SOVEREIGNTY MOCKERY: DRONE TYRANNY AT HOME AND ABROAD

Militarized policing and surveillance and the implied technological transfer is symptomatic of an empire “come home.”

by Maj. Danny Sjursen, United States (retired)

Take it from a penitent practitioner of drone warfare: Americans do not want these devices hovering over their cities. Only it’s already a reality. Literally at Type 1, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is flying a predator drone over Minneapolis, surveilling people protesting the police execution of George Floyd. Almost certainly, this particular prototype isn’t armed. After all, according to the United States Air Force, the predator’s primary purpose is as “an intelligence-collection asset,” and it is only used “secondarily against dynamic execution targets.” Nevertheless, mass surveillance has always been a slippery slope towards violence. Just ask the eleven people (including five children) killed when Philadelphia police dropped a satchel charge on the house of a black liberation group in 1985.

Make no mistake, historically speaking, every single solitary advance in surveillance technology—from telegram to telegraph to telephone to teletype—grew from the very local to the worldwide. Militarized policing and surveillance and the implied technological transfer is symptomatic of an empire “come home.”

Des Moines, drone fleets make a mockery of sovereignty. Tech-savvy surveillance amounts to liberty larceny. From West Africa to Central Asia, United States militarism and its inherent technological tyranny has created a generation of poor people, especially children, of color who live in terror. Theirs is a life few Americans (for now) can fathom: they are cowering in fear of, and even suffering PTSD from, the hum and buzz of the Pentagon’s and CIA’s drone fleet. Even if a missile doesn’t launch from these unmanned aircraft, the Africans, Arabs, and Asians below know, viscerally, that they live under an Orwellian surveillance regime. However, now, just like the United States military’s excess assault rifles, camouflage body armor, and MRAP armored vehicles, drones are headed for communities near you. This, friends, is the logical (albeit absurd) conclusion of an empire come home to roost.

Don’t be too shocked: it’s what they do, historically and conceptually.

See, victim and victimizer are always inexorably linked in any imperial system of repression, and it hardly matters that there’s no military draft, no direct “war-tax,” and no congressional declaration of war. The United States government wages these aggressive wars in the people’s name. We are all complicit. That war, whether waged on the Continued on page 4

SURVIVING COVID-19 AT THE DES MOINES CATHOLIC WORKER

by Frank Cordaro

In the last via pacis, I wrote “Growing Old with Norman.” This article could also be called “Being Old with Norman and Eddie.” Like everyone else on the planet, we are trying to survive the COVID-19 pandemic in our “American baby boomer apocalypse” ways.

As I start to write, I feel like asking, “Does anybody really know what time it is?” from the song title of the 1960s band, Chicago. One way to measure our time is by the number of people that have died from COVID-19. For the record, I started writing this article when the United States had hit the 60,000 death mark. More Americans have died from the virus than from the Vietnam War, and this virus is far from over.

Once the COVID-19 pandemic hit Iowa, “social distancing” and “stay at home” attempts were adopted, and our world at the Des Moines Catholic Worker radically changed. Our community posted two internet reports about these changes on March 25 and May 1. The reports gave updates on our community situation and the work we are continuing to do.

At the beginning of the March 25 report, I wrote, “The outbreak of COVID-19 has turned our world at the Des Moines Catholic Worker upside down. Half of our community members are over 60 and/or have prior conditions that put them at high risk. For this reason, we have put two of our houses in quarantine to protect their vulnerable occupants.”

Then on May 1, the 87th Anniversary of the Catholic Worker movement, I wrote another internet report with a fuller picture of what was happening at the Des Moines Catholic Worker:

We find ourselves six weeks into the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, and life at the Des Moines Catholic Worker is starting to take on a new normal feeling in these most abnormal times.

Chelsie Manning House’s effort to be a complete quarantine has pretty much worked for Charlie and Celestino’s Sal Ramirez. Charlie is the highest-risk person in our community, with only one lung. Neither of them have been outside of Chelsea Manning House for six weeks. We all miss Tony, Celestino and Charlie’s young son, who is staying at his other mother’s house. Sal, Charlie, and Tony get to see each other on the internet.

Keeping Norman Searah in a quarantine space Continued on page 5
As for ourselves, we must be meek, bare injustice, malice, and rash judgment. We must turn the other cheek, give up our cloak, go a second mile. -Dorothy Day

Poetry and Art Corner

**Trapped**

In a world of madness, where might be lead
How can I ever escape
All the chaos within my spinnin’ head?
My thoughts begin to wander
Running wild from here to there
Trying to maintain the boundary of sanity
When everywhere around us exists insanity
Unable to speak my mind
Even though the words came from my heart
Forces of hypocrisy and injustice bind me
And blow my beliefs apart
No longer to be myself or an individual
Not able to be different or even unique
Bound by a society of the most hypocritical
This society preaches Unity and Justice
Their slogan: United We Stand, One Nation Under God
But, I find that I’m trapped
In a society of injustice, racist, and pure insanity
Led by a government of unjust rule and chaos
We are all trapped

Written by Coleman Marlow Jr.

**Unwind**

I looked at beauty straight in the eye and as I told my story I fell to my knees and began to weep
She held my head in her tender hand like a tea-cap saying she understood
She drew me in close for comfort as she too began to cry
We put despair on the shelf and my back down in the emerald dew
When we awoke our eyes were dry and our heads were full
We had spent the night together in warm embrace
The taste of compassion still fresh upon our lips
Ships having sailed and then returned to the safe harbor right here at Mother Hubbard’s door
Barefoot on the weather beaten floor
The lace curtains ruffle in the breeze
Beauty and I swirled within the moon moves the tides along the soft littly shore

Written by Todd Barry

Cranston Facility, Rhode Island

Real Presence

The Archdiocese is streaming live on Facebook adoration of the Sacred, the chapel silent but for the background buzz of video equipment. We know it need be live-streamed since shots shut us out, but video puts us there, and is saved for later. We feel the stillness and the silence happening, though little happens.

Nothing moves except the occasional flickering candle. No human present. Only the altar with its gold-plated monstrance makes a claim upon our sense of person.

Christ present in the bread presented in a replication of a royal court inverts the sign of bread for the hungry, replacing food with regal distance—a distance further complicated by the screen between the event and its reception. Presence is a leap of faith across the reach of doubt and mounting distances.

And presence is the ability to occupy in real time the silent chapel, putting ourselves resilent, beyond the screen, the beyond the court, beyond the sign of bread.

Written by Fr. Bob Beck

Eddie celebrates another birthday at the Catholic Worker surrounded by fellow community members and friends.
In February, I remember watching people in Wuhan, China on television bleaching delivery bags and all their contents after they were delivered to their apartments. It seemed so surreal at the time since I thought of the scene that became a reality here in America seemed somewhat unlikely. I remember even before that, seeing the mask-wearing "swine" and "bird" flu outbreaks of previous years. Again, it didn't seem like that was something that would happen here. Then, by the end of February, I could see things rapidly changing. This was different. Everything was about to change.

My wife, Charlie, had a surgery a few years back that left her with basically one lung. Her pulmonologist had called to tell us that the coronavirus would kill her if she got it. We had no choice but to talk with our fellow Catholic Workers about this news and the circumstances we faced. We have several community members that are in their 60s and older. They are at risk as well. Our community, as they've always done, stepped up in aiding us. We are indebted to them as they care on the work. We have quarantined our house from the public. No one is allowed to go out back inside the basement floor of the Manning house. All deliveries, doorknobs, mail, or anything we have to touch gets bleached before and after each use. Groceries are delivered to us from community members such as Ruth, Patrick, and Maddie, which are then sprayed with bleach before and after each use. Water is all is said and done, getting the mail alone takes fifteen minutes. It is how fast one will adapt to the situation when faced with ones own mortality.

Charlie and Celestino had their wedding license notarized while in quarantine! Charlie and I have 50/50 custody of our son and had to call his biological mom to see if she preferred he stay with us or with her until quarantine was over. We couldn't afford to have him go back and forth from houses because of our strict quarantine. As much as it broke our hearts to face the uncertainty of not knowing when we would see him again, we allowed her to make that choice. She had chosen to keep him until quarantine was over and then he could come back. We haven't seen him in two and a half months. We talk to him almost every day. It hurts so badly, so we call him as much as we can. It also hurts him, but we give him as much comfort as possible. He is such a strong boy, but even the strongest of children have their limits.

Reality has changed so drastically. We can't work shifts, interact with guests, or do the food runs that we used to do. It took back on that time when I had watched my fellow persons in China wearing their face masks and bleaching their goods before handling them, realizing this is now our reality. I feel an even bigger sense of solidarity with my fellow humans on the other side of the globe. I married Charlie on May 30th, and only ten people were allowed to attend the service, including the pastor. We were Wuhan that day and have been every day since shutting our house down. We all share this new way of life. I am humbled. I see life in yet even more sympathetic light. I love my wife. She is my best friend and the only thing keeping me from going crazy. She is my rock and my stability. I love my community. Frank, Eddie, Norman, Annie, Patrick, Jade, Ruth, Maddie, Araceli, Lily, and Jenny are so amazing. They've redefined it for me word "brave" in my vocabulary. They have made me and my wife safe. I am indebted to my community, for they have not only picked up the slack, but have added more meals in order to supplement the food that other places couldn't provide due to the virus.

I can't wait for this to be over and get back to normal, but they say, "normal" never comes. At least until they find a vaccine or cure. Until then, quarantine keeps us going, and the community keeps us alive.

Social Distance Plan
by Travis Wolfkill

If you have been a subscriber in the last year, you may be familiar with my story. Arrested at the age of 19 and given life in prison, I am ineligible for parole. If my crime had been committed just one day before turning 18, I could have been released already. This is merely one of the flaws of our criminal system.

In order to help keep reform an active discussion, I use the best tool I have, the power of the pen. In consulting with the editor of this publication, it was suggested that I do a piece on dealing with the pandemic from a prisoner's perspective. The following is meant for entertainment purposes only: Activism aside, we could all use a laugh. Please direct any and all complaints to management in Washington D.C. at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue…

As I am writing this, a Dr. Phil episode is on television, discussing the ‘furry’ subculture. This culture is composed of people who incorporate cosplay (that’s short for costume, not Church of Satan) into their lifestyle, usually some sort of animal costume. Such individuals may be considered weird and looked down upon by the masses. They have to be grinning by their giant dog heads now. If you sneeze in one of those things, nobody’s going to look twice.

There are many ‘pros’ to the crisis. Less pollution, more solidarity, and a greater respect for science, to name a few. Quarantine gives many the opportunity to be with loved ones, read a few good books, and think about what's important in life. There is an attitude of ‘We’re all in this together!’ Unless, of course, we’re talking about responsible handling of toilet paper, or hand sanitizer, or… nevermind. My mom told me she bought a bidet. We’re all going to turn into Europeans!

You’re Invited!

Starting: Thursday, August 6 at 8 a.m. (The time the United States dropped the bomb on Hiroshima).
Ending: Sunday, August 9 at 11 a.m. (The time the United States dropped the A-bomb on Nagasaki)

Where: Iowa Air National Guard Drone Command Center, 3100 McKinley Ave.
Des Moines, Iowa

This year, Aug 6th and 9th marks the 75th Anniversary of the United States atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. The bombings of these two densely populated cities in Japan on Aug 6, 1945 is claimed to have brought the world to end to World War II. This claim is spurious, and these two bombings were also United States war crimes, as were the massive city bombings of all the major cities in Germany and Japan that led to the end of World War II, and to this day, they remain unrecognized and unrepented war crimes.

The problem with unrecognized and unrepented war crimes is that the lies used to cover them up become more deadly and criminal than the crime they are covering up. The justifications used for the murder of Japanese civilians become the justification for the murder of Vietnamese civilians, Iraqi civilians, and Yemeni civilians. Since 1945, the United States military and government have committed countless criminal acts of war against nations all over the world. No other country comes close to our 75-year run.

Today in Des Moines, Iowa, we allow members of our Iowa Air National Guard to murder people in the Middle East with armed drones, guided and controlled from a computer at the Drone Command Center on the south side of Des Moines. They do this in broad daylight with the full blessing and support of Iowans.

Come join us on-site. We hope to have a presence outside the base on the public right of way with at least two to three people camping out at any given time. We will be COVID-19 sensitive and do social distancing and mask-wearing if still recommended. Come join us for a few minutes, an hour or two, or pitch a tent and spend the night.

We plan to end the vigil with a rally and direct action “line crossing” on Sunday, Aug 9th at 11 a.m.

This is a Des Moines Catholic Worker and Des Moines Veterans for Peace sponsored event. All are welcome.

For more information and updates contact: Ed Bloomer (515) 305 5591 Frank Cordaro (515) 490 2490 frank.cordaro@gmail.com
Stonewall Revisited
by Madeleine Terry

I took my daughter to Stonewall two years ago on a trip to New York City. Walking down Christopher Street, I tried to imagine the tipping point, that day, that moment, that revolt or series of revolts which was caused by years of police violence against their community, Des Moines Police Department raided Des Moines’ oldest queer bar. Des Moines Police accused the bar of harboring agitators of violence. Video footage from inside and outside of the bar showed a peaceful scene until police showed up. Video and eye witness accounts reveal the police spokesman’s initial story to be a lie.

Other scenes from the evening at a nearby protest showed the police as the agitators of violence as they gassed, beat, and shot protestors. They caused the violence and then used it as a pretext to revive their old tradition of persecuting queer people. This is tangible now. Police have used the group’s yearnings to be free of their murderous practices as a thin disguise to take us all back to Stonewall. I know to say this aloud in this way lays bare my own naïveté and white privilege. I’m understanding this now better than before. I’m angry. I’m in this fight to support any one oppressed by the police. The police must be abolished! I can’t go back.

The Blazing Saddle, the local LGBTQ bar in Des Moines, was recently raided by police during a protest while a first aid station was being run inside the building.

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Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence and the Catholic Worker
by Josh Brown

For the past 50 years, June has been a time where those identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender have celebrated the struggle for equality as a community.

For the past ten years, members of the Des Moines Catholic Worker and the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence have marched side by side in Des Moines’ Capital City Pride parade in affirmation of this celebration and commitment toward equality.

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence identify as sacred clowns and activists. As cultural workers, we take vows to expiate stigmatic guilt and promulgate universal joy. We have orders around the globe.

I suspect that you have seen a rainbow flag. It was our Sr. Chanel 2000, Gilbert Baker, who created that flag and was honored by President Obama for his cultural achievement. It was also the Sisters who created the first safer sex pamphlet, “Play Fair, Play Safe,” at the onset of the AIDS epidemic.

In many communities, we share with our sisters and brothers of the Catholic Worker movement the importance of feeding those who are hungry and advocating for those in need.

With the advent of COVID-19, there will be no parade this year, but our combined work continues. Our partnership in supporting our community continues the commitment to our daily walk in sharing our blessings.

We encourage all who read this to dig deep and share some “green energy” as you are able through financial contribution, by volunteering, and through communion with The Divine.

Bright Blessings your way,
Peace Be the Journey,
Sr. Clara

Missionary Order Perpetual Indulgence

urban inner-cities, native reservations, or Rust Belt ghost towns. It’s all a collective national sin.

The war on “terror” is but the latest canard of American aggression dubbed a “social-distancing” brand of combat. Yes, in this case, activists make no distinction between the demonstrable crimes of domestic and overseas empire.

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These activist saints, and countless others whose names we’ll never know, remind us of the undeniable fellowship of human existence and suffering. The tools of man’s and the state’s war-making, and ultimately, the good and evil are all inextricable. The list is long and, for the most part, unthinkably large. The tools of man’s and the state’s war-making, and ultimately, the good and evil are all inextricable. The list is long and, for the most part, unthinkably large.

Yet I’ve dealt and witnessed enough death to allow myself the projection and conjecture that for its victims, there’s nothing abstract about the United States’ way of war.

No doubt it feels a lot like “real” war below the business end of America’s raining munitions.

Decency demands disobedience; to stop that war before it boomerangs back to Des Moines.

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Frank, Eddie, and Norman are surviving the pandemic together! The virus is how it will survive. This could take years to play out. Likely everyone else is thinking the same thing, or at least some. Why the science and technology comes up with ways to treat the virus, address the symptoms, and how to come up with a vaccination. I am praying that we have a government that can govern a social plan to implement the remedies and cures. These things might happen, but in what way? Most likely, in the same way things happened in the pre-COVID-19 time; badly. We've had a "filthy rotten system," as Dorothy Day put it, long before COVID-19. This has been true my entire lifetime! What we are up against with this virus is an acceleration of failing global human systems. In biblical terms, St. Paul calls these systems the "Powers and Principalities." (Ephesians 6:12) The human race is in a moment of crisis. If not addressed, a bad "system" will get even worse, but with crises comes opportunity. We either take advantage of the opportunities or "the filthy rotten system" will do its own thing and continue to rule over what is left after the virus runs its course. Being a human issue, this virus is very personal too. It is being played out in our human families and relationships! Like our Christian faith, it's social. You have to catch it from somebody, and like the Eucharist, it's transmitted conspiratorially, from person to person. The word conspiracy is derived from the Latin word conspirare, which literally means, "to breathe together." Unfortunately, there are two good things that I see so far coming out of the virus. The first is that we now have a whole new understanding of heroes! They are not our gun toting police or our wea- ponized military. The new heroes are the doctors and nurses risking their lives and the lives of their families to save others, and they are not alone. The nursing home and grocery store workers, gas station workers, truck and bus drivers, credit union workers, and many more lower-paid service-based workers are our new national heroes. Basically anybody doing the "Works of Mercy," feeding the hungry, providing shelter for the homeless, visiting the house- less, visiting the imprisoned, and burying the dead, are heroes. The Works of Mercy have never been so universally understood before. They are being practiced today!

For example, feeding the hungry is one of the things we at the Des Moines Catholic Worker do all the time. These days, lots of people are feeding the hungry. Every school is a feeding station. Cafes, restaurants, and other neighborhood social organizations are getting food to people. It's amazing, personal, and universal.

The second good thing I see from our global experience with COVID-19 is that as the world shuts down eco- nomically, the global environment is showing real signs of improvement. If sustained, this could be a "game changer" for the long-term survival of the human race.

It's a global human wake up call, if ever there was one! If we could figure out the global human needs at the COVID-19 levels of "car- bon footprint," the same time we had to do the justice, make the peace, and build a better world. At the end of my March 25 report, I wrote the following: "Where we go from here is hard to tell. The COVID-19 virus is not going away anytime soon. More and more people are going to get sick, and some of them will die. We all can see it coming. The challenge for us at the Des Moines Catholic Worker is to stay in character with the spirit of our movement, no mat- ter what happens. To that end, we will continue serving our guests as long as there is a single healthy Catholic Worker here. To love each other is to love the guest, the stranger, and the convict at the Catholic Worker. It's always been a race to the bottom with serving as our game! We continue to serve, in good times and in bad times."

We are now entering a time of uncertainty, but also a great opportu- nity for service. Our need to pray has never been more important. As we focus on our day to day life, the prayer Jesus taught us is always guid- ing our hands...give us this day, our daily bread."

When I started writing this article, I asked the question: "Does anyone really know what time it is?" At that time, the United States had hit the 60-day death mark of the virus, deaths of publishing (June 21), the number of people who have died from the virus in the United States is at least 122,000. Does anybody really know what time it is?© www.viapacis.wordpress.com

Frank, Eddie, and Norman are surviving the pandemic together!
One Woman’s Trash Is Another Woman’s Wedding Dress

by Charlie Ramirez

One of the means of the Catholic Worker movement is voluntary poverty. As Catholic Workers, my new husband Celestino and I take this vow to shorten the divide between ourselves and our fellow humans who come to us for help. I find that it also keeps me focused on the things in life that are truly important, and as a creative human, nothing inspires me more than a constraint.

On May 30, I married my best friend, soul mate, and absolute love of my life. In order to do that, I needed something to wear. In keeping with the means of the Catholic Worker, it certainly wasn’t going to be an exorbitantly-priced, heavy satin gown purchased at a traditional bridal shop. About six months ago, I started keeping my eyes open for “things that might be useful” as Celestino and I did our regular task of sorting donations and maintaining the Des Moines Catholic Worker’s free store and pantry. Guests’ demand for items like gauzy, translucent window curtains and tablecloths is fairly low, so those were the things I collected.

The one thing I did purchase was a 25 dollar hoop crinoline, which I ordered on Amazon. The hoop crinoline is like the skeleton of a dress: it creates the shape of the gown from the waist down and is critical for shaping large skirts without making them weigh 900 pounds. Getting the shape right is really hard, so I thought I would save time by not trying to make one from scratch. Unfortunately, when it arrived in the mail, it wasn’t shaped the way it had been pictured online, and we were already fully in quarantine, so I was stuck with it. After fighting to adjust it for way too long, I gave up, ripped it completely apart, and learned how to make a late 1800s elliptical hoop crinoline with parts I reclaimed from the original skirt, including making every single one of the 10,000 support straps. I also made an additional hoop from some PVC pipe, duct tape, and two three-inch finishing nails. From start to finish, just making, leveling, and balancing the hoop skirt took an entire week.

After finishing the hoop, Celestino and I set out to Maria Von Trap a dress out of curtains, the dust ruffle material at all. We were already rapidly becoming not enough material very rapidly became not enough what I thought was more than enough. Finding scraps, sheet sets, and closet to find anything white that would do, but I dug through all my fabric and notions pulled off of swim suits, jackets, and pants, and the zipper lovingly released from a dress that former Des Moines Catholic Worker community member, Ryna-Ria, gave me after her wedding. All the material was some degree of shear, so even after making a full lining for the bodice and the skirt, I still had more transparency than I wanted.

I ended up cutting between one and three underlinings (additional layers) for every pattern piece. Unfortunately, what I thought was more than enough material very rapidly became not enough material at all. We were stuck in quarantine, and I needed a solution quickly! I dug through all my fabric scraps, sheet sets, and closet to find anything white that would do, but came up totally empty handed. I stood in the kitchen contemplating, when I had a thought: “You know, our living room curtains are white-ish…”

The happy Catholic Worker couple!

The process took much longer than I’d expected, and parts of the dress were pinned together rather than sewn, but I walked down the aisle in something that made me feel lovely. The coronavirus has delayed our reception for a year, giving me an extra year to fully finish it. The whole time I was cutting them out, I wondered why on earth I kept seeing footprints on the paper. It wasn’t until I’d almost finished that I realized that it was a huge protector used to protect new carpet from continued foot traffic. I shoes! I put my markings on the same side as the footprints in hopes that I could keep them from soiling the white fabric.

With 21 pattern pieces finally drafted to my liking, I set out to Maria Von Trap a dress out of curtains, the dust ruffle being a double bed sheet set long since given away, notions pulled off of swim suits, jackets, and pants, and the zipper lovingly released from a dress that former Des Moines Catholic Worker community member, Ryna-Ria, gave me after her wedding. All the material was some degree of shear, so even after making a full lining for the bodice and the skirt, I still had more transparency than I wanted.

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The happy Catholic Worker couple!

The process took much longer than I’d expected, and parts of the dress were pinned together rather than sewn, but I walked down the aisle in something that made me feel lovely. The coronavirus has delayed our reception for a year, giving me an extra year to fully finish it. I’ll probably also make a jacket. I’m excited for the time to make it even more perfect than it was on our day. All told, the dress cost $25.30, and it was even more perfect than a store-bought gown. I would have been overjoyed to marry Celestino wearing absolutely anything, but with a little craftiness and a lot of hard work, I was proud to wear a garment that showed just a tiny glimmer of the effort and love that I vowed to put into our marriage that day!

most certainly not my same shape.

When I had rough fabric shapes, I made paper patterns using the paper on the roll. The whole time I was cutting them out, I wondered why on earth I kept seeing footprints on the paper. It wasn’t until I’d almost finished that I realized that it was a huge protector used to protect new carpet from continued foot traffic. I shoes! I put my markings on the same side as the footprints in hopes that I could keep them from soiling the white fabric.

With 21 pattern pieces finally drafted to my liking, I set out to Maria Von Trap a dress out of curtains, the dust ruffle being a double bed sheet set long since given away, notions pulled off of swim suits, jackets, and pants, and the zipper lovingly released from a dress that former Des Moines Catholic Worker community member, Ryna-Ria, gave me after her wedding. All the material was some degree of shear, so even after making a full lining for the bodice and the skirt, I still had more transparency than I wanted.

I ended up cutting between one and three underlinings (additional layers) for every pattern piece. Unfortunately, what I thought was more than enough material very rapidly became not enough material at all. We were stuck in quarantine, and I needed a solution quickly! I dug through all my fabric scraps, sheet sets, and closet to find anything white that would do, but came up totally empty handed. I stood in the kitchen contemplating, when I had a thought: “You know, our living room curtains are white-ish…”
Yoga Part 4: Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi
by Ryna-Ria Ignacio

There has got to be a more qualified person than me to speak about these eight limbs of yoga, specifically the last three, but here I am writing about it, just a spark of yogic inconceivability richness, all in hopes of sharing positive, provoking thoughts that could lead us all to healthy action. Let's jump into this transcendental rabbit hole...

The final three limbs, to conclude this series on the eight limbs of yoga, are dharana (concentration), dhyana (meditation), and samadhi (full meditative absorption).

Dharana is the process of ceasing our attachment to any sensual engagements, to redirect the mind and meditate on the self within it. It is the process of trying to control our perception of sound, touch, form, taste, or smell and lose awareness of the external world. Many may ask, "Well... why would I want to do that? I like my senses. They bring me so much pleasure!" By meditating on the self, we can experience an even more satisfying and everlasting pleasure. There is a fault in relying on the validity of the perception of the senses. Our minds and senses have their ways of fooling us, and sometimes we cannot tell the difference between serving the false ego or serving our true self.

Before we can fully understand how to tame these constantly wandering senses, we first have to understand who the self is. In chapter two of the Bhagavad-Gita As It Is (translated by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada), Lord Krishna explains the science of the living entity: "Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor will I ever cease to exist" (Bg 2.12). "As the embodied soul continuously passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. A sober person is not bewildered by such a change" (Bg 2.13). All throughout the Bhagavad-Gita As It Is and other major Vedic texts, the nature of the soul is described as eternal, unborn, indestructible, immeasurable, and full of knowledge and bliss. Our life force is animating this body, but the body becomes worthless, later turned into stool, ashes, and later, earth, when the spirit soul, or self, leaves.

Now, let's get into the thick of practicing dharana. Lord Krishna shares with Arjuna reasons why we should try to subdue these senses, which can cause so much anxiety and fuel our minds with madness, so that we can meditate on the self within. He says that lust arises within the self after one meditates on different sense objects which bring about different desires within us. This is something that is natural, to meditate on the things that we want, but the Bhagavad-Gita shares an alternate way of thinking about our lives.

The chain of unfortunate reactions that happen within us begins with meditating on certain objects of interest: "While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment for them, and from such attachment lust develops. And from lust, anger arises" (Bg 2.62). It is frustrating to the best of us to work so hard towards something, or even just to think hard about something we want and not receive it. However, even if we receive what we want, it may cause us to hanker for more.

"From anger, complete delusion arises, and from delusion, bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost, one falls down again into the material pool" (Bg 2.63). Reflecting back on the nature of the soul, Vedic thought teaches that we are not of this material world. This is not to say that it does not exist or that it is a "bad" thing, the material world could be a good place if we all thought about utilizing our energy and our resources towards the benefit of others, towards pure, loving, devotional service to the Lord, but that is not what is actually happening.

So when Lord Krishna refers to the "material pool," He is speaking about a place that is not truly natural for us. Like I mentioned before, the natural state of the self is blissful. We are drowning in suffering. Many of us are anxious, unsteady, uncertain, tired, and depressed. While we can find temporary relief, it doesn't take too long for us to realize the fickering of this so-called happiness. The point is, the only way to truly live happily here in this world is to realize the self, realize our connection with the Supreme Lord, and serve Them and others with love.

He continues, "But a person free from all attachment and aversion and able to control his senses through regulative principles of freedom can obtain the mercy of the Lord" (Bg 2.64). "The senses, the mind and the intelligence are the sitting places of this lust. Through them lust covers the real knowledge of the living entity and bewilders him" (3.40).

Though we are perfectly imperfect, we are fortunate enough to have a vast collection of texts available written by great saints who lived exemplary lives by following and sharing many principles and practices with pure unalloyed love, devotion, and discipline. By their examples, they have shown us that it is possible for any one to achieve success in these practices of controlling the senses and living in true bliss through service of the Lord. This brings me to the next limb, dhyana. True meditation begins when we let go of our anxieties and worries; we make the move, and we invite the Lord to be the focus of our thoughts. From our thoughts, we choose how we want to act upon them by word or deed. Through dhyana-yoga, we are disciplining ourselves and cleansing or purifying.

Frank and Patrick take the new van for a cruise!

The Des Moines Catholic Worker has a new cargo van! At a cost of 21 thousand dollars, it was a group effort! It began with Frank’s cousin, Bobby Mauro, who found the van, and Reliable Motors, who sold it to us. We received an anonymous five thousand dollar gift for this effort. Then, Ray Blase raised another five thousand dollars from the Hubbell Family Foundation. Both of these donations, plus one thousand dollars from Frank’s cousin, George Cataldo, were cleared through another cousin, Lewis Randa’s, tax deductible Peace Abby Foundation in Sherborn, Massachusetts. Another six thousand dollars was begged from another fifteen people! The Des Moines Catholic Worker contributed the difference from our savings account. Many thanks to all who made this happen! We love our new van!
continued until all of our comrades were free. By Wednesday night, we had overnight shifts that bailed comrades out as quickly as they were processed. At this point, we had become an extremely effective jail support/bail fund for not only Polk County, where we bailed people out extremely quickly, but across the state, where comrades facing serious charges were released from jail within days of arrest. At this point, we've bailed out dozens and dozens of people, and EICBP has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to bail out more.

Our work is still ongoing at the time of penning this article and will probably have transitioned to legal support for arrestees by the time of publication. During the past week, our jail support station was the site of both joy at the moment of release and the unloading of deep trauma, both physical and emotional, picked up by arrestees in jail. Police brutalized people both before and during their detention. They started investigations into the bail fund organizers and despised our ability to put the people they yanked from the streets right back into the fray.

We're some distance away from unpacking everything that happened this week in regards to our work getting folks out of jail, but a quick reflection reveals both some critical successes we had and some mistakes we made in our effort:

1) You need a crew of people whom you can trust and who are ready to put in work. Bailing people out requires large volumes of cash, and you need to be able to trust the people holding it. It also takes a lot of work, sitting at the jail, answering and returning phone calls, working with financial institutions, and fundraising. Most of us only got a few hours of sleep in those first few days. Be prepared to put every free second of your life into this.

2) You need connections and some standing in the activist community. You're going to be getting people's close comrades and friends out of jail and helping people you don't know. You'll need a large network to get the word out and get fundraising going. We were very fortunate, again, to have EICBP's support on day one, and connections should be made to existing local bond projects if they exist. If they don't, your network will be even more important in raising money via GoFundMe/PayPal/Venmo. Also, a few groups might try to create bail funds at the same time you are, which was our experience. This is a good thing, it's not a competition. Work with those whom you trust to coordinate efforts.

3) You need to establish a hotline, social media presence, and flyers. We made the mistake of establishing a hotline on a VOIP internet service. While it's very nice to be able to use something like Google Voice, jail phones didn't connect to the line, so people arrested couldn't reach out. We got this fixed later by porting that Google Voice number to a physical phone. Having a real “in-your-hand” phone that can be passed around is what we should have done initially. Also, make a Facebook and Twitter page for the bail support group. Make some simple flyers to pass out at protests and have protesters write the hotline number on their arms. If you're bailing people out, word will spread quickly.

4) You need to establish a priority system for arrestees. You may not always have all the cash to get everyone out right then, right there. Even when you do, who do you get out first? People of color should be at the top of the list. This should be a given. If you have reason to believe particular people are being mistreated in jail, they should also be prioritized. Bail out everyone you can, and don't leave arrestees in there because of serious or “violent” charges: what cops charge people with has little to do with what happened on the ground. Decisions will inevitably be made on the fly, but you should have some sort of rubric established from the get-go.

5) You're going to have problems with liquidity. Most jails accept only cash and sometimes cashier's checks for bail. If they're hitting arrestees with serious charges as they did in Des Moines, you will need a huge amount of cash to bail them out (we were initially looking at $176,000 total). Banks like to put multi-day holds on large transfers of money, and you will have to fight them to lift those holds. If you have solid connections in the community, you might be able to find organizations and individuals willing to front cash for repayment when the bank holds clear, which is what we were fortunate to do.

6) You need people at the jail until all of your people are out. This is the bread and butter. Volunteers who aren't in the close circle of trust can be quickly trained to do this. At least two people should be at hand. People are going to be arrested overnight, and ideally you'll have your people there to get them out as soon as they're booked in. Jail is traumatic, and you will need water, snacks, cigarettes, phone chargers, rides, and emotional and physical first aid available for people getting out. You should also keep track of who is getting arrested and who gets out, as well as their contact information for legal aid later down the line.

7) Start early. You should know what form of payment your jail accepts for bail, where it is, who is eligible to bail folks out, and whether they accept surety (ten percent non-refundable bonds; Note that you should never use bail bond companies, they are evil). This can be done long before protests start. We also wish we could have started our efforts earlier because we could have bailed people out before they were brutalized in jail. Have the infrastructure ready to go and begin mobilizing the second its looks like people are going to be arrested.

There are reams more that could be written about our experience and libraries that could be written by people who have done this before us. We are learning from our experience already, and we have mistakes in our future that we will learn from still. We were overwhelmed by the tidal wave of support, bravery, solidarity, and pure humanity that made our effort possible. If anyone reading this has helped in any way, thank you. None of us are free until all of us are free.
Introduction and Three-Month Reflection

by Lily Kirsch

About three months ago, when the country started realizing there was no escape from the impacts of COVID-19, Grinnell College abruptly ended its on-campus instruction and told students to return home. I was a first-year student looking for a place to stay who found a friend from Oscar Buchanan, a friend who stayed here last summer, that the Catholic Worker House was offering rooms to students who needed them. A chaotic few days followed. Grinnell was suddenly telling us we had to get out by the end of the semester, and at that point, I hardly knew what the Catholic Worker was, much less visited or worked a shift.

That Friday afternoon, I had my first communication with a resident at the Worker (a very glitchy video call with my now housemate, Madeleine Terry), and by the next morning, I was in Des Moines, an hour away from Grinnell, jumping onto the Saturday shift. It was not only my first shift ever, but the first ever COVID-era shift, the first time meals were served to guests outside of a window. Two days later, I had moved into Rachel Corrie House.

That whirlwind start to my time at the Worker was probably good preparation for the months to come. Adjusting to life in an intentional community and life in a pandemic at the same time has been a tough, but very rewarding experience. Some of the things I’ve learned so far are how to cook a couple hundred meals in a short amount of time, how to back to a very big van into a very small driveway, how to stock a pantry with food and supplies that are constantly changing, and how to feed myself with more than PB&J and quesadillas. I’ve learned a lot about doing it on the fly, about de-escalating conflicts, and about trial and error and letting go of perfection.

Being here, feeding and listening to people, and also just being alive in this moment where the full extent of police brutality is so painfully visible, has brought me face to face with many of the things that are wrong with myself and my country. I see how much I’ve ignored and learned to fear the people we hate, who we beat and imprison, and whose homes we destroy. I’ve gained a new perspective on the ways the social safety net in this country systematically fails poor people, especially people of color. I’ve learned about the extremely harmful ways my white middle class upbringing has distorted my concept of safety to justify cruelty.

I’ve also gained new tools for being genuinely engaged in a community and in solidarity with my most marginalized members. I’m continuing to learn new ways of actively using the resources at my disposal: my privilege gives me large amounts of disposable time, freedom of movement, and a network of social workers, and lawyers are striving to make sure that the migrants have a plate of hot food, a secure place to sleep, and some kind of work and information regarding their right to asylum. They are sustained thanks to donations, international aid and local support, as well as a few local organizations. Since 2019, the federal government of Mexico has halted aid to these organizations due to lack of funds. There is no stereotype for the migrants who reside in the refugee camps. There is a man with a backpack and baseball cap. There is a mother that travels with her daughters. She left her two sons behind because she didn’t have enough money for the whole family to travel. They were fleeing a war. There is a widow that had a son killed in Honduras. She was trying to rescue her other sons of five and ten years old. There is a man, 60 years old, who was deported. He is losing his visa and does not want to telephone his daughter to get mixed up in his problems because of her precarious situation with immigration. There is a pregnant woman of 19 with another child in her arms; the child in her arms is five years old with urine-stained trousers, caused by his fear after having been processed into one of the ICE detention centers for children in the United States.

Now with the COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis is even more alarming. The situation of migrants in southern Mexico is as bad worse than the situation in the north. A center of refugees that houses 160 people, most of whom are seeking asylum, live in a space with only 100 beds. Conditions are deplorable, with no access to medical attention or methods of disease prevention or information in the face of the sanitary emergency of the coronavirus. Additionally, there are cases of people who are HIV positive that have no medical help or medicines. They are suffering from severe conditions of poor hygiene with very little water.

There is news of migrant people and refugees being detained across Mexico. Particularly alarming in the context of the pandemic is the detention of people with previous symptoms of respiratory infections and fevers. To date, none have received medical attention since the start of the pandemic, and none have been isolated or tested for COVID-19. Without Borders has visited various migrant holding stations and say that the spaces have no facilities for regular medical attention, and they lack basic needs like water. All in all, the factors indicate an ideal mix for the propagation of illnesses. COVID-19 among them.

With the situation of the migrant jails, many of the detained migrants want to voluntarily return to their country of origin. However, the government of Guatemala has closed their frontiers and asked the Mexican government to cancel any repatriation of its citizens, as well as those of El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Any return of the non-Guatemalans has to pass through Guatemalan territory if the trek it by land. This is the reason why Tapachula, Chiapas has thousands of migrants detained in the National Institute of Migration, plus hundreds detained in small non-governmental shelters. The migrants have no possible way to return to their country of origin or to try and continue their travel to the United States. They are effectively trapped in Mexico.

In protest, 700 of the detained have camped in Station XXI of the immigration services of Tapachula City in a strike, expressing their need to repackage. Some of the detained have escaped to try and make their way north. Faced with the strike, the National Institute of Migration has been trying to negotiate with the governments of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador to accept the return of their citizens, but in the middle of the sanitary problems generated by the coronavirus, there have been no answers from the Central American governments. Thousands of migrants that have entered in a legal manner to the United States have not been detained, but they also have been affected by the closing of the frontiers. Legal immigrants are faced with the impossibility of returning to their home country. Many have no place of refuge in the United States because of the closing of immigrant centers in the cities along the border.

Some of those immigrant centers have shelters on both sides of the border. The first to close was the refugee house operated by the Diocese of Tapachula. Various centers in the Southern border soon followed suit. One of the earliest to close was in Tecum Uman. The Jesuit services for migrants, along with most of the NGOs with social services that assist the poor have provisionally closed their doors and attend the population only through the telephone. Today, in both borders, but especially in Tapachula, Chiapas, chaos reigns.
Rest In Peace, Catherine “Kaydee” Bobbitt
by Wendy Vasquez, Mother

Kaydee Bobbitt left this life on April 3, 2020 at age 34. She is joining her beloved broth-
er, Luke, who died last year, and her godmother, Lin Romano, who died in February.

Kaydee was a smart, funny, and glamorous young woman with many gifts. Her life was absolutely focused on her family. As a single mom raising three kids by herself, Kaydee car-
ried imposing financial and emotional burdens all the time, but she always felt that it was all
her responsibility and that no one else should have to listen to her troubles. With immense
determination, she took a cheerful, funny, and responsible self to work from age 18 on. She
finished high school in three years while caring for a baby, earned her house through Habitat,
fought two years at DMACC, cared for three energetic kids at home, and tried hard to keep
her house clean. She did her best to keep all
that to herself and never asked for help unless it
could absolutely not be avoided. She would never set foot outside her house unless she
looked right, and the same went for the kids.

Kaydee was born into the Catholic Worker community and learned those values
as thoroughly as she learned to walk and talk. She taught her kids never to pass up a homeless
person without giving them some money, even
when you don’t have any for yourself. Over the
ten years she had her house, she shared it with
a series of people she knew and cared about who
needed a place to stay. She could not tolerate
any form of racist, anti-gay, anti-poor, or any
other similar comments or conversations, and
she would let you know.

Kaydee’s life was fiercely focused on her
children, and her dreams were all about family.
She was dreaming of taking them on a vaca-
tion and was making plans for that, taking them
to college hunting, getting married someday,
and living in a peaceful neighborhood with a yard.
When she was killed, she had just bought bikes
for the kids and a pull cart for the baby, and
she was excited that they were all going to go for a
bike ride the next day.

Kaydee leaves behind broken-hearted
and stunned family and friends from North
High School, Blank Children’s, the City of Des
Moines, and a myriad other people who knew
her in other ways. Her spirit lives on in her chil-
dren, who are picking up the slack now because the baby needs them, and though they all know
they are going to need some help themselves
down the line, they are taking care of business
first. We thank the community for all the sup-
port you are showing us and for reflecting back
to us the love and energy Kaydee brought to the world.

Wendy can be contacted at
Wendy Vasquez, <wendyvasquez1227@gmail.
com> 515-771-8656
1309 Chautauqua Parkway, Des Moines ia 50314

YOGA PART 4: DHARTANA, DHYANA, SAMADHI continued from page 7

-ing our hearts. Most of us are unable to renown all of our things and
our jobs and leave our homes to live in a secluded place to meditate, so
we have to continue to be active and work. The level of consciousness we are in
makes all the difference. If we try to renounce the fruits of our labor unto
the Supreme Lord, we will be rewarded ten-fold. The Bhagavad-Gita As
It Is has a whole chapter speaking about dhyana-yoga, so I will just share
some key points:

“For those who have conquered the mind, the Supersoul is already
reached, for he has attained tranquility. To such a man, happiness and dis-
tress, heat and cold, honor and dishonor are all the
same” (6.7).

Everyone is seeking a higher purpose. Everyone is seeking something to do. Not all ac-
tivities we engage ourselves in are fully satisfying, but we do them anyway, either because we haven’t
been presented any alternatives that interest us, or
because we are afraid. This world is full of activities that satisfy our senses, but the Vedas recognize the
importance in seeking and worshipping the Su-
preme Lord, who is the creator and controller of all
the senses.

“A person is said to be established in self-re-
alization and is called a yogi [or mystic] when he is
fully satisfied by virtue of acquired knowledge and
realization. Such a person is situated in transcen-
dence and is self-controlled. He sees everything-
whether it be pebbles, stone or gold—as the same”
(6.8).

“A transcendentalist should always engage
his body, mind, and self in relationship with the Su-
preme; he should live alone in a secluded place and should always carefully
control his mind. He should be free from desires and feelings of possessive-
ness” (6.10).

“Thus practicing constant control of the body, mind, and activities,
the mystic transcendentalist, his mind regulated, attains to the kingdom of
God [or the abode of Krishna] by cessation of material existence. (6.15).

“He who is regulated in his habits of eating, sleeping, recreation,
and work can mitigate all material pains by practicing the yoga system”
(6.17).

Once we find a regulative practice or discipline, then we can at least
gain a taste of bliss, or samadhi.

“One who is not connected with the Supreme [in Krishna or God
consciousness] can have neither transcendental intelligence nor a steady
mind, without which there is no possibility of peace. And how can there be
any happiness without peace?” (Bg 2.66).

To fully experience samadhi, we must develop a higher taste, and
we will remember our original, natural position of being full of knowledge
and bliss, eternally connected with the Lord as stated here:

“Though the embodied soul may be restricted from sense enjoy-
ment, the taste for sense objects remains. But, ceasing such engagements by
experiencing a higher taste, he is fixed in consciousness” (Bg 2.59).

“In the stage of perfection called trance, or samadhi, one’s mind is
completely restrained from material mental activities by practice of yoga. This perfection is characterized
by one’s ability to see the self by the pure mind and to
relish and rejoice in the self. In that joyful state, one is
situated in boundless transcendental happiness, real-
ized through transcendental senses. Established thus,
one never departs from the truth, and upon gaining
this, he thinks there is no greater gain. Being situated
in such a position, one is never shaken, even in the
midst of greatest difficulty. This indeed is actual free-
dom from all miseries arising from material contact”
(Bg 6.20-23).

One bonafide process that has existed since time
immemorial, described in the Vedas, is known as
bhakti-yoga. This practice is so rich and elaborate.
Through this practice we are able to attain all three of
these limbs and learn how to fully engage our mind
and senses on the Lord’s devotional service.

Jakob and I are living in a faith-based community
with Hare Krishna devotees (International Society
for Krishna Consciousness), and we study Vedic literature that offers a simple,
yet practical, lifestyle full of activities in devotional service according to
sacred scripture. We arise at 3:30am and spend most of our day singing and
chanting these names of God:

Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama, Hare Hare
These names—just like any other name of God—carry a transcend-
ental vibration that awakens, elevates, and purifies the soul.

I have learned more in the short spontaneous moments of pure
surrender than when I think that I could control all aspects of my life. It comes
and goes, but one day I hope to find steadiness in this path of trying to real-
ize God with sweet support from the knowledge of the Vedas and the eight
limbs of yoga.
A Letter From A Former Des Moines Catholic Worker

April 2, 2020

Dear Frank,

I recently received the latest issue of the viapacis and read the “Blast from the Past: May 16, 1981” article. That demonstration on Armed Forces Day resulted in my very first arrest, followed by several years of continued nonviolent demonstrations and arrests. I hope you remember me. I volunteered and then lived at the Worker between 1979 and 1981 before I left to finish my pediatrics residency in Rochester, Minnesota. The years that I was involved with the Des Moines community are some of my very favorite memories. My experience there influenced everything I’ve done since then. I worked as a physician with Native Americans in Minneapolis from 1983-2016. Throughout my career, I felt that I was continuing the spirit of the Worker.

In 2003, I worked with two other women physicians to create a new health center for Native people in Minneapolis. I had the Catholic Worker in mind throughout its creation and management. We had to do a lot of begging for funds from local businesses and foundations to get started, and we received many small donations (and prayers) from people in the community.

It was our mission to create a place that provided warmth and respect, as well as quality medical care. We kept the place simple and welcoming. The clinic waiting room felt like our living room, with second-hand chairs, donated decorations, etc. It was a place with a soul. The Native American Community Clinic staff truly cared about the Native community (and still does). In addition to healthcare, there was always an effort to provide winter coats, gloves, gifts for children, access to community resources, etc. I can’t tell you how often I thought of the Catholic Worker throughout that time.

I’ve enjoyed reading about your community over the years. I’m not surprised that the Worker continues to attract wonderful new community members. I’ve wondered how you personally stay there and keep going with all the protest, but I guess Dorothy did too! I’ve lost much of my confidence in the power of small marches and protests, but I do, of course, remember the importance of “NO!” from “Bread and Wine” by Ignazio Salone. These days I often feel powerless about making any significant changes in our corrupt government except by voting.

I haven’t given up: I still have faith, and I’ll always cherish my experience with places like the Catholic Worker and knowing people like you. If you think Norman would remember me, please give him a hug for me. I don’t know how you’re doing “social distancing” during this terrible pandemic. Take good care of yourselves, and stay healthy. Your work and the very presence of the Catholic Worker adds hope to the world.

Love,
Lydia Caros, Des Moines Catholic Worker 1979-1981

On Violence

by Patrick Stall

As Catholic Workers, we are generally committed to nonviolence. We preach it, we live it, and if you’re lucky like me, a guest might punch you in the face while you’re trying to practice it. In abstract terms, and in our houses of hospitality, it is relatively easy to position ourselves in a nonviolent stance.

The protests over George Floyd’s murder by police officers, like the wave of Black Lives Matter protests 2014-16, have made that position more difficult for some. Aren’t these protests violent? The capitalist media tells us so. Their cameras somehow seem to be always pointed at protesters exhibiting revolutionary energy that fuels uprisings like these.

This intentional obfuscation hides the violence of the state. While I was on the ground at protests in Des Moines, I witnessed the police use chemical weapons, which are banned in warfare by the Geneva Convention, on protesters with no provocation whatsoever. Cops started beating and pepper-spraying people they were close to without any warning. On that first night, a comrade of mine acting as a street medic treated a twelve year-old girl who had not been protesting, but had been hit hard by tear gas and barely understood what was happening. If you don’t believe me, google “police attack unprompted,” and sit at your computer for a few hours. Better yet, get up and go to a protest and watch these things happen in real time.

The violence of the police here is the return to America of what the United States empire has exhibited across the world throughout its whole existence, the control of populations through violent subjugation. The methods of police violence we see today were used yesterday in Iraq, Vietnam, Chile, and Palestine. The fascistic exercise of force against protesters, the breaking of skulls, the letting loose of white supremacists with AR-15s, and the choking mist of tear gas represent the return of colonial methods of repression from foreign lands to the settler colony that we call America.

There are people on the ground right now protesting this violence, by whatever means necessary. Those of us who are white are especially called to perform the works of mercy for those who are crying out against repression. Washing tear gas out of people’s eyes is healing the sick. Bailing out protesters is ransoming the captive. Calling cops what they are, the butchers of the state, is admonishing sinners. No one is asking the Catholic Worker movement to participate in the direct acts of uprising, but we are called to support those crying out for justice, for survival.

In his 1967 speech, “Beyond Vietnam,” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, “I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed...without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today: my own government.” In the same way, Catholic Workers are called today to rebuke the police, the military, the government, and white supremacists for their unspeakable violence against protesters, against people going about their lives. We live in a country that locks up 2.3 million of its citizens in cages, murders colonized people with police, poverty, and pollution, drops bombs the world over to maintain its slipping geopolitical hegemony, and literally causes an ecological apocalypse through climate change. This is violence. Call it out. Talk about it.

And of the “violence” of the protests? If you still have enough breath to say a single word about protesters throwing plastic water bottles at riot police encased in 60 pounds of body armor, helmets, and gas masks, then you should save that breath and listen to the people suffocating under 400 years of enslavement, murder, and genocide, who can only gasp, “I Can’t Breathe!”
Volunteers: Individuals and work crews for hospitality (serving food, cleanup), cleaning and general inside and outside maintenance... without them, we burn out.

Food: Fruit, Vegetables, Meat and Fish, Milk, Cheese, Salted Butter, Olive Oil, Sugar, Coffee, Creamer, Juice (sugar free), Salt, Black Pepper, Fresh Garlic, Soups and Stews (both canned and fresh). Leftovers from weddings, funerals and other social gatherings...

Meal Providers: Provide a meal for 50-70 people once a month! Call or email for current openings. 515-214-1030, dmcw@catholicworker@gmail.com


Toiletries: Disposable Razors, Shaving Cream, Shampoo, Conditioner, Lotion, Deodorant, Soap, Toothpaste (Small sizes preferred for handout), Toothbrushes and Toilet Paper.

Clothing: Underwear, Socks, T-shirts, Sweatshirts, Hoodies, Coats, Work Pants (All Sizes, especially big), Sleeping Bags, Blankets.

Household Supplies: Bleach, Laundry Detergent, Environmentally-Friendly Dish Soap, Murphy's Oil Soap, Pinesol, Trash Bags, Brooms, Rugs, Candles, Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs, Aluminum Foil, Plastic Wrap, Sandwich and Freezer Bags, Bath Towels, Playing Cards, Candles, Phone Chargers.

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.

Library: Peace and Justice books for the Berrigan House Library.

Cash Money: Cash donations are essential to pay our property taxes, utilities, repair and maintenance of property, upkeep and gas for two vans, purchase of needed supplies, community gardening, and for the continued publication and mailing of the via pacis, a good 20% of our annual expenses.

DMCW Website: The DMCW website has recently been redone! Please visit us at www.desmoinescatholicworker.com. You can also visit www.viapacis.wordpress.com for an online version of the via pacis.