

via paciis

—The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

October, 2009

www.desmoinescatholicworker.org

Volume 33, No. 3

Finding warmth from the cold



Scott Lamar's Annual Hog Roast Bazaar. Volunteer Scott Lamar carves with former Des Moines Catholic Worker Chuck Kirkpatrick in August.



by Tracy
Robson

It is an unusually cold late September evening as I sit at my ancient desktop computer and listen to Ani DiFranco. It was a stressful day doing hospitality at the good ol' Dingman House tonight. Why, you ask?

Winter has come.

This means that—as Eddie Bloomer is known to state—it'll be "butts to nuts" very soon. The house will be packed, snow will be tracked in, amazingly, from the back door all the way to the front door, and we'll run out of blankets as soon as we get them donated.

Up to today, September 29, the weather has been pretty nice. All of the sudden, however, fall overtook us with a fury, and we found ourselves wearing fluffy

socks and coats indoors. This change, however, is even rougher on our guests; especially those who sleep outside all winter. We try to keep blankets and candles in stock for those people in particular, but it's hard to deny someone a blanket, so we rarely have any in the storeroom. If you ask for it, and we have it, we'll give it to you. It's the Catholic Worker way.

Along with the cold weather, today was also the end of the month. Most people get their disability or SSI checks at the beginning of the month. Hence, by September 29, the money from September 1 is long gone. I can't imagine trying to live on such a fixed income. I'm so middle class it's sickening.

When we opened the doors at 3:00 p.m., I knew today would be different. There were about forty people waiting outside, which is a strangely high number. They filtered in through the door and immediately ten

people had signed up to take showers. The line for the "snack" of the day, which most often is reheated food from the previous day, curled through the dining room and into the T.V./sitting room. Eddie, Norman, and I were busy for the first hour playing leapfrog in and out of the storeroom, handing out hygiene products, clothing, food, and blankets. Bri was busy in the kitchen washing the same dish three or four times, as it was used, washed, used, washed, and used again by different guests each time. The coffee pot, a popular item even in the summertime, had a constant line at it. People went back for refill after refill, simply trying to keep themselves warm.

Halfway through the shift I tried to sit down with a sheet of paper to record some of the things I observed, with the intent of including them in this article. This is all the further I got:

"cold=busier"
"end of month=busier"
"crazy"

Succinct. To the point. True.

"Can you get me some toilet paper?" "Do you have a care package of hygiene products?" "Where are the cups?" "Can I have a food pantry bag?"

These are the questions that we live by. Jesus practiced a ministry of interruptions; we practice a ministry of answering the same question a million times. "No, we don't have any more blankets." "Yes, this is the only type of candle we have." "I'm sorry, the only canned food we have is peaches. Would you like three cans?"

But it's still a ministry. And even though there were probably 70 people that cycled in and out of the house today, the blessings spilled over. The meal we had tonight was this delicious homemade chicken-noodle recipe ladled over homemade mashed potatoes with homemade rolls. It was wonderful with the cold weather, and the amount donated so generous that we'll enjoy leftovers for several days. We also had some great volunteers from Simpson College who helped with the intense clean-up work. That just goes to show that hospitality can't be done alone.

Last night we received a large donation of blankets and men's clothing, including jackets, t-shirts, and pants. By 3:30 PM, everything that I had hauled in the night before was gone. While it's good to know that those things are going to good homes where they will be used, that statistic just really helps you to realize the gravity of the situation. The economy is down. People who are normally employable are no longer considered employable. The dollar just doesn't go as far, and it's much harder to stretch it than it used to be.

Last night we received a large donation of blankets and men's clothing, including jackets, t-shirts, and pants. By 3:30 p.m., the following day, everything hauled in the night before was gone.

We've seen many more new faces in our home: people who are down on their luck for a little while, then head off to the next unreachable dream. Chicago. St. Louis. Houston. Omaha. "If I just go there, I'll get a job. Life will be good. Things will work out." Des Moines.

It's the same everywhere.

We had a guest recently return to Houston. Quincy, we'll miss you. We hope that things are better there than they were here. We also had another guest, Elizabeth, return to Omaha. And what she found there was the same that she found here; no work, abusive relationships, and hardship.

So as I sit at a picnic table in the back yard, I observe life as we know it. Door open, people in. Door open, people out. Door slam, cold air in. Cold air out? Never. Cigarettes. "Can I borrow your lighter?" Dirty dishes. Crumbs on the floor. Plastic bags. No plastic bags.

It's the conversations we have that really get us through the cold nights and the blisteringly hot days. The relationship we create while

(Continued on page 11)

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Subscriptions

Via pacis is published quarterly. To subscribe, mail, email, or phone your name and address to the editor.

Photos and Illustrations

Unless noted (or we goof), all photos and art are produced by the Des Moines Catholic Worker community.

The Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

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

Becoming a Des Moines Catholic Worker

We are always open to considering new community members. For information about joining our mission, contact any community member or visit our web site.

Mailing Address

PO Box 4551
Des Moines IA 50305

Bishop Dingman House (Hospitality Center)

1310 7th St.
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-243-0765
Residents: Frank Cordaro, Alex Barnes, Ed Bloomer, Brianne Boylan, David Goodner, Tracy Robson

Phil Berrigan House (Social Justice Center)

713 Indiana Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-282-4781 (DMCW business phone.)
Residents: Frank Cordaro and Mona Shaw

Msgr. Ligutti House (Residence)

1301 8th St.
Des Moines, IA 50314
515-288-4326
Residents: Renee Espeland, Dan Hughes, Frankie Hughes, Reetzi Hughes, Norman Searah

Lazarus House (Residence)

1317 8th St.
Des Moines, IA 50314
Residents: Ashley Megan, Sean Megan, Wrigley Megan

Weekly Lectionary Bible Study

Mondays, 7pm. Berrigan House
Call to confirm.

Weekly Mass or Spiritual Renewal Service

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

The Chiapas Project

Chiapas, Mexico
Richard Flamer
flamerrichard@hotmail.com

Celebrating the Life of Mike Fuller



Michael Dean Fuller, 58, of Waterloo and formerly of Des Moines, died Friday, September 25, 2009, surrounded by his family at Covenant Medical Center in Waterloo following a short illness.

Michael was born on November 30, 1950, in Waterloo; the son of D. Dean and Joan (Messerer) Fuller. Michael graduated from Dункerton High School in 1969 and from Drake University in

1985 with a degree in business and accounting.

Michael had lived in the Des Moines area for the past 37 years and returned to Waterloo in September, 2008. Michael retired from Kum & Go on May 31, 2009 as a sales manager. He enjoyed Scrabble, chess, the Iowa Hawkeyes and small-town Iowa high school sports. He had spent the last nine years as part of the Catholic Worker community in both Waterloo and Des Moines doing hospitality and serving meals to the poor.

Michael is preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his wife of 35 years, Fran; three daughters, Sarah Fuller of Des Moines, Melissa Fuller of Hartford, IA and Laura (James) Hidlebaugh of Waterloo; Aunts Norma Daubenbaugh of Winthrop, Sue Fuller of Cedar Falls, and Pat Fuller of Rus-

sellville, AR, three grandchildren, Jason and Jessica Musso of Hartford and Geneva Hidlebaugh of Waterloo; two sisters-in-law, Teresa Bentall and Jane (Joseph) Bordenaro, both of Des Moines and a brother-in-law, Fred (Ellen) Butorac of Des Moines.

A celebration of Michael's life was held at 1 p.m. Saturday, October 3, 2009 at 675 Jalea Street in Hartford, IA.

The family suggests memorial contributions be made to the St. Francis Catholic Worker of Waterloo. He will be missed by his family and many friends

Messages of condolence can be sent to:

Fran Fuller
franafuller@gmail.com
Waterloo Catholic Worker
PO Box 1533
Waterloo, IA 50704
319-232-2116

Voices Mounts New Campaign

CHICAGO—Voices for Creative Nonviolence (VCNV) is initiating a nationwide Peaceable Assembly Campaign



Kathy Kelly is a co-coordinator of the campaign.

which seeks an end to the U.S. wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan and an end to U.S. support of the continued occupation of the Palestinian territories.

Beginning in September, 2009, and continuing for the

next ten months, VCNV will engage in both legal and extralegal (nonviolent civil



disobedience/civil resistance) lobbying efforts, urging Representatives and Senators to stop authorizing and funding wars and occupations.

Voices for Creative Nonviolence has deep, long-standing roots in active nonviolent resistance to U.S. war-making. Begun in the summer of 2005, Voices

draws upon the experiences of those who challenged the brutal economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. and U.N. against the Iraqi people between 1990 and 2003.

Des Moines Catholic Workers plan to participate in the campaign.

For more information about the campaign, contact:

Voices for Creative Nonviolence
1249 W Argyle Street, No. 2
Chicago, IL 60640
Phone: (773) 878-3815
email: info@vcnv.org
www.vcnv.org

How Firm a Foundation



Sean Megan, Lee Jankowski, and Bob Zellmer, work on the foundation.

Without the prayers and generous hearts of our friends, nothing would happen here. A miraculously timed gift from Our Lady of Immaculate Heart made it possible for us to complete critical repair to the foundation of Ligutti House in Octo-

ber. The Ankeny parish donated \$5000 that paid for almost all of the expenses and saved the house from collapsing. Much of the labor for the project was donated. Special thanks are owed to Catholic Worker Lee Jankowski, who came from Dubuque to lead the project.

Our next critical home repairs include a new roof on Lazarus House, new fire escapes, and painting the outside of Ligutti House.

We hope to accomplish these projects next summer.



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

-Dorothy Day

DM Catholic Worker Campaign Spurs National Action



Protesters at Aetna headquarters in NYC, September 29.

As the health care debate in Washington D.C. rages on, and real change seems less and less likely, a national call for grassroots action is sweeping the nation. Mobilization for Health Care for All is calling for civil disobedience at insurance companies nationwide. Starting in New York City on September 29, followed by Chicago on October 8, then other cities nationwide on October 15, Mobilization for Health Care for All (www.mobilizeforhealthcare.org) is calling for sit-ins at insurance companies.

On September 29, 17 people were arrested at

Aetna Insurance headquarters in New York City. This started the first in a series of grassroots actions that organizers hope will bring attention to American citizens' disgust for insurance profits, while thousands of people suffer without proper insurance and, more importantly, proper care. Mobilization for Health Care for All hopes for "Medicare for All", a single-payer system that cuts out the middle man of Big Insurance.

Mobilization for Health Care for All hopes that civil disobedience at profit-making headquarters will call attention to the vastly unjust

health care system we currently have and the deadly role insurance companies play in it.

These sit-ins are similar to sit-ins at lunch counters during the civil rights movement and were inspired by the Des Moines Catholic Workers' July 27th action at Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, in which nine people were arrested, including 11-year-old Frankie Hughes. Dr. Margaret Flowers, a Maryland pediatrician who was arrested in May when she attempted to speak for single-payer healthcare at a Senate Hearing on health-care reform, was in Des Moines for the action.

The Des Moines Catholic Worker began its "Insurance Profits Make Us Sick" campaign last March. On July 27, 2009, about 30 people filed into the lobby of Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield offices in Des Moines to ask for answers to questions posed in a letter that had been mailed a month earlier. The letter asked Wellmark for complete transparency of its financial dealings.

When officials told the group "no one was available" to answer their questions, most left, but nine remained stating that they'd wait until someone was available. The nine were arrested by Des Moines Police.

A jury trial has been set for eight of the nine (Ed Bloomer, 62, Kirk Brown, 29, Robert Cook, 66, Frank Cordaro, 58, Renee Espeland, 48, Christine Gaunt, 50, Mona Shaw, 58, and Leonard

Simons) for November 18, 2009, in Polk County Courthouse in Des Moines.

No trial as yet been set for Frankie Hughes, who was eleven at the time of the arrests and has been referred to juvenile court.

The Des Moines Catholic Worker is committed to continuing its campaign until not one person living in the U.S. is denied healthcare because they cannot pay for it.



Des Moines Catholic Worker, Frankie Hughes, standing to Dr. Margaret Flowers' right, is thanked by Congressman John Conyers for risking arrest in July. Frankie was invited to speak at a national healthcare rally in Washington at which Conyers was a keynote speaker.



Norman's Whereabouts

by Norman Searah

Hello there! I'm writing this article slow. I'm writing it in my room, which overlooks Second Avenue and other parts of Des Moines. I am at the University Park Nursing and Rehabilitation Center getting ready to leave it for the Catholic Worker.

They, with Broadlawns Hospital, have been caring for a couple of bones in my leg. They did a good job; as best they could. They were always busy doing other work sometimes to help the people they're caring for, but always going back to their own work. They moved me once to the same floor but different room. I recalled my first roommate: I sometimes have to watch him so he doesn't get into trouble because of his age.

Most of the people were old age with problems, but got along with others fine. They even got along with those that were younger, along with the workers that spoke other languages. I felt that I was back at the Worker or on the streets of New York City or even Brooklyn listening to the people in their own language in a caring way.

I got along with everyone mostly nurses, cleaning people, and the people in therapy. I got to go to the Catholic Worker twice; the first time was to welcome the Bishop to the community. The other was to see if I can get around the community, which I did well.

Often times most of the people from the Catholic Worker came to visit me.

I'm sorry that I missed Sugar Creek this year. I bet it was good. It was good to hear that Carmen came.

I guess that there were a lot of people there and people brought a lot of food. I wonder if there was a campfire with people singing songs and the famous skid show. I wonder if there was anything new in Goose Lake or in Charlotte, but I'll find out next year.

I watched a lot of TV, and, while writing, I've learned a lot.

I saw a lot of movies on Woodstock that made history. I asked myself why we don't have one now, to protest against the wars. It's about time to end all wars and prevent all wars from happening.

I saw programs that showed that there are other ways that can destroy our

Earth, our home. Things crashing into the earth like a meteor or an asteroid.

It's about time to end our wars so we can deal with our home. We have no other place to go. Or is there? I would like to go. You can have the Earth.

The way our Earth is right now it needs help, like a sick person does, or worse. We need to fix this earth together.

I saw movies like *Dancing with Wolves* and about the dog soldiers (or dog men), American Indians which reminded me of a friend.

I saw President Obama along with other leaders from other nations speak about climate change and what their nation is doing right now. I found out on the day that I left the center that President Obama was going to speak at the United Nations again. I hope that he was going to say that we should end all wars to deal with our Earth which is in a mess and needs to be fixed, along with other things. We still have fires on the west coast and farm land drying up that the Governor of California was going to Washington to see the President about, while other parts of this country are faced with

rain and floods like Atlanta, Georgia. A lot of places saw a lot of rain. Take a look at your part of this country or wherever you are at.

Two more before I close. I got a gift of Get Well things from a person in a nursing center, at a place that I visited once in the town of Provincetown, Massachusetts. It's a couple of hours from my mother's home. One of the gifts was a little book of letters to God by children. We were all children at different times, no matter what color we are, what language we speak, or religion we are. We get along together. We change when we get older; we no longer play in the sandbox together or play children's games. But now that some of us are old now, the games are so different that we can even hurt, kill, divide, or separate us. We are lucky if a disaster happens, because we will come together then. Sometimes a war, too.

I thank you for showing me that we are all children even though we're all not grown ups. I also would like to thank you for your cards of getting well. I would like to thank the Catholic Worker in Cambridge, Eng-

land. My mother is from England. If I had a wish I would like to go there. I would work at the Worker while seeing London, seeing who is buried in Westminster Abbey, seeing where my mother met my father, seeing a football game, and learning about a busboy that coached a football team.

But that's just a wish; we all have wishes.

Thank you for your time.



[Ed. Note: Norm is happy to be home now and back managing the store-room at Dingman House. The photo above of (left-to-right) Community friend, Mike Solomon ("the boss"), Norm, and Bishop Richard Pates was taken in August when the Bishop led Mass in Dingman.

The Wizard knew about the power of the media, and deception.



by Dan Hughes

"Do you presume to criticize the great Oz, you ungrateful creatures?"

"Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain."

-Wizard of Oz

The Wizard knew about the power of the media, and deception.

There is a strenuous health care debate out there today, or so it would seem. Is it true? We hear republicans saying that a public option plan will devastate private health insurance companies. We hear them talk about the greatness of private enterprise and the dangers of huge government takeovers of health care, of socialized medicine and of skyrocketing costs, as if they have really seemed to care about that lately. We hear from democrats who swear that reform "will not" eliminate private for profit health insurance companies!

What we do not hear in this political debate in the mass media, is anyone questioning why keeping private health insurance companies in business is really such a good thing anyway. It is actually not because no one is talking about it, we just do not get to hear it. In fact, both democratic and republican leadership have done everything in their power to stifle discussion about single payer insurance for everyone. Single payer is a system where through taxes the government collects money so everyone can go to the doctor. It skips the skimming the profit off the top part, or the not covering what is wrong with you part, or the getting in the way between you and your health provider

part. We do not hear that there are many in the medical profession who would like single payer to be part of the health care debate, doctors and nurses want to be able to take care of their patients without a fight from the insurance company. We do not hear that the majority of doctors are not in the AMA. It is interesting to note that over 16,000 doctors are pushing for single payer health insurance. Did you know that doctors and nurses are being arrested on a regular basis for trying to get our elected officials to include single payer insurance bill HR676 into the discussion? Eighty-five congressional representatives sponsor this bill and still we cannot talk about it. What is going on? The insurance industry wields power.

It is clear that those behind the curtain manipulating public opinion want to keep this information quiet and secret. It is interesting to note that in 2003, before becoming president, Senator Obama gave a speech saying the only thing stopping a single payer plan for everyone was to elect democrats in congress, senate and for the president. It was part of why voters elected him. It is also very interesting to know that according to opensecrets.org, the insurance industry spent 150 million in lobbying and contributions last year and the pharmaceuticals spent 230 million. That is a lot of money, apparently enough. It is noteworthy, that unlike (foreign) wars without declaration, illegal spying on citizens, or imprisoning people indefinitely without trial, single payer insurance is actually something the Constitution gives Congress the authorization to do. Section 8 declares it. Congress can tax to provide for the common Defense and General Welfare. Welfare according to the Constitutional dictionary includes health and well-being. When all citizens have access to health care without going bankrupt, it

contributes to a nation's welfare as well as the individuals.

The Des Moines Catholic worker has a new campaign. "Insurance Profits Make Us Sick." Why would a group whose main battle has been against the war machine and the war economy take on the health insurance industry? It is important to know that today over 70 percent of people in the United States have health insurance plans attached to their employment. Do you ever wonder why? Neither auto insurance nor property insurance has any such attachment.

In the 1940s, the Roosevelt administration imposed a wage and price freeze on the country. The US had 14 million men fighting and had a shortage of workers here at home. Congress and the IRS passed a law that gave business and labor (typically large business that was producing for the war effort) relief from the constraints of the federal government's wage and price restrictions. They did this by allowing compensation from business, in the form of health care benefits to the employees, to be tax-free and not defined as a wage increase. This tax break was not for people who have to buy their own health insurance, with after tax dollars. It is not a health care policy; it has always been a compensation policy. Wage and price controls no longer exist. Government policy has herded two hundred million people into employer-based insurance. The rest do not have any or buy their own. Consider those who pay 100 percent of their own premium, which, commonly run over 1000 dollars a month, sometimes much more. Of course, if they get sick and cannot pay that much insurance, companies drop them.

This government driven tax policy, no tax on corporations for health insurance as compensation, has completely defined the health

insurance market. For sixty-five years, the federal tax system has supported private-employer-based insurance with huge "tax subsidies" or "tax expenditures." In reality, the ones who make up for this tax break are all other taxpayers. Employees become stuck with their jobs for fear of losing insurance. The real cost of health insurance becomes blurred with partial payments spread from government, employee and employer and the insurance companies make a fortune off all for only moving money around. Consumers pay the employer's portion out of higher prices for the goods and services they provide. Our "for profit" health insurance system owes its existence to the war economy. Those who would complain about government interference about health care, take note, this has been government manipulation at its biggest and finest! Contrary to what elected officials and the insurance industry tells us a system where the only function of the government is to collect taxes and distribute the funds for healthcare to your healthcare provider when needed is less interference by government, not more.

Health insurance companies are simply brokers, they give no health services, and they provide no care. Insurance companies have almost free reign on whom they will cover, what they will cover, and how much they will pay for care. Their true function is simply serving as a middleman between the patient and the doctor for a huge fee and corporate profits. If there were not the giant tax breaks for the corporations, employer-based-for profit-health-insurance would not have developed. Meanwhile insurance companies, whose sole purpose is to make money, have control over patients' life and death and there is no oversight. They do not have to tell us any-

What we do not hear in this political debate in the mass media, is anyone questioning why keeping private health insurance companies in business is really such a good thing anyway.

thing. Their greed for profit holds more importance than a person's life.

After 60 years of government supporting the health insurance companies, what do we have? While spending 10 times as much in military "offense" than any other country, we have

1. 40 million or more uninsured Americans,
2. Insurance executives who can have 750 million dollars in company stock and multi million dollar salaries (received from the insured's premiums,) while 40 percent of all bankruptcies are due to medical bills owed by people WITH insurance.
3. A US rank of 37th for health care among nations
4. The most expensive health care in the world.
5. 45,000 People who die needlessly each year due to lack of access to health care.

This feels like war. Why would we think this is a good idea? We can do, and deserve better.



Catholic Workers from the Des Moines and Omaha communities stand with friends at the gate to Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha to remember and mourn the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The vigil took place August 6-9, 2009.

Calling for Stories by “Friends of Dorothy”



by Frank
Cordaro

Last month a call for submissions of stories, letters, memories and photographs of gay men and lesbians in the Catholic Worker movement was issued by Brendan Fay and Michael Harank (see below, right). This effort is long overdue and most welcomed by our community.

Brendan and Michael's call has led me to examine our own Des Moines Catholic Worker history regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) matters as well as my own personal journey. Born in 1951 to an Italian Catholic family on the south side of Des Moines, IA, I was raised in a sea of homophobia and heterosexual privilege. It was unavoidable in my world. The best I can say about my understanding of the oppression of LGBT people during my early years was that I was completely ignorant to the issues, and my ignorance was sustained by a good measure of fear. We were never taught to hate or despise homosexual people. We were always taught to show respect to all people. Yet the message in my family upbringing was that homosexuals were to be avoided. And though I am sure I had friends who were gay, I never knew it. They never were public, and I never had to deal with the issue in any direct way. All of which kept me ignorant, clueless and fearful.

One memory, which took place during the summer before my senior year in high school, stands out in my mind. My father, whom I dearly loved, was the athletic director and baseball coach at Dowling High School, the all-boys Catholic High School in Des Moines that I attended. For some reason, which rarely happened, we both had a free night, and dad offered to take me to the movies. This was a big deal. I had four other brothers and one sister, and it was a rare occasion that any one of us had alone time with Dad. He wanted to take me to the movie *The Sergeant* starring Rod Steiger. I had heard about this movie and knew it explored the issue of homosexuality, a taboo topic back in 1968 in Des Moines.

I remember thinking to myself, “how cool” dad was taking me to this movie want-



ing to explore this exotic issue with me. As it turned out, my father, the ex-Marine and WWII Vet thought the movie was a war show, and he was only looking to get out of the house. Ten minutes into the film, he was spooked. We both snuck out of the Varsity Theater, dad praying that no one we knew saw us there.

This experience confirmed several things about my understanding of homosexuality then. Homosexual people are to be avoided. Homosexuality was a condition to be afraid of. Yet, based on who my father was and how we were raised, I still inferred we were never to treat anybody badly, even homosexuals.

As far as I know, I went through my college and seminary years without having any real contact or friendships with LGBT people. Again, I know now that I must have known some LGBT people, but none of them ever made themselves known to me. It was during those years of the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War that the issues of racism, sexism, poverty and Empire were about all I could handle. Besides, when it came to human sexuality, the Church taught that all sex outside of marriage was wrong, and I figured LGBT people all lived under the same chaste rules that applied to other single people, mindful that lots of people in my generation did not live the chaste life.

It was not until I helped start the DMCW community in 1976 that I began to meet gay men and lesbians who were out of the closet. And, the first gay man I was blessed to befriend was Richard Cleaver. Richard was from Grinnell, IA. He joined our DMCW community in 1979 after having spent fifteen months at the New York

City Catholic Worker. He brought a rich background of both experience and knowledge to our little community. He was the only DMCW to have lived with Dorothy Day. He was our official representative at Dorothy's Funeral in 1980. Richard is a walking encyclopedia on all things having to do with the Catholic Worker movement.

It was through my friendship with Richard that I began to cease being ignorant of the plight of LGBT people. I no longer felt any reason to be fearful of a LGBT person, nor were they to be avoided. On the contrary, I now know that whenever there was any discrimination or mistreatment of a person because they were LGBT, I was morally bound to stand with the LGBT person and resist such treatment.

It was during Richard's tenure at the DMCW that our community took a baby step in our public stands in support of LGBT rights. Richard was one of the original planners of the first Gay Rights Parade in Des Moines. I remember walking in that parade, holding tightly my sign that read, “Straights for Gays.”

While he was with us, Richard wrote, with the input of other members of the DMCW community a revised version of the “Aims and Means,” or Catholic Worker positions that were originally written by Robert Ludlow and published in the New York Catholic Worker paper in the 1950s. We published this revised version of the “Aims and Means” along with five essays by Richard explaining them in more detail in the *via pacis* from the Autumn, 1981, through the May/June, 1982, issues.

In the “Aims and Means” section dealing with equality we wrote: “We believe in complete equality of all

women and men as sisters and brothers created by a loving God. Racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, classism—all of these—are blasphemy against God whose image is incarnate in us all and whose death has redeemed us all (Galatians 3:28).”

We were one of the few to openly call into question the sin of heterosexism in the 1970s. To my knowledge, the San Francisco Catholic Worker Community is the only CW community that publicly supported gay rights in one of their newsletters before us. This says a lot of about personalism, friendships and the DMCW community. It also says a lot about the larger Catholic Worker movement and the learning curve it's been on regarding issues surrounding LGBT people.

Fast forward to 2006. The DMCW hosted a national gathering of Catholic Workers and the first national gathering in more than fifteen years! As host community we had a say in programming, and we fully supported the program committee's choice to hold “The Catholic Worker movement and Heterosexual Privilege” workshop at the gathering. The workshop was attended by about 35 people. I did not initially attend the workshop and was busy with some housekeeping con-

Our experience as Catholic Workers living with and serving LGBT people has taught us that God loves all people just the way they are. The ethical and moral issues surrounding human sexuality are not decided by whom you love but how you love.

cerns when I heard loud voices coming from the vicinity of where the heterosexual privilege workshop was taking place.

When I arrived on the scene, there was a highly charged atmosphere among the participants. Though the vast majority of people attending the workshop were in support of the premise underlining the works shop—that

(Continued on page 11)



Friends of Dorothy Anthology

Brendan Fay and Michael Harank are soliciting essays, letters, stories and photographs of LGBT women and men from around the world whose lives and hearts have been transformed and influenced by Dorothy Day (1897-1980) and the Catholic Worker. This collection will be a unique and insightful remembering of Dorothy Day, Peter Maurin and the CW movement through the eyes of LGBT people. Up to now this has been an untold or incomplete story.

Submissions will be accepted from LGBT people who knew Dorothy in person, through her writings, or her legacy of spirit or simply by heartfelt affection or association with Catholic Worker communities.

The essays will be a gathering of stories at that “crossroads” of encounter between personal/ spiritual radicalism and LGBT humanity. This proposed book seeks to break through the historical silence in honest and heartfelt ways that soulfully reveal, some perhaps for the first time, lives of pain and joy, struggle, compassion, laughter, despair and hope.

The book intends to go beyond the idealized portraits of Catholic Worker communities and to include an inclusive range of experiences, comfort and pain, transformation and healing, rejection and hope.

Submissions are requested before November 1, 2009.

Please contact
Brendan Fay: brendan@stpatsforall.com (718) 721-2780
Michael Harank: mharank@yahoo.com (510) 482-6448

Fr. Carl Kabat Arrested at Colorado Missile Site

GREELEY, CO—Fr. Carl Kabat, OMI, 76, performed another “Plowshares” action in which he attempted to disarm the N8 missile silo in Weld County, near Greeley, Colorado. Kabat was arrested after cutting the fence, hanging banners, and then preparing to hammer on the silo’s lid.

His actions on August 6, 2009, mourned the Hiroshima bombing on that day. Kabat also chose the timing to observe his 50th anniversary as a priest and 25th anniversary of nuclear resistance.

Raised on a farm in southern Illinois, Father Kabat joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate order as a young man and became radicalized after missions in the Philippines and Brazil. But it was not until the late 1970s, after meeting Philip Berrigan that Father Kabat hurled himself into antinuclear weapons resistance.

Fr. Carl last did a plow-share action on Good Friday, April Fools Day, 2006 at a North Dakota silo and was sentenced to fifteen months for that action. He received an 18-year sentence for taking a jackhammer to a silo in 1984, but the sentence was reduced on appeal, and he served fewer than 10 years.

On November 6 there will be a pretrial conference. On November 10 there will be a readiness hearing, pretrial motions etc.

December 9 and 10 have been set aside for a jury trial. All of these court dates are set for Weld County Court-house.

Letters are welcomed and should be mailed to:

Carl Kabat, OMI
Weld County Jail
2110 O Street
Greeley, CO 80631



Calling himself “a fool for Christ,” Fr. Carl Kabat wears a clown costume as he places the banner above (see insert) on the fence to Missile Base in Colorado.

Kabat is currently being held in the Weld County Jail, awaiting his trial that is tentatively set for December 9 and 10, 2009.

Bridging the Gap to a Growing Community



by Justin Norman

In November of last year, I found myself shivering, hands in pockets, pressing against a fence just above the roar of interstate 80 in downtown Des Moines. Moments earlier, my brother Wesley had scaled the chain-link barrier and was somewhere just out of sight, snapping a photo beneath the Sixth Street bridge.

A few minutes ago we’d been in a lighthearted mood, garnering chuckles from the odd looks of passers-by as he awkwardly fell off the far side of the fence into the grass and I dangled the camera over to him. But now, as we both stared at the resultant image from this adventure, we both felt a bit unnerved. The glow of the camera’s backside monitor revealed a rocky ledge beneath the familiar bridge, littered with dirty blankets. So this is where Ryan slept.

For three weeks, a high school student from Des Moines had called this home. But the reason for my sudden change of mood wasn’t just because of the unpleasant living conditions shown in the photo. It’s because I’d been struck by the realization that I drove under this very same bridge quite frequently. This

is when Ryan became real to me.

This incident turned out to be the beginning of a pattern of realizations as I took on the role of art director for the book, *From a Growing Community, Iowa’s Homeless Youth* – a compilation of stories from nine homeless kids around Iowa, of which Ryan was one. Throughout the process, I learned many things. By the bridge, I realized that the problem of child homelessness was not something that existed in some other world, though it often seemed like that to me. No, it was right here, in familiar places all around me.

While I had volunteered to serve homeless adults on-and-off at Catholic Worker houses for a couple of years, a problem I’d always had when talking about homelessness to my friends is that almost none of them had ever even heard about the Catholic Worker. Nor did they want to. Suspicious glances and questions like, “Well, don’t those people want to be homeless?” were common fare.

In some ways, I can relate to their ignorance. While problems regarding homeless adults were familiar territory, I never had a clue as to the extent of the homeless youth issue until Danny Heggen moved in with me last year. Danny had recently returned from Australia, where he’d interviewed

women in a new prison and compiled them in the book, *Voices on the Inside: the Women of Boronia*. The book was published locally as a way of educating people about an alternative prison system that better prepares convicts for re-entering society.

Having arrived back in Iowa, Danny wanted to duplicate that process, but with an issue plaguing our home state. He explained to me that there were over 10,000 homeless children in Iowa last year, but only 735 shelter beds available for them.* This was a complete shock to me. *Ten thousand homeless kids?* I’d had no clue. So I offered to help Danny spread that knowledge with the skill that I’d excelled at for years – graphic design.

The realizations I had during this work came as much from the new design and publishing concepts as the subject matter it supported. Graphic design did not have to be a process of slathering every product on an assembly line with a coat of gloss, as it had often been for me in the past. The book’s text consisted of letters straight from the mouths of the people affected by the problem, and the design could be a natural outgrowth of that.

Over the course of nine months, we traveled to the places the kids mentioned in their harrowing stories, pho-



tographed them, and bound them together in hopes of bringing their voices out of the muffled cracks they are so often confined to, and into a common medium where they can be amplified. They are not so distant – they are here in familiar places, like the sixth street bridge.

But the most freeing realization for me was not just learning of the problem itself. It was discovering that something could be done about it quite easily if even a small number of volunteers begin to prioritize people over profit. The four people who worked on the book all could have been making much more money working a typical 9-to-5 job for a year. But instead, by choosing to spend that time volunteering at shelters and taking a pay-

ment of 50 cents per book, we’ve been able to route the funds to those who need them *far* more than we do.

With each \$20 book sold, \$10 is raised for Youth and Shelter Services, and we have sold over 800 copies in the three months since its self-published release. The result is that in many ways—through knowledge, money, and direct action—the gap between the housed and the homeless is gradually being bridged.

Find out more at

www.SowSomethingMeaningful.com

*Statistic from HomelessChildrenAmerica.org

Justin Norman is a frequent volunteer at the Des Moines Catholic Worker.

And Freedom's just another Word for Nothing Left to Lose



by Renee
Espeland

"Good evening Darling, how was your day today?"

"[smooch] Hello Pumpkin. My day sucked really badly! The world is a slimy pit of lies and deception, which is paled only by the constant slaughter and genocide of so many."

"Oh my goodness dear, it sounds as if you may need a cup of fair trade cocoa and a nice little return on those investments so that when we retire, we can be secure and do a little traveling to those few places that are not yet contaminated with depleted uranium or Prozac."

"[Sigh] Oh, Snookums, I am so glad that we became conjoined and have never been put asunder. Your love is like Novocain for the complicity-with-the-evil-empire worn soul. This abundant life is a bodacious and prosperous blessing, a real god thing. Let's have a little HOPE while we watch CNN and get ready for our progressive peace group meeting."

We all have lenses through which we perceive the world. Some of us have a lens that says that the United States is the bearer of light, the great protector of the world against godless oppression (most of the time.) We believe that we live in a democracy (that is slightly corrupt.) We do not believe that our government or corporations would habitually let people die for strategic purposes or for profit. We feel a warm feeling when we sing the national anthem and think of our fellow countrymen who have sacrificed and fought for our freedoms (acknowledging some of the ulterior motives behind war.

So when information is brought forth that refutes what we see, it is easy to steel our resolve against these "conspiratorial fabrications." The progressive bunch in the peace community, who think that the Democratic Party shyst is designed differently than Republican Party shyst are going to sink the proverbial ship—we need to go at this nasty stuff with our eyes open. I have been told that one catches more flies with honey than vinegar...hmm. I have to say that I am start-

ing to think that only really ignorant people don't eat pickles—not very nice is it? Well, mimicking reality, this article only gets worse! Here are some (eye)-ball-busters that I encourage you to investigate (if you can stand the pucker):

Wealth is never destroyed, it merely changes hands.

The Federal Reserve Bank is a private bank with a monopoly on money.

Usury is the greatest weapon of tyranny in existence, by definition it is fraudulent and creates institutionalized oppression. It is contrary to reason and justice.

We have a debt-based economy. War is the biggest debt generator and debt creates dependency on Banksters who choreograph the implosion or explosion of economies.

Money in a just world is a tool of the people and can easily be printed for the purpose of serving members of society, funding public works, and to facilitate the exchange of goods. It is easy for a municipality or government (as opposed to private central banks) to print enough debt free money to insure growth and quality living for all.

The presidency is a puppet position; it is predetermined and paid for by those who run the country (bankers, corporations, the military industrial complex and international financiers.)

Politics is like professional wrestling, bluster and theater for the camera...then everyone meets at the bar afterwards.

There is no free press in the main stream.

Assume that every evil thing is a success for someone, follow the trail and discover who benefits. There are no "failed policies."

Let's start at the top of the corruption pyramid. The Fed can affect the money supply through the sale and purchase of government bonds. To increase the money supply, the Federal Open Market Committee directs bond traders at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to buy bonds. The money the Fed pays for the bonds increases the number of dollars circulating in the economy. To decrease the money supply, FOMC does the opposite: instruct traders to sell bonds to the public. The money paid by the public for these bonds reduces the amount of money in circula-

tion. "When you or I write a check there must be sufficient funds in our account to cover the check, but when the Federal Reserve writes a check there is no bank deposit on which that check is drawn. When the Federal Reserve writes a check, it is creating money." — Putting it simply, Boston Federal Reserve Bank.

A private corporation, the FRB intentionally creates bubbles or depressions in the economy, it can make money from nothing, and then lend out ten times more than it keeps in reserve at great rates of interest (that it sets for itself) all the while telling the public that it "strives to ensure stable economic growth, protect the purchasing power of money, and minimize inflation." Hey folks, the FRB is keeping us "safe"—all 12 of them! A few private bankers, who do not answer to any branch of government or to any set of laws are running our country.

Thomas Edison spoke to this years ago when he stated that, "If our nation can issue a dollar bond, it can issue a dollar bill. The element that makes the bond good makes the bill good also. The difference between the bond and the bill is the bond lets money brokers collect twice the amount of the bond and an additional 20%, where as the currency pays nobody but those who contribute directly in some useful way. It is absurd to say that our country can issue \$30 million in bonds and not \$30 million in currency. Both are promises to pay, but one promise fattens the usurers and the other helps the people." "Give me control of a nation's money, and I care not who makes its laws" said Mayer Amschel Bauer Rothschild.

Next down on the corruption pyramid are the unofficial organizations that set national and even international policy—arguably these groups wield more power than congress although congress is a necessary front or delivery network for these unofficially determined agendas. Example: the Trilateral Commission, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Security and Prosperity Partnership the Infragard, the Bilderberg Group, the Carlisle group etc. Look it up!

The presidency and congress are easily bought and paid for. Corporations run the country. Profit is systematically placed before people. Obama was chosen and is probably the most handsome, well educated and articulate Trojan horse ever

in recent history to grace the White House. Obama has installed into positions of "power" more Wall Street criminals than any other administration; he has illegally authorized the bombing of Pakistani civilians without declaration of war and with the use of unmanned drones. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are escalated; there is a continued and expanded use of private for profit mercenary forces. He has given immunity to corporations that illegally spied on U.S. citizens and has voted to reinstate the Patriot act which denies Habeas Corpus and makes impotent the Bill of Rights. Obama has pledged to keep extraordinary rendition to secret prisons SOP (standard operating procedure) and will maybe close Guantanamo Bay torture center...some day, although we mustn't speak harshly about water boarding... and how about that NAFTA/CAFTA weapon that he is on board with? I shudder to think what might happen if the health care plan were designed by some one who is not a corporate slut. Golly-gee-whiz, it might look like a single payer plan where sick people get health care.

Can we imagine that there could be such a harsh reality as it described above? Most of this is not new policy; it just uses different vowels and consonants to describe deception.

Pearl Harbor has been revealed to have been anticipated by the U.S. command. The official U.S. entrance to Vietnam was a false flag operation. The reasons for the U.S. entrance to the first gulf war, the slaughter of Kuwaiti infants by Iraqi soldiers, were entirely false and the tearful testimony of such was conveniently from the daughter of the Kuwait-U.S. ambassador. In each case the truth was deliberately hid from the public requiring the cooperation of numerous peo-

The presidency is a puppet position; it is predetermined and paid for by those who run the country (bankers, corporations, the military industrial complex and international financiers.)

ple at the highest levels of power, and in each case the conspiracy was successful enough that the vast majority of the public is unaware of them and never will be so long as the textbooks continue to repeat the fake history.

OK! How about the press? Let's keep it short. In the case of the one millions dead Iraqis the left progressive press has shown late and limited coverage at best. The million dead number emerged in the summer of 2007 on several websites including *After Downing Street*, *Huffington Post*,

(Continued on page 9)



Renee reads from a prepared statement delivered to Wellmark on July 27, 2009. Renee was among the nine arrested that day. (See page 3.)

Sugar Creek

*the clouds kept
their distance from the sun
I wonder at the Iowa pastoral*

*red barns capped in white
against the familiar
blue blackbirds swarm*

*trees to cows
grazing greenly in my left hand
field of vision I feel*

*strangely small
the open landscape
overwhelms me*

*later when electric pink streaks
the sky I connect with
the dusky purple longing of clouds*

*the sun sweetens
a tangerine swallowed whole
by the reluctant horizon*

*if we are where we need to be
then cloaked in night I will
throw back my head*

*laughing with the stars as
they glitter and glint like
flecks of foil in the dark*



by Sade Murphy
South Bend Catholic Worker

AFGHANISTAN



**8 years and counting.
Thousands killed.
No end in sight.**

The Des Moines Catholic Worker, along with other Des Moines Metro area peace groups joined a national effort in October to resist the escalation of the war in Afghanistan. October 7, 2009, will begin the ninth year of occupation and war in Afghanistan.

On October 6, 2009, a young woman and refugee from Afghanistan spoke on their dangerous and deteriorating conditions in her country wrought by the U.S. military presence there. The woman, who could not give her real name due to serious death threats begged the audience to urge the U.S. to withdraw.

On October 15, a vigil was held in Downtown Des Moines, and October 17, a free public screening was presented of Robert Greenwald's film, *Rethink Afghanistan*.

More than 60,000 U.S. troops are in the country—a record number—to fight rising insurgent violence. The number of roadside bombs

deployed by militants across the country has skyrocketed, and U.S. forces have moved into new and deadlier areas this summer, in part to help secure the country's Aug. 20 presidential election.

The intensification of recent bombings in Afghanistan included one of the deadliest so far since the escalation of aggression ordered by the Obama administration.

Bombs dropped on Kandahar produced an entire city block of devastation, gutting shops and homes and reducing many of the structures to mounds of rubble. Residents searched at the scene and hospitals for missing loved ones, as the death toll rose to 41, with more than 60 wounded. The dead and wounded were primarily civilians as the case of the six sons of shopkeeper Abdul Nabi. Nabi was only able to find two of the six in the wreckage.

U.S. military deaths in Afghanistan could well double the number incurred in 2008, the final year of the Bush administration.

More than one critic has observed that Obama's rhetoric regarding the Afghanistan conflict more and more mirrors that of his predecessor as on when told a room full of veterans on August 18, "This is not a war of choice. This is a war of necessity."

Indicating that U.S. troops would not be brought home anytime soon, Obama added, "Those who attacked America on 9/11 are plotting to do so again. If left unchecked, the Taliban insurgency will mean an even larger safe haven from which Al Qaeda would plot to kill more Americans."

While the president suggested the August elections in Afghanistan could be an encouraging sign, only a fraction of the electorate showed up at the polls, and hope for this fix evaporated.

Meanwhile Obama is considering significantly increasing troops and ordering even more intense aggression.

SUGAR CREEK 2009



About 175 attended this year's Midwest Catholic Worker Gathering, September 18-20, 2009. The annual gathering takes place each September at the Sugar Creek Retreat Center by the St. Joseph Church near Charlotte, Iowa. This year's gathering included Catholic Workers from as far away as Texas. The three days included reflection, workshops and frolic. The coveted Football Mary trophy for giving the best performance at the annual talent show went to the South Bend (Indiana) Catholic Worker Community, which will host the 2010 gathering.

61 Arrests at White House Anti-War Witness



In front of the White House on October 5, 2009.

WASHINGTON, DC – As the U.S. led war in Afghanistan began its ninth year, 61 were arrested, including Iowans Christine Gaunt and Brian Terrell, on October 5, 2009, bringing a strong message to the White House that war, torture and drone bombing are outrageous, unacceptable and must end immediately. National anti-war groups and people from around the country joined together to say “No to War in Afghanistan. No to Torture and Vengeance.”

Hundreds of people gathered the morning of October 5th in McPherson Square for song, poetry and rousing speeches to kick off a day of action. Led by the “Mourn the dead, heal the wounded, end the wars” banner, those gathered then marched to the White House in a solemn procession, carrying large photographs of war victims, signs and banners.

The group assembled on the sidewalk in front of the White House and Cindy Sheehan, whose son Casey Sheehan was killed in Iraq in 2004 while serving in the U.S. Army, read a statement and welcome the group, which by this time had grown to more than 500 people.

As the “March of the Dead” wound through the crowd wearing white masks and carrying the names of

dead U.S. service people and Iraqi and Afghan war victims, more than 20 people dressed as Guantanamo prisoners assembled near the White House fence. Members of “Witness Against Torture,” a group committed to the shuttering of Guantanamo and the quickly enlarging Bagram air base in Afghanistan, many chained themselves to the fence. On their backs, they wore the names of Guantanamo detainees cleared for release who remain detained under the Obama administration despite the White House’s heralded decision to shutter the prison.

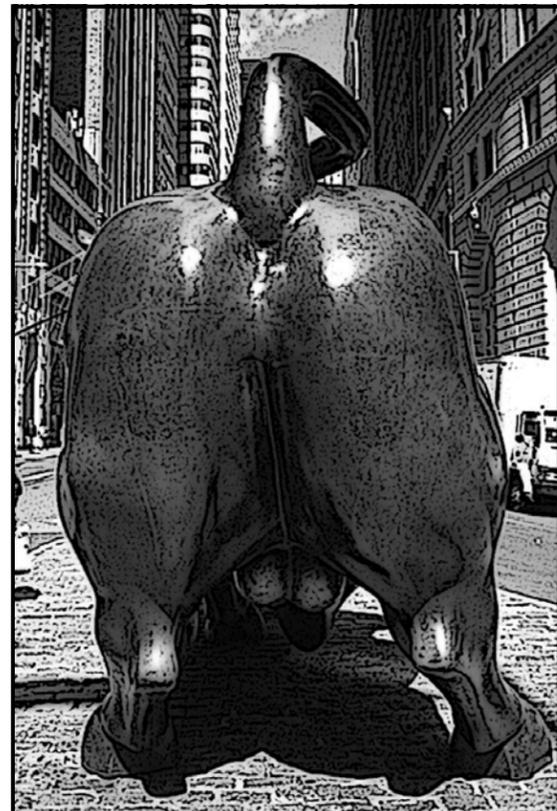
The group read the names of those killed in war and newspaper accounts of U.S. bombings and their devastating consequences in Afghanistan and Iraq. Code Pink, World Can’t Wait and many others also participated in the day of action. Veterans for Peace carried large American and peace flags and processed with three coffins representing those killed in war. Each coffin was draped with a flag—America, Iraq and Afghanistan all represented. Members of the War Resisters League held a large banner that said “End the War in Afghanistan” and wore white shrouds emblazoned with the pictures of Afghan civilians.

All those who remained on the White House sidewalk were eventually arrested. In total, 61 people were taken into police custody as the readings of the names of the dead—a tragic litany of war—continued.

Meanwhile, the National Call for Nonviolent Resistance, the group that convened the day of action, and members of PeaceAction left the area to deliver a letter to the Obama Administration. Rebuffed at the press gate, the group held a die-in, read statements and were eventually arrested.

The protests today send a strong message that Americans are sick of war, gravely concerned that the Afghan conflict is spinning out of control and hopeful that the President will listen to the American public and end the occupation. Continuing—and surging—Bush era policies means more American deaths, more civilian casualties, an intensified insurgency and the further waste of precious resources that are so badly needed at home.

The October 5 Anti-War Coalition includes: National Campaign for Nonviolent Resistance, War Resisters League, Witness Against Torture, Code Pink, Peace Action, World Can’t Wait, Veterans for Peace, and , Voices for Creative Nonviolence .



Wall Street Villanelle

by Mona Shaw

The kingdom came and found them all asleep
And blind to anguish flowing in the street.
The kingdom left because they would not weep.

Each dawn they’d drain their heart and bid on meat.
And auction off the door for Paraclete.
The kingdom came and found them all asleep.

When Rachel brought dead children to their feet
They closed-out half her grief as indiscreet.
The kingdom left because they would not weep.

She torched their fields and lost her life for heat
And while they whimpered over burning wheat,
The kingdom came and found them all asleep.

Had they not given what they didn’t need?
Does legacy mean more than those who bleed.
The kingdom left because they would not weep.

The market shed dispute with sin’s increase
And back-stabbed heaven trading death for peace
The kingdom came and found them all asleep.
The kingdom left because they would not weep.

And Freedom’s just another Word for Nothing Left to Lose

(Continued from page 7)

Counter Punch, and *Alternet*. Progressive journalist stalwart Amy Goodman at *Democracy Now!* didn’t cover the story until February of 2008 after Reuters had it a few days before. The *Nation* magazine didn’t acknowledge the story until February 16, 2009 in an article by John Tirman at MIT. This underplaying and lack of reporting such a critical story on the humanitarian crisis of the US occupation by the left press in

America does not bode well for a strong, public, peace movement. (Truth Emergency: Inside the Military Industrial Media Empire by Peter Phillips and Mickey Huff)

“Oh sweetie, wasn’t that movie on how the U.S. gives so much money to Israel informative?”

“Yes, I am so going to sign on to another petition that supports the Palestinians. I am also going to really pray for them...a lot...and I am never going to forget to vote.”

“Don’t forget to get your H1N1 flu shot tomorrow honey.”

“I won’t, [smooch] Good night.”

Psalm 46:1 elaborated

by Jimmie J Lewis

God gave us all a gift
thats all part of God's
plan, this is something that
a lot of people need to understand.
Giving out food cloths and
toiletries.

Thank God for your time
and your Hospitality.
So as we strand together
and pray,

God loves us all every second
minute, and every hour of the
day.

Stand up for your rights,
do you hear what I say
This is real life, there is
no time to play.

We all can help just join
together.

Helping one another which
will make things better.

The Catholic Worker House
is open to everyone,
fathers, mothers, daughters and
sons.

If you are hungry come join us
to eat.

If your toes are cold, we
have socks for your feet,
cloths for your body, even
pillows and bed sheets.
Saying hello with a smile
and with good heart is the
way we greet.

Don't be a stranger,
we are opened days through
the week.

Don't let evil disturb your
Mind

because evil is easy to defeat.
Stand up strong, your God's
creation.

Just have faith, hope, love and patience.



Annie and Albert rejoice at the Hog Roast in August. Many of our hospitality meals are prepared and served by volunteers. We have a few times open for this gift. Those interested should phone 515-282-4781.

4th Annual "Die-In" at STRATCOM's Space Weapons Bazaar

OMAHA—The Des Moines and Omaha Catholic Worker Communities and Nebraskans for Peace (NFP) along with the Omaha chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility are hosting their annual Witness and Die-In at the Strategic Space Symposium in Omaha, Nebraska on November 2-4, 2009.

Co-sponsored by the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) and the Space Foundation, this yearly space weapons bazaar, which brings together the corporate suppliers of weapons and space technologies, USSTRATCOM, and Military Brass, takes place at the Qwest Convention Center in Omaha.

The past four years the Des Moines and Omaha Catholic Worker Communities and Nebraskans for Peace have staged a counter conference that concludes with a Die-In at the Qwest Center. Guest speakers for the counter-conferences this year will be Fr Louis Vitale OSF and Loring Wirbel.



Fr. Louis Vitale is a Franciscan priest from CA who has spent the last 35 years resisting many of the

current missions and commands of STRATCom from the NV Test Site, to Vandenberg Air Force Base, to the SOA in Ft Benning GA, to U.S. military interrogators at Ft. Huachuca, AZ, and to the Creech Air Force Base in Nevada where unmanned drones are piloted. Father Vitale has lost track of how many times he has been arrested for witnessing for peace but estimates it's between 200-300.

Loring Wirbel, author of *Star Wars: US Tools of*



Space Supremacy is an activist with Citizens for Peace in Space and Pikes Peak

Justice and Peace Commission in Colorado Springs. He has worked against nuclear weapons and intelligence abuses for thirty years and concentrated on space militarization issues since the 1990s. He spoke at STRATCOM in 2005 and has spoken on U.S. military space policy in Korea, England, and Germany.

Floor space will be available for anyone needing overnight hospitality at Holy Family Church, 1715 IZard Street, Omaha, NE. If you have special needs, arraignments can be made. If you are going to be using the Church or needing a bed or any other hospitality needs contact Jerry Ebner at the Omaha Catholic Worker, cwomaha@gmail.com (402) 502-5887.

All events are free and open to the public.

For more info contact:

Omaha chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility
Andrew Jameton
ajameton@novia.net net
402-559-4680

Tim Rinne
WalteRinne@neb.rr.com
402-475-4620

Nebraskans for Peace
Mark Welsch, coordinator
NFPOmaha@inebraska.com
402-453-0776

Des Moines Catholic Worker
Frank Cordaro
frank.cordaro@gmail.com
515-282-4781

Omaha Catholic Worker
Jerry Ebner
cwomaha@gmail.com
(402) 502-5887

Schedule of Events:

Monday, Nov 2

4:30 p.m. Legal demo at Quest Center for opening of Space Weapons Bazaar Symposium led by NFP and Omaha PSR.

Tuesday, Nov 3

7 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Legal demo at Quest Center for opening of Space Weapons Bazaar Symposium led by the NFP and Omaha PSR.

Noon to 4 p.m. Nonviolent Training and Die In planning session. Anyone considering risking arrest during the Die In must attend this session led by the Des Moines and Omaha Catholic Workers.

Place: Holy Family Church

3:30 p.m. Talk: A 15 min. intro to STRATCom and its 8 Mission Commands" by Loring Wirble followed by "35 years of resisting the missions and commands of STRATCOM" by Fr Louis Vitale OSF

Place: Creighton University

7:30 p.m. Talk: "A 15 min. intro to STRATCom and its 8 Mission Commands" by Loring Wirble followed by "35 years of resisting the missions and commands of STRATCom" by Fr Louis Vitale OSF

Place: College of St Mary, 7000 Mercy Rd. Omaha, NE, 68106, the Cross Conference Center

Wed. Nov 4th

11 a.m. "Die In" at Qwest Convention Center led by Des Moines and Omaha Catholic Workers.



In front of the Qwest Center in 2008.

Finding Warmth from the Cold

(Continued from page 1)

our house is open, and which we maintain when we see our guests during our daily activities out and about, are really those things that sustain us.

And so, today, as I am stressed by getting people things they need, answering questions, doing dishes, and directing volunteers, the overwhelming feeling I get is how blessed this house is to be so busy, so crowded, and so stressed to the seams. This is a community unlike any other. Who would have thought five years ago that earlier today I would be sitting at this old picnic table, talking to a homeless veteran and making funny faces at a twenty-something drug addict? I'm amazed at the conversations that I am a part of, as well as the conversations I overhear. These people rely on one another, and they rely on us, and, come to think of it, we rely on them.

Dingman House is old and tired, but it's still full of love and blessings.

I see it when I see the smiles of our guests as our door opens. Or when I enter the house two hours before we open and already three guests are waiting outside. They make a joke about my bicycle helmet, and I retort immediately with a joke about their shoes. I see it when I see our guests helping one another, and I see it when I look into their eyes.

In July I had a very telling experience, one that really put me in my place. I wrote it down for something else, and I'd like to share it with you:

"Yesterday a woman who comes quite often to hospitality at our house came in and asked for a pair of pants. She'd spilled on the back of hers and needed a new pair. My past experience with this woman is that she wants pretty much everything, even if she doesn't need it, and hoards a lot of stuff.

So, regardless, I grumblingly offered her a pair of pants, the entire time thinking, "Goodness, this woman always asks for stuff. I wish we could save these pants for someone who actually needs them." I'll have to admit, I even gave her the uglier of the two pairs we had that fit her, solely because I didn't think she deserved them.

God, forgive me.

Today, she comes in and immediately pulls two pairs of

pants out of her bag. "I want to donate these," she says. That's it. I couldn't believe it. I hated giving her a pair yesterday, and here she is, sharing what she has with those who need it most.

What? Ok, God, You're right. You proved me wrong again.

Two pairs of pants for the price of one? We even came out better in this deal.

Once again, proof that the people around here are like family. They don't just take and take--they want to give as much as they're able, and often they're more willing to give than we even are.

Thanks, God."

And that's what it is here all the time—sometimes you just have to look past the pain, hardship, and grumbling to see it.

Thanks, God.

Update: On the beloved women I wrote about in the last issue of via pacis.

Angela, after disappearing shortly after I wrote the article, showed back up in the backyard of the Dingman House. She'd been living in West Des Moines with her biological mother, which could be considered good or bad, dependent upon the day. She'd also managed to get herself out of the prostitution circle she was in, and is currently looking for legitimate work.

Courtney has continued to come around Dingman House. She's on a roller coaster—some days totally coherent and other days very lost in her own mind. We hit a wall one Wednesday when she phoned six times in two hours, leaving messages that became more and more serious that she was considering suicide. I phoned her back and, while I wasn't able to talk her out of it, I convinced her to let me call the Mobile Crisis Unit. I learned later that she had been placed in outpatient day treatment for addiction. I'm not convinced this will help, so I was glad when a few days later Courtney asked me for advice on getting her into a residential support center for women. She knew that she needed a place that was a little more structured and would keep her away from that which tempted her so badly.

Since then she's had surgery to remove a possibly-cancerous tumor from her neck, was evicted from her apartment and is alternating between living on a friend's couch, and sleeping in her car. Switching her life around is a constant struggle; and I keep praying.

Calling for Stories by "Friends of Dorothy"

(Continued from page 5)

confronting heterosexual privilege in the CW movement was something needed to be done—a hand full of people voiced their obedience to the official Catholic Church's teachings on homosexuality and insisted that the CW movement cease all efforts that ran contrary to official church teachings on these matters. One of those voicing support for official Church teachings did so in a very mean and hurtful way. A shouting match ensued. A lot of people were angry; many were emotionally wounded.

When order was resumed, people began to speak to what had happen. When my turn came, I remember saying that what the Church teaches does not always come from the top down. The Church also teaches and learns from the bottom up. I said Church teachings are developed, improved and decided upon through a fully engaged, participatory process of the whole Church, not just the bishops and the Pope. And with the Church teachings on women and human sexuality, much more needs to be done by the whole Church before any teaching could claim to be settled.

On the issue of heterosexism, the Catholic Worker movement has something to offer the larger Church, because we take our lead from the "Aims and Means" objective "to live in accordance with the justice and charity of Jesus." This is to say, we follow the practice of loving and living justly as Jesus did, a living tradition. And, when our Church's teachings would have us do otherwise, we set those teachings aside. This was certainly the case when Dorothy Day and the CW movement embraced pacifism during the years leading up to WWII. At the time there were no Church teachings from Bishops or Popes that supported Catholic pacifism, yet Dorothy insisted that her pacifist beliefs were rooted in her Catholic faith. Today, we now know that Dorothy was right and the official "top down" Church was wrong.

Our experience as Catholic Workers living with and serving LGBT people has taught us that God loves all people just the way they are. The ethical and moral issues surrounding human sexuality are not decided by whom you love but how you love.

The upside about what happened at our heterosexual privilege workshop in

2006 was that the workshop took place at all. It would not have happened thirty years before. The fact that it did happen and that the vast majority of those who participated were in agreement that heterosexism privilege exists in our movement and needs to be confronted speaks to how far we have come.

The following year Mona Shaw joined our DMCW community. Mona brings many gifts and rich life experiences to our community. We share a common history as both of us graduated from high school in Iowa in 1969. She is a real computer wizard—just check out our community web page. She is a great writer, editor and newspaper lay-out person. You have only to see the last two years of the *via pacis* to know this. Her greatest asset to this community is her gift for community building. These days we do a lot of community processing with deliberate and intentional formation. She also brings with her a poverty class consciousness having grown up poor. With all of this, she is also an activist and organizer. Mona is the person who sold us on our "Insurance Profits Make Us Sick" campaign. Throw in the fact that she is a deeply spiritual woman who knows her bible well and loves Jesus. Well, she was made to be a Catholic Worker.

One more thing about Mona, she is a lesbian. And she is not a laid back, closeted lesbian. She has spent the better part of her adult life advocating and organizing around LGBT rights. She is well known locally, and on a state and national level as an LGBT rights advocate. I knew this when I invited her to come check out our community.

There is a big difference between being invited to check out a CW community and becoming a community member. Many factors come into play. Call it miracle, call it God's providence, or just dumb luck, two years after my invitation, Mona is now a fully vested member of the community. And in the mix of personalism, friendships and the spirit of the DMCW community, I knew that it would be just a matter of time before Mona's natural sensitivity and consciousness for LGBT oppression would move our community further along in the learning curve of LGBT rights activism.

As Mona got to know our community and the larger

Catholic Worker movement's history with LGBT people, the more she helped us see our need to be proactive in addressing these unmet issues against love and justice for our LGBT friends, community members and guests. When the Vatican rejected the U.N. Declaration on Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in December, 2008, it set in motion in our community the needed impetus to do something.

The result was our community's statement calling for the confession of and repentance for Heterosexism. These words prefaced our statement that is found on our web page, "In December, 2008, a number of cruel and ignorant public statements regarding same sex relationships were made by church leadership that weighed heavily on the hearts in our community. After deep prayer and reflection, our souls demanded that we publicly confess and repent our sins of heterosexism and call others to do the same." The statement was published in the April 2009 issue of *via pacis*. We asked others, Catholic Workers, Catholic Worker communities and friends of the Catholic Worker to sign on to the statement. We continue to seek signatures. Names can be added by emailing us.

This call for submissions issued by Brendan Fay and Michael Harank is long overdue. The "Friends of Dorothy" stories—letters, memories and photographs of gay men and lesbians in the Catholic Worker movement—will enrich us all. We implore all who have a piece of this history to submit a contribution to this yet untold narrative of love, missteps, pain and redemption.



Wrigley, almost 2, and the youngest member of our community dresses as a dinosaur for Halloween.

Des Moines Catholic Worker

via pacis

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Via Pacis

The voice of the Des Moines Catholic Worker Community

October, 2009

www.DesMoinesCatholicWorker.org

Volume 33, No. 3

How you can help...

Prayers and Love	Food	Health and Hygiene	Household Supplies	Clothing and Bedding	Volunteers	Cash Donations
Without your prayers and goodwill, nothing happens.	Cereal Coffee Fruit Vegetables Beans Meat and Fish Soups and Stews Sugar and artificial sweetener Coffee Creamer Juices Milk Cheese Butter or Margarine Eggs Salt and pepper Salad dressing and condiments	Tylenol Ibuprofen Multiple Vitamins Ointment Disinfectants Band-Aids Feminine Hygiene Items Disposable Razors Shaving Cream Shampoo and Conditioner Lotion Deodorant Toothbrushes Toothpaste Toilet Paper	Bleach Laundry Detergent Dish Soap Murphy's Oil Soap Pinesol Toilet Cleaners Paper Towels Sponges Trash bags Brooms Rugs Floor mats Candles Light bulbs Aluminum Foil Plastic Wrap Sandwich and freezer bags	Underwear T-shirts Towels Blankets Sheets Pillows Socks Sweatshirts Hoodies	Individuals and work crews for hospitality (serving food, cleanup), cleaning and general inside and outside maintenance.	Cash donations are essential to pay taxes, utilities, repair and maintenance bills and to purchase supplies.
Peace and justice books and videos are always welcome donations for the Berrigan House Library.						

House Repairs

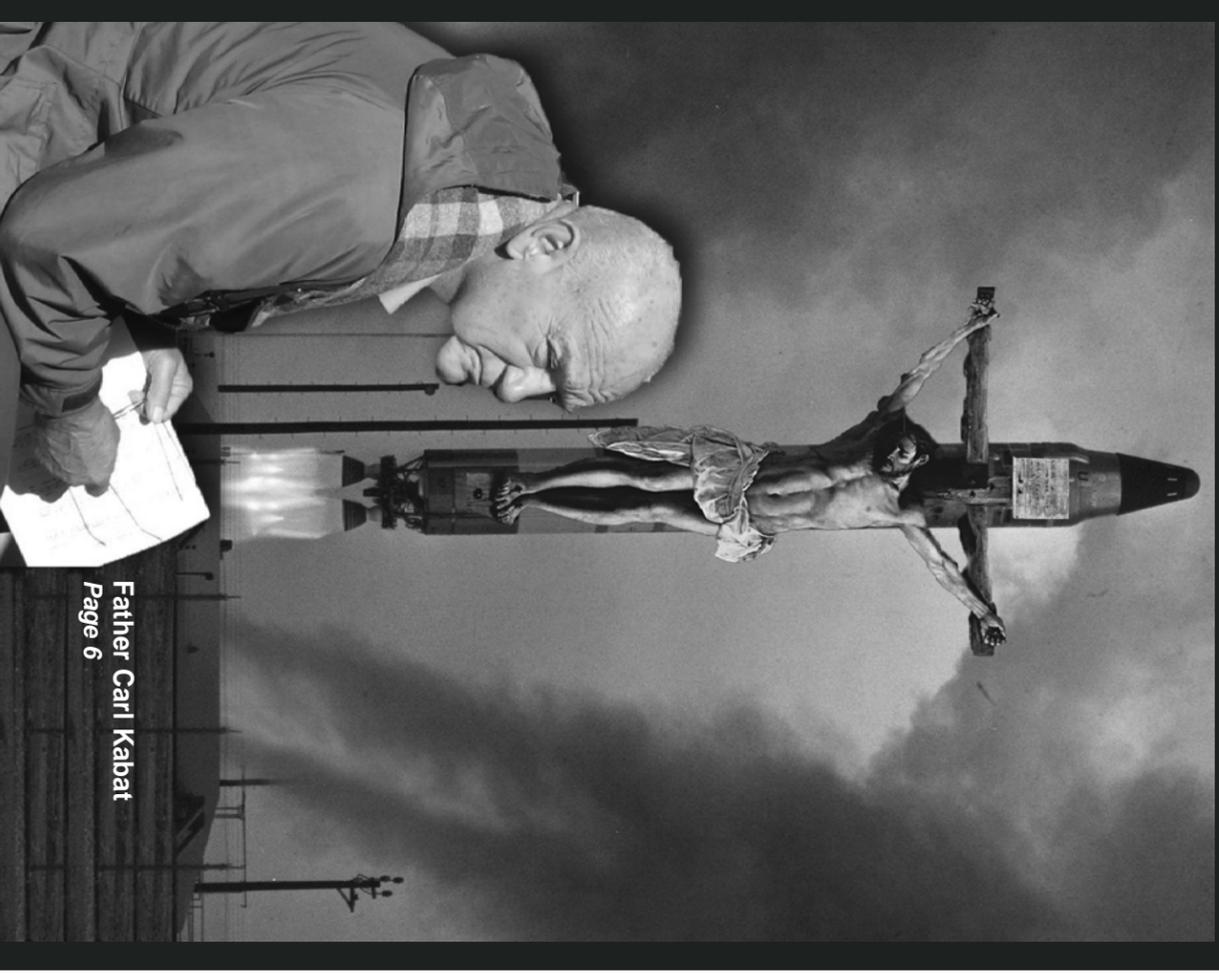
With four old houses, there are plenty of projects, large and small. We invite do-it-yourselfers--individuals or groups--with skills in carpentry, plumbing, painting, electrical, etc. to come in, look over our housing needs, and choose a project. Bring your own tools if possible.

Major House Repair

Lazarus House will need its roof replaced this summer. Any help in labor or donations to help defray this expense will be very gratefully received.

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Father Carl Kabat
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