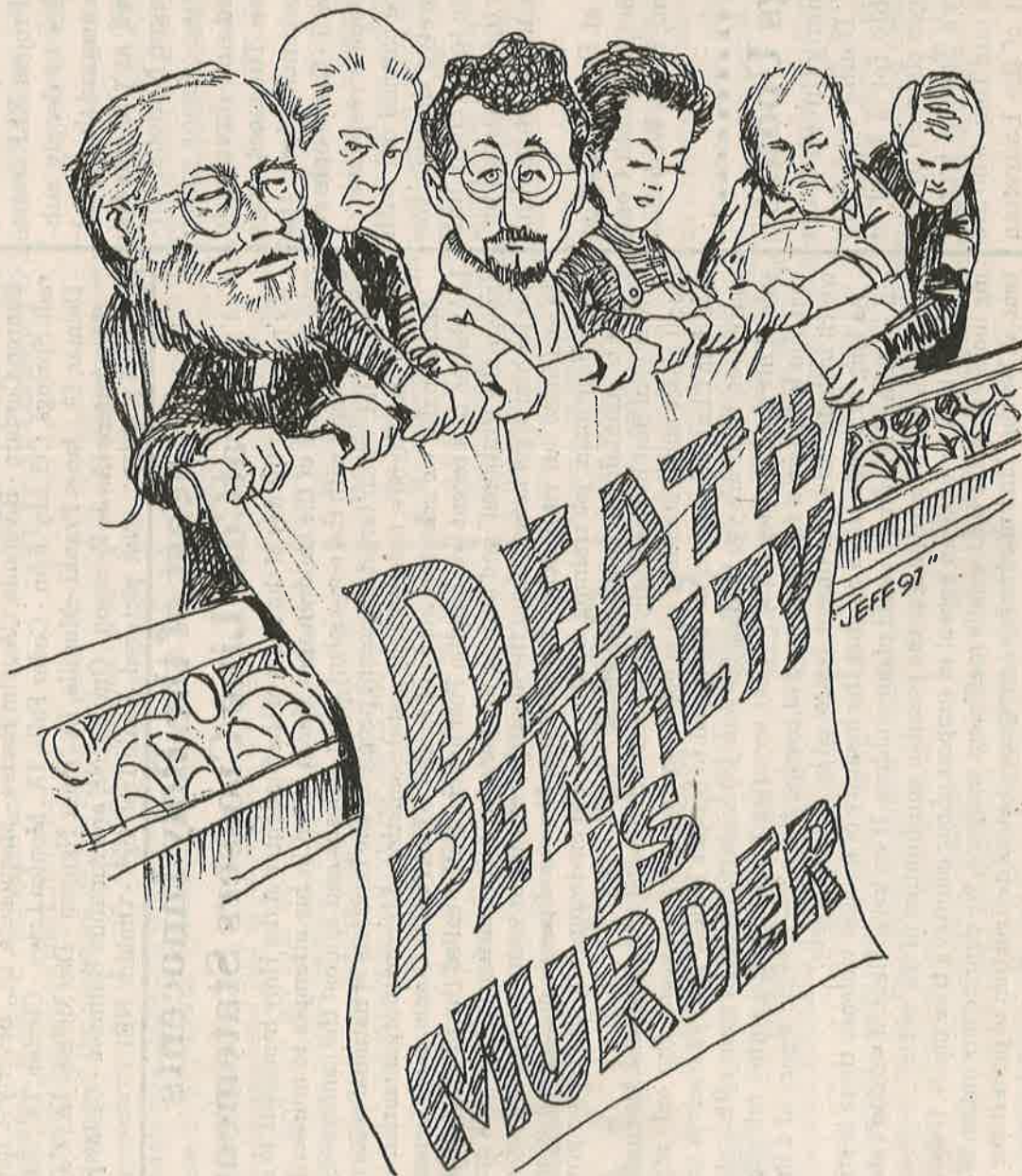


via pacis

Newsletter of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

Volume 21, Number 1

Winter 97



Artist's rendition of Iowa Catholic Workers witnessing against the death penalty during the Governor's Condition of the State Address, January 14, 1997

Living, Learning and Leaving Iowa

by Joanne Kennedy

There is little to be said that hasn't been said by people much greater than I, but the obligation remains to etch out a history of oneself, so I will try, at the behest of my friends.

By the time this reaches your eager hands I will no longer be living in Des Moines. The fact that this makes it to your home is a sign of hope (and Frank's determination and everyone else's hard work.)

I am leaving "the catholic" here in Iowa for the not-so-greener pastures of New York. I will be living at the Catholic Worker there, on the lower east side of Manhattan. I have long had the desire to live in New York City and felt that now was the time to move. It is, naturally, a very exciting and turbulent time for me.

Glancing gently back at the time I have spent in Iowa, I am moved by much. What follows is a hodgepodge of thoughts on what I have learned.

I have been made more aware of our relationship to the land. Here in this luscious country I can see our dominance in the food chain, recognizing all the while that we prostitute our farmers and their fields to the dollar. We expect more for less, paying the ultimate price by destroying family farmers and their sacred ways.

I used to think that "weather" meant rain, which meant worse traffic on the freeways and some snow in the mountains, which was good for skiers. Now I see that weather is not an inconvenience, it is a force to be reckoned with. In fact, it is a force we are not meant to overcome. The awesomeness of the seasons has given me a more proper perspective. I am not the master of my environment.

Still, there are few things more hope filled in this world than the first warm day of spring. I have learned much about living and dying by

I'M HOME!



Artist's rendition of Joanne coming home to the Des Moines Catholic Worker after a visit to California

watching the landscape in her cycle of greens, yellows, browns and quiet white.

Speaking of white, I learned that "minus" was not just a word used in math class, but can also be used to refer to temperature, and its not as infrequent as one might think. Then there is this myth of "wind chill" that I have had to wrassle with. Either it feels like seventy below when I go outside, or it doesn't, whatever it feels like ought to be the tem-

perature. Is that so unreasonable?

Perhaps no one would have characterized me as a ignorant or racist before I came to Des Moines, yet I find that I have learned volumes about the inherent assumptions one makes as regards color and class. I am better for having learned much. Who would believe that I came to Iowa to learn such things?

Sometimes I have been known to ridicule the "smallness" of this town, but

in all honesty, I have enjoyed this venue. Where else could I see someone I know personally in the newspaper at least once a week, or just decide to go to the Governor's address, get a great seat for our purposes and see familiar and friendly faces, even on the chamber floor among the legislators.

Here in Des Moines I have come to understand family in the nuclear-free sense of the word. All these children of God, with whom I share this earthly home, truly are my family and I care for them as such, be they young or old. And they have cared for me, by this I am deeply touched. So many kind people have embraced me as their own. This is the most precious gift.

Living near and with the mentally ill and the chronically addicted I can better appreciate the real work of living. For some, to rise up every morning and face the demons in their lives is a harder day's work than I will ever know and the pedestal of judgment is delicately encased in very thin glass.

I am especially grateful because I have had the luxury of realizing that when you believe in your work, it is a joy to struggle through the days, even the ugly ones, because you know, at the end of those days, that you have done what you believe is good, if flawed. I only wish that every person had the chance to know this.

I sense that when I came to Des Moines my wings were already spread, but here I have found the wind to lift me higher than I thought possible. This gracious strength carries me on to what lies ahead.

While I will always be "from LA", I will smile, knowingly, at those who will mistakenly assume that I was born and raised in the Midwest. They may go uncorrected, as I know that a part of me that is good was raised up here. Send your complaints to me at: Joanne Kennedy c/o New York Catholic Worker 36 East First Street New York, NY 10003

**The Second Annual
BISHOP MAURICE J.
DINGMAN
PEACE AWARD DINNER**

**February 21, 1997
Dowling High School
1400 Buffalo Road
West Des Moines, Iowa**

Peace Award Recipient: Gwen Hennessey, OSF
Peace Award Presenter: Mary Dingman SSSF
Featured Speaker: Senator Tom Harkin

**Social Hour at 6:00 pm
Dinner at 7:00 pm
Ticket Donation: \$25.00**

Sponsored by
Catholic Peace Ministry
4211 Grand Avenue,
Des Moines, Iowa 50312

This is a nonpartisan event everyone is welcome!

For more information
contact
Catholic Peace Ministry
(515) -255-8114

**Mark your
calendars now!
Special Dates for 1997**

September 19-21, 1997

Sugar Creek, IA
Annual Midwest Catholic Worker Gathering

October 9-12, 1997

Marquette Univeristy, Milwaukee, WI
"Dorothy Day & The Catholic Worker:
A Conference To Honor The Centenary Of
Dorothy Day's Birth"
Contact: Phil Runkle, Marquette University Archives, PO Box 3141, Milwaukee, WI 53201-3141

November 7-9, 1997

Las Vegas and the Nuclear Test Site, NV
West Coast Gathering to Celebrate Dorothy
Day's 100th Birthday,
Contact: Las Vegas Catholic Worker (702) 647-0728
and/or Nevada Desert Experience(702)646-4814

via pacis

Newsletter of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

Bishop Dingman House
1310 - 7th St. (515) 243-0765

Msgr. Ligutti House
1301 - 8th St. (515) 246-9887

Lazarus House
1317 - 8th St. (515) 246-1499

Newsletter

Editor - Joanne Kennedy
Associate Editor/Circulation - Frank Cordaro
With lots of help and support from everybody else.

**Gwen Hennessey To Be
Honored Dingman Peace Award**

by Bob Brammer

Gwen Hennessey, OSF the first Director of Catholic Peace Ministry will be honored on February 21, 1997 as the recipient of the Bishop Maurice J. Dingman Peace Award. The award will be given during a celebration that evening at Dowling High School in Des Moines. The presentation of the award will be done by Mary Dingman, SCFF, Bishop Dingman's sister, and comments from Senator Tom Harkin will follow.

When Gwen first came to Des Moines to discuss the position as director of Catholic Peace Ministry she met with her friends at the Catholic Worker, emblematic of her long ties to the Catholic Worker and her commitment to the poor.

Gwen, a native of Ryan, IA and a member of the community at Mount St. Francis in Dubuque, has often said that one of the influences that drew her to Des Moines was Bishop Dingman. She well knew of his complete commitment to peace and justice, more specifically, to working for peace and justice.

It was a match made in heaven. People fondly remember Bishop Dingman's directive to his flock to enable his service to the cause of justice: "Use me," he would say, and Gwen did just that.



photo credit unknown
Gwen Hennessey at Offut AirForce Base, August 9, 1992

Gwen Hennessey helped Bishop Dingman answer Christ's call to be an instrument of His peace, and in doing so, she helped many more of us to heed the call as well.

Gwen organized ways for the Bishop to raise his voice for justice, ranging from public gatherings to private appeals to Iowa's legislators. She helped him work with his colleague "judicators," the interfaith denominational leaders of Iowa who spoke out so eloquently to end the arms race and move from "swords to plowshares." She helped him form his views and communicate them to his flock here in the Diocese, all over Iowa, through the media and across the nation.

So, Gwen's close work with Bishop Dingman is one reason to honor her with the Peace Award named in his honor. Another reason is that Gwen shared Bishop Dingman's

style of doing her work and living her life in full compassion with the poor, with complete dedication and utter humility. Gwen has always demonstrated these traits, before and after her time as director of Catholic Peace Ministry during the 1980's. She has worked with Cesar Chavez in California, organizing migrant workers. She has worked with the poor in New York City and served the poor in Appalachia. She is now in the Diocese of Richmond, VA working the poor southwest corner of the state.

Gwen heeds the maxim "if you want peace, work for justice." She has been a blessing to Catholic Peace Ministry and so many of us, even to Bishop Dingman. We celebrate Gwen, we welcome her back home among us and we give her our love and best wishes.

Please join us for
Friday Evening Liturgy
7:30 p.m.
Dingman House at 1310 - 7th Street



Come celebrate the Eucharist and spend time with friends.
Everyone is welcome!

Community News

by Carla Dawson

I hope this article finds people in joyous spirits. We, at the Des Moines Catholic Worker are in happy and sad spirits because our sister Joanne is moving on to the New York Catholic Worker. Sad because she won't be here on a day to day basis with all her expertise and splendid personality. Happy because she is fulfilling a dream to live in New York. It is a very weird situation we are in because we will miss her, yet on the other hand, we are excited for all she will gain by moving on. So, remember to keep her in your prayers. She has been a God send to us and our two and a half years would not have been possible without her. God's blessing to you in the future Joe.

On to less difficult subjects. Tony Pohlen a summer intern here from Notre Dame came to visit over his Christmas break. It didn't seem that Tony had been gone four months. He came ready to jump right into what we were doing. It was great to see him and to know he is doing great stuff at

Notre Dame. Come visit again Tiger!

Eddie went home to Louisville, KY during the holidays. Joanne made a death defying drive to Louisville and back to Des Moines in less than thirty-two hours, that's 1200 miles! Eddie got a call that his friend was very ill with cancer so he went straight down there. She is feeling better, but is far from being well. He also visited with his mother and sister while he was home. He was down there for three weeks and we sure did miss him. We are very glad he made it back safely. Eddie still works for the Home Recycling Exchange with Lyle Ball two days a week, it's a great barter arrangement for us!

Kelvin Howell, who had been living with us for a while has moved on. Last we heard he was working construction. We wish him well and hope that he learned as much from us as we learned from him.

Michael Burrell, whom some of you may have met, has been living with us for nearly eight months. He has been doing so much better since he has been living with

us. He has a part-time job working dietary in a nearby rehabilitation hospital. He gets to visit with Bertie a lot, and we are glad for that. He has been a great help in the community and even though we are constantly on his case, he is doing well. We hope and pray that he stays in a good space.

Jerry McDermott, whom you may know as "old man Jerry" and has lived with us for many, many years, fell and broke his arm very badly at Thanksgiving time. The recovery will be slow and arduous, remember him in your prayers. He has not had a beer or a cigarette in over a year. Who says you can't learn new habits at 60 years old!

Because of all the changes in our community, we have decided to rework our schedule. As of January 12th our new hours are: 12 noon - 7pm. We are closed completely on Mondays and Wednesdays. There is usually someone around the house most of the time to answer the door or the phone, but there is not free access to the house like

there is when we are "open". We have done this to preserve our energy as best we can. If you have questions or concerns feel free to write or call. Please pray for us during this transition. These changes are sometimes difficult and we need all the help we can get!

My boys are doing very well. Julius is busy playing lots and lots of basketball. He got done with his school team just in time to play club games. He is in two different leagues. His grades are still looking good, as well.

Joshua was one of two students selected from his whole elementary school to receive an art award. His drawing of a person holding a baby will be on display at the Art Center here in Des Moines later this year. We are awfully proud.

Jordan is still making short work of kindergarten. He is in a multi-age classroom, which is great, so he can work at first grade level, which suits him well. He has become quite an expert on the Star Wars trilogy, he can give anyone a run for their money in a discussion on that.

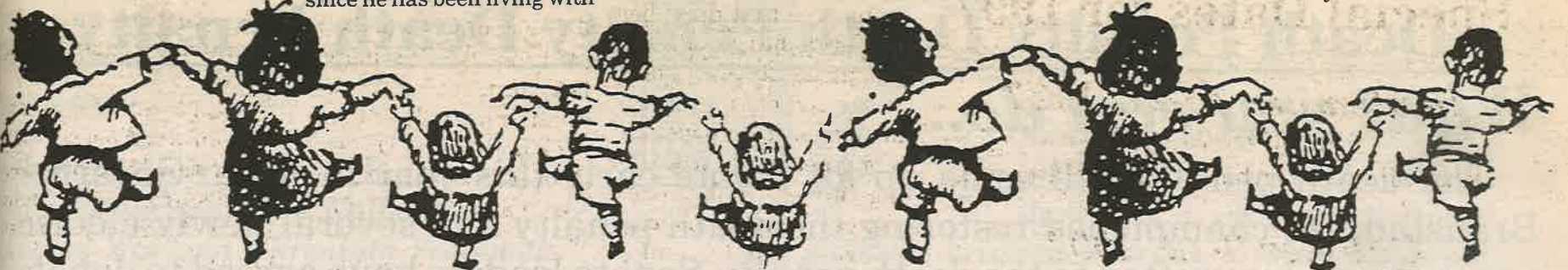
Richard continues to work as a nurse's aide at several area nursing homes. His schedule is not as hectic as

it was, but he is still very busy. He hopes to be back in school soon.

I am doing well. Recently, a highlight for me was receiving a letter from Richard's family in Cameroon. They are kind and generous people. It is nice to feel loved from so far away. I hope we can visit them someday. I am still working at Moulton Elementary School as the family advocate for Head Start. It is great to work at the boys' school right here in the neighborhood.

We had a party for Joanne's departure which was attended by lots of wonderful people, including Beth Preheim and Michael Sprong, Steve and Lana Jacobs, their daughter Heather and her very talented canine companion. People from all walks of life in Des Moines were there to share liturgy and celebrate Joanne's new endeavor. It was really a beautiful evening and a good time was had by all.

As always, we send heart felt thanks to everyone who supports us, from near and far. It is important for us to know that you are out there helping and it's important for you to know how much we appreciate what you do. You know who you are! Thank you and God Bless.



Norman's Whereabouts

by Norman Searah

Hello! I'm sitting here looking at the life sized statue of Mary holding baby Jesus in the front room of Ligutti House and thinking about how many changes I've seen in this house. I can't help but remember when there was the Ligutti House Peace and Justice Library in this room. There were lots of books and bookshelves in this room with posters of all kinds on the walls. Sometimes the Peace and Justice Library was used to have different meetings. Sometimes we had Press Conference there too.

I remember one Press Conference many years ago when Kalonji Saadig announced he was running for Mayor. Kalonji use to be a Black Panther. He was a neighborhood activist who always went to bat for anyone who was being mistreated by the system. I'm

remembering Kalonji and this event because Kalonji died a few weeks ago. I liked him and so did the people he tried to help. He will be missed.

I just moved out of Franks old room on the second floor of Ligutti House and into the small bedroom on the first floor. I'm making room for Rusty Martin who is returning to Des Moines and the Catholic Worker for three months. Rusty used to be a Des Moines Catholic Worker in 1980. He is coming back to Des Moines to do his student teaching. He wants to be an elementary teacher. It will be good to have him back in the house again.

I rang the bells for the Salvation Army again this December. I really like this job because I get to make a lot of new friends each year and reconnect with a lot of old friends too. You'd be surprised how many people you know pass by when you're ringing bells.

One of my long time bell

ringing friends was Dolores Wellons. Unfortunately, Dee died this year. She had a stroke while she was ringing the bells in her favorite place and had to be taken to the hospital. She liked that bell ringing spot because the people were always friendly to her and she use to sing when they walked by. She rang the bells for the Salvation Army for over twenty years and had come to know many folks at that spot. I got to meet a lot of Dee's friends because I got to ring the bells in her old spot. Many people came up to me and said they missed her. I miss her, too.

I'm never sure from one year to the next if I will be ringing bells again. If I don't ring them next year, I'm sure I will miss a lot of the people I've come to know as my special Thanksgiving to Christmas family.

Getting back into good health is still one of my goals. I'm now wearing reading glasses and I'm starting

to get some gray hair. The doctors have told me that I am a borderline diabetic. At forty six, I'm having to learn a lot about human biology the hard way, because I'm the subject! My big goal is to try to lose some weight.

I'm still doing woodcarving these days. I'm working on couple of carvings for gifts I've promised to people.

Look on page four and five for the story about the Governor's State of the State address. I was Frank's support person, which was a little hectic, but we survived.

As you can see from the story on page seven, I crossed the line again. This

time I'm sure I broke my last 'ban and bar' letter and I'm waiting to hear from the Federal Court in Omaha. There is no way to tell, for sure, if I will have to go to court or not. If I am charged, there is a good chance that I will end up in jail this time. If I do get charged, it will be my third time before a judge. So, by the time you get your next issue of the via pacis, I might be in jail. If that happens, I'll be writing Norman's Whereabouts from behind bars. Before that happens, I'm hoping to get some traveling done. Take care and keep me in your prayers!



Death Penalty Death Penalty Death Penalty

Witness at the Condition of the State Address

Catholic Workers from Iowa draped a banner which read "Death Penalty Is Murder" over the spectator's balcony at the State Capitol Building during Governor Terry Branstad's State of the State Address on Tuesday January 14, 1997. When Governor Brandstad mentioned his intentions to reinstate the death penalty Frank Cordaro, Brian Terrell, Joanne Kennedy and Ed Bloomer silently stood up and unfurled the banner over the balcony railing. The banner was exposed for the assembly to see for but a few seconds before two state troopers apprehended it.

One state trooper warned, "Let go of the banner or you'll be arrested." They continued to hold the banner and reassured the officer that they intended no harm or injury to him. Then, a second state trooper waded through the crowded seats and snatched the banner by grabbing the bottom half of the hand painted sheet.

At that point, Frank Cordaro liberated a handful of leaflets over the balcony railing. The leaflets fluttered down to the main floor of the chamber gently delivering their message onto the heads of press representatives and legislators. He was quickly escorted out of the assembly and taken to Polk County Jail. He was booked on a misdemeanor charge of "Willful Disturbance" and bail was set at \$650 dollars. Norman Searah took out his Salvation Army Christmas bell ringing earnings to cover the bulk of the bail amount as Frank had only anticipated a \$150 bail. Thank God for good friends.

The test of the offending leaflet is as follows:

The Death Penalty Is Murder

"We are here today to protest Governor Branstad's intention to reestablish the Death Penalty in Iowa. We believe it is never right to take a human life. To this there are no exceptions. We urge our Catholic Governor to truly be consistent in his defense of life.

Governor Branstad stop using the death penalty as part of a political strategy designed for winning votes. Truly be the Pro Life Governor you proclaim to be. The death penalty is murder."

- compiled by Frank Cordaro and Joanne Kennedy

Death Penalty Death Penalty Death Penalty

What you can do...

The death penalty will come up for a vote early this year in Iowa. Governor Branstad has championed restoring the death penalty and several newly elected senators are committed to the death penalty. Senate leaders have agreed to debate the matter again. The Senate defeated the death penalty 39-11 in 1995, but it could go either way this year. There will be efforts to introduce a "limited" death penalty to lobby more votes.

Strong and swift action by citizens all over Iowa is needed, at once, to block restoration of the death penalty. We can stop it!

Citizens need to do two things:

- #1 - Urge lawmakers to oppose restoration!**
- #2 - Be an opinion leader in your community!**

We have the ability to organize people in our churches, social concern committees, neighborhoods, organizations and work places. But we must act swiftly!

If you do nothing else, send a short letter to both your state senator and representative immediately. A direct, personal statement of your views is most important. Ask your lawmakers what their views are and how they plan to vote. Your letter will make a difference. Send them a reply once they respond and include any articles that you find persuasive.

For more information or ideas contact:

Iowans Against the Death Penalty, P.O. Box 27120, West Des Moines, IA 50265

Catholics Against the Death Penalty (515) 274-3473 or (515) 262-6409

Catholic Peace Ministry, 4211 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50312 (515) 255-8114

- gratefully adapted from a Catholic Peace Ministry mailer

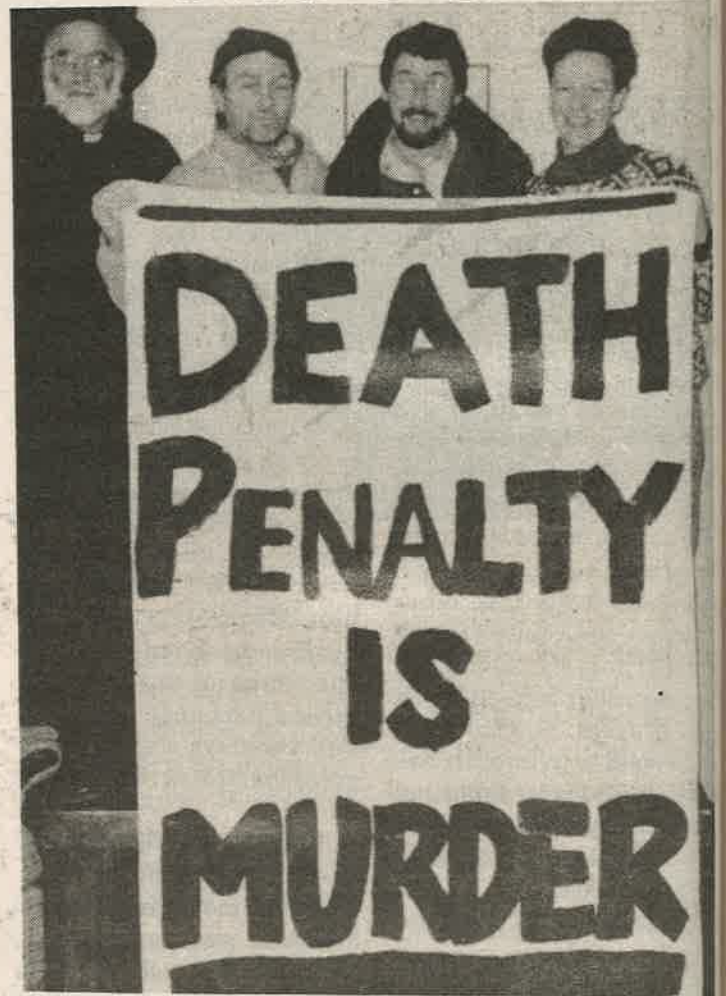


photo by Norman Searah
Catholic Workers from Des Moines and Maloy pictured here holding their banner before the Condition of the State Address. From Left: Frank Cordaro, Ed Bloomer, Brian Terrell and Joanne Kennedy

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by **Richard McSorely** . . .

My main objection to the death penalty is not its failure to deter. I insist my main objection is that by taking a life you usurp the authority of God. God alone gives life and He alone has the authority to take life. He does not delegate that authority to the state... If you believe in what Jesus said, that we should love one another and our enemies, you have evidence stronger than common sense to abolish the death penalty. You rarely do not argue we are showing love to the man or woman we are killing at the moment we are killing them. Neither is it true that you are protecting society by increasing general disrespect for life. By leading society away from the Gospel of love, you are not protecting it. And even if you were protecting society by killing some of its members, you would be doing it for immoral reasons. Evil means for a good purpose do not make a good moral act.

Excerpts from *It's a Sin to Build a Nuclear Weapon: The Collected Works on War and Christian Peacemaking of Richard McSorely, SJ* page 47. This book is available from Fortkamp Publishing, 1-800-443-PEACE, mention via pacis for 10% off the price.



by **Robert Ludlow** . . .

In this matter of the Rosenbergs and this more general matter of capital punishment it is well that we take stock of ourselves. It is unfortunate that we apparently give little thought to this until some "famous" case comes up. Plenty of others are every day going to their death by capital punishment. Most of them are mentally ill

and need psychiatric care, not punishment. But we are not civilized enough to see this. We are still . . . barbarians in this respect. Capital punishment closes the door to rehabilitation, to reform. And when punishment is divorced from these it becomes vindictive and injures both those who receive and those who administer it.

Since then, entirely aside from ethical considerations, capital punishment serves no useful purpose, since it is but a relic of darkness, a withdrawal from

the problems involved in crime, a social laziness, we do well to advocate its abolition and even the statistics are on our side in proving that such abolition will not increase crime. For the roots of crime go deeper than that; they go so deep that not even the fear of death will deter them.

- Robert Ludlow

respectfully reprinted from *The Catholic Worker* Volume XIX Number 8, 1953

Death Penalty Death Penalty Death Penalty

The Iowa Catholic Bishops 1995 statement

We speak in opposition to the death penalty and its possible reinstatement in Iowa. We realize that not all Christians may come to these conclusions when they apply general principles and Gospel values to the concrete situation. However, we challenge the people of Iowa, especially our own Catholic faithful, to examine the issue of capital punishment in the light of basic moral and religious values. After further review and in the light of current discussions and initiatives, we are reissuing our public position statement. We dare to take this position and we raise this challenge because of our commitment to a consistent ethic of life by which we wish to give unambiguous witness to the sacredness of every human life from conception through natural death. We proclaim the good news that no person is beyond the redemptive mercy of God...

Call to Action National and Regional Activities

Over five thousand people attended the national Call To Action conference in Detroit, November 15-17, 1996. There were four Bishops in attendance. Nine percent of the people attending were priests, over twenty five percent were nuns and more than one third are employed by the Church. There were fifty five Iowans in attendance.

Speakers at the conference included Hans Kung, a world famous Catholic theologian from Germany who lost his Catholic teaching job because of his writings. He spoke about the need for a new world ethic upon which all the major religions of the world will agree. Also speaking at the conference was Bishop Jacques Gaillot, the French Bishop whom Pope John Paul II removed from his diocese for speaking out publicly for Church reform. He spoke of his experiences living in solidarity with the poor in France. It was a very moving and inspiring testimony. Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, the auxiliary bishop of Detroit and leading advocate for church reform among U.S. Catholic bishops, shared his memories of the original Call To Action gathering in Detroit in 1976. He assessed the current reform movement and hinted at his hopes for the future.

One high point of the conference was the introduction of John and Jean Krejci to the whole assembly on Friday evening. John and Jean are from Lincoln, NE, and were excommunicated, along with others, by the Bishop of that Diocese for their participation in Call To Action. John and Jean are refusing to let the Bishop's excommunication stand. When asked about getting excommunicated, Jean said, "It's a lot like an unexpected pregnancy, you just deal with it."

One Iowa attendee, Sister Maggie O'Toole reported the following:

"The truth shall set you free!" This is how I felt when I attended the national gathering in Detroit.

I felt I was among people who really wanted to live by the truth. The spirit of the whole conference was one of excitement and enthusiasm. Throughout the whole weekend there were opportunities for further education, a variety of ways to explore one's inner life through liturgy and prayer experiences. There were all kinds of people there, young and old, people of color and people from other countries. There were people with all kinds of gifts and ministries, a lot of them working in the Church. It was a real experience of the universal (Catholic) nature of the Church....

The climax of the weekend for me was the great liturgy we celebrated at the end. The whole assembly was consciously participating in the service; 5,000 strong! There were no passive bystanders at this Mass. The music was the best.

I left the weekend full of hope and enthusiasm! It was the medicine my soul needed. As I return to the realities of my parish ministry in West Des Moines I'm looking forward to seeking out the small groups of other individuals who might be waiting for me to share with them some of the spirit I experienced in Detroit. I'll begin by telling them that the truth can really set you free, if you give it a chance.

-compiled by Frank Cordaro and Joanne Kennedy

IA Call To Action



Christine Schenk
Iowa Speaking Tour
February 9-12!



Sr. Christine Schenk is a member of the Congregation of St. Joseph (CSJ) of Cleveland, OH. She has Masters' degrees in both Midwifery and Theology as well as an extensive background in community organizing. She is executive director of FutureChurch and serves as project coordinator for the Call for National Dialogue.

Her visit to Iowa is being sponsored by Iowa Call To Action to help promote both "A Call for National Dialogue on the Future of Priestly Ministry" and "We Are Church: A Catholic Referendum".

Contact: Helen Oster (515) 223-5031 or
Fr. Frank Cordaro (515) 534-4691



photo by David Peterson of the Des Moines Register
Pictured above from left, Helen Tichy, Helen Oster, Frank Cordaro, Rita Hohenshell and Barry Malloy at the Iowa Call to Action Meeting on November 31, 1996

On November 31, 1996, Iowa Call to Action held a prayer service and prayer conference to kick off their effort to get signatures for We Are The Church: A Catholic Referendum. After a wonderful prayer service, led by Maggie Rawland, all who wished to publicly support the referendum stood together as a group and faced the news media. The group included Sisters Elaine and Jean Hagedorn, Cathy Cody, Barry Malloy, Sr., Susan Widdle, Sr., Maggie O'Toole, Helen Tichy, David Polich, Fr. Frank Cordaro, Kathleen Ryan, Helen Oster, Mary Jane Spitzer, Rita Hohenshell, Yvonne Farley, Kathy Shurman, Pam Wadle, Maggie Rawland and Joe & Jeanette Bauer. Rev. Bob Notman-Cook and Bill and Jean Basinger, Methodist and Presbyterian friends, were also on hand to show support.

The Diocese of Des Moines maintains the policy that Iowa Call to Action, and other reform groups are not permitted to conduct their meetings on Diocesan property. In this situation the reform group prevailed upon the historically generous sanctuary of the Quakers. The event was held at the Des Moines Valley Friends Meeting House.

The conference received a lot of press attention, as the story was carried on three local television stations (One of the cameramen, a former student of Elaine Hagedorn, signed the referendum!) A story with a photo appeared in the Sunday Des Moines Register and it was also broadcast on some area radio stations and appeared in other regional news papers. For more information about Iowa Call To Action and the Referendum contact Helen Oster, 101 Village Dr., West Des Moines IA 50265 (515) 223-5031 or Fr. Frank Cordaro, PO Box 145, Lacona, IA 50134 (515) 534-4691

- compiled by Joanne Kennedy and Frank Cordaro

WE ARE CHURCH: A CATHOLIC REFERENDUM

The movement for renewal of the Catholic Church is spreading like the fire of Pentecost. More than 2.3 million Austrian and German Catholics have signed referenda calling for widespread reforms, as have Catholics in Western Europe, Latin America, Canada and Australia. U.S. Catholics urge support from all sectors of our church for long overdue reforms.

1. We believe in a loving church where the equality of all the faithful is respected, the gulf between clergy and laity is bridged and the People of God participate in the process of selecting their bishops and pastors.
2. We believe in a church with equal rights for women, where women are full participants in all official decision making and are welcomed in all ministries, including the diaconate and the ministerial priesthood.
3. We believe in a church where priests may choose either a celibate or non-celibate way of life, where the right of a congregation to the Eucharist and pastoral care is more important than a rule of canon law.
4. We believe in a church which affirms:
 - the goodness of sexuality
 - the primacy of conscience in deciding issues of sexual morality (ie: birth control)
 - the human rights of all persons regardless of sexual orientation and
 - the importance and urgency of issues other than sexual morality (ie: peace, non-violence, social justice, preservation of the environment).
5. We believe in a church which:
 - affirms people rather than condemns them
 - respects primacy of conscience in all moral decision-making
 - embraces and welcomes those who are divorced and remarried, married priests, theologians and others who exercise freedom of speech.

If you support this referendum sign below:

Signature _____ Printed name _____ Address _____

Send to Iowa Call to Action, 101 Village Drive, West Des Moines, IA 50265

resistance notes

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Commemoration of the 17th Anniversary of the Martyrdom of Archbishop Oscar Romero



Sunday March 23rd 7:00 p.m. Visitation Church

1271 E. 9th St., Des Moines A Catholic Peace Ministry event Call CPM Office (515) 255-8114

Lakes & Prairies Life Community Meeting

April 11-13 Omaha, NE

Call Jo Peterson (402) 556-9057 or Fr. Frank Cordaro (515) 534-4691

The Annual Memorial Day StratCom Witness and Line Crossing Monday, May 26th

Call Jo Peterson (402) 556-9057 or Fr. Frank Cordaro (515) 534-4691

Project ELF Resistance Continues

Twelve nuclear weapons opponents were arrested for trespass during a symbolic "boarding up" of the Wisconsin ELF transmitter on Sunday January 19. The twelve face a fine of \$264.50 or, upon failure to pay, the nationwide suspension of their driving privileges for up to five years. The action was the culmination of weekend activities focused on Project ELF and the Nuclear Navy. It was the sixth annual Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday peace action sponsored by Nukewatch and Stop Project ELF. Project ELF transmitters send crude, one-way orders to deeply submerged nuclear armed submarines around the world. About sixty-five people gathered at the remote, wooded ELF site in the Chequamegon National Forest and conducted a mock sentencing during which the transmitter was ordered closed and directed to pay \$2 billion in fines and restitution. The mock judge reiterated ELF's crimes, heard testimony from the parties and repeatedly asked "How do the people respond?" "Shut it down!" was the people's response.

The "judge" ordered the sentence carried out with haste and she led the group of twelve through the facility's outer gate and up the drive to the chain link fence that surrounds the site. They then "boarded up" the gate by tying a dozen boards to the chain-link fence.

Join the next civil intervention at Project ELF on Mother's Day, May 11, 1997. Contact Anathoth Community Farm, 740 Round Lake Road, Luck, WI 54853 (715) 472-8721

Howard - Hastings Update

On January 27, 1997 Ashland County Circuit Court Judge Robert Eaton found that Donna and Tom Howard-Hastings are each liable for a total of \$7,497.03 in restitution for damages claimed by the civilian operators of the US Navy's Trident trigger system, "Project ELF." Both Donna and Tom, who are currently incarcerated as a result of the Laurentian Shield Plowshares disarmament action, informed the court that they would never pay "a nickel" to the Navy for its nuclear weapons program.

Submitted by John LaForge (respectfully edited for space)

Feast of The Holy Innocents Retreat, Witness and Line Crossing

This year's Feast of the Holy Innocents Retreat and Line Crossing at Offutt Air Force Base in Bellevue, Nebraska was a big success. More than sixty people participated in the retreat at some point during the weekend. Fourteen people crossed the line, receiving 'ban and bar' letters from the base.

The big difference between this year's witness and those in past years, was the number of young people who participated. We had several college students from Loras College in Dubuque and the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls. Eight of the fourteen line crossers were under twenty-three years old!

The youngest line crosser was Cassy Moore, a seventeen year old high school student from Mondamin, IA. Cassy is the daughter of Bill and Mary Moore. The Moore family has participated in the annual witness and line crossing in previous years. Mary and Cassy crossed the line together in 1992, when Cassy was 13 years old. This year Cassy came on her own to cross line, a right of passage for this young women.

The students from Loras and UNI were encouraged to attend the event by Frank Cordaro when he visited their campuses this past Fall. He extended the invitation to participate in this unique Christmas break experience. Hopefully, this support from colleges and universities will grow and students from other institutions will participate in the future.

Among the line crossers was Norman Searah, from the Des Moines Catholic Worker. He was the only person with an active 'ban and bar' letter who crossed the line. This means that Norman could be charged with violating his previous 'ban and bar' letter and, if found guilty, be sent to jail for up to six months. It usually takes the base authorities ninety days to decide whether or not they are going to prosecute the line crossers. At this point there has been no communication from the base on this matter.



photo by Frank Cordaro

Pictured from left, Norman Searah - Des Moines, IA., Jim Durdin - Clarinda, IA., Sharon Cordaro - Riverside, CA., Jim Earles - Maquoketa, IA., Beverly A Jahn - Colorado Springs, CO, Aby John - Cedar Falls, IA., Monica Lowy - Clinton, IA., John Farrell - Delmar, IA., Janet Frankl - Manilla, IA., Peter Nguyen - Des Moines, IA., Cassy Moore - Mondamin, IA., Jo Peterson - Omaha, NE and Amanda Bahnson - Cedar Falls, IA (Not pictured, Jamie Trobough - Omaha, NE)

Feast of the Holy Innocents StratCom Line Crossers Statement

We're here on the day of the Feast of the Slaughter of the Holy Innocents to commemorate the deaths of the children that Herod killed in his attempts to murder the Christ child. We stand with the non-violent spirit of Jesus and against the continued mission of STRATCOM, which targets innocent people in the interests of national security. Today's military, like Herod's, is essentially a state-sanctioned terrorist organization.

Additionally, we echo the words of former STRATCOM Commander General George Lee Butler. In a recent Washington Post article, Butler called the US nuclear policy "fundamentally irrational" and nuclear weapons "morally indefensible." It took an entire career for him to get honest about the absurdity of nuclear weapons. These weapons destroy life and bleed our vital social programs dry. Masses of people are homeless and hungry. Our college loans, job training, health care, and environmental protection programs are all cut to maintain our military empire.

We're glad that Butler finally got honest with himself and the public. He came out of the moral closet and is standing up in opposition to nuclear weapons. Our only regret is that this didn't happen sooner. We invite you to become honest with yourselves as well. Ask yourselves, what are you trading for your job security? Wouldn't you rather stand on the side of life than on the side of nuclear terrorism? Wouldn't you rather tell your children that you left them a future instead of leaving them the horrific legacy of a nuclear age, which includes an environment destroyed by nuclear waste?

As long as people stand against the insanity of nuclear violence there is still hope for our world and the future world of our children. If we keep silent, if we don't stand for our moral beliefs, we contribute to the possible annihilation of the world.

We are here to make an appeal in support of our country's true needs. If we keep wasting money on what Butler calls inefficient weapons, we deprive our nation of its full potential. We shouldn't need to have weapons of mass destruction to protect our way of life. People should not have to compromise their values or beliefs to get job training, obtain a college education, or make a living. In addition, we're here to encourage you to examine your own faith and conscience. Our actions reflect our faith. We can't love our enemies and kill them at the same time.

This whole page was respectfully compiled by Joanne Kennedy & Frank Cordaro

This is our conspicuous begging section.

Are you a roofer? Do you know a roofer? Do you enjoy the satisfaction of being part of a successful roofing project? Do you enjoy financing successful roofing projects? Are you an electrician? Do you know an electrician? . . . You can see where we're going here. Please help us in any way you see fit!

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