

Via Pacis

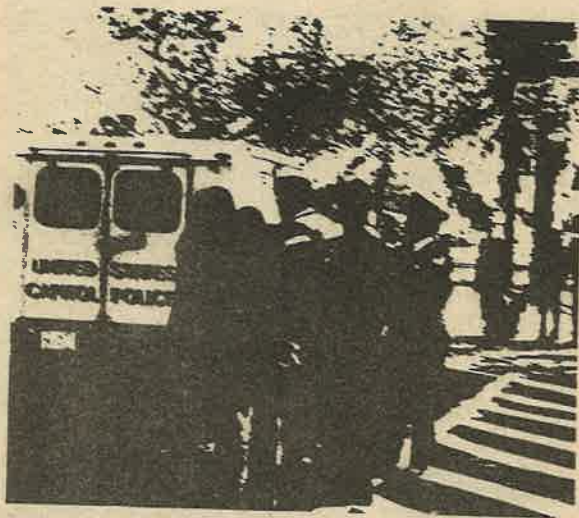


nov/dec
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AROUND THE HOUSE

We've been really busy lately with a lot of people coming and going at the house. We've been crowded for some time now, even turning people away, which we didn't have to do much during the warmer weather when people were able to camp outside or make do however they were doing it. But recently it hasn't been that way. The many donations of food and supplies we have received recently have been a big help, and it's been good to have more community members around to spread out the time on the house, which can be pretty draining at times.

The affordable housing campaign, which we were working on during September and October, is over now. With help from a number of good friends we were able to send two groups out to Washington, D.C. to participate in the demonstrations that went on from Sept. 26 - Nov. 7. The first group, which included Wendy, Luke, Katie, Leagals, Carla Dawson, Debbie Gottschalk, Patty MacDonell, and J.R., went out for the Oct. 26th scheduled Iowa demonstration. Some of us blocked the street in front of the Capitol for about 10 seconds with a banner reading "15,000 Homeless Iowans Demand Housing Now". The demonstration itself was disappointing since no one saw it but the Capitol police, but we had a really good overnight jail experience and it was good to be among the 35 or so groups from cities around the country who participated in the 1 1/2 month long campaign. A local demonstration here in Des Moines, which Patti worked on with Ed Fallon and other local activists, brought more local attention to the need for affordable housing in Des Moines. A second group, consisting of Paula and Mike Airhart, Ed Bloomer, Carla Dawson (again), Julius Johnson, and Leola Levy, went out for the final demonstration on Nov. 7 where nearly 400 people were arrested.



We've had a lot of help with food recently, and we especially want to thank DeAngelo's Fruit Market for their very generous twice-weekly donations of all kinds of produce, Sbrocco's, where we run whenever we are out of potatoes or onions, Prairie Farms where we are able to pick up all the milk we need every day, and Wonder Bread and Tait's which keep us well stocked with bread and sweets of all kinds. We also want to thank everyone who brought turkeys and canned goods at Thanksgiving -- so much came in we couldn't keep track of where it all came from but it's really great to have our pantry well stocked, because so many people have been coming to eat with us recently.

A recent addition to our material wealth was a car which JoAnn Muldoon donated just in time for our trips out to Washington D.C. It was also just in time for us to move the Chevette into semi-retirement since it seems to be terminally ill. J.R. and Burke, a Grinnell student who volunteers with us and Kindred House on Saturdays have both been trying to resuscitate the Chevette but something always falls apart so it's nice to be able to give it a rest.

Many thanks to Jim Speak, for another appalling fumigation of our houses!



We have some new volunteers working with us these days: Kay Mayer, who has been taking the house Wednesdays with her children, Kenna, Jann and Kerry; Daniel Avila, who has been working every day on the new house renovations, and Hazen Audway and Barry Malloy, who have been helping out a lot on the new house also.

The Broadlawn Outreach team has made a big difference for the guests staying here. These folks come around on a daily basis both working on people's immediate health care needs (they run clinics in the area every day and help with transportation to appointments and obtaining prescriptions), following through with other problems many homeless people have such as lack of appropriate clothing or food, blankets for people living outside, etc., and working to get people into shelters who are living outside. This is a really caring and committed group of people and everyone has really appreciated their involvement here.

Leagals Dunbar went out with the first group to Washington D.C. for the housing demonstration on October 26 and decided to work with CCNV until the end of the campaign on election day. It was a good chance for him to meet people from around the country who came in for the demonstrations as well as to help out with organizing and routine shelter work (cooking for 1000) and to get a picture of the homeless problems there.

Our new community member, J.R. Stockberger, got left out of the introductions last issue. J.R. came in July and has been working at Iowa Peace Network as a Brethren Volunteer and living and working at the Catholic Worker as well. He stays busy around here with produce and milk pickups, taking the house, and generally being around. J.R. is from Indiana, and some of us had a chance recently to visit his home when we stayed overnight at his family's farm on our way out to D.C. and again coming back from the housing demonstration. His folks were so hospitable that it was easy to see where he gets it from.

Another new member, Ted Pedersen, came in early October. He has spent time working with Jim on the new house as well as taking shifts and living at Lazarus House. Ted is a former member of the Houston Catholic Worker, Casa Juan Diego.

Eileen Glover, who was at CCNV for the housing demonstrations, has come to Des Moines for an indefinite stay with our community. Eileen was a staff person at a shelter and outreach center in New Brunswick N.J., but was interested in the Catholic Worker movement and has come here to try it out. We hope she likes it and meanwhile it's good having her work with us.

Norman has been busy keeping the pantry in order during the recent deluge of canned goods that we so desperately need. His mother visited from Boston not long ago and charmed us all during her stay in town. Norman the Cat has grown a lot in the last few months and takes special delight in tormenting Toto and Blackie during the morning staff meeting. Norman manages all this, working at Panda Chinese Food, taking shifts at the house, and doing a fair bit of running around every day to the post office, the bank, and doing assorted pickups and errands.

Patti has recently begun working regularly at Westminster House. She was able to go home during the Thanksgiving holiday for a short visit. She helped organize the Halloween party at Trinity United Methodist for the kids in the neighborhood and dressed up as a clown for the event. The party must have been quite a success since we had a total of three trick or treaters.

Jim is still off the schedule and has been using the time to do some travelling as well as work on the new house. He recently got back from a visit to Wisconsin and in a few weeks will be heading for Mexico with the Bojorquezes to spend Christmas with their family. Meanwhile he has been working steadily with Daniel Avila, Ted and other less regular volunteers on the house renovation.

Wendy, Luke and Katie went out to Washington DC for the housing demonstrations and had a chance to see old friends at CCNV. Luke decided that he's going to get locked up in the next demonstration, and Katie thought it was so much fun having JR take care of her overnight that she can't wait for the next time either.



We approach the coming holiday season with a mixture of hope and dread. It is the hope brought to us through the message of Christ and the celebration of his birth. The dread comes during trips downtown and to Target as we witness the crass merchandising of this most joyous time. It is our hope that the advertising and pressures to "buy yourself some Christmas" do not obscure the true causes for celebration, reflection, and prayer at this time of year.



reflections on my time in Des Moines

By Ted Pedersen

During my first month at the Catholic Worker of Des Moines I have had many opportunities to consider the differences and similarities between here and Casa Juan Diego (the Catholic Worker of Houston) where I spent the latter half of 1987.

In Houston the guests were newly arrived immigrants from Mexico and Central America, Spanish speaking undocumented. So far in Des Moines I have yet to unveil my stock Spanish welcoming speech to anyone (not that it couldn't happen).

The community at Casa Juan Diego was mostly composed of white college educated people who spoke Spanish with heart on hold and foot in mouth.

Because the house was run by gringos the guests sometimes thought that we were either government officials or part of an obscure religious order. The idea of a Catholic Worker house was not familiar to them.

It seemed that some of our guests felt that they needed to provide a story (be it true or not) for them to be allowed to stay with us. This no doubt sometimes had to do with their mistaken impression that we were an "official organization". I also believe that this was due to the tendency of some parts of the "sanctuary movement" to look for people with good stories to parade in front of the media rather than accepting the people as they are and not using them for political ends. I recall Mark Zwick, director of Casa Juan Diego, joking with us that a person couldn't get sanctuary unless they had been shot at least three times.



One of the great similarities between here and Casa Juan Diego is the fact that no questions are asked. There is no attempt to exploit the guests for political purposes. There is no desire to call in the TV cameras and wave self-righteous fingers while chanting "look what you have done".

The differences in language and culture are obvious. An incident that brought the problem into focus for me still stands out from many others.

I had been working since 6 AM. I was tired. I had been on the phone for a long time trying to make eight separate flight reservations. I had been shouted at once or twice. And then a young man said something unintelligible to me in Spanish.

"Do you need food?" I tried. He said no and repeated his indecipherable message.

"Do you need clothes?" I was prepared to give him a shirt and send him on his way.

"No," he smiled. And then he said it slowly. Unintelligible.

"What is it? Airline tickets? A job? What?"

And finally, ever so slowly. "I ask you why you no sleep now."

I was startled. Then I felt foolish. It had not occurred to me that he might be interested in making conversation or not asking for something. The great frustration of dealing with a foreign language is that you are often reduced to stock formula conversations to get things done. If someone talks to me they must need something. Right?

I stood out from the guests at Casa Juan Diego as much as a white, blond, blue-eyed person ever could. Benefactors, visitors, and guests could always tell that I was staff for no other reason than that I couldn't possibly be a guest. I couldn't ever escape that. Consequently one of my greatest pleasures here in Des Moines has been the fact that I can sit at the dinner table and not stand out as an authority figure. I can point my head towards my plate and any new guests or visitors could think that I was simply passing through for a meal.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE - RIGHT OR WRONG?

By J.R. Stockberger

Four months ago you could've quoted me saying: "there are many routes to justice - if it is not necessary to break the law then the law-breaker is wrong in doing so. The law-breaker is creating an injustice to and victimizing those who uphold and live by the law. An eye for an eye you say? I thought Jesus opened our minds to a more peaceable kingdom."

I still wonder if what I said was right or wrong. My eyes have been opened to many things in the past few months that have further confused my position on the issue of civil disobedience being a viable, moral tool for change. It's a struggle I don't anticipate an end to. On the one hand, many things create injustice and, in my opinion, civil disobedience creates injustice. I've never been comfortable with ways and means arguments. Must we live unjustly in an unjust world? What does it mean to fight for justice in an unjust manner? On the other hand, could we try to struggle for justice in a "somewhat" just manner in this unjust world? Is that possible?

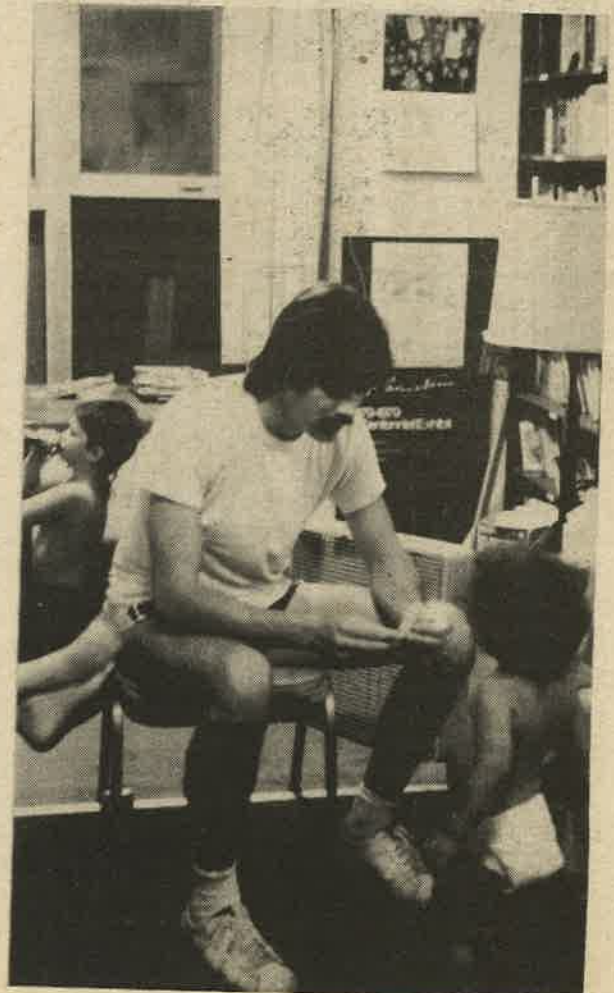
I've been searching for a single, universal, right or wrong answer. I have found that in an issue of conscience there is none. When you come upon a problem that demands some sort of urgency that all of your experience, wisdom, or education cannot solve you must rely on your conscience to guide you. Our consciences will lead us in different directions and I, being human, am unable to say which way is more right - the law abiding citizen or the civil disobedient. It is the urgent nature of the situation that calls for an act of conscience. And again, we will all see situations in different levels of urgency - ask a plowshares activist

spending time in jail. I'm sure he/she will express a need for an immediate end to the construction of nuclear weapons. Who are we to say their "urgent" view is wrong? We all know the world could go up in smoke tomorrow. But then would a father living with his family in a station wagon see nuclear war as an urgent issue? Surely he would see more urgent problems. Is he wrong? Who could blame him for doing an act of civil disobedience that would get his family a home?

Because there may be no universal right or wrong answer, I cannot really contemplate civil disobedience without relating it to a particular issue. I would hope that as a Christian struggling to follow Jesus' example, I would be able to give my life for that of another person. Therefore, "in thought", I am more than willing to die, or spend time in jail, or direct my life in such a manner that will reduce the suffering of others. Where is my action. The war in Central America, the starving child, the man freezing to death on the sidewalk - if my action will alleviate their pain then what right have I to say no? I would be wrong in saying no.

On October 27, I was in D.C. with a small group of advocates for the homeless. We were voicing our cries of protest to the fact that 25 billion dollars each year had been cut from the budgeted amount for low-income housing programs during the Reagan administration. We were demanding that the money be returned. Five people in the group blocked a street close to the Capitol building and were arrested. An urgent need for reform called for a personal act of conscience. I hadn't given up hope on finding a better way to demand change. I didn't commit civil disobedience. I didn't go to jail.

On November 7, 377 people were arrested in D.C. for the same cause we were struggling for. I wish I would have been there. My motives and conscience seem to be gaining power over my doubts. It has become clearer to me that this was a moral, just, urgent, and legitimate action. Maybe I need to quit telling myself that I'm wrong and do as my conscience dictates.



MORE HOUSE NEWS

Lately we've been working on laying down wood floors in the new house. We are using salvaged floorboards we were given out of an old house, and they were a mess. Walnut and maple, but covered with stain and varnish, crusted with dirt and shellac like cement, full of invisible staples and nails, splintered and broken off in places. Cleaning up that wood took forever, weeks of work for a lot of people. We pulled out all the nails. We scraped at the shellac and dirt on the tongues and grooves, turning screwdrivers into icepicks, going through every tool that could possibly be turned to that purpose. We planed off the old varnish, cut all the boards to size, sent them all back to be scraped again, and finally Jim and Daniel laid them down in a beautiful pattern and put on the linseed oil and sealer.

Looking at the pile of wood we started with, you could never imagine that something so beautiful could come out of it, and that's the way it's been with the whole house. Everyone who saw it when we started looked at us like we were crazy when we got it and said we were going to rehab it, because it was so far gone that it looked like one of those houses everyone would be sad to see get torn down, but it was hopeless. But that house is going to be beautiful, a wonderful place for people to live in when we get it finished. It's getting to where you can see what it will be like, with the rooms on the first floor drywalled and painted and now the floors going in. Upstairs it's still a wreck.



We've been working on the house with virtually no resources, going ahead with what we can with whatever people or materials turn up from time to time. Mostly it has been friends and guests working over there; most of the work is pretty basic and anyone who is willing can do it. Sometimes it seems hopeless when there is no one much around to do the work or we are held up on a major project, and other times it can be a lot of fun when a group gets together to drywall or pull nails or whatever it might be. Tomorrow the Knights of Columbus will be coming over to put in the windows which Marvin Windows donated and that will be another project underway.

We still have two major items to take care of which will require a lot of financial support: the heating and plumbing systems. To get plumbing in the house we need money to pay the plumber's labor and the cost of materials. In our last issue we asked for contributions toward the plumbing costs but in fact contributions stayed about the same, enough to cover our regular bills and no more.

We want to finish rehabbing the house soon so that we can return Corrie House to its owner, who has been leasing it to us for several years but has other plans for it in the future. To date our expenses in fixing up the house have been about \$2500. We have been able to keep them so low because all the labor has been a gift and a lot of the materials were salvaged or donated. But the work has been progressing slowly because there are not always people to help or money to enable us to continue.

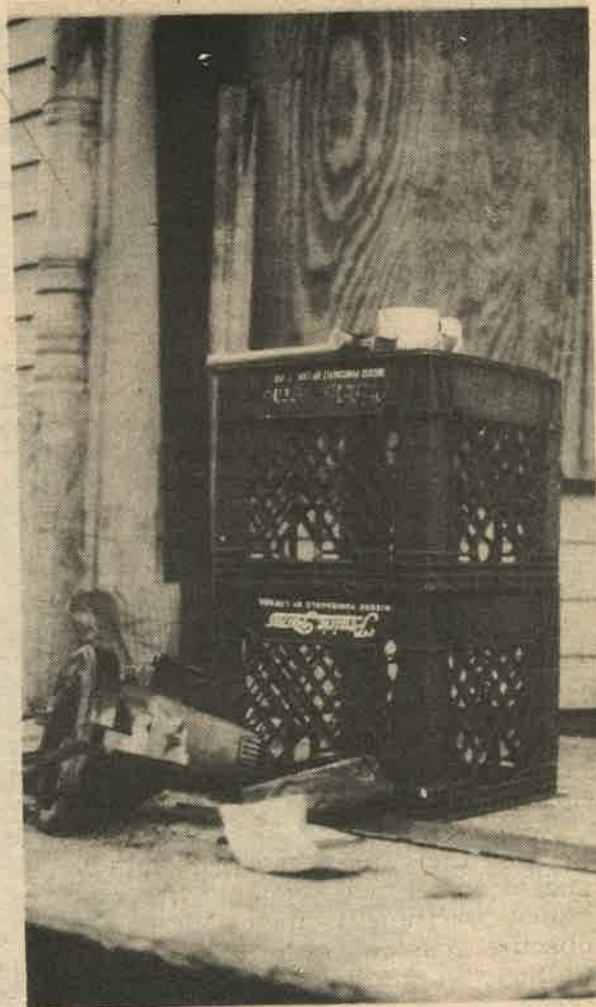
We really need help in completing the work on the house. We need people with energy to do the physical work and we need money to purchase supplies and to pay for the plumbing and heating. Please see what you can do.

WHO WE ARE

The Catholic Worker is a group of individuals living together in community and working together in pursuit of common goals of peace and justice. In our life together we are trying to live out the Biblical mandate to love one another, and so our houses are open to anyone in need, to stay on a temporary or occasionally a longterm basis.

The Catholic Worker is not a tax exempt organization. Members work as unpaid volunteers, receiving only room and board for our work. We neither seek nor accept government or foundation moneys of any kind, choosing to depend on gifts from our extended community who give at a personal sacrifice. In our refusal to conform to organizational structures, we affirm the responsibility of all to assume personal responsibility for those in need and for the problems facing us all in the world. We invite all to join us in whatever way you can.

COMMUNITY
Katie Bobbitt
Luke Bobbitt
Wendy Bobbitt
Leagals Dunbar
Jim Harrington
Patti McKee
Ted Pedersen
Norman Searah
J.R. Stockberger



The new house has new windows! A work party from the Knights of Columbus, organized by Grand Knight Bob Molman, has started putting in the new windows which were donated for the house by Marvin Windows. The work began yesterday and the Knights are planning to come back tomorrow (Dec. 1) to wind the project up. These windows are really great, and it's been really neat to have the Knights get involved with the work here. Many thanks to all!

NEEDS

money
laundry detergent
dish soap
any cleaning supplies
tampons and pads
diapers
towels
coffee
toiletries (combs,
disposable razors,
deodorants, etc.)

We're Broke!

Looking at the checkbook it seems doubtful that the current set of bills will get paid on time, and soon we'll be at a dead standstill on new house renovations until some major money comes in. Whatever you give will go directly toward utilities, car and house expenses. Please be generous.

INDEPENDENCE FOR THE CAPTIVE STATES

(standing with the people of central america)

By Brian Terrell

After a summer of drought in southwest Iowa, painstakingly nursing a garden to a small harvest and hunting forage for our small herd of goats, I was stunned by the rich green abundance of Central America in its rainy season.

Traveling by bus through Guatamala, El Salvador, and Honduras with a small group friends from peace communities on the East Coast, we saw corn being harvested and planted at the same time in the fields side by side, rice growing in the valleys and coffee in the mountains. Wherever our buses stopped they were boarded by vendors selling bananas, oranges, roasted corn, mangos and many strange and delicious fruits and vegetables whose names I didn't know.

Despite the richness of the land and the ingenuity of the people at making do both in the cities and the country many Central Americans are hungry and children often die from malnourishment.

There is very little land available to the farmers to grow food for themselves or to sell on the market. Instead they must work growing cash crops for export on land owned by foreign (mostly U.S.) corporations at below sustenance wages. In some areas they farm for a small landed gentry in a primitive and brutal feudal system.

To preserve this good business climate for U.S. corporations, the United States government puts millions of dollars a day into the economies of these countries. Despite these vast sums of money, cities are in decay, schools and clinics barely exist, buildings destroyed in earthquakes many years ago still lie in ruins, towns are without water, roads and bridges go years without repair. The only place we saw evidence of the region's natural richness and of the millions spent in U.S. dollars was in the homes of the wealthy and in the military establishment.

We travelled to Central America to stand for a little while with the people there in their struggle. We had the privilege of praying with Christian base communities, talking to farmers and workers and with people working for human rights at great personal risk.

While the war in Central America is sold to the 'American' people who are paying for it as a war against communism it is really a war against the poor. As a Guatemalan general recently told a group of businessmen, "We have been fighting communists for you for three hundred years!" In the last ten years of this war tens of thousands of people have been killed or have disappeared. Few of these victims have been armed rebels. To the governments of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, the enemy is the farmer who wants to own land, the pastor who preaches the good news of justice to the poor, the working man and woman who ask enough wages for their work to feed and educate their children; the one who demands that the killing stop and the prisoners be released.

The traditional Independence Day for all Central America is September 15 and our group of traveling companions acted on the day before at three locations to ask the United States to recognize the independence of its southern colonies.

I went to Palmerola Air Base in Honduras along with Art Laffin, Elmer Maas, and Judith Williams from Connecticut, Andres Thomas from Washington, Gail Presby, Mary Jane Helrich and Kathy Boylan from New York and Bob Simpson from Philadelphia. (The Honduran constitution forbids foreign military within its borders except "in transit" and so the fiction is maintained that Palmerola is a Honduran, not U.S., air base, even though U.S. airmen and soldiers outnumber Honduran personnel more than two to one.) We blocked the traffic into the base with our bodies and spread banners in English and Spanish saying "Thou Shalt Not Kill" and "Independence for the Captive States". Our

Traffic was routed around us and we remained about an hour singing and praying and talking to the Hondurans and North Americans caught in our traffic jam. Art Laffin made a moving appeal to the U.S. military there to go home and stop participating in this illegal and immoral war.

Our vigil ended when the security police, FUSEP, arrived and packed us into the backs of pick-up trucks and took us to the police station in the nearest town.

Guatemala City - Embassy vigil
Photo from Year One



gesture was met with a flurry of activity and confusion. (The Honduran military there wear uniforms identical to the U.S. airmen but for the insignia and were clearly taking orders from their Yankee counterparts.) Had we been Hondurans there is little doubt that we could have been shot down there and then or have been arrested and not heard from again. U.S. citizens wearing T-shirts saying "Fuera Tio Sam" (Get out Uncle Sam) presented a dilemma.

Late that night the nine of us and four soldiers armed with M-16's rode through the mountains in a pick-up truck to the capital city Tegucigalpa, where we were reunited in a jail cell with four of our friends, Pat McCullum, Marc Fryer, John Bach, and Terri Allen. They had been arrested by the FUSEP that day for taking part in a similar blockade of the United States Embassy in that city.

RESISTANCE AND PRIESTHOOD -- A DEVELOPING MODEL

By Frank Cordaro

The following article was written while Frank was serving a six-month sentence at Marion Prison Camp. In it Frank outlines his own person story in an effort to develop a model for a resister-priest.

This month marks the third year of my ordination. I'm celebrating my anniversary at Marion Federal Prison Camp in Marion, Illinois. In April I was sentenced to six months for crossing a white line at Strategic Air Command Headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska. Thus far it has been a time for review and renewal.

As long as I can remember, I was always open to the idea of becoming a priest. I seriously took up the call after graduation from college in 1973 and officially became a seminarian for the Des Moines Diocese. I spent the next three years at Aquinas Institute of Theology in Dubuque and received my Master of Divinity degree.

At Aquinas I spent my first summer in the South Bronx working in a Black and Puerto Rican parish. The following summer I worked at the Catholic Worker in Davenport, Iowa. Those two experiences convinced me I needed to find a way to work for justice while living with the poor. There didn't seem much chance of this happening if I were ordained to the Diocesan priesthood. To add to my discernment process, I had fallen in love ... a major stumbling block in becoming a Catholic priest. I dropped out of the Seminary and in 1977 helped to start the Catholic Worker in Des Moines.

Seven years later, after countless pots of soup, bringing three houses of hospitality into existence, distributing thousands of leaflets, standing in hundreds of picket lines and experiencing a whole bunch of arrests, the subsequent jail time and failing at love, I found myself seriously entertaining the idea of ordination again.

I was serving time at Leavenworth Federal Prison Camp in Missouri for destroying U.S. Government property. At the gate to S.A.C. a billboard displays their international motto "Peace is Our Profession". A group of us thought some truth more important than a good paint job. So, on the Feast of the Holy Innocents with paint and brush in hand, we crossed out the word "Peace" and substituted the word "War". We felt we improved the sign ... the judge thought differently. It was while serving time at Leavenworth that I decided to re-enter the process of priesthood again.

I knew this resistance 'thing' I was doing was going to demand more and more of a serious commitment. Down the line an eight month prison sentence would be considered a gift. If I was going to measure up to the growing demands of resistance I had to take care of the unfinished business keeping me from growing in the direction that God was calling me. I needed to respond to the priestly call again but was not sure the Church would accept me. With that in mind, I officially resumed my relationship with the Diocese of Des Moines and Bishop Dingman.



I don't believe there is another Bishop in the country who would have given me a second chance, especially with my track record at the Catholic Worker. Bishop Dingman and I had a very close relationship. We had worked together on many occasions throughout the years and had grown to love and trust each other completely. It was a relationship in which both of us felt free to speak our minds and never think twice about jeopardizing our friendship. A rare and beautiful gift, a relationship I will cherish for the rest of my life. We spent a lot of time talking to each other after my release from Leavenworth. Bishop Dingman wanted to make sure I was a serious contender. He decided to send me back to the Seminary at St. John's University at Collegeville, Minnesota for two years.

I remember telling the Bishop I thought it would be a waste of time to send me back to school. I had the necessary degree. He told me that he wanted to see how well I could survive in the Institutional Church.

I asked Bishop Dingman, "Why not send me to a parish for two years if you want to see how well I can survive in the Institutional Church? Why send me to a seminary?"

He answered, "Why do you think they made seminaries? This will be a test."

I said, "I don't think I will like this test."

Then he said, "That is what will make it a good test."

So I went to St. John's and raised what hell I could, giving the institution my best shot. I spent my creative energy organizing anti-ROTC vigils, picketing University Awards banquets, threatening to occupy the ROTC offices in the Pledge of Resistance, getting arrested twice at Honeywell and once at a farm protest. I wrote scathing articles in the school newspapers, and organized two Holy Week trips to Washington D.C. to work with the folks at the Community for Creative Non-Violence and with the homeless, to protest at the Pentagon with the Jonah House Community. I was a general pain in the side of the 'status quo' challenging everything and everybody, and getting mixed reviews through it all. I learned little in the classroom but learned much about St. John's, the Institutional Church and the state of Catholic higher education. At all times I was up front about my resistance past and intended resistance future. At the end of two years, to the surprise of many, myself included, Bishop Dingman ordained me to the Diocesan Priesthood to serve the Diocese of Des Moines.

I felt well grounded in the resistance 'thing': my seven years at the Catholic Worker served me well. I saw resistance coming from a basic understanding of Gospel fidelity. It naturally flowed from my

(Cont'd on p. 9)

INDIA CHRONICLES

By Patti McKee

This summer I took part in a study program in India that was sponsored by the Lisle Fellowship of the U.S. and the Gandhi Peace Foundation (G.P.F.) of India. The Lisle Fellowship focuses on promoting world peace through intercultural understanding. The G.P.F. promotes Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence, of education, and of economics. There were 12 U.S. participants and 14 Indian participants. The program theme was alternatives to violence through intercultural understanding and nonviolent living.

The U.S. participants met as a group in New York City for orientation. From there we flew to India. India is a land of great diversity in religion, language, food smells, and sound. I will struggle to share with you some of my experiences.

After approximately 15 hours of flying time, we were dropped into New Delhi, a city of 6 million people. As we drove from the airport on the outskirts of town to the city we passed several military police check points. We later learned these were set up to control any terrorist attack on the capital city. They are primarily concerned about Sikh terrorism.

Delhi is a city of contrast. You can see the British legacy of traffic circles and British or western influence in architecture as well as Indian style buildings. There is also a great contrast between very modern living quarters to very primitive ones. At the G.P.F. we had modern facilities with running water and electricity (when it decided to work). Across the street on the road easement were a few hovels built which were each about 10' x 10' without water or electricity in which a few families lived. People are allowed to build living structures on public land. So along many of the roads in Delhi we saw many such structures.

Even though Delhi is a crowded city there are still many trees and birds around. The rains had started before we arrived so the trees and bushes were bursting forth in flowers sending wonderful fragrances into the air to counter the exhaust fumes, manure and in some places raw sewage fumes.

Living at the G.P.F. center we got a sense of what Indian traffic is like. We were situated between a busy street and the train station. Traffic started about 5:30 in the morning and went until about 12 or 1 the next morning. An integral part of Indian driving is the use of the horn. This is partially due to the variety of sizes and kinds of vehicles and animals on the road. In the city you may have everything from double decker buses and transport trucks to small cars, motorcycles, bicycles, horse and bull drawn carts, and an occasional elephant or camel. Plus the infamous motorized rickshaw, which is basically a 3 wheeled motorcycle with one cab on the back big enough to hold 3 thin adults. A ride in a rickshaw is not to be missed. The rickshaw drivers are generally very daring; they weasel their way in and out of the trucks and buses avoiding the bicyclists and blowing their horn all the way. Because of the variety of sizes of vehicles, lanes of traffic have little meaning. At a stop light on a busy 4 lane street there may be 6 vehicles lined up on one side of the road ready to charge ahead at the change of the traffic light. All in all I do not cherish the idea of driving in Delhi.

In contrast to the hectic traffic we visited the site of Gandhi's cremation. It was a peaceful park along the Yamuna River in which Gandhi's ashes were spread. The park is a great reprieve from the hustle and bustle of the city.

To much of India Gandhi is mainly seen as a national hero who freed the country from the grip of the British. (Many of the cities have statues of Gandhi or buildings, parks, or streets named after him.) His values of nonviolence and his system of education and economics have long been forgotten by most Indians and for the most part by the Indian government.

The people of the G.P.F. are struggling to keep his ideas alive and through these ideas to improve the lives of the common Indian people which at times comes into conflict with the current government's policies.

While staying at the G.P.F. center in Delhi we heard seminars on the effects modernization and mechanization have had on the Indian culture. Most Gandhians see the communal village life as the backbone of their culture and want to preserve it. They see the use of high mechanization and technology as detrimental to Indian society because it takes work away from village people and makes them dependent on larger cities for goods and also causes more unemployment in the villages. An example of this phenomenon is the introduction of plastic buckets to villages taking business away from the village potters. The Gandhian's emphasis is to improve the lives of the village people through the use of simple technology. Technology that village people can make for themselves or that can be purchased for a small amount and that the village people can repair themselves.

Examples of simple technology are foot powered spinning wheels made from bicycle parts and a solar water distillation system. The overall point made in these seminars was that humans should control the technology rather than the reverse. One should not use the technology just because it is available. But one should question its necessity and its effects and all those involved not just the ones who benefit from it. I believe we in the U.S. need to take these points into consideration.

In addition to our studies at the G.P.F. center we went shopping and sight seeing in the Delhi area. The pinnacle of our sightseeing, of course, was the Taj Mahal. It is an exquisite building of white marble with inlaid designs of jasmine, daffodils, lotus, marigold and iris flowers on the interior walls. The dome was constructed so that the slightest sound echoes. One of India's rulers built it as a tomb for his wife. It took 20,000 people 20 years to build, making it one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

With our time ending in the Delhi area we next had the experience of riding on India's trains. The railway stations, especially in the large cities, are crowded centers of activity. Besides coming and going passengers there are food vendors selling bananas, mangos, oranges, cashews, fried snack food, tea, and coffee. People sleep under the protection of the waiting platforms, for some it may be home.

One has to wade through this mass of humanity to find your train car. We traveled mostly on second class sleeper cars. The sleeping compartments were about 8' x 10' with six bunks, three on each side wall. The middle bunk folded down to form the seats.

Some trains are equipped with kitchens, others are not. A person comes by and takes your order, then the food is brought to you either from the kitchen or food is brought on the train at one of the stops, so you eat your meal in your compartment. If the food comes in disposable containers children come along later and collect them. They sell the containers to be recycled for a bit of money. Other food vendors are allowed on the trains at times to sell fruit and nuts or other food. Then there is the tea vendor whose call will wake anyone out of their deepest sleep. In addition to food vendors, beggars are present on the train. Some of the beggars were children, some were healthy, others severely handicapped, others were blind and some had what appeared to be leprosy. It was a struggle to know how to deal with the beggars. This was a struggle that I don't feel I dealt with well.

All in all, travelling by train is an economic and fairly convenient way to travel and allows one to see the countryside and a variety of villages and cities.



After 40 hours on the train and about 1,000 miles we arrived in the city of Bangalore. From Bangalore we were transported by van to a farm about 7 miles outside of the city. It was to be our home base for the next 3 1/2 weeks. The farm has been founded on Gandhian principles of Sangdoua welfare for all. They worked to help the farmers in the surrounding villages. The people at the farm ran a day care for the children from families in which both parents worked. The farm workers were doing experiments using older varieties of rice that were nutritionally higher in quality and more resistant to insects and disease than the newer high yielding hybrids. They encouraged the area farmers to use these old varieties of rice so they would not be so dependent on fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides. In addition to growing rice the farm had coconut groves and raised cattle.

At the farm we met the Indian participants in the program. Much of the learning in this program came from the interaction between the U.S. group and the Indian group. As we came together each group had their own set of expectations; we from the US focusing more on group process and the Indians focusing more on learning of Gandhian philosophy. Over the course of time the expectations of the groups merged as we became one group rather than two.

To enhance our functioning together as a group, each evening before supper we met to review the day's happenings. During this time we would share the highlights of that day, work through conflicts, discuss and collectively decide on necessary changes and preview the events of the coming day.

Communication was challenging even though most of the Indian participants spoke English very well. We all had to speak slowly and clearly and listen carefully. It took more energy than usual to do this, and to work through different definitions of the same word or phrase to make sure the other person heard what you meant.

We shared with each other about religion and culture through our prayer time and cultural programs. Our days began with prayers, songs, and readings from our different faith backgrounds of Hindu, Christian, and Moslem. It was a time of drawing us together and finding common threads in our different fabrics of faith.

Several of our evenings ended with cultural exchange programs, where we would share songs, dances, skits, plays, and poetry from our countries. We from the U.S. found our repertoire sadly lacking compared to the Indian participants' repertoire. As U.S. citizens we are so used to being performed to by "professionals" through pre-packaged T.V. shows, movies, and concerts that we have lost much of our oral tradition of sharing stories of our heritage and cultural backgrounds. This experience encouraged me to continue my clowning and storytelling and to encourage others to carry on our oral tradition in the U.S.

Another way we learned of each other's culture was through the Indian newspapers. We were there during the time the U.S. shot down the Iranian airplane and the Democratic convention. The newspaper picked up on both events. The papers were very critical of the shooting of the Iranian plane. Their comments on Dukakis' choice of Bentson was accurate; they saw it as a way to appease the conservatives and to try to throw off his liberal label. In general the Indian papers seemed to keep track of major U.S. events. It was revealing to get a glimpse of our country through another country's eyes.

We had many resource people who had been involved with the Gandhian movement for many years, some had even lived and worked with Gandhi, and shared with us various aspects of Gandhian philosophy. At this point I will not go into depth on these issues, they will be covered in later newsletters.



All of this discussion seems so ironic to us from the U.S. We were so glad to get to India to be able to buy all cotton clothes that were cooler than anything we could buy in the U.S. There they were wanting the polyester.

In our afternoon sessions we were more participatory. We did skits on how to deal with conflict situations in nonviolent ways. We tried as a group to come up with 4 words that best capture the essence of nonviolence. That task was a challenge to get 26 people to agree.

In addition to our studies we did some exploring in Bangalore. After about 2 weeks of being in India most of us from the U.S. were ready for a cold beer and a pizza. After a little searching and direction from one of the Indians we found a place that sold pizza. We made an evening of eating pizza and ice cream sundaes. We also did some sight seeing and shopping in Bangalore.

After 10 days at the farm the group broke down into 3 groups and went on separate field trips. The field trips were a combination of sightseeing and visiting developments of the G.P.F. or related groups. The field trip I chose went to the state of Karnataka.

Our first stop was the old walled city of Bijapur, built in the 1300's by invading Moslems. One of the rulers built an impressive domed mausoleum. From its towers one could see the city and the vast surrounding countryside.

We visited a village outside of Bijapur where a woman's sewing collective had started. The women had been taught how to do tailoring and sewing (work usually done by men). Some of the women just used the new skills for their own use. Others formed a sewing collective so they could take contracts for sewing school uniforms, etc. In this way they were able to earn an income in their village.

The village did not have a state run school. Some of the older children who had been educated were teaching younger village children basic skills. Since paper is in short supply, the children were doing their lessons on slate boards. Before we left the school the children shared a song with us.

About 5,000 people lived in this village with only about 450-500 buildings, which meant about 10 people living in each household. One of the homes we visited consisted of basically 2 rooms, the kitchen and living room, which was used for sleeping at night. The house was about the size of our kitchen and dining room here at the Catholic Worker House. The house was made of adobe as were most village houses that we saw throughout our travels. Generally the houses had either thatched or tile roofs.

The village had some electricity. One family owned an electrically powered oil press. The farmers of the village grew a certain kind of seed that had a high oil content. The family pressed the seeds to get the oil which was then sold. The meal that was left over was used to feed the cattle.

Our stay in the village was much too short to find out what village life was really like. It only gave us a small glimpse.

The village visit concluded our stay in the Bijapur area. From Bijapur we traveled by bus to an ashram near Mudhol. This ashram was a religious based community focusing on the goodness of physical labor and the importance of producing our own basic necessities of life. They focus on Gandhi's philosophy of bread labor. The community of 11 people was basically self sufficient. On 2 1/2 acres of land they produced all the food they needed except oil and flour. They sold excess produce to buy these items and pay their electric bill. From the cow manure and through a biogas system they produced methane gas which they used to cook with. The leftover sludge was used to fertilize their crops. It was a very efficient system.

While at the ashram we were visited by some of the local people. One man brought his elephant by to do tricks for us. This huge gentle animal amazed us with what it could pick up with its fingered trunk—anything from a person to small coins or food.

From the ashram we travelled by bus to Gadag to visit one of the main distribution centers for the khadi industry (homespun cloth). The concept was started by Gandhi. In the time of British rule raw cotton from India was shipped to Britain to be milled and woven into cloth. The cloth was then shipped back to India to be sold. Gandhi called a boycott of British goods and encouraged people to spin their own thread and weave their own cloth.

The khadi industry has become an extension of this idea. The industry has its pros and cons. The spinning and weaving are done by women in small villages and provides them with an income they probably would not have otherwise. The spinning is done on hand cranked machines that produce 6 or 12 spindles of thread at a time. The weaving is done on floor looms much like what many of our ancestors may have used.

The khadi industry has stiff competition from factory produced cloth and also the plague of polyester has struck India. People don't want to buy all cotton cloth because it is not as easy as the polyester blend cloth to maintain. Thus, the khadi industry has cloth rotting away in their warehouses even with a 20% discount off the purchase price that is subsidized by the government. So the khadi industry has started to use polyester in some of their cloth. Two problems with this decision are that the polyester has to be produced in a city factory and sent back to the factory to be dyed. Both actions take work away from the local village women.

(Cont'd on p. 8)

Leaving behind the khadi industry we travelled from Gadag to Medeburi by bus. This bus ride was memorable. While waiting for the bus we became a point of curiosity. A group of people would come around us just to stare or try to speak a few words of English to us.

Next came the challenge of getting on the bus. It involved a lot of pushing and squeezing to get our baggage as well as our bodies on the bus. One way to get a seat on a crowded bus is to put your bag or other object in through the window onto an empty seat to hold a place. Sometimes you find the person is coming back and have to relinquish the seat. The system seems to work without too many disagreements.

By the time I got on the bus it was fairly full, but an Indian woman with her 2 small children invited me and another woman to sit with her in her seat built for 3 people. The aisle was tight enough packed to keep the end person from falling off the last bit of seat. Not all of our bus rides were this crowded, thank goodness.

In riding the bus one again encounters the adventures of Indian traffic. Most of the paved roads in the countryside have only one paved lane down the center with 2 wide shoulders.

It seems as though every vehicle or herd of goats or pedestrians figure they own the paved lane, but in the end the buses and transport trucks win out. Imagine the road ahead completely blocked by a herd of goats. The bus is bearing down on them at 50 m.p.h., the bus driver blowing his horn all the way. Neither one is giving way and just before you swear you are going to have goat rump for supper the herd separates and the bus goes through. Not all of our bus rides were this exciting.

The day after arriving in Medeburi we saw many of the development projects in the village. People were learning to make sandals and were weaving mats of homespun wool and palm fronds. The products would later be sold.

We visited other villages in the area. One we visited was downstream from a poly fiber plant. The plant had been dumping raw or only partially treated sewage into the river that was the only water source for the villages downstream from it. Through an interpreter we spoke with some of the village people. The most articulate person was one of the village fishermen. He told us that his silk nets used to last about 10 years but now only last about one year. If he stayed in the river too long his skin would be irritated or any sores would become infected. One of the village farmers told us that crops irrigated with the river water would produce less and the quality was worse. People and animals drinking the water developed stomach problems such as ulcers. Clothes washed in the river would deteriorate faster. The air pollution from the plant caused our eyes and throats to burn. It also caused the tile roofs to deteriorate much faster than normal. Through legal action, people are trying to force the plant to use its treatment facilities but the village people did not have much hope that anything would change.

This plant was also tied to another crucial environmental problem facing India-deforestation. Most parts of India that we saw were sparsely forested and most of the trees were very small. In most areas of India wood is the major source of fuel. Thus, the demand is very high. In order to deal with the deforestation the government started planting eucalyptus trees which grow quickly and are good for soil retention and for the fiber and paper industry, but not for the common village people. First of all the eucalyptus trees form a monoculture leaving it open to be wiped out by disease and changes in the habitat for wild animals. The people don't like to burn the eucalyptus wood because their food come out tasting like Vick's Vapor Rub. The trees

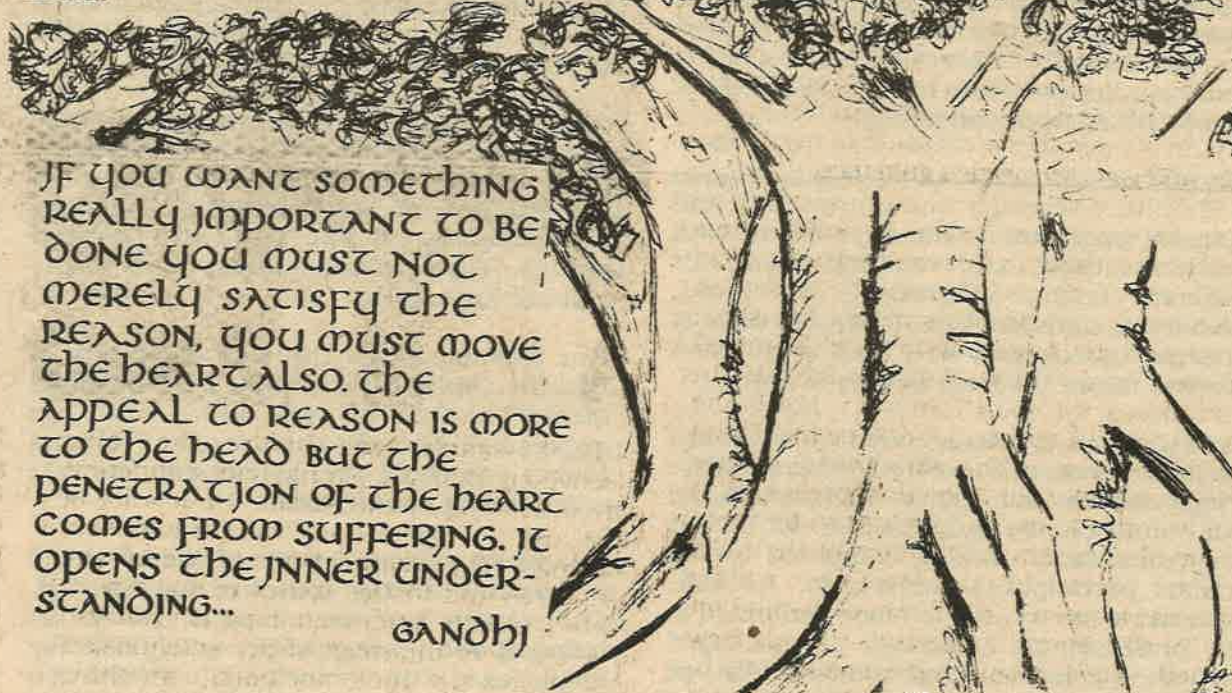
don't produce any edible fruit for humans or fodder for domestic animals. The government then in turn sells the wood to the fiber or paper industry for their use.

Groups are doing civil disobedience actions concerning this issue. They have gone in and pulled the eucalyptus saplings and planted in their place various kinds of trees that will provide for the village people's needs. One village we visited had a nursery with various kinds of tree saplings for villagers to plant.

Other groups are trying to come up with alternative fuel sources. One is to make charcoal briquets out of crop residue. They are found to be more efficient than ones made from wood. Manure is also an alternative source of fuel either through a biogas system or mixing it with straw and dried in cakes to be burned.

The next stop on our field trip gave us a break from these serious issues. Next we visited the city of Mysore where we spent our time sightseeing. Mysore is a center for India's silk and sandalwood industries and the home of a famous Maharajah's palace, beautiful gardens, temples, and art museums. At the palace and the museum I saw some of the most beautiful, intricate handcarvings of wood and ivory, and wood with inlaid ivory. The work was the most delicate and intricate of any I had ever seen.

From Mysore we travelled to the large village of Melkote. This quiet village held many surprises for us. On the top of one of the steep hills was a large temple. We made the trek up the cold stone stairs in the pouring rain. The temple was surrounded by a large court yard from which we could view the countryside through the rain and fog. In this setting it reminded me more of being in a Scottish Castle than a temple in India.



IF YOU WANT SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT TO BE DONE YOU MUST NOT MERELY SATISFY THE REASON, YOU MUST MOVE THE HEART ALSO. THE APPEAL TO REASON IS MORE TO THE HEAD BUT THE PENETRATION OF THE HEART COMES FROM SUFFERING. IT OPENS THE INNER UNDERSTANDING...
GANDHI

In Melkote we stayed with a man and his family who ran a home for physically handicapped children and a home for mentally handicapped teenagers. The children seemed happy and well adjusted in spite of their handicaps. The children went to school and helped grow food for the home. It was disheartening to find out that some of the physically handicapped children were victims of polio. The disease is still prevalent in the country.

With the physically handicapped children we played a game of kickball (which they won) and had a cultural program with them. They sang songs for us, acted out skits they created, and acted out a drama of their country's history for us. They were a talented group.

We also visited a junior college run on Gandhian principles and a Khadi workshop run by physically and mentally handicapped people from the area.

From Melkote we travelled by bus back to Bangalore and on to the farm. The last five days of the program were mainly spent sharing with the other groups what we learned on our field trips. We did have a few other activities though. We visited a school run by the R.S.S., a very nationalistic group that wants to re-unite Bangladesh,

Pakistan, India, and Sri Lanka as one nation. It was a person from this group that assassinated Gandhi.

The children (all males) were very disciplined, wearing white uniforms and sitting in very straight rows. And as we were to find out, they could be quieted down by a hand signal from one of their leaders.

During the cultural program their presentation seemed to be rigid and without feeling. We shared songs and stories of peace and fun. To end our part of the program we did the Hokey Pokey with them. About half way through the leaders thought things were getting out of hand and with a few signals quieted the children considerably. We could tell they were not very pleased with us. We departed to the farm soon after the program.

To leave our mark at the farm we planted some coconut trees. We were disheartened to find out that DDT was still used as a pesticide there. The Indians using no precautions put the DDT into the hole before each tree was planted. Using DDT took the joy out of the tree planting.

The planting was one of the final activities we did together as a group. The last day was spent doing evaluations and preparing to say good bye. We had become a tight group and saying goodbye was especially hard since many of us would be separated by an ocean.

After most of the Indian participants had left the U.S. group saw a different side of India. We went to supper at one of the more expensive hotels in Bangalore. The lounge was much like that of a hotel lounge in downtown Des Moines. The restaurant at the building top gave us a full night time view of the city. With the cover of darkness it was like being in a U.S. city. The restaurant had a five dollar cover charge to get in. The band was playing much from the U.S. and the dance floor had a sign "for couples only" which we defied and danced as a group. All this plus the fancy food was quite a shock after our past few weeks of simple living. After our evening out we took hired cars back to the farm rather than the bus. It was like driving from the U.S. back to India.

After another day at the farm we from the U.S. started to go our own ways. Some people were planning further travels. Six of us went to Bombay. From there one other person and myself flew back to the U.S.

Since my return I have spent much time integrating my experiences in India into my life here. The process is not yet complete. In coming issues of Via Pacis I hope to share more of my reflections, but more importantly to have articles from my friends in India about their lives and involvement in the Gandhian movement.

Baptismal character. Given the times, the sorry state of affairs, the Spirit cries out for Biblical activism, for a sampling of people throughout the land to embrace a resistance way of life. A life of willful positioning of one's person into the cogs of the system, messing up the 'status quo' disregarding what goes for legitimate and getting in trouble with the law. A gathering of a people with an outlaw spirit. All done under the discipline of non-violence with an eye for the poor and the oppressed. A group of folks with an open invitation to one and all to conversion. As I see it, this resistance 'thing' is needed everywhere -- the problem is that big. I knew its geography, it was familiar to me. What I didn't know was how does one do resistance and be a parish priest?

Not terribly well prepared for pastoral ministry despite (because?) of my seminary training, I was assigned to the Harrison County Team ministry, working with two other priests, two deacon couples, and a Religious resource person. We served the Catholic communities of Harrison County, Iowa, five different parishes in five different towns. It is a rural County on the western edge of the diocese along the Missouri River and just north of the Council Bluffs/Omaha area.

I was not assigned arbitrarily. The Team interviewed and asked for me. They were in the midst of a rural crisis. It was thought that while I grew in my priestly pastoral life, I might transplant my activism to the rural scene. I welcomed the assignment. I liked the possibilities of working in Team Ministry. We would be a base community of men and women, married and celibate serving the ministry needs of the County. As models go, it is one of the best I've seen given the flaws of our Church's ordained ministry. The Team was very supportive. They knew my background and history. They helped me to soften some of my rough edges and gave me needed guidance.

There is no better place to start one's priestly life than in a rural setting. The parishes are small. I was the assigned administrator of the two smallest parishes, St. Anne's in Logan with one hundred families and Holy Family Parish in Mondamin with sixty families. My home was in Logan. I spent a lot of time just being with the folks. The smallness of the parishes allowed for a relaxed presence. I quickly got to know and be known by these two small communities. Some of the folks knew me by reputation. Most were willing to give me a chance. The farm crisis had hit them hard. Many hoped this strange new bearded priest might have something to offer. I started having a home Mass once a week. This was a great way to meet the families, get a good home cooked meal and bring the Eucharist into their family lives.

The thing that surprised me most was how little it mattered whether I was conservative or a liberal, a traditionalist or a progressive. What mattered most to the people I served was whether I cared about them. Could I share in their everyday lives? They wanted a priest who had a deep faith; who was prayerful; sincere in his preaching and reverent in his liturgies. A man who could sympathize in their moments of grief and laugh in their times of joy. Someone who revealed enough of himself to be called friend. They wanted their priest to bring to their lives a touch of the Lord.

It surprised me how well I took to my pastoral duties. The parish structures were small. Our Parish Councils met every other month. The folks knew better than I how to keep the parishes afloat financially. They had a better grasp of the maintenance and upkeep of buildings. The Liturgy committee had a good handle on the Church environment, the capabilities of the worshipping community and the needs of the liturgical life of the community. I tried to stay out of their way, lend a helping hand when I could and affirm what had already gone before me. That part was easy.

The first year I spent time listening. Visiting the sick and the homebound was very important. I also had a weekly mass at the nursing home in Logan. I tried not to show any favorites and to keep an eye out for the marginal and disenfranchised. I spent time with the elderly. A lot of what gets done in a parish is done by women -- especially women over fifty who have raised their families. Listening to these good women's stories, I got a true picture of the community. I made a point to affirm people as much as I could. The first year we had twelve funerals, a high number for the size of the parishes. I spent quality time with the bereaved families. This was clearly the heart of the ministry.

My basic sense of the job of a parish Priest is one who celebrates. He celebrates everything with his people, their joyful moments, their sorrowful moments and everything in between. It's a job description well suited to my spirit. In short, I was having a good time and it showed. People appreciated a happy priest.



Still it wasn't long before the folks discovered that Fr. Frank had a different way of looking at the world. I put a lot of time and energy into my weekly homilies, making the connection between the scriptures and justice issues of our day. I wrote a weekly letter in our parish bulletin to keep them informed of my activities. I was always up front, not doing anything they were not informed of before hand. I wanted them to hear from me what I was doing and why I was doing it before they saw me on TV or read about me in the newspaper.

Within a few weeks of my arrival I organized a line crossing at SAC in Omaha for August 6th. At my invitation five people crossed the line with a small pig to make the connection between the Arms Race and the Rural Crisis. The other two priests on the Team were among the line crossers. This set the whole county talking ... something was up with their priest and they had better start listening.

I also spent time getting a handle on the rural crisis. I knew next to nothing about farming and I had to learn a lot quickly. Visiting with farmers and reading farm publications was very helpful to me. I went to conferences and strategy meetings throughout the state, as well as farm rallies and protests. I pushed the idea of civil disobedience as an important tactic to be used in the effort. Most people were not open at first; some began to understand slowly. I started planting white crosses and having a prayer vigil in front of our Court House every time there was a Sheriff's sale.

As I got more involved in the rural struggle, I continued my resistance to the Arms Race and our Government's policies in Central America. In my first two and a half years in Harrison County I received a couple of 'ban and bar' letters from SAC bases in Missouri and in North Dakota, was arrested in the Capitol Building in DC for protesting Contra Aid and helped occupy the Iowa Governor's offices in Des Moines over his sending the Iowa National Guard to Honduras. I was arrested in Nevada at the Nuclear Testing site. I spent a few days in jail, always during my vacation time.

Eventually some people got interested in doing civil disobedience on the rural issue. I was arrested with a man who was being evicted from his farm house in Adams County, Iowa. I organized a protest at a Sheriff's sale in Harlan, Iowa where nineteen people were arrested while two hundred tried to yell down and stop the sale.

Not surprisingly, all my activism caused a great deal of concern within the parishes. Complaints were sent to the Chancery office. People were saying there was too much political rhetoric from the altar. They wanted to know how they were to teach their children to obey the laws when "Father" was breaking them. People started asking how I could be doing my job when I was always off protesting. Their priest was the talk of the wider community and an embarrassment to some. I had lots of one-on-one discussions. There were a couple of Parish community meetings. These were some difficult times for the parishes. My activism got mixed reviews. I had my detractors and supporters. A few left the parish and attended Church elsewhere.

Through it all I kept trying to make the distinction between following my conscience and being their Pastor. I made every effort to be a pastor to all, regardless of their feelings about me. I made it clear that though there were two distinct aspects of who I was, I would continue to struggle with them both.

At first few understood what I was talking about. It took a while to develop a common language. Understanding came slowly as we began to share common experiences. Seeing me interact with them in important pastoral moments did a lot to break down the barriers. As our trust levels grew so did our mutual respect. I had to make some adjustments. Some people had to rethink their positions. Even today I cannot say many of my parishioners agree with the things I have done. Yet, I feel I can safely say most respect me for following my conscience.

One thing I discovered in the past three years in this crazy country of ours is that people of good faith can come to opposite points of view on the most vital social and moral issues of our day. If we can't agree, we can at least learn to respect and appreciate each other's Faith journeys. Because all Faith is a gift, it is never earned. If the faith we have was freely given to us by God, who are we to question the Faith of others. Church communities also need to learn how to fight fairly and to disagree strongly without putting down the people they disagree with. These things were not covered in the Seminary.

It is clear that those who embrace a Faith-based resistance way of life will be a minority within the larger church. They both need each other. The resisters need the Church to give them a solid tradition to follow. The Church needs the resister to enliven the prophetic Spirit of our time. The larger Church needs to find ways to affirm and to support this vital minority, to foster a greater tolerance for conflict within the ranks and to develop the tools to deal with the tensions.

Last December 28th, 1987, on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, I crossed the line at SAC Headquarters, again. I collected my fifty ban and bar letters from the base. There was a good chance I would probably end up going to jail. I spent the next couple of months preparing my parishes for this possibility. I made it clear in my weekly bulletin letters how I was going to deal with the indictment. I gave my reasoning for not seeking leniency before the court and how I fully expected to be sentenced to prison. I let it be known I was willing to talk to people about the matter. I spoke to many individually and held a couple of small group discussions. When the indictments were made, the trial date set and the sentence received, it was no surprise to my parishioners.

The success or failure of the last three years have a lot to do with how the parishes do in my absence. A part of any resistance life is doing jail time. How does one be a Pastor and be in jail at the same time? Coverage for the weekends has been scheduled and a temporary administrator has been assigned. I do the best I can to keep in touch. I call Kathryn Epperson, my main contact and support person in the parishes, twice a week to check in, find out who has

been sick and what has been happening. When people are in the hospital or laid up I write or call. I continue to write my weekly letters for the bulletins. In them I share my experiences here in Prison Camp. I try to relate my message to the Scripture readings for the week. I also write about the events I have missed: Confirmation, First Communion, graduations, and the holidays. The parishioners have been most supportive. I answer over thirty letters a week, most of them from Harrison County. Folks keep me informed about what is happening in their lives and the life of the parishes. I've gotten photographs of the big events I have missed. The children's religion classes have sent me letters and drawings.

There have been two deaths in the parish since I've been gone, one expected and the other not. I've called and talked to the family members. For one, a letter I wrote after her death served as the homily for the funeral mass. These have been the most difficult times of the separation.

Perhaps the most significant way I continue to be pastor is in prayer. I faithfully pray my "Office" plus I have been able to celebrate a private Eucharist daily. People have asked me to offer some of these masses for their loved ones. During my "Office" prayer and the Eucharist I lift up my parishioners in prayer and mention those in particular need by name. Despite my physical absence, there has been a real connection between me and my congregations through prayer. When I am released I will return to Harrison County and resume my duties on the Team.

The dual tension between the pastoral ministry and resistance life has been a part of me from the very beginning of my priestly journey. Sometimes I have felt it pull me apart. It has not been easy to keep in balance. In a very real sense this parish priest - resister I have been writing about is a reflection of myself. A composite of my unique history, background and gifts. Yet not so unique others cannot see parts of themselves in my story.

A couple of years ago Bishop Dingman suffered a serious stroke that left him bedridden. He was forced to resign. It has been a very sad and painful time for him and the Diocese. Our new Bishop, William Bullock, inherited me. He has been fair and

generous, willing to trust the process Bishop Dingman started with me. When I spoke to Bishop Bullock of the tensions I feel with these two pulls in my life, he suggested I visit Bishop Dingman and ask his advice.

I made the pilgrimage to St. Paul, Iowa, where Bishop Dingman lives with his sister who cares for him. The Bishop was in his bed, still paralyzed on the left side and in great pain. He was very tired and I could only visit for a short time. I told Bishop Dingman that Bishop Bullock had asked me to ask him for his advice on this matter.

Bishop Dingman looked up at me and stared. Then he said, "Compromise!" He lowered his eyes. We sat in silence for a minute or two and then he looked up at me again and said, "Do both!"

As I do my time here at Marion Prison Camp I think often of his advice and how I hope to continue following it in the future.

As I stated in the beginning, my time here in Marion Prison Camp has been one of review and renewal. What we have been doing in Harrison County these last three years is developing a model of priestly ministry that incorporates both resistance and pastoral ministry. Until the Church brings to life the concerns of peace and social justice on the Parish level, all the good words our Popes and Bishops write on the subject will come to naught. Justice and peace will continue to look like extraordinary and non-essential matters. A parish priest doing resistance is one way to bridge the gap between parish life and prophetic witness. Not every priest or every parish need embrace this kind of witness but some should and room must be made for their development.

MASS SCHEDULE

Father Frank Cordaro will be celebrating mass at the house on January 6, and will be discussing his prison experiences at the Round-table afterwards. Please join us at Lazarus House (1317 8th St.) at 7:30 PM.

Water fasters during daily vigil on the steps of the Capitol -- Affordable Housing Campaign



From Jan. 13th through Jan. 15th, Bemidji Friends for a Nonviolent World will be holding a retreat to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, followed by a non-violent demonstration and civil disobedience at a Minuteman III Launch Control Center. For more information, contact Barb Katt/John LaForge, P.O. Box 462, Bemidji, MN 56601, or call (218) 751-3419.

Ted Pederson has decided to return to his family's home to help care for his mother, who is seriously ill. We ask your prayers for both of them.

Frank Cordaro is trying to fill out some missing issues in his collection of Via Pacis. If anyone can come up with Vol. 10, No. 4 or any issues from 1984, please let us know at the house and we'll pass them along to Frank.

Many thanks again to Dean, Doug and Marcia and everyone else who helps us get this paper out!

AFFORDABLE HOUSING CAMPAIGN

When the Des Moines group arrived in Washington, DC, the Affordable Housing campaign was drawing to a close. The demonstrations, which began on September 26, drew hundreds of people from across the country, and over 200 people were arrested in the daily demonstrations as well as nearly 400 in the final large demonstration on Nov. 7. Each group designed its own action. Groups disrupted both houses of Congress, occupied Quayle and Bentson's offices, and "evicted" several members of Congress. East Capitol St., in front of the Capitol, was blocked a number of times, and some groups unfurled banners inside the Rotunda. A group from rural North Carolina released chickens into the street with a banner reading, "Congress, your chickens have come home to roost". A group from Pennsylvania managed to build a pre-fabbed house on the Capitol lawn and carry it out into the street. Many of the demonstrations were well covered in the media. On Nov. 7, people marched from the Capitol City Inn, a welfare hotel on the New York model, to the Capitol. Almost 400 people, including many children, participated in the demonstration in the street in front of the Capitol and were arrested.



As the campaign progressed, more attention was focussed on the 10 fasters who were taking only water. Some of the fasters were advocates from various cities; others were homeless people themselves. When we got there, blood tests had just been done showing that two of them were in critical condition due to low potassium levels. During the last week of the campaign the Washington Post covered the story on almost a daily basis, accomplishing the goal of drawing public attention to the seriousness and urgency of the need for affordable housing around the country.

We really want to thank everyone who contributed to the gas fund and made our trip to DC possible -- Alice Brown, Don Carlson, Pam Carmichael, Brian Carter, Cynthia Carver, Fr. Frank Cordaro, Steve Elliott, the Gerstenbergers, Mikel Johnson, Vern Lyons, Don Ogren, St. Ambrose Cathedral, Urban Mission Council, Fr. Bob Schoemann, Jim Pender, Fr. John Zeitler, the Stockberger family, and everyone else whose names we didn't write down. Thanks to all!

INDEPENDENCE FOR THE CAPTIVE STATES, Cont'd

Fyodor Dostoyevski, the Russian novelist, said that the only place one needs to visit in any country to find out all there is to know about it is its prisons. Whether this is true or not, we saw Honduras from a vantage usually denied tourists in our short visit there.

Our group of 13 occupied a cell about 14' x 5 1/2' in the basement of a large jail complex. The front of this cell was iron bars open on a courtyard where the soldiers stationed there as guards drilled and bathed. The back wall had obviously been used for long years as a urinal. The next cell from ours held about 20 young men, all soldiers locked up for breaches of military discipline.

The officers in charge of this place were rude, if not mean and cruel, but we had few dealings with them fortunately.

Our guards were young soldiers, draftees mostly in their mid-teens, too small for the heavy M-16's they almost never put down, prisoners as much or more than we were ourselves. They treated us respectfully, even graciously. They met our needs as best they could, prayed and sang with us, discussed family problems and I think had a real understanding and appreciation for the actions that brought us there.

After a night of hardly sleeping on bare concrete in a space too small for all of us to lay down, the rain and wind of Hurricane Gilbert hit, not strong enough to blow down the prison walls, but enough to give us a good soaking through the bars.

That day was spent partly in quiet, sometimes breaking with spontaneous prayers or songs or jokes or stories from our lives. We were visited and lied to by consular officers of the U.S. Embassy (Our guards always assured us that our fate was in the hands of the U.S. Embassy, as is everything else in their country).

We ate no food until that evening, about 30 hours after our arrest. In Honduras prisoners are not fed by the state. Family can bring food to the jail, or those with money can send guards out to restaurants

and stores for any food and drink they can afford. In a country where so many are destitute and where so many of the prisoners are among the "disappeared", some inmates have to beg from cell mates for any sustenance, some do not eat at all. We had little money with us in U.S. dollars, but with the exchange rate we were rich in Honduran Lempes. We bought supper for ourselves and for the other prisoners in the basement cells. When our beans, tortillas and rice arrived we joyfully dug in. Pat, a Harvard divinity school student, asked if we shouldn't have offered grace before eating. I reminded her of all the times in the past few days we prayed and did not eat and put an end to that.

Another night on concrete and in the morning we were put on a troop truck for another trip through the mountains to Amatillo on the Salvadoran border, where the Honduran army attempted to dump us. A North American needs a new visa for each entry into El Salvador, which none of us had, so we could not walk across the bridge into that country. The hurricane had cut off communication to the capital and our guards did not know what to do with us. As white skinned people under heavy guard we were quite a curiosity in Amatillo. We bought lunch, fed our soldiers, played with a frisbee John brought with the town's children who had never seen one before. The little bit of baggage we still had was discreetly given to a woman there with a large family.

About dark the soldiers, still not knowing what to do with us, locked us into 4 hotel rooms. Two hours later, no longer so friendly, they came back and pounding gun stocks on the doors ordered us up and back into the truck. Not knowing our destination, we drove southward and began to wonder if we were going to be put across the border into Nicaragua.

We didn't go quite that far, though, and in another town near the Pacific coast we were ushered into the plush, flag draped office of a very polite colonel who told us that the attempted deportation into El Salvador was a mistake and that the next morning we would be flown to the United States at Honduran government expense.

He put us into another hotel for another two hours and we were back in the truck for the airport at the capital from which we were deported to Miami via Belize and San Salvador, a tiny reversal of the constant flow of refugees being deported out of the United States.

Only then did we hear of what had happened to our friends, John Schuchardt, Charley Litkey, Dale Asher-Davis, and Sara Story who blockaded at the the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City at the same time as our Honduran demonstrations. They were not arrested or otherwise bothered by the authorities and remained there for seven days fasting on water alone. Each day at noon they welcomed crowds of Guatemalans to a service of prayer and repentance and attracted amazingly sympathetic press coverage throughout their vigil.

Throughout our travels, action, jailing, and deportation we felt confident in God's protection and happy to be together. Our short discomfort was nothing compared to the ongoing trials of the people of Central America who are struggling for freedom and bread. We are conscious, too, that for our families and loved ones, most of this time of not knowing where we were or even if we were alive, this was a more difficult time than it was for us.

I shall always be grateful to my travelling companions, to the people of Central America and to the friends who helped pay for my trip for all I learned and experienced in eight short days. I will do all I can to bring an end to this terrible war, planned and paid for as it is by the government of my own country.

I pray that the people of Central America will be able to grow crops, rebuild cities and raise their children without fear. I pray that someday soon I can return with my own children without fear for them and that they will see a prosperous beautiful country in peace and meet the people there who touched me so deeply.

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Many ask, "How effective are you?" Indeed, it would be good to change the world or even a small part of it but the hope of changing a few individuals - ourselves first - is worth a living risk. Living and speaking the truth is not optional for one who knows it. Gandhi emphasized two principles: that the means contain the end and that we must renounce the fruits of our actions. "Do the right thing and let it go," he said. Who can set limits on the power of spirit which must be greater than any material force?
- Dr. Anne Montgomery