinates or setting boundaries, her efforts almost always backfired," sometimes leaving no small damage and pain in their wake. Indeed, an honest look at the movement's early history would show that Dorothy was not entirely disingenuous or self depreciating when she quipped that the movement had "survived" forty years of her. Not as the autocrat (or "anarch") that her temperament might have impelled her to be "but as a mentor, friend, and teller of stories about her own mentors and friends, she inspired thousands to devote their lives to the works of mercy." (page 4)

McKanan also challenges the conventional history of the movement as he names a chapter of this book "The Flowering of the Sixties," in contrast to the chapter title describing the same period in William Miller's

Review continued on page 8

East Side's needy mourn Dorothy Day

Burial today for woman who, like those she helped, lived in poverty

The Daily News - N.Y., Dec. 2, 1980
By MARTIN KING

Dorothy Day, who devoted a lifetime to the poor, lay in state on the lower East Side yesterday in a second-hand dress, a single red rose decorating the lid of her plain pine coffin.

"Sorry, the clothing room will be closed today because of a death in the family," read the handwritten sign on the door of Maryhouse, a home for women that Day opened at 55 E. Third St. during the Depression.

The sign made no mention of the fact that Day, 83, beloved co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, died Saturday. She had devoted years of service to the neediest members of society while she herself lived in voluntary poverty.

She will be buried in Pleasant Plains Cemetery on Staten Island today.

SCORES OF MOURNERS visited the home yesterday to pay last respects to the champion of charity at an afternoon wake. They were of all ages, and they gathered in the auditorium to drink coffee and exchange stories about Day.

"She never turned anyone away," said a woman visitor to the house's modest chapel.

Day was one of the most influential lay persons in the history of American Catholicism. She constantly challenged the male-dominated Catholic Church, and she insisted that her volunteer co-workers live on the bare essentials and in small groups.

IN 1972, THE REV. Theodore Hesburgh, former president of the University of Notre Dame, commended Day for a life spent "comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable."



Brian Terrell talks to woman who came to pay last respects to Dorothy Day at Maryhouse. Terrell, who knew Day five years, flew here from Davenport, Iowa, when he learned of her death.

HARRY HAMBURG DAILY NEWS

75th Birthday Bash, Film/Discussion at DMCW



On the May 1, 1933, International Workers' Day, Peter Maurin, Dorothy Day and friends distributed

copies of the first edition of *The Catholic Worker* newspaper to crowds marching in New York City's Union Square. Seventy-five years later the Catholic Worker movement has more than 180 houses of hospitality and farms around the world.

On May 2, 2008, the Des Moines Catholic Worker will host a screening of the film, *Dorothy Day: Don't Call Me a Saint*, which premiered to critical acclaim at New York's 2006 Tribeca Film Festival. The film will be followed by reflections by Brian Terrell and Richard Cleaver, who both lived with Dorothy Day at the New York Catholic Worker houses during the last years of her life.

Produced by Claudia Larson, the documentary tells the story of the

New York writer and Catholic anarchist whose career began as a writer for radical papers during the Bohemian whirl of 1917 Greenwich Village. The film begins at the height of the Depression with Dorothy meeting the French peasant philosopher, Peter Maurin, with whom she created the Catholic Worker, a social justice movement that persists to this day.

Dorothy's commitment to justice and peace led to several arrests for civil disobedience and to a life

dedicated to helping the hungry and the homeless. In 1980 Dorothy died of heart failure at Maryhouse, a home she founded for the homeless women of New York City.

This film includes footage of interviews with Dorothy, intimate friends and family, and compelling images of her life and times. The screening will begin at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, May 2, 2008, at Dingman House, 1310 7th Street in Des Moines. All are welcome at attend.



Brian Terrell (far left) and Richard Cleaver (second from the right with hat in hand) with other members of the New York CW community in front of Maryhouse, Christmas Day, 1977. Photo by Stanley Vishnewski

Community News

Continued from page 3

munity she's participated in several Direct Action efforts and joined Kirk in their attempt to make a citizen's arrest on Karl Rove in Iowa City. She maintains our web page, co-edits and lays out the *via pacis*, and is currently teaching a six-session class called Lessons in Moral Courage at Berrigan House. Mona also still maintains a residence in Iowa City and is involved in efforts there.

Timing is everything. We now have openings

for one or two new live-in community members. If you have ever thought of joining our DMCW, now would be the time to come and try us out. It's never an easy thing to do, to live in an intentional, faith-based, poverty level, works-of-mercy-focused, nonviolent, peacemaker community. Living while working with others is often the most difficult and challenging aspect about being a DMCW. It is one of the most rewarding things about being here too.

Worker and Volunteer Openings

The Des Moines Catholic Worker has openings for two new community members as well as volunteers a few hours a week to help us run our daytime drop in center.



Prospective live-in community members are expected to be primarily focused on maintaining daytime hospitality, willing to live simply and nonviolently, and support active nonviolent resistance to injustice and war. You need not be Catholic or even Christian. Live-in members are given free room and board.

Beloved volunteers may schedule time or simply show up when we are open, noon-7 p.m. every day except Monday and Wednesday.

If you or anyone you know is interested in being a live-in community member or a regular volunteer contact Frank Cordaro. Contact information is on page 2.

And it's still going on...

Continued from page 7

1982 biography, *Dorothy Day*, "The Travail of the Sixties." Certainly the '60s were tumultuous years for Dorothy as they were for many and the cultural upheaval both in society at-large and in the movement in those days at times filled her with what she could only call desolation. This was also a time, though, of growth and of amazing possibilities, giving Dorothy, McKanan says, "ample reason to feel both vindication and mortification." (page 72) In those years Dorothy travelled to Rome to petition the Second Vatican Council to condemn nuclear weapons and greeted the council's "Pastoral Constitution on the Church and the Modern World" with joy. She visited the revolution in Cuba that she had long admired from afar. The horrors of the Vietnam War "stirred a new generation of Workers to heroic acts of resistance" (page 72) that

Dorothy celebrated. Even as some aspects of the protests that took place in the 1960s troubled Dorothy, McKanan rejects the notion that the "extreme resistance" that began with the destruction of draft board files then and the Catholic Worker represent "two rival approaches to Catholic nonviolence" (page 90) as they are sometimes portrayed.

The "flowering" that McKanan perceives as beginning in the midst of the crucible of the 1960s that most historians miss is that "the hippie generation of Catholic Workers achieved something that very few of the founders had: they figured out how to make whole lives out of the Catholic Worker movement." (page 91) They were able to do this, he suggests, by learning from one another in a national web of friendships that did not really exist before but endure to this day.

My own memory of coming to the movement in the '70s is that there were very few individuals in the New York community where I lived or in others around the country who had been in the movement for more than a short time. "The gold moves on," Dorothy often lamented, "and the dross remains." (page 23) Yet some of those who arrived at the Worker in the decade before me and some who arrived in the next few years did remain. Some are still with us in various communities; some have raised families in the movement and have grown children living the life as well. McKanan credits these as much as Dorothy herself for the endurance of the Worker. "They are moreover," he says, "the ones who have handed Day's legacy on to the new generation that is now adapting the Worker vision to the twenty-first century." (page 5)

One important development in the years

"after Dorothy" that McKanan might have given more attention is the growth of the rural, back to the land vision of Peter Maurin. More than ever, Catholic Worker farm communes have come to be regarded as more than mere appendages or auxiliaries to urban hospitality houses and as integral to the Worker program in their own right. I am also disappointed that while McKanan expanded his scope beyond New York, he limited it to the United States. Since Dorothy's death, the movement has also seen great growth in size and in spirit in Canada, Mexico, Europe, New Zealand and Australia, and these are important parts of the story. But these are minor quibbles, and this is a book that I heartily recommend.

Dan McKanan's *The Catholic Worker after Dorothy- Practicing the Works of Mercy in a New Generation* is a welcome addition to scholarship about the movement and

deserves to be read and discussed by all who want to understand or participate in it. No other book presents so well the history of the movement over the past few decades or the present state of the Catholic Worker in this, its 75th year of existence. The Catholic Worker belongs not just to the past but perhaps even more to the present and, hopefully, to the future. McKanan opens his book quoting Day's autobiography *The Long Loneliness* "it all happened while we sat there talking, and it is still going on." I am grateful to Dan McKanan and to his publisher, The Liturgical Press of St. John's Abbey, with its long association with the Catholic Worker movement, for this important contribution to a lively conversation that began so many years ago and is still going on today.

The Challenge for Peace: a 25th Anniversary Reflection of Then and Now



By Frank
Cordaro

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the US Catholic Bishop's "The Challenge for Peace" peace pastoral, and I can't help but feel nostalgic for those good old days. The writing of this peace pastoral marked the culmination of factors and history that pushed the Catholic Church into a rediscovery and recovery of the nonviolent, pacifist character of its founder, Jesus. The bloody wars of the twentieth century, especially WWI and WWII, had a lot to do with awakening our Church's senses to the true character of modern warfare, and the US-led Nuclear Arms Race impressed on the Church the urgency needed to address the issue. Starting with Good Pope John 23rd's Encyclical *Pacem in Terra* and followed by the Vatican II Council condemnation of nuclear weapons, the universal Church was turning its sights toward becoming a peace Church and away from its outdated, short sighted, unworkable and unbiblical Just War tradition.

The US Catholic Bishops' "The Challenge of Peace" pastoral was the US Catholic Church's articulation of where the universal church was headed in regard to these war and peace issues. Incorporating our own tragic lessons from the Vietnam War, taking stock of where the Nuclear Arms race was

headed with our deployment of first-strike nuclear weapons systems, and assessing the stated US policy that justified the first-strike use of nuclear weapons along with the growing belief in a winnable nuclear war, the Bishops in "The Challenge for Peace" restated clearly the Church's condemnation of the use of nuclear weapons, first-strike or otherwise. More importantly they raised the priority and the imperative for Catholics to embrace and seek out nonviolent means to address political conflicts and to push them toward the most Christ-like pacifist option. They restated the right of pacifist Catholics to be conscientious objectors to war and went even further when they stated that Just War Catholics could be selective conscientious objectors, leaving open to Catholics in the military the option to refuse to fight in wars they deemed unjust.

For many of us in the peace movement, the statement fell far short of where we wanted it to go. It and the economic pastoral that followed were the last consensus pastorals that the US Catholic Bishops Conference would write with a majority of the Bishops appointed under Pope Paul VI. Once the majority of the US Catholic Bishops Conference was made up of Pope John Paul II appointees, the issues of war and peace were tragically set aside for what they believed to be the more pressing concerns of "Catholic Identity." The prophetic energies within the US Catholic Bishop's Con-

ference that once voiced the concerns of the larger Catholic social teachings (in which the war and peace issues had been a part) were replaced by the voices of Bishops championing the anti-abortion cause and thus squandering the US Catholic Bishops' political equity on this single-issue concern.

Twenty-five years after its writing, we find ourselves in the fifth year of the Iraqi war and occupation, a war that Pope John Paul II called "immoral, unjust and illegal" from its beginning. The shocking realities of Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib revealed to the world a US government acting with disregard for international laws, routinely violating basic human rights, justifying its use of torture, and plunging the US reputation to its lowest point in history.

Tragically we find ourselves celebrating the 25th Anniversary of "The Challenge of Peace" amidst pastoral sleepwalking in a collective Catholic amnesia. Today a new generation of US Catholics knows nothing of this peace pastoral. They do not think as Catholics when assessing the war in Iraq and our young know little to nothing of our Church's Just War Tradition, the pacifist Catholic option, nor of our stated support for conscientious objection. Today the US Catholic Church is shamefully more nationalistic than it is Roman Catholic, a spiritual state which is bad for our souls and bad for our nation.

Catholic Worker Movement Marks 75th Anniversary



The Catholic Worker Movement will celebrate its 75th birthday July 9-12, 2008, in Worcester, Massachusetts. The movement was founded in 1933 by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. The gathering will take place at Our Lady of Mount Carmel/Saint Anne Parish Center, 23 Mulberry Street.

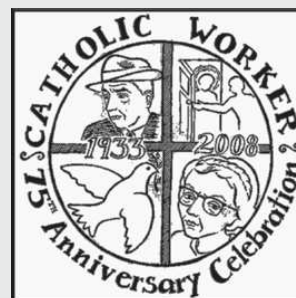


Scheduled speakers for the event include, Robert Ellsberg, Mel Piehl (author of *Breaking Bread: The Catholic Worker and*

the Origin of Catholic Radicalism in America), Bishop Thomas Gumbleton (co-founder of Pax Christi USA) and Martha Hennessy (Dorothy Day's granddaughter). Bishop Robert McManus of Worcester will celebrate the closing Mass.

Catholic Workers have already RSVP-ed from Germany, Alabama, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Michigan, New York, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Montana, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Virginia, Wisconsin, Illinois, Vermont, Tennessee, and North Carolina.

For more information, contact Scott Schaeffer-Duffy: theresecw@gmail.com, 508-753-3588, and RSVP as soon as possible.



Censored

For Jon Sobrino and Miguel Rincón

Censored, yes.
silenced, no.
That would leave the goat
shivering, shorn of blame.

What do you expect
when you've journeyed where
the church can never go;
casting your dice, your shadow
with those risk-takers and beggars
who understand that losing
is the true seed of liberation?

By Diane Leslie Wiggins, 2007

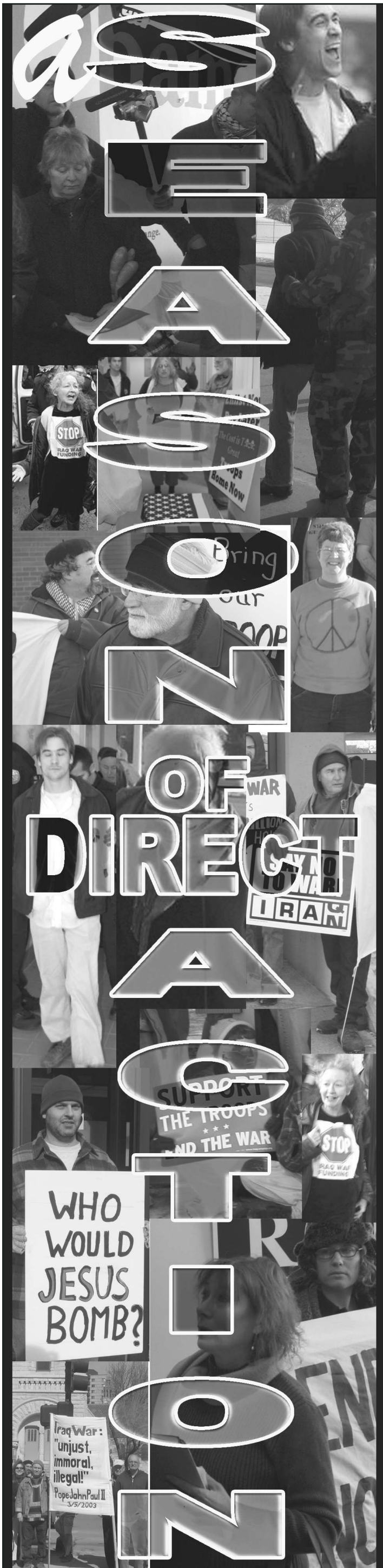


Summer Internships at DMCW!

The Des Moines Catholic Worker will host two Summer Intern sessions this summer. The sessions are open to adults of all ages regardless of background or life experience. The first session will be June 11-24, 2008, and the second will be July 23-August 5, 2008.

Each session will provide an opportunity to explore character development, spiritual growth and one's personal relationship to social justice. The sessions will include workshops on Direct Action Organizing, History of the Catholic Worker and other social justice movements, Lessons in Moral Courage, as well as hands-on experience in living and working with the poor. Fun, social activities are built-in to the schedule too. Both sessions are free, but space for each is limited. If you're interested contact the Berrigan House or Frank, Kirk, or Mona. Contact information is on page 2.

Don't miss it!



A Season of Direct Action

The winter of 2007-08 brought an intense storm of direct action that drew international attention. Sadly, the war rages on, and since our last issue, the benchmarks of its 5th anniversary and its 4,000th military death have been crossed. Dom Helder Camara once observed, "If I feed the poor, they call me saint. If I ask why people are poor, they call me a communist." Feeding the poor is incomplete, if we do nothing to stop poverty, war, and human suffering. The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community remains reverently committed to both. Highlights of several actions follow.

Feast of the Holy Innocents

The 28th annual Feast of the Holy Innocents Retreat was held, December 26-28, 2007,



in the basement of St John's Church on the campus of Creighton University in Omaha. The retreat brought representatives from five Midwest Catholic Worker communities; Omaha, Des Moines, Yankton, SD, Kansas City, MO and Wisconsin Dells, WI.

Participants explored the often-ignored spiritual meaning of the season through study of the infant narratives of the Gospels and examination of the links between King Herod's killing of the innocents and the murderous deeds of US-backed modern day Herods.

On the final day of the retreat fifteen people stood fast at the main gate of Offutt Air Force Base (home of the STRATCOM/Offutt security) and shut down the exit lane of the main drive as the group moved onto the exit lane holding a banner that read, "Herod Killed the Infants, STRATCOM would kill the World, Celebrate Christmas, Shut Down STRATCOM."

Two in the group, Dagmar Hoxsie, 76, of the Yankton Catholic Worker and John Bach, 33, of Des Moines, crossed the line onto Offutt property and were then immediately arrested. Both pleaded guilty to charges of criminal trespassing, were fined and given suspended sentences.

SODaPOP

On the sub-zero days of December 31st-January 3rd, Seasons of Discontent: a Presi-



dential Occupation Project (SODaPOP) occupied four offices of leading presidential candidates in Iowa. Members of the campaign visited



former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee (December 31), Governor Mitt Romney and Sen. Barack Obama (Jan 2), and Sen. Hillary Clinton (Jan 3) in the Des Moines metro area.

In total, 15 members of SODaPOP were arrested. The demands of the campaign to the presidential candidates are a complete withdrawal of the U.S. mili-

tary forces from Iraq and Afghanistan within 100 days of assuming the office of President and a halt to any and all military actions against Iraq and Iran.

The three arrested in Mike Huckabee's campaign headquarters were Robert Braam, 52,



Manhattan, IL, Kathy Kelly, 55, Chicago, IL, and Mona Shaw, 56, Iowa City.

Twelve people were arrested January 2, 2008. Four were arrested in the Romney headquarters: Chris Gaunt, 51, Grinnell, IA, Ed Bloomer, 63, Des Moines, Janice Sevre-Duszynska, 57, Nicholasville, KY, Suzanne Sheridan, 31, Chicago, IL. Arrested in Obama headquarters were Vicki Andrews, 63, Grand Rapids, MI, Diane Haugesag, 48, Minneapolis, MN, David Hovde, 37, Evanston, IL, Dan Pearson, 26, Chicago, IL, Tom Roddy, 76, Evanston, IL, Brian Terrell, 50, Maloy, IA, John Tuzcu, 23, Des Moines, IA, and Kathy Kelly, 55, Chicago, IL.

While 25 SODaPOP members attempted to occupy Clinton Headquarters on January 3, 2008, no arrests were made.

Shut Down Guantanamo Action in DC, 8 Iowans Arrested

On January 11, 2008, hundreds descended on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. as part of an International Day of Action demanding the shut-down of the U.S. prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, an end to the torture inflicted there, and justice for those detained. The



day of action was endorsed by more than 100 groups and included more than 80 events world-wide.

Eighty activists were arrested as part of an action organized by Witness against Torture [www.witness torture.org] as they attempted to deliver a message to the justices of the U.S. Supreme Court to end prisoner torture and to release or charge the prisoners detained there. About half of the activists were arrested inside the Court and the rest arrested on the Court steps.

Each arrestee was intentionally not carrying any personal identification and was taken into custody under the name of a Guantanamo prisoner. At their arraignment, arrestees also entered the prisoner's name into the court record before making his or her plea.

"This group brought the names of the victims of Guantanamo right to the Supreme Court," said Elizabeth McAlister, a member of the Jonah House community in Baltimore and the mother of one of those arrested inside the Court. "The Court has listened and listened to the views of the imprisoned, but has not heard them."

Those arrested included eight Iowans: Des Moines Catholic Workers, Ed Bloomer, Kirk Brown, and Mona Shaw; Chris Gaunt of Grinnell; Renee Espe land and Elton Davis, both of Des Moines; Megan Felt, Iowa City; and Brian Terrell from Maloy. January 11, 2008, marked six years of detention without hope of release for the nearly 300 held at Guantanamo.

A Solidarity Action was held the same day in Des Moines that included a thirty-minute vigil in front of the Des Moines Federal Court House. Sponsors included the Des Moines Catholic Worker and Students against War.



Blessed Franz Jagerstatter Lenten Fast and Prayer Campaign

Des Moines-area Catholics and friends held weekly Friday Lenten vigils across the street from St Ambrose Cathedral in Des Moines during Lent.

The weekly vigils began February 8, 2008, as part of the Blessed Franz Jagerstatter Lenten Fast and Prayer to Break the Silence Campaign. This effort was a national prayer and fasting campaign that took place in reparation for our silence and the silence of our church in not condemning the invasion and ongoing occupation of Iraq.

Franz Jagerstatter (1907-1943) was an Austrian conscientious objector during World War II who was later executed for his stance. For more information, see the Franz Jagerstatter, Breaking the Silence web page [www.FranzPrayForUs.org].

Karl Rove Citizen's Arrest

Des Moines Catholic Workers Kirk Brown and Mona Shaw attempted to make a citi-



zen's arrest on Karl Rove at the opening of his talk on Sunday, March 9, in Iowa City. Shaw and Brown stood before an audience that included about 200 protesters decrying Rove's appearance. The message of the protestors

included written and spoken exposés of Rove's criminal and traitorous acts as well as shaming the University of Iowa for providing a climate of legitimacy for a man they believed should instead be indicted.

In a speech at a protest rally held before Rove's talk, Des Moines Catholic Worker Frank Cordaro submitted the reasoning behind the need to attempt citizen's arrests of Rove whenever the opportunity arose.

"Iowans need to ask the bigger question of why Karl Rove is an unindicted war criminal and a free man. Isn't it because of our gutless Congress, unwilling to do its duty and start impeachment proceedings on Bush and Cheney and to start a war crimes case against Rove 'the architect' to Bush's War on Iraq? Isn't it because our judicial system, starting with the Supreme Court has been bought off or scared off by the national security interests running our country? In our democracy when the presidency is controlled by a criminal gang, and the Congress and Judicial branch of our government are unwilling to do the right and just thing, it is left up to ordinary citizens to step into the breach and attempt to make a citizen's arrest of people like Karl Rove."

Brown and Shaw attempted such a citizen's arrest immediately following Rove's introduction. Both read from a written "Citizen's Arrest Complaint" that cited Federal Criminal statutes and the Iowa Code. Before they could finish reading the complaint, they were taken into custody by University Police, informed they were under arrest, and removed from the

hall. Both were released in the foyer leading to the hall without being charged.

Des Moines Military Recruiting Center Shut Down on 5th Anniversary of War

A military recruiting center was briefly shut-down on March 19, 2008, in Des Moines. It was the fifth anniversary of the invasion of and the start of the war in Iraq. Two Des Moines Catholic Workers were arrested after



protesters carried a flag-draped coffin into the foyer of the Armed Forces Career Center on SE 14th Street and blocked entrances to the offices of the four branches of the Armed Forces branches there.

The two arrested, Ed Bloomer and Kirk Brown, were among a dozen protesters holding anti-war signs and distributing "anti-recruitment" literature. Des Moines Catholic Worker Mona Shaw told those present the group was there to do three things:

1. Mourn the tragic lost of life caused by the war including nearly 4,000 military personnel and more than one million Iraqis.

2. To send a plea to others to do more to stop the war.

3. To protect more young adults from losing their lives by shutting down military recruiting at the Des Moines recruiting center for at least one day.

"When we were protesting 'Shock and Awe' five years ago, we feared aloud then that this war would last this long," said Brian Terrell, a Catholic Worker from Maloy and director of Catholic Peace Ministry, "We take no satisfaction in making such an accurate prediction."

Des Moines Area HS Student Group stage "Die-In" against Iraq War

More than 130 students participated in "Five Years of an Unjust War is Five Too Many: Die-in Against the War" The action was organized by Students Beyond War [www.studentsbeyondwar.org], a high school peace group centered in Des Moines. In the past, the group has held nonviolent sit-ins at Congressional offices. The die-in was designed to provide a visual display of the costs of war.

"We want to get people to think about what we're doing. That's why it was silent; we wanted to present part of the reality of what's going on," said Ames High senior Bobby Hunter, 18, an organizer of the action.

Students Beyond War meets Thursday events at American Friends Service Committee offices at 42nd and Grand Ave in Des Moines IA. Contact Nate Looker, 515-229-2087, skierguy7@hotmail.com.



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Prayers and Love	Food	Health and Hygiene	Household Supplies	Clothing and Bedding	Volunteers	Cash Donations
Without, your prayers and goodwill, nothing else matters.	Cereal Coffee Fruit Vegetables Beans Meat and Fish Soups and Stews Sugar and artificial sweetener Coffee Creamer Juices Milk Cheese Butter or Margarine Eggs Salt and pepper Salad dressing and condiments	Tylenol Ibuprofen Multiple Vitamins Ointment Disinfectants Band-Aids Feminine Hygiene Items Disposable Razors Shaving Cream Shampoo and Conditioner Lotion Deodorant Toothbrushes Toothpaste Toilet Paper	Bleach Laundry Detergent Dish Soap Murphy's Oil Soap Pinesol Toilet Cleaners Paper Towels Sponges Trash bags Aluminum foil Brooms Rugs Floor mats Candles Light bulbs	Underwear T-shirts Towels Blankets Sheets Pillows Socks	Individuals and work crews for hospitality (serving food, clean-up), cleaning and general inside and outside maintenance.	Cash donations are essential to pay taxes, utilities, repair and maintenance bills and to purchase supplies.
Peace and justice books and videos are always welcome donations for the Berrigan House Library.				Renovation Help Do-it-yourselfers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, etc. are needed to help with: Dingman House All new kitchen Fire Escape Lazarus House New Roof Fire Escape Ligutti House Fire Escape With four old houses, there is always something to repair or improve. Bring your tools and pick a project.		

