

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

When I look at the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you established;

who are we that you should keep us in mind, mortal flesh that you care for us?

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is thy name in all the earth!

Psalm 8

FALL 2004



THE HARTFORD CATHOLIC WORKER

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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 and <http://mywebpages.comcast.net/catholicworker/> We are: Brian Kavanagh, Morlianna Evans, Jacqueline, Christopher, Micah and Ammon Allen-Doucot.

A NOTE ABOUT OUR BUDGET

The ministries of the Hartford Catholic Worker are funded by individual donations and parish support. We do not typically receive Foundation support and we will not seek Government support. By limiting ourselves to a stipend of \$20/wk. and doing without Savings or Retirement accounts and Health Insurance we do our best to keep administrative costs down. Nonetheless, the Works of Mercy cost money.

If every reader of *The Hartford Catholic Worker* contributed \$10 each time an issue arrived (\$60/yr.) we would be able to perform our ministries and be in a better position to handle unexpected expenses like vehicle repairs. We understand that you may have

received this publication unsolicited. If that is the case and you wish to be removed from our mailing list please mark this issue of the *Hartford Catholic Worker* "**Return To Sender**" and we will remove your name from our mailing list.

If on the other hand you appreciate the stories of hope and nonviolent struggle from places as various as the inner city of Hartford, to the inner city of Baghdad and you want to support our efforts to alleviate the suffering of God's children please make a financial contribution to the Hartford Catholic Worker and please remember us in your prayers. Ω



♥♥♥ Friends: Please *do not leave any donations: ie. bags of clothing or boxes of stuff on the porches of St. Martin or St. Brigid Houses at night. Please call ahead. 724-7066*♥♥♥

St. Martin's Calendar

- ✦ Please join us on **Tuesday, September 7, October 5 and November 2 at 7:30 PM** for the celebration of Mass at St. Brigid House, 18 Clark St., Hartford. Refreshments and conversation follow Mass.
- ☐ Please join us on **Tuesday, September 28 at 7:30 PM** for the film *Independent Media in a time of War*. The film features Amy Goodman host of Democracy Now!
- ☐ Please join us on **Tuesday, September 21, October 19 and November 16 at 7:30 PM** for the showing of the films *Bloody Sunday* about the 1973 massacre in Belfast, *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed* the true story of nonviolent resistance to the Nazi regime and *Blue Collar* with Harvey Keitel and Richard Pryor a story about working class life in America.
- 🌐 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.

PAINTED SUNFLOWERS AND DANCING GIRLS

Christopher Allen - Doucot

Sitting in a plastic cup of water held secure in the drink holder on the dash, the cut sunflower commanded my attention. This particular flower wasn't one of the mammoth sunflowers, head drooping like a drunk. Stiff stemmed and head held high, this mesmeric blossom was a painted sunflower. Sunflowers are actually 2 flowers in one. The petals are known as the Ray Flowers and the center is the Disc flower.

The bloom before me had a 3 inch Disc surrounded by a couple of dozen slender petals- the Ray Flower. The disc was a fuzzy dark chocolate with a faint blush of pollen forming a ring a half inch from center. The rays were like eyelashes, the size of a toddlers index finger, they were elongated ovals pointed at their tips. Together the rays were a symphony of concentric hues of rust, paprika, dandelion and ripe tomato in harmony with the boldness of the seed repository they surrounded. One ring towards the middle appeared to be air brushed so subtly with ground Turmeric that not even Van Gogh could have replicated the beauty. Sunflowers grow so fast that during the day they constantly seek the sun. If you study their stems they even appear twisted like a stick of licorice.

The sunflower I've cut will soon dust the window sill with pollen and it's petals will then fall to the counter with the evening breeze. Separated from its roots it cannot survive for long.

It's almost midnight of the first night of camp for a group of teenage girls. They went to bed 2 hours ago but I can still hear them giggling. Earlier they were clapping and singing *Go tell it on the mountain*. The girls are 11, 12 and 13 years old and most of them are the eldest sibling at home. Being the oldest child in single parent homes these girls are loaded



with responsibilities. They clean the apartment and do the laundry, they walk to the corner store for milk and eggs, and they watch their younger siblings. Day in and day out they watch their mothers little ones, they walk them to and from school, they comfort them when they cry, and they too often pass on activities they would like to do because they have to watch their little sisters or brothers. Too often they don't get to be kids themselves. Many grow up too fast and, rather than experiencing the steady turning toward that which gives life, like the sunflower following the sun, these girls are pushed and pulled by the demands of their responsibilities at home, the siren call of the streets, and the cat calls of the older boys and young men who prey on these girls who are not yet young women.

Patricia is an attractive girl. Though her dark eyes are attentive, she often looks down or away. She is a thin girl and yet she must be sturdy for she seems to carry a mighty weight around with her. One night around the campfire the girls started singing:

When I was just a little girl,

*My mama used to tuck me into bed,
And she read me a story.*

*It always was about a princess in distress
And how a guy would save her
And end up with the glory*

At first Pat just smiled, but then in a burst of laughter laughing she said *"Hey, that's my song!"* as she jumped behind her lawn chair.

Patricia, her older sister, her three younger brothers and sister and a few cousins live with their elderly grandmother. One morning at camp Pat shared with me why she lives with her grandmother. She told me how when she and her siblings lived with their mom and dad, their mom and dad always fought. Pat says her dad would sometimes hit her mom. *"One day they were fighting real bad and my dad called DCF and told them to come and take us away because he didn't want us no more."*

That was seven years ago when her youngest sister was still in diapers. Pat's dad doesn't live nearby and she rarely sees him. Her mom lives a block away and she sees her even less. *"She's too busy doing everybody's hair, but she will never do mine."*

*I'd lie in bed
And think about
The person that I wanted to be,
Then one day I realized
The fairy tale life
Wasn't for me.*

In the glow of the fire I could make out her face, her eyes were closed, head tilted back and arms akimbo. And then she



(SEE SUNFLOWERS, P4)

SUNFLOWERS AND GIRLS, CONT.

began to dance. I could see the white sleeves of her shirt as they moved furtively like the branches of a young sapling in a steady breeze. While Pat boogied under the moon the other girls licked the marshmallow off their fingers, put down their sticks and joined in the singing.

*I don't wanna be like Cinderella,
Sitting in a dark, cold, dusty cellar,
Waiting for somebody to come and set me free. (Come and set me free)
I don't wanna be like someone waiting
For a handsome prince to come and save me
Oh, no, will survive,
Unless somebody's on my side.
Don't wanna be
No, no, no one else.*



I'd rather rescue myself

On this night Pat is a girl, simply a girl. Not a big sister caring for little siblings, not an older child worrying about grandma's health, and not a lonely daughter wondering if she will ever see her mom again. Protected by the darkness of the forest night she has put down her load and is free to be a 12 year old girl, if only for this fleeting moment.

While the other girls sang:

*I can slay my own dragons.
I can dream my own dreams.
My knight in shining armor is me.
So I'm gonna set me free*

Pat had set herself free.

In a slow motion spin in time with the rising sun sunflowers thrive by seeking the good, not by turning away from the bad.

It's simply not enough to tell Pat to not get pregnant, to say no to drugs and to stay out of gangs. If the children heed the calls to turn away from what will harm them will they find anything in place to nourish them?

On even the sunniest of days the obstacles of poverty, broken families, un(der)employment, and substance abuse cast long shadows in the neighborhood. Seedlings in the shade will grow long and yellow in their search for sunshine. They survive; they don't flourish. We too cast shadows. Indifference, self-absorption, prejudice and violence threaten what little sun makes it into the neighborhood. If we want the children to flourish we must start by



getting our shadows out of the way.

All the sunshine in the world, though, won't save the sunflowers I cut. They may be pretty for a while but separated from their roots they are no longer able to seek the good. So many of our children have been cut from their roots, a tragic legacy of the crime of slavery when slave owners broke apart families by selling the fathers of children to the fathers of other children. A vestigial remnant of this crime continues with the disproportionate sentencing of Black men to prison. But the children are stronger, more resilient and more beautiful than any sunflower. With love, not mere words, but the active loving demanded by Christ, even wounded children can thrive in the presence of what is Good in this world. Let's be a part of that Goodness, reflecting the light of God into every dark place so that all God's children can always turn toward the Good and restore Goodness to the land. **Ω**

Please Note: Our Annual Christmas Party for the neighborhood children will be on Saturday, December 18th. We kindly request that parishes collecting toys, hats, mittens, socks and underwear schedule collections in time for us to pick up or receive items by Wednesday the 15th at the latest. Thanks!!

LEARNING FROM NICARAGUA

Clare Kobasa

Because of its history and social values, Nicaragua was my choice as the first country I would visit outside of the United States. From the first eye-opening ride through Managua to León to the bouncy journeys over unpaved roads through farmland in Goyena and Los Barcones, I learned a great deal about a culture and people who are sometimes overlooked.

The country is better off in some ways with the United States ignoring them. Throughout Nicaragua, and in León especially, there are many reminders of the violent past that the U.S. played such a leading role in. Sandanista murals and FSLN graffiti still cover walls. Now there is a particular sense of freedom in Nicaragua.

Sometimes it is hard to remember that not long ago this was a violent, unstable country. People still have an appreciation of their freedom that has been lost in other parts of the world. Our group walked up to the Fort that was once a jail for Sandanistas in León to celebrate the anniversary of its liberation on July 7. There were people of all ages, cheering and waving flags. León is a progressive, liberal city. Someone described the people of León as "volcanic." They can lie dormant, but will erupt with a fiery passion.

I traveled with a sustainable agriculture delegation sent by the New Haven/León Sister City Project. Through this organization, I was placed with a host family in León. They were a great family, with three children ages four, six, and nine, and a mother and father, both of whom worked. The kids were a lot of fun and the parents were open and welcoming, as were so many of the people I encountered.

Veintitres de Julio, the neighborhood I stayed in, was lower middle class. There are also the wealthy who control much of

the country, with sprawling houses by the ocean and on the islands of Lake Granada. And then there are the mounds of burning garbage on the hills being sifted through by children living in shacks; a different kind of shock.



The experience opened up my world in a way that only hearing about these kinds of places and situations all my life had not. It was strange seeing that everything I had always heard about was true.

My host family was comfortable enough, with plenty of food and clothing. Driving through some of the farming communities was a different story. As a part of my delegation's agricultural work, we traveled to visit the schools the Sister City Project has set up for the children unable to travel to the cities. Grades 1-6 were in one room with one teacher, and often between forty and sixty children. We helped with weeding and did some soil tests in the gardens to find out what crops would grow well, in addition to the squash and fruit already planted there. The meetings with parents exposed the many needs of the schools and their communities. The parents are so appreciative of what has already been done and that there are schools at all, that they inspired me to want to contribute more. At the same time, these are people who know for

themselves what they want and need which would be most helpful in enabling their independence.

We visited a farmer in Goyena, near León, one of many who has been adversely affected by the proximity of the Pellas family's sugar cane plantations. This farmer grows tomatoes, beans, squash and papayas, but his farm is failing. Many of his crops have been destroyed by the herbicides used on the sugar cane, which blow onto his land.

Another major problem is the great depth of the wells drilled on Pellas land. These have lowered the water table so that the farmers' wells are no longer usable, and if they dig theirs any deeper they will become so contaminated with salt that the water will be undrinkable. Many of the farming practices used on the Pellas land including the herbicide application and digging of these wells is illegal, but efforts to stop them have proven unsuccessful, a failure explained by the fact that the Pellas are one of the richest and most powerful families in Nicaragua.

León, or at least certain of its inhabitants, have no love for George W. Bush. Spray painted on a wall in the town square, opposite the largest cathedral in Nicaragua were the words, "*Bush Genocida, Enemía de Humanidad*", or "*Bush, Maker of Genocide, Enemy of Humanity*." It saddens me that people in another country were able to see so clearly what people in our own country still have trouble comprehending.

So many of the people live such a relatively simple life and seem perfectly happy without so many of the trappings that we North Americans expect. Granted,

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NICARAGUA, CONT.

the occasional blackout and freezing cold showers took a little getting used to, but it surprised me just how adaptable one can be.

Just watching Nicaragua reveal itself through the car windows was an incredible experience: the long cobblestone streets down the hills lined with low, tile-roofed buildings with their raised stoops; the volcanoes rising

into the clouds over fields of green; and the sparkling waters of the many lakes.

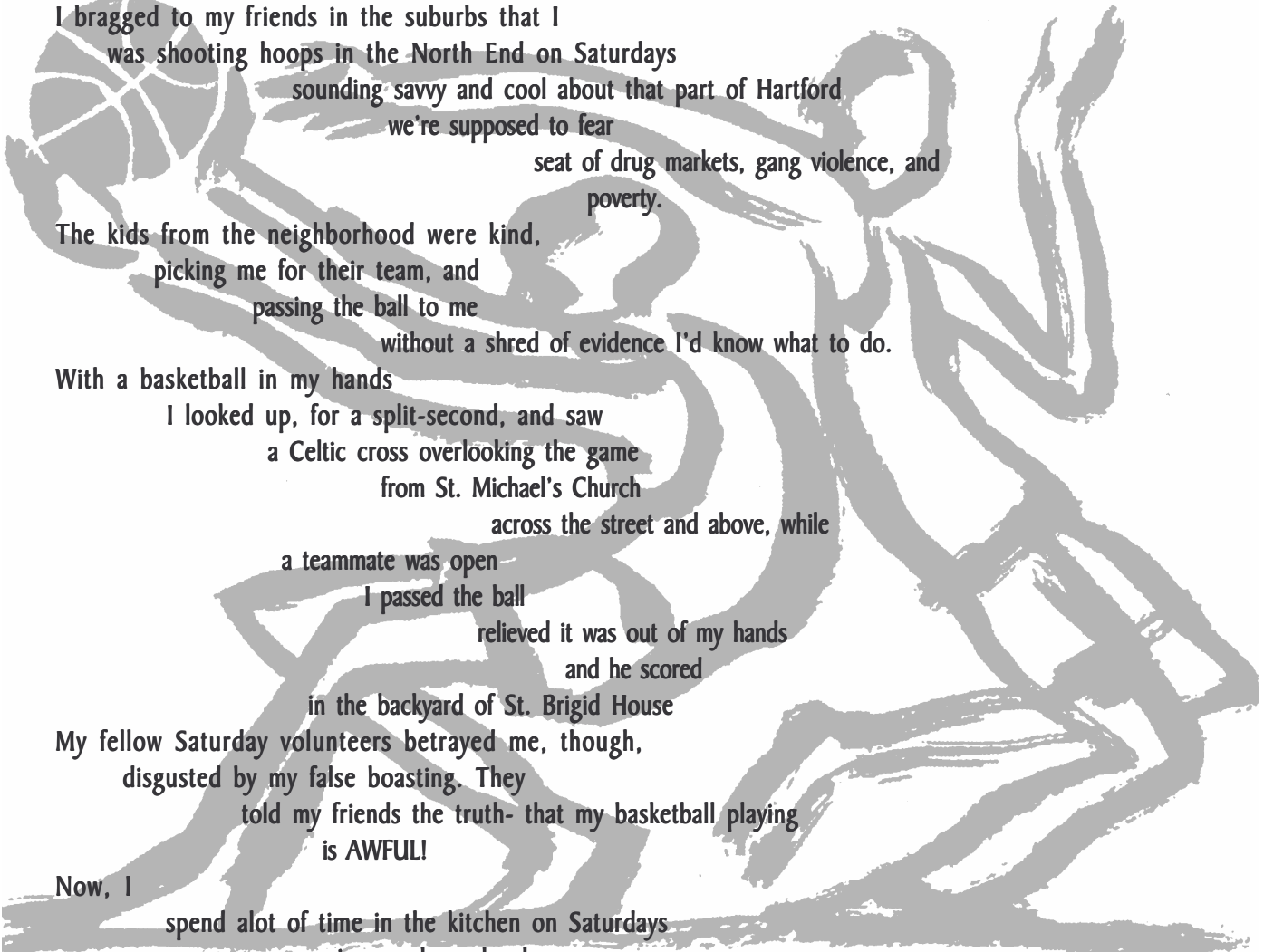
I waded in the Pacific Ocean for the first time, climbed a volcano for the first time, and experienced life in a different country and culture for the first time. The country has such spirit, which spills over into all the fun! The dancing, the singing and the music were such a memorable, vibrant part of my impression. It was amazing to see the kids light up at the

piñata during the party we had our last night in the neighborhood.

The trip turned out to be pretty adventurous, especially since we didn't always know exactly what was happening from day to day. But Nicaragua taught me about appreciating the here and now of things and just letting new experiences come.

(In September Clare will be a junior at Wilbur Cross High School and the Educational Center for the Arts in New Haven) Ω

HOOPS



I bragged to my friends in the suburbs that I
was shooting hoops in the North End on Saturdays
sounding savvy and cool about that part of Hartford
we're supposed to fear
seat of drug markets, gang violence, and
poverty.

The kids from the neighborhood were kind,
picking me for their team, and
passing the ball to me
without a shred of evidence I'd know what to do.

With a basketball in my hands
I looked up, for a split-second, and saw
a Celtic cross overlooking the game
from St. Michael's Church
across the street and above, while
a teammate was open
I passed the ball
relieved it was out of my hands
and he scored
in the backyard of St. Brigid House

My fellow Saturday volunteers betrayed me, though,
disgusted by my false boasting. They
told my friends the truth- that my basketball playing
is AWFUL!

Now, I
spend alot of time in the kitchen on Saturdays
preparing snacks or lunch

Still, the kids invite me to play with them
when I near the hoops behind the Green House
Innately generous are these children
from a place that I am supposed to fear.

JOHN OVERMYER

Brenda McLaughlin

START YOUR DAY THE FAIR TRADE WAY

Al Benford

About a year ago, I spent a week in Nicaragua talking with coffee farmers. I was there as part of an interfaith delegation sponsored by Equal Exchange, a Fair Trade, cooperatively owned coffee company, and hosted by Witness for Peace.

During our first day we were briefed about the damage being done to developing countries in the name of free trade. While I don't pretend to be an expert on international economics, it seems clear to me that agreements like NAFTA, (North American Free Trade Agreement), CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement) and FTA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) primarily benefit the investing corporations, usually with considerable damage to the developing country's environment, indigenous laborers and businesses. Decisions by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are based on the values of the investing countries, and not on the well-being or traditions of the people or the economy of the developing country.

We spent the rest of our time in Nicaragua visiting and talking with people who grow and process coffee. Equal Exchange participates in the Fair Trade market. Fair Trade means that the coffee is grown by small farmers, organized in cooperatives, processed in cooperatively owned *beneficios*, and sold to traders including Equal Exchange. Fair Trade certification is made by a third party agency that inspects the operations of the growers and insures that applicable standards have been met.

There are several principles required for participation in the Fair Trade market: producers must be paid a living wage to cover basic needs, including food, shelter, education and health care. Cooperative workplaces and producer associations are healthier for workers than large-scale manufacturing and sweatshop conditions. In the latter situations, unprotected workers earn below minimum wage and, in general, profits go to investors rather than being fairly distributed along the production chain. The Fair Trade movement insists on consumer education to make

consumers aware of the hidden human costs of their "bargains,"; and to enhance cross-cultural understanding and respect between consumers and communities in the developing world. Fair



Clint Hanson

Trade Organizations encourage environmental sustainability. Fair Trade Federation members that buy products directly from producers also provide financial and technical support and establish long term relationships with their producers. Fair Trade buyers show respect for cultural identity by encouraging the production and development of products based on producers' cultural traditions. Finally, Fair Trade Federation members' finances, management policies and business practices are open to the public and monitoring by the Fair Trade Federation, showing public accountability.

Our first two days in the *campo* were at a coop. in *Miraflor*, in the northern high country. We met with Francisco, the coop president who told us about their democratic organization, the need for organic and environmentally sound growing processes, and their protection of many rare species of orchids. As opposed to most coffee farms, their coffee is grown under a canopy of trees, maintaining habitat for birds, satisfying another environmental concern.

He also told us of the importance of Fair Trade in allowing them the ability to finance their crops, to diversify their crops to include items such as red and black beans and cabbage for their own consumption as well as those and other crops for sale. They were also diversifying their economic opportunities by building rooms and studying English so they could welcome ecotourists.

Julia, an intense and committed woman, with *Ellim* and *Rosario*, other leaders of the active women's movement in the *Miraflor* union of coops, gave details of their property ownership and their leadership roles at *Miraflor*. The women, in particular, impressed on us their determination to not exploit their children as laborers, and to insure educational opportunities for them.

One day, Francisco led us to an area where coffee grew among banana trees and showed us how to pick coffee berries. The clusters looked like red grapes, but are a little smaller. We were told to be sure to separate the "fruit" from the stem.

Picking the stem would damage the plant requiring a year or more to heal. Most of us found that very difficult, taking the stem more than half of the time. Even at that, the ten of us together picked less coffee in two hours than a picker would need to pick in half a day for a standard wage. Francisco then showed us the "water process" of removing the pulp from the coffee "cherries" leaving the beans separate. The pulp is then composted to become organic fertilizer. Next he took us to their new quality control lab, staffed by a young man who had studied and become certified to operate it. They were very proud of the fact that he was "one of their own" who had come back to live and work in the coop. We learned about "cupping" coffee, a process similar to wine tasting that has a lot to do with quality control.

After a second night at *Miraflor* we left the mountains to head for *Matagalpa*.

On the way, we visited a *beneficio* (processing plant) operated by *PRODECOOP*, which processed beans from 45 grower coops, 2300 separate growers. Here, the beans are dried, their husks removed, and then sorted by machine and by hand to remove poor quality beans. They are packed for shipment to importers including Equal Exchange. It is interesting to note that the *PRODECOOP* plant is, as its name implies, a coop, and it operates by Fair Trade rules, with fair distribution of income to workers at all levels, comparable to the distribution to coffee growers. Yet only about 20% of its coffee goes to the Fair

(SEE FAIR TRADE, P8)

FAIR TRADE, CONT.

Trade market. The remainder is sold on the free trade specialty market. I say this to illustrate how much growth is possible in the Fair Trade market.

Over the next few days, we visited another coop, Esperanza Verde, where they were more advanced in their eco-tourism. We were served lunch in a new facility designed for tourists. The cleanliness, upbeat attitude and the overall sense of hope we had found in Miraflor were also evident here.

From here we were taken to some areas that had not yet been organized into coops; passing through some areas of coffee "plantations" where laborers picked coffee for a large land owner. Here the atmosphere was very different. There was no sense of optimism or hope. At best, people were struggling to get by, by having an adult working away from the family, and another adult doing sewing to supplement the income from coffee.

Dona Maria Elsa made school uniforms for the village children to make additional money. At worst, people were suffering. With children working in the fields, families could not make enough from their coffee plants to satisfy their needs. This even includes families who owned their own land. One farmer named Oscar had obtained his 2.5 acres of land in the 1970s. This land supported his family of 10 children and 21 grandchildren. He could produce 10-100 pound bags of coffee each year. At the free market price recently at \$.46/pound, that is \$460 a year to support more than 30 people. (For the record, the Fair Trade price for organically grown coffee is a minimum of \$1.41/pound, almost three times the recent free market price.)

Oscar talked about his family going without sufficient food for months at a time after coffee income was gone. Hearing this and looking at his dilapidated shack, we were thinking this was about as bad as it could get. Then Oscar went on to say, "If you think I am poor, you should see the people up on the hill." It was a very somber ride back to Managua.

Coffee is the second most valuable item of legal international trade, after

oil, and is the largest food import of the United States. Generally speaking, coffee is consumed in the richest countries in the world, and grown in the poorest countries. It seems more than reasonable that people in the richest countries should pay enough for their products so that the people who grow and make those products can have enough income to satisfy their basic needs. That means enough for food, clothing, health care and education, without having to depend on their children working in fields and sweatshops.

My experience in Nicaragua convinced me of the value of Fair Trade coffee. I saw the Fair Trade growers with their enthusiasm about their products, their lives and their futures. I saw their dedication to the democratic process in their coops, and the advancement of women as property owners and officers in the coops. I saw their pride in the ability to educate their children in their own schools in the coop, or in the city, and to have one of their own return to run their quality control lab. I saw how pre-harvest financing allowed the coops to diversify their crops, and to lessen their dependence on agriculture by investing in facilities for eco-tourism. I also was able to see the contrast with those who were not part of the Fair Trade market. They struggled for the very basics of life, and

often went for long periods without adequate food. Their whole demeanor was one of dejection and hopelessness.

The Fair Trade market in coffee is expanding. The Interfaith Coffee Program of Equal Exchange is an effective way of connecting the coffee at "Fellowship Hour" on Sundays with the social justice values of most religions. Since its inception in 1997, the Interfaith Coffee Program has brought agencies of seven denominations into this effort to apply religious values, Lutheran, Church of the Brethren, Mennonite, Presbyterian, United Methodist, United Church of Christ, and Quaker. In December of 2003, Catholic Relief Services joined.

In addition to the satisfaction of providing a better life for coffee growers and processors, these organizations receive a benefit from their sales of Equal Exchange coffee. Equal Exchange returns 5% of their sales through each agency to that agency for its own work. More information about the Interfaith Coffee Program can be found on the website, www.equalexchange.com

I am buying Equal Exchange coffee for my own consumption, as well as for gifts for friends and family. Won't you consider "making YOUR coffee break a cup of social justice?" Ω



*"If we pay them starvation wages—
why do they need a lunch break?"*

NOTES, CONT.

"dead meat". Thank you guys from the bottom of our hearts the help was well appreciated. Oh no we shall not forget about our Saturday crew. The weekend crew is Brenda, Nancy, Jory, Jamie, Octavio, Steve, and Alex. This dynamic crew came every weekend and just took over the kitchen, and playing with the kids in the back yard. "Hey guys you rock big time!!!!"

Our extended Community and we the Catholic Workers are experiencing a great deal of sadness. The reason for this is because so many of our kids are leaving us. Most of the kids that have moved are from two large families. They are very cute, funny and fun to be around. If you don't know whom I am talking about, they are Shyshy, Ananda, Danielle, Danny, Jazzman, and Mary, Patricia, Duncan, and Joshua, George and Thomas have also moved out of the neighborhood. Surprisingly enough, on Saturday August 7th, Tomas took the bus from Capitol Ave. to attend the Saturday program. The Volunteers and I were astonished and impressed because of the extra mile that Tomas took. Given this situation it is still not the same because he will not be able to attend as frequently as before. We will miss them greatly and we will never forget them. We hope that they take what they learned from the Green house into consideration when making decisions.

Have you been to the Green house or the Purple house lately or in the back of the Green house lately? If the answer to this question is yes you have experienced the blessing of sunflowers and roses from dad's garden. If the answer to this question is no, you have just missed one of the greatest blessings of a lifetime. There is still hope for you because dad's garden is still blooming. Well let me tell you the greatest thing about it for me is, the different colors of roses that I saw. In all

of my twenty-two years of life I always thought that there were only red, white and yellow roses in existence. Well I thought wrong, if you also thought wrong don't miss your chance to see these peach and orange roses (hurry!!!!)

Speaking of Chris and all of his great accomplishments; the knee that was being operated on is doing great. Oh lets not forget the other leg, it is also doing great. If you don't know the story, please, ask the man himself.(or just check out Brian's drawing on the back page).

Daniel Piper, twenty two years of age, has been living with us since July 19th until. He is a member of the Association of Community Organizing for Reform Now, (ACORN). Dan has been going door to door asking the people questions specifically about the speeding in the neighborhood. He told me that the people are also concerned about the police brutality, police not being punctual in domestic disputes, violence etc. Dan seemed very confident that the people will come together to make some drastic changes. He is hoping that more speed bumps are being put on the streets to reduce the speed of vehicles. The other issues he said the he hopes the people will come together so that they can take the necessary steps to create change. As the saying goes, "togetherness for progress." Please keep Dan in your prays for protection and guidance.

I have had such a long summer and I have been praying to God that it will come to an end. This statement might sound strange but I miss going to school. I will be going back to school on August 30th, Micah goes back September 1st and Ammon on September 7th. We often burst each other's chaps (ed. note: i.e. bust each other's chops) on how soon school opens for us. This year Ammon whined but Micah and I don't really care. On the other hand Ammon rolls in his victory just like the exact way Chris rolls his fish in bread cramps (ed. note that would be

"breadcrumbs" and Mo is the hump for not eating it!) before frying it -that hump. The huge part of the reason why Micah doesn't care about his loss is because he will be attending a new school (MLC). Please pray for our success and guidance in our school this new year and also for the rest of the children in the world that will be going back (yes that's right, the whole world).

This is the time when I share my painful heavy load with you, extended community. If you care about me you will help me whatever way you can. If you did not know yet, my mom is terminally ill with cancer and she is receiving treatment up here in the United States. Over the past couple of months she has been very home sick and wants to go back home to St. Lucia. The problem with that is we are not sure that she will return to continue her treatment. In my mom's situation she must receive intense treatment so that the cancer can remain under control. I need your prayers that she comes back before the pain from the cancer escalates. On the other hand if she decides to stay, pray that the pain will go away and leaves the rest of her life pain free. This is a very sensitive issue and I don't like to talk about it to any one. I truly believe that if I share it with the people that cares about me, this load that I am caring will get more manageable. I hope I am not asking for too much but please keep me and my family in your thoughts and prays.

Finally, I would like to take the time to thank all of our volunteers, angels, donors, our community and the people that loves us and support our work. Without you we would not be able to do the different ministries that we do. We need you now and we will need you in the future. May God bless you now and always.

I am glad that I am finished with another year for writing the house article. Until next year, bye (OOoooya baby!!) Ω

Notes From De Porres House

Monliana Evans

Camp Ahimsa has come to an end, for the year two thousand and four. During each week of camp six or seven different kids (one week we had 12) would be taken down to Voluntown to spend five days. During that five days the children had great fun and games. Some of the fun activities were, swimming, watching movies, doing tie-dye T-shirts and playing board games.

Also this years summer camp was based on teaching the kids HIP steps. (Help Increase Peace) we are hoping that they use These steps them to solve situations and conflicts in their lives instead of violence. I did one week of summer camp along with Jackie and Patrick Sheehan-Gaumer. (Boy this week was long) When the lesson was being taught the children seemed very interested in what was being said to them. The responses to the questions were unbelievable.

Doing one week of summer camp felt like one of the most difficult jobs that I ever had to do. In the past I have heard Jackie and Chris saying how tired and burned out they are after doing summer camp program. I thought well, how could they be tired when the kids are boasting how much fun and games they had. Immediately I would start thinking I can do this with my eyes close and will



Brian Kavanagh

enjoy every second of it. Well my brothers and sisters I thought wrong. When we wake up at eight O'clock in the morning we don't get off our feet till eleven O'clock at night. The constant talking, cleaning, cooking and entertainment takes allot from us. My heart goes out to Jackie, Chris and

Patrick (and Clare Kobasa for a week) for their patience. Also just given the fact that they have been doing this for eleven years. However this was a very rich experience for me and my future plans as a counselor. Great thanks goes out to Patrick and Clare Kobasa for helping with summer camp and making it such a great success. Also thank you to all of the angels that contributed money, marshmallows and materials for this peaceful camp, may God bless you all.

"Hard Work Brings Success," according to the motto on the school uniform crest I wore in St. Lucia. "We made the impossible possible," To everybody that donated to the successful purchase of the historic Voluntown Peace Farm and Camp Ahimsa- thank you. The Voluntown Peace Farm is open for grand tours and for individuals to help in any way that they can. The space is also open for rent for individuals and groups. Please feel free to refer VOT to people that don't know about it.

Without our extended community our work here at the Catholic Worker would not be so manageable. This summer proved that to me. The help that we got was very intense on Monday, Wednesday and on weekends. Without Octavio, Jory, Nancy, Jane, Michael - and Donna coming on Tuesday to help with House cleaning- Brian and I would be

(SEE NOTES P.9)

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