

# THE HARTFORD CATHOLIC WORKER



ST. MARTIN DE PORRES HOUSE  
ST. BRIGID HOUSE

*"To construct a new society within the shell of the old." Peter Maurin*



*Brian Kavanagh*

*But the risen Jesus does not confine his activity to the Church. He penetrates the entire cosmos, pervades the whole world, and makes his presence felt in every human being. the resurrection is a process that began with Jesus and that will go on until it embraces all creation. wherever an authentically human life is growing in the world, wherever justice is triumphing over the instincts of domination, wherever grace is winning out over the power of sin, wherever human beings are creating more fraternal mediations in their social life together, wherever love is getting the better of selfish interests, and wherever hope is resisting the lure of cynicism or despair, there the process of resurrection is being turned into a reality.*

*Leonardo Boff*

## EASTER 2004

# THE HARTFORD CATHOLIC WORKER

Established November 3, 1993

Volume 12 Number 2

*The Hartford Catholic Worker* is published bimonthly by the St. Martin De Porres Catholic Worker community. We are a lay community of Catholics, and like minded friends, living in the north end of Hartford, working and praying for an end to violence and poverty. We are not a "tax-exempt" agency. We do not accept government funding. Our ability to house the homeless, feed the hungry, and work with the children depends on contributions from our readers. We are not paid. We can be reached at: 18 Clark St., Hartford CT 06120; (860) 724-7066, doucot@sbcglobal.net We are: Brian Kavanagh, Morlianna Evans, Jacqueline, Christopher, Micah and Ammon Allen-Doucot.



## ST. MARTIN'S WISH LIST

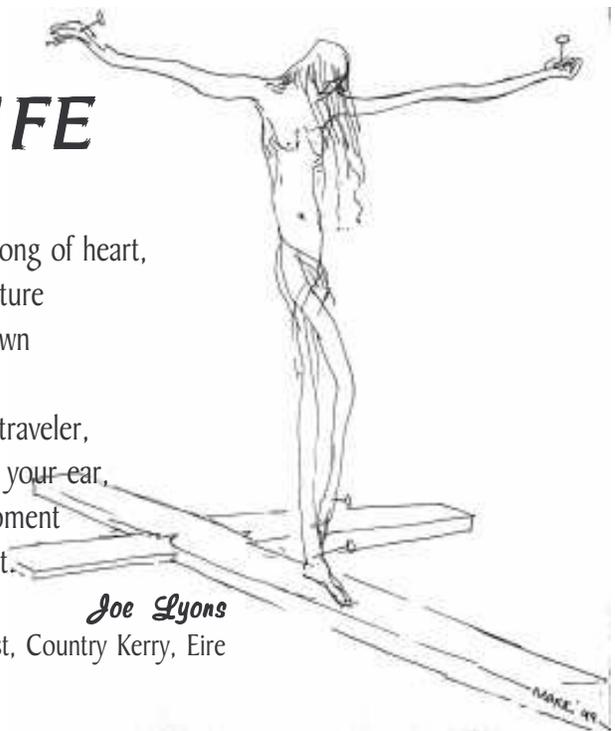
- 🍝 spaghetti sauce, beef stew, peanut butter, jelly and tunafish
- 🛏 Beds, dressers, pots and pans, and kitchen tables
- 🪑 Help picking up furniture on Thursdays.
- 🙏 your continued prayers and financial support
- 🚲 Someone to volunteer a few hours a month to **help fix us bikes** in our bike shop. The kids keep asking for bikes- we got 'em to give, they're just in need of a little work. PLEASE HELP US.
- 😊 Please: no more egg cartons for 2 months. Thanks!

## LIFE

Life, Life,  
Life is for the strong of heart,  
For those to venture  
in a world unknown  
Time, Time,  
Time is a fellow traveler,  
Who whispers in your ear,  
Savour every moment  
for it is going fast.

*Joe Lyons*

Tarbest, Country Kerry, Eire



## St. Martin's Calendar

- ✦ Please join us on Tuesday, **May 4, and June 1 at 7:30 PM** for the celebration of Mass at St. Brigid House, 18 Clark St., Hartford. Refreshments and conversation follow Mass.
- 🌍 Our vigil for an end to war continues on **Friday's from 11:30-12:30** outside the Federal Building on Main St. in Hartford. Please bring a sign and join our call for an end to the American military occupation of Iraq.
- 🌍 Please join us for our annual **earth day neighborhood cleanup on Saturday April 24 at 8:30AM**. For this year's cleanup we will be joined by several hundred young Catholics from our the city, student-athletes from several UCONN teams, the Ebony Horsewomen, the Friends of Keney Park, and the Upper Albany Neighborhood Collaborative.. We are planning on cleaning a section of Keney park. A forgotten jewel in north Hartford planned by Frederick Law Olmstead which is home to deer, fox, hawks and more. Following the cleanup we will provide a lunch and host a game of soccer or flag football. **We will gather at the Keney Park Pond House on Vine St. Call 724-7066 for details.**

# COMPLETING THE RESURRECTION

## *Christopher Allen - Doucot*

Joshua is a charming 14-year-old boy who frequents the Catholic Worker. Joshua is a big kid (you should see his 2-year-old sister who looks like she is 6!). He is gentle, curious, and interested in how things work. When we first met Joshua about 2 years ago he had a pea sized cyst on his right ear lobe. This past February the cyst was the size of a walnut.

Because Joshua is gentle and because of this growth on his ear he has had a hard time with other children in school. He kept his head down, staring at the floor, studiously avoiding eye contact with anyone who might use his glance as a chance to pounce on him.

Joshua is an entirely trustworthy kid. We love having him around and so the more he was here the more comfortable he became with us and we with him. Finally I asked him about his ear. He told me that the cyst was the result of an ear piercing that didn't work out. When queried why he hadn't had it removed he responded that his mother tried but was told by a doctor that his insurance wouldn't pay for the procedure. With his permission I made some phone calls to look into the matter.

As it turned out there was some truth in what he told us. Joshua lives with his mother and 2 year old sister on a tough street two blocks from the Catholic Worker. They live on the third floor of a 3 family house. The doorbell is broken and the door to the building doesn't lock. The furnishings of his apartment are Spartan at best. A brief scan reveals one queen sized bed, no tables, no chairs, no wall furnishings, no books, and an antiquated Apple computer on a milk crate. Their home does not have phone service.

Joshua's mom is intermittently employed. Joshua and his sister have medical insurance through the state of CT HUSKY program. With HUSKY parents can choose one of several health plans from private



Eleanor MB / MB News Art Syndicate

companies which the state contracts with. The plan that Joshua's mom had initially chosen apparently did turn down the doctor's request for approval for the surgical removal of the cyst justifying their decision by declaring that since the cyst did not affect his hearing the procedure was elective and cosmetic.

When I got involved Joshua's mom had switched medical plans but did not have any pending appointments for taking care of Joshua's ear. Unfortunately the plan she chose is not accepted by the CT Children's Medical Center! With some help from a doctor friend I was able to get Joshua seen by a surgeon, who apparently had earlier seen Joshua. We again switched his health plan and the growth has been successfully removed. Once the wound heals Joshua will need to wear a special clamp at night which will reduce the chance of reoccurrence from 50% to 5%.

Within days of his surgery Joshua came by saying he was worried about his mom.

He told us that DCF might be removing him from her custody. A few days later we received a call from Joshua. He had been removed from his home and was staying in another town with his aunt and a brother who had been previously removed from his home.

Weeks passed until his next call to us and we had no way to reach him. I sheepishly admit to you all that I didn't go to his mother's apartment looking for him. I've only met the woman twice and I'm afraid that she might believe that our intervention in Joshua's health care led to his removal from the home. If word spread that we called DCF on the parents of the kids we work with the kids would simply stop coming here.

DCF is overloaded with cases and there are not enough Foster Homes for all the kids who should be pulled from their homes. Thus many kids remain in homes where they are neglected or ignored because they are not deemed to be immediately at risk.

By nurturing relationships with these kids we are often able to get into their homes to help with furniture, food, a referral to an agency, or simply a shoulder to lean on.

Joshua misses his mother and wishes he were still with her, but there is not enough room in her life for both her children and her Crack.

Justine is a 19-year-old young woman whom we met through her younger sister Jackie. A few weeks ago I received a call from the Probate Court asking me if I would agree to be Justine's Conservator of Estate and Person. Apparently there is no other trustworthy and responsible adult in her life who could act in this capacity. I agreed.

Justine is one of her mother's ten children, had by four different fathers. Most **(SEE RESURRECTION, P.4)**

## RESURRECTION, CONTINUED

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of her mother's children were removed from the home years ago. Currently her mother has at home with her four children ages 11 through 2. Justine is currently a patient against her will at an area psychiatric hospital, diagnosed with Bi-Polar disorder (also known as Manic-Depression). She is currently in a manic state.

She is in denial of her illness and experiencing delusions. Since she has refused to willingly take medication I was requested to approve her medication as her conservator. After praying, visiting with Justine, and meeting with her doctor and social worker I consented to have Justine forcefully medicated. Unfortunately the most promising medicines available to treat her illness cannot be injected and so a medicine that can be injected which treats her psychosis has been administered. The hope has been that if she responds positively to this medicine she will then consent to the other medicines which must be taken orally.

Sadly, she has not responded positively to the medicine. Indeed, if judged by the incoherent letters that I receive from her daily, her condition seems to have worsened.

My appointment as Justine's conservator is open-ended. I am conflicted by this arrangement. On the one hand I am glad that I was asked since I have a background working with people with mental illness and since I knew Justine and her family beforehand I have some grasp of her reality.

On the other hand, I have cooperated with the state in their decision to strip this woman of her civil liberties. She has since been involuntarily committed to a psychiatric hospital and forcibly injected with medication. What if the doctors are wrong? Or for that matter what if they're right that Justine has bi-polar disorder is that reason enough to suspend her liberties and confine

her to a hospital ward?

I worry about Justine and her siblings. When Justine was in the home she did much of the mothering. From a young age she was responsible for watching the younger ones. A few weeks ago the father of her youngest brothers went to Philadelphia for a funeral. He has yet to return.

With Justine in the hospital much of the responsibility for the little ones in the family now falls to Jackie, age 11. Jackie lives in an apartment complex derisively known as "New Jack City" by the kids. Jackie's mom is unemployed and she is no longer eligible for state cash benefits- like Joshua's mom she's been Welfare Reformed. I'm not sure how she pays the bills.

A couple of years ago when her father passed away she used a small inheritance to buy a used minivan. Unable to afford the maintenance the van croaked. The family now gets around town mostly by foot since they cannot afford bus fares. They are a pathetic site ambling down the street with children, laundry, groceries, secondhand clothing, and just about anything else they need to move loaded onto a wobbly wheeled baby stroller.

Joshua and Justine are only two of the thousands of kids in Hartford that are victimized by the misfortune of being born into poverty in a society that is simply too comfortable to care enough to radically redistribute wealth so that all God's children have dignified access to health care, education, and housing.

The stories of Joshua and Justine are the human face of the myriad of factors, which contribute to the preponderance of poverty in Hartford. Among the tangible ingredients that create poverty are: unemployment, chronic illness, mental illness, lack of education, inadequate access to transportation, addiction to drugs or alcohol, teen pregnancy, and single parent families.

These factors are not insurmountable, nor are they inexplicable. The

decline of manufacturing jobs in Hartford (and in America in general) is the result of trade agreements which support factory openings in places like China and Mexico where labor is cheaper and sometimes forced. The exodus of retail jobs from the city to the suburbs was facilitated by the exodus of the middle class to these same locales, which was in part facilitated by public subsidy of infrastructure for the middle class.

Increased investment in health care and schools won't be possible so long as trillions of dollars are spent designing and manufacturing the latest ways to kill people overseas.

The fact that fully employed people working at, or just above the minimum wage, still live in poverty is the result of a policy decision and public acceptance of low wages for apparently meaningless jobs such as child care, nursing home workers, teacher's aides, kitchen workers and office cleaners. Meanwhile, the truly important members of our society, the ball players and Hollywood heartthrobs receive millions of dollars generated through our voluntary purchase of movie passes and baseball tickets.

The woefully inadequate system of public transportation is the result of policy and budgetary decisions which over the last half-century have benefited the auto

**(SEE COMPLETING, P.7)**



# EVIDENCE OF THE INCOMPLETE RESURRECTION

According to *A Hartford Primer and Field Guide* by Ivan Kuzyk of the Cities Data Center at Trinity College, the various obstacles faced by Joshua, Justine and their families are regrettably common in Hartford.

Hartford is the second poorest American city; 31% of Hartford residents, and 41% of Hartford children live below the poverty line. The per capita income of a Hartford resident is \$13,428; while for Avon the figure is \$51,000, the figure for our neighborhood is \$6,900. "According to the 1997 IRS data, 26.4% of taxpayers in the city qualify as "working poor,". (p177).

"Manufacturing in Hartford once provided an ample supply of stable, relatively well paying jobs for low-skilled workers. During the 1950's and 1960's, these jobs began to leave the city for the suburbs, or the non-unionized South. Although the city's working class bore the most immediate brunt of these job losses, the disappearance of the city's manufacturing base is probably the most critical factor that forced the city into decline" (p13)

"By mid-century, two phenomena accelerated the decline of manufacturing supremacy. The first was the dispersal of the old multi-storied factories to the suburbs, attracted by plenty of room for more efficient one-story operations, new industrial parks, highway access and tax

breaks. The second phenomenon was a wave of buyouts and mergers, especially among family-owned enterprises in which the founders had died and left operations



behind to less able managers. Between 1951 and 1971, the number of plants within the city shrank from 41 to 16." (p74)

"A century ago, local elites owned the area's major companies. Today they manage them, and corporate interest and involvement in local affairs has diminished dramatically." (p81)

"There are few problems in Hartford that could not be greatly minimized by an ample supply of \$12 per hour jobs with health benefits." (p72)

"A recent study by the National Institute for Literacy estimated that 41% of Hartford's adult population ... cannot fill out a job application, read a food label, or read a simple story to a child." (p88). "Only 89 of Hartford's 1048 ninth graders read at their grade level in September 2000." (p89) "in 2001 only 1.7% of Hartford 10th graders scored at or above the state goals on all four sections of the [CT Mastery Test]" (p100).

"Schools are the biggest supplier of health and dental care to children in Hartford." (p99). "The asthma rate in Hartford is more than five times the national average." (p109) "The infant mortality rate for black infants born in CT is three times that of white children" (p114) The infant mortality rate for Hartford is 14.0 deaths per 1000 live births, the CT rate is 7.2, Mississippi rate 10.6. (p115).

"For children in poverty the dropout rate is twice as high, the lead poisoning rate is three to four times higher. Teen pregnancy is five to seven times more likely." (p109). "In 1999, 456 Hartford teens gave birth. In that same year, 332 girls graduated from Hartford High Schools." (p112). 73% of Hartford children under 6 live in a single parent home. (p110)

*A Hartford Primer and Field Guide* is available from: The Cities Data Center at Trinity College, 71 Vernon St, Hartford CT 06106 Ω

# A CHOICE OF PASSIONS

Stephen Vincent Kobasa

*The part that got me was, there was a lady sitting next to me that cried all through the goddam picture. The phonier it got, the more she cried. You'd have thought she did it because she was kindhearted as hell, but I was sitting right next to her, and she wasn't.*

- *The Catcher in the Rye*

In the photograph, only the torso of the body lying in the street is visible, hands bound, a strand of rope stretched tight from the wrists to a point outside the frame. The fingers are pasted with clay, as if some murderous artist had taken an impression for an anatomical study. A crowd, headless from the cropping of the image, lines the background. Other corpses, of course, are to be found in Haiti on this day, although the newspaper shows only this one. For most readers, this would merit a glance and a turning of the page. But there is more of Christ's Passion in this image than in the entire two hours of the recent film which claims the title.

The distortion of the Mel Gibson version is not in its graphic suffering - a truth that the Christian tradition largely suppresses - but that Jesus' experience is presented as unique. Torture was not unusual then; it is not unusual now. The terrible gift of the incarnation was that God became human to experience pain as we do, so that we could see our face in God's. This was not some struggle of an epic hero to endure all things. Indeed, the film portrays Christ as inviting the flagellation to be intensified so as to confirm his divinity. The violence is so grotesquely extreme that, in the end, it leaves us unable to imagine that Jesus is doing anything but miming the pain. A human being would have found it unendurable,

but the film will not show Christ in that shape. Pilate's "Ecce homo!" is made to



sound like a lie. But we should hear it as "Look, only a man."

Beneath all the spurious authenticity of language and costume lies a fidelity to ancient heresies - Gibson takes the Docetist position that Jesus appears to be human, but is only playing out a masquerade. Ignorant of the trick, and with her son's blood on her face, it is Mary's suffering that is real - in the end, the story is not about Jesus at all. Unjustified by scripture, this Mary is portrayed as omnipresent, a witness to every horror perpetrated upon her son. The mother's loss is everything; his is nothing. The exquisite image of the *pieta* is the triumph; the resurrection an afterthought.

This is a complement to Gibson's defining heresy - the newly familiar

Manichean landscape of contemporary American political life.. The film defines its absolutes of good and evil as a struggle between a death-pale female Satan and Christ's mother walking across from each other along the Via Crucis, eyes locked, matched sets of opposites. The woman from hell births snakes and carries a malformed infant, hairy and scarred across its back in a parody of the whipping that is taking place at the moment it appears on the screen.

This demonization of children is a recurring image of the film, twisting Jesus' injunction to "become like little children" into an invitation to vindictive violence. Judas is tormented to suicide by a mob of ravenous adolescents who would not be out of place as the young cannibals of Tennessee Williams' play *Suddenly Last Summer*.

As for Judas himself, he is used as another opportunity for denying the humanity of the story. How one longs for a depiction of betrayal that is not telegraphed by wild-eyed frenzy, a traitor by nature. There is no ordinary man here who you could not have singled out from among those seated around the seder table.

But stereotypes abound in this film, as much recent comment has noted, especially in regard to its anti-Semitism. But that particular distortion is not a simple matter of the depiction of Jewish complicity in Jesus' death. Rather, it is contained in the refusal to consider the understandable reasons why some members of that community would have demanded his execution. The argument "It is better that one man should die..." is a reminder of a terrorized society living under occupation, fearful of provoking further repression. There is no justification for portraying

Caiaphas, the High Priest, threatening revolt as a way of blackmailing Pilate into pronouncing a capital sentence. Given his position as a collaborator attempting to provide for the preservation of his community, dissent was hardly an option, any more than it is for the Iraqi governing council of today.

Granted all these distortions, in the end it is the negation of Jesus' message of peace that is the most telling. He stops Peter from using a sword, merely pragmatic advice to one being held down by a circle

of armed men. The pause is used as an occasion for an extended miraculous healing rather than a critique of violence. And he still retains the murderous children - along with a vengeful raven to pluck the eyes from an unrepentant thief. We look in vain for the gospel of love here.

Yet for all its graphic violence, there are limits to what Gibson is willing to show of the crucifixion. There is no display of Christ stripped naked; the hero can be tortured, but not humiliated. No place here for King

Lear's discovery of the "poor, bare, fork'd animal" which would confirm the corpse as human. We are led to a pristine Golgotha as if for its first and last use; not to what was a killing ground, blood-soaked, with the memory of death thick around it. And it would not be abandoned after Jesus' body was removed. The film promotes the fantasy of suffering brought to an end; a useful blindness meant to leave us in tears at the sight of the cross, but blind to the dead in our own streets. **Ω**

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## COMPLETING, CONT.

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industry and the construction of highways at the expense of public transportation. Compared to 100 years ago the percentage of the American population with access to public transportation has diminished with the destruction of trolley lines and service. In the process the poor of the city have been left with inadequate access to the job market which has largely left the city. Meanwhile the concurrent advent of the Interstate highway system has contributed to the air pollution and elevated asthma rates in our cities.

The stratified and segregated society of 21st century America is the result of personal and societal decisions. These choices can be undone. What I have trouble figuring out is how do we Christians of our society justify loving ourselves more than our neighbors? Indeed, Jesus taught that the greatest commandment was to love God above all and our neighbors as ourselves and in fact that if we are to love God we must love our neighbor within whom God has chosen to be present among us. So then why do we persist in the falsehood of saying we love God? (1 John 4:20).

Why do we accept the Eucharist at Mass only to turn away from the Eucharist in the street? Why do we say "God Bless you" to the neighbor who sneezes while not sharing God's Blessings with the hungry and

the homeless, the sick and the tired, the elderly and the imprisoned? It is not poverty, which is insurmountable; Nay-what I fear as insurmountable, is the ability for us to rationalize the suffering of others while justifying our comfort.

I wonder if the two are somehow connected? Is there some cosmic equation whereby the increased comfort of some heaps suffering on others?

Our highways have torn apart city



neighborhoods, our automobiles have poisoned our air, our malls have denuded the countryside, and our subdivisions have vanquished Christ to the ghetto; forgotten or feared. He walks our streets today but I fear that we lack even the faltering faith of

Thomas who simply needed to touch Him to believe in His Resurrection.

I've held Him, fed Him and even been cursed by Him and yet when I think about Joshua and Justine I sometimes doubt His Resurrection. It is easy for me to recognize the Crucified Christ in the broken people around us but my faith will never be complete until I also accept His Risen presence in these same broken souls.

Joshua, Justine and Jesus don't need my pity. I need their healing. The Resurrection is all around me: it is Joshua calling from his foster home to see if we can get a bike for his brother or our new guest Heather staying sober one day at a time and still wanting to help a homeless family she knows.

The Resurrection is the undeniable ability of the Soul to recognize suffering beyond its body and our subsequent yearning for wholeness. The ongoing process of Resurrection is the knitting back together the Mystical Body of Christ broken by a Crucifixion perpetuated by poverty and violence. It is the building of community with those on the margins of our society which will save us all and complete the Resurrection.

Christ Risen was able to roll away the boulder blocking his tomb but until we form loving relationships with those who seemingly have nothing to offer- He, and we, will never be fully resurrected. **Ω**

# AIMS AND PURPOSES

*Dorothy Day*

February 1940

For the sake of new readers, for the sake of men on our breadlines, for the sake of the employed and unemployed, the organized and unorganized workers, and also for the sake of ourselves, we must reiterate again and again what are our aims and purposes.

Together with the Works of Mercy, feeding, clothing and sheltering our brothers, we must indoctrinate. We must "give reason for the faith that is in us." Otherwise we are scattered members of the Body of Christ, we are not "all members one of another." Otherwise, our religion is an opiate, for ourselves alone, for our comfort or for our individual safety or indifferent custom.

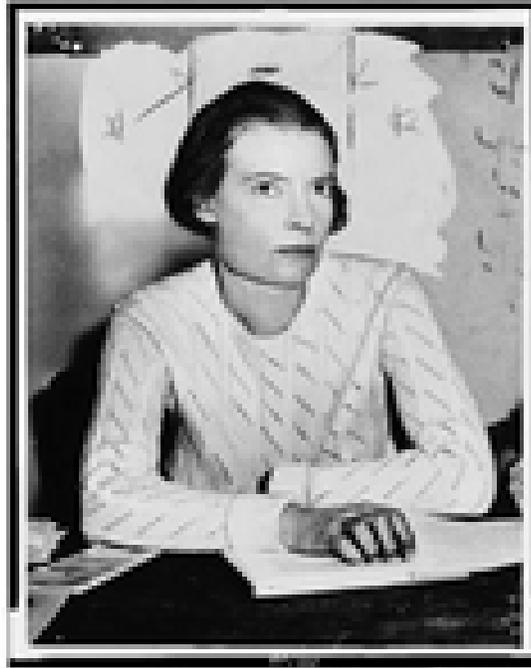
We cannot live alone. We cannot go to Heaven alone. Otherwise, as Péguy said, God will say to us, "Where are the others?" (This is in one sense only as, of course, we believe that we must be what we would have the other fellow be. We must look to ourselves, our own lives first.)

If we do not keep indoctrinating, we lose the vision. And if we lose the vision, we become merely philanthropists, doling out palliatives.

The vision is this. We are working for "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein justice dwelleth." We are trying to say with action, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We are working for a Christian social order.

We believe in the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. This teaching, the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ, involves today the issue of unions (where men call each other brothers); it involves the racial question; it involves cooperatives, credit unions, crafts; it involves

Houses of Hospitality and Farming Communes. It is with all these means that we can live as though we believed indeed that we are all members one of another, knowing that when "the health of one member suffers, the health of the whole body is lowered."



This work of ours toward a new heaven and a new earth shows a correlation between the material and the spiritual, and, of course, recognizes the primacy of the spiritual. Food for the body is not enough. There must be food for the soul. Hence the leaders of the work, and as many as we can induce to join us, must go daily to Mass, to receive food for the soul. And as our perceptions are quickened, and as we pray that our faith be increased, we will see Christ in each other, and we will not lose faith in those around us, no matter how stumbling their progress is. It is easier to have faith that God will support each House of Hospitality and Farming Commune and supply our needs in the way of food and money to pay bills, than it is to

keep a strong, hearty, living faith in each individual around us - to see Christ in him. If we lose faith, if we stop the work of indoctrinating, we are in a way denying Christ again.

We must practice the presence of God. He said that when two or three are gathered together, there He is in the midst of them. He is with us in our kitchens, at our tables, on our breadlines, with our visitors, on our farms. When we pray for our material needs, it brings us close to His humanity. He, too, needed food and shelter. He, too, warmed His hands at a fire and lay down in a boat to sleep.

What we do is very little. But it is like the little boy with a few loaves and fishes. Christ took that little and increased it. He will do the rest. What we do is so little we may seem to be constantly failing. But so did He fail. He met with apparent failure on the Cross. But unless the seed fall into the earth and die, there is no harvest.

And why must we see results? Our work is to sow. Another generation will be reaping the harvest.

We are upholding the ideal of personal responsibility. You can work as you are bumming around the country on freights, if you are working in a factory or a field or a shipyard or a filling station. You do not depend on any organization which means only paper figures, which means only the labor of the few. We are not speaking of mass action, pressure groups. We are addressing each individual reader of *The Catholic Worker*...

"Where are the others?" God will say. Let us not deny Him in those about us. Even here, right now, we can have that new earth, wherein justice dwelleth!**Ω**

## NOTES CONT.

sitting.”

Two weeks later St. Ann's returned with socks, clothes and underwear.

Ammon refused to comment about underpants or underwear and said our readers should check out the Captain Underpants book series if they want to read stories regarding underwear.

We had 2 great round table discussions. Our friend Anilsa shared with the St. Thomas JustFaith group about the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride and Grandma Mick (Ammon's grandmother) came to do a reading about her book. "We have been reading grandma's book at night. My favorite part of her book so far is the part where she goes on a picnic with a general and gets stuck in a landmine field!! She really is an old war hero!! I think I inherited my love of reading, my wise acher attitude and my Irish temper from her. If you do read her book, read the part where she fights with the British dude, if you want to know what the fight was about... buy the book!! I get 25 cents for everyone I get somebody to buy."

"My mom took a weekend sculpture workshop. She made a St. Martin De Porres statue out of marble. I think she needs to finish it. Right now it looks kind of scary because his eye is covered up by rock. I did like the nose a lot. It looks very human. Alleluia!! Micah was accepted into the Metropolitan Magnet School. It goes from 6th grade to senior year. Alleluia- Micah will have homework every night. I want to go to Two Rivers Magnet School because I love science and nature." Next year Ammon will be applying to the lottery for magnet middle schools.

The Voltown Peace Trust has just submitted a sale and purchase proposal for the summer camp and former CWA

farm property. We are still trying to raise the money for a big down payment so that our mortgage will be as small as possible. We have been blessed and humbled by how many people and groups have come on board to support the project. We believe this is a sign that we must move forward in faith. We will be scheduling our first work and dance party weekend in early June. We are in the early planning stages for some dance parties and retreats and we will also make the space available for affordable vacation rentals (come enjoy the lake and Pachaug hiking trails!) We just found out the farmhouse (circa 1700) was a stop on the underground railroad. Peace and justice have been flowing from that spot for a long time and we are joyful to be a part of that great history continuing. "It's a great place to catch salamanders, run with your dog, feed horses, climb rocks, catch frogs, swim and enjoy a good campfire. Ask me sometime about my flying flaming marshmallow."

We leave off on our writing as Spring arrives. "Bring with it Easter. Easter is great because its the day Jesus came back. He didn't have to come back, but he wanted to help his disciples and see his mom. He told his mom 'do not be frightened' and she cried tears of joy. Jesus wanted to tell us not to fight and to keep the peace. If he came Church on Sunday he would say 'I'm here at St. Mike's because it's the best church in America, even though it is located in the ghetto'. I think he'd say in Mass 'stop the war, stop the gang fights'. He'd tell me to stop playing tricks on kids in class, don't trade bad for bad, return good for bad."

To close, Ammon would like to say to our readers: "thank-you, and be sure to read our next issue, it will have my bro in it."

To close I would like to leave you

with the words of Leonardo Boff from "Way of the Cross, Way of Justice"

The man who was raised up was not someone with power. He was a defeated, crucified being. Through the fate of Jesus, God has informed us that the ultimate meaning of history is turned into a reality by one who is crucified for identifying himself with those who are poor and unjustly treated in this world, by one who is rejected and cursed for trying to create a more fraternal, less evil kind of societal life. Hence all who work for those causes have a future. They will enjoy the fulfillment of a resurrected life. The murderer does not triumph over the victim. Death, where is your victory? Oppression, where is your power?

Death has been swallowed up in Christ's resurrection. Oppression has been transformed into a pathway to liberation through sacrifice. The bright rays of new life penetrate the dark recesses of the world. We can now glimpse the first signs of the new heaven and the new earth. Amen, Alleluia!Ω



# Notes from De Porres House

*Jacqueline Allen-Doucot with Ammon Allen-Doucot*

We were all arguing about whose turn it is to write the house article. I wanted Morliana to do it, but she has 5 classes this semester and a lot of papers a to write. When I suggested it was her turn, she put her hand up like a crossing guard and said "No!" I believe it was she who suggested that it was about time Ammon or Micah took a turn.

Micah said "I don't want to, you do it Ammon". Ammon, being quite a good writer himself, agreed to give me some help. So here goes... (he is wearing my eyeglasses to help him set the mood). Here is our format. I will say a bit about something happening here at the Worker, and Ammon will give his 9 year old's perspective. He insists I write exactly what he says. I will, of course, try to keep his fresh asides to a minimum.

We were all really pleased that the surgery we arranged for our friend Joshua's ear went well and that he has recuperated and healed nicely. Ammon says "the good thing is, he is not being teased by the other kids anymore."

We have been carried along lately by a wave of new volunteers. Sophomores from Northwest Catholic H.S., young women from the Ethel Walker School,

young people from St. Christopher's in East Hartford, JustFaith groups from St. Pat's in Farmington, St. Thomas Aquinas of Storrs, and St. Brigid's in Manchester, student athletes from UCONN, and members of Old St. Andrew's Episcopal in Bloomfield. "It's kind of nice to see the helpers... it means



my mom doesn't get so cranky with me because all those kids coming over drive her crazy."

Last Friday, after our regular vigil for peace, we had a great street theatre action in front of the United Technologies headquarters downtown. Steve Ginsburg dressed as the Statue of Liberty juggled on stilts, we played marching band music and Chris and Tim

Black dressed in suits with George Bush and Dick Cheney masks campaigned. The show attracted large crowds of pedestrians who were happy to take the leaflets. One soldier in uniform came up to thank us for our witness and say he and many others see this as a war for oil. "All the kids in school saw the picture in the paper but I wish the photo was in color. My dad was doing a good job as fake president. For a joke I gave him a pad of paper that had a nuclear bomb on it. I wish my dad was president. He would order all soldiers out of Iraq and rename north America as north Peace. He would make the streets of Hartford safer... clean up the north end, and make sure no more kids were killing each other over cell phones and gang fights. He would get rich people to make friends and live with poor people. He would help Bill Gates spend all his money in a good way. I'd vote for him."

St. Ann's of Avon did an incredible Lenten food drive- over 100 grocery bags! "It was especially good to get all the juice and snacks after school... that might already be gone because the kids are like sharks when the food comes out. Little Mary Pipkin alone can eat 25 or 26 peanut butter crackers in one

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