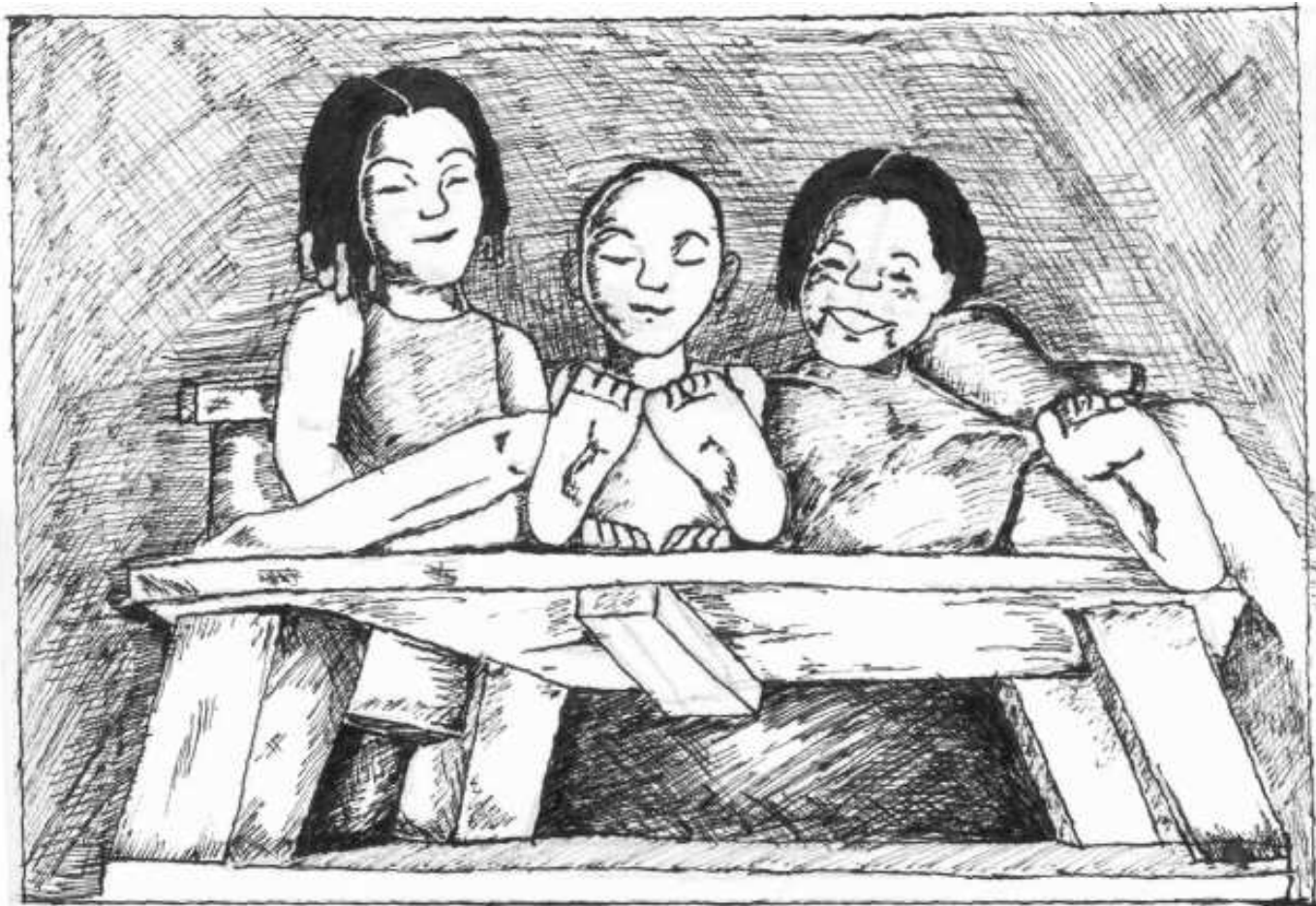


THE HARTFORD CATHOLIC WORKER



ST. MARTIN DE PORRES HOUSE
ST. BRIGID HOUSE

What does God require but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly... Micah 6:8



Dwight Teal

The Joys of Camp Ahimsa

*Happiness is climbing to the top of the life guard's chair, riding the ocean waves, and eating s'mores around the camp fire.
Happiness is going to the movies, eating ice cream at Buttonwood Farm, and having a pool party at the mayor's house.
Happiness is seeing North End children return from a week at camp Ahimsa calm, patient, and Glowing in God's Presence.*

Angela Thomas

FALL 2006

THE HARTFORD CATHOLIC WORKER

Established November 3, 1993

Volume 14 Number 4



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 www.hartfordcatholicworker.org We are: Brian Kavanagh, Morliana Evans, Sarah Karas, Angela Thomas, Jacqueline, Christopher, Micah and Ammon Allen-Doucot.

COMMUNION

Jesus loved
being
at table,
breaking bread
with friends.

What tenderness
there is in sharing
food,
vulnerable
as we are
needing to be
nourished.

Gifts of earth and vine,
and work of human hands
remain
just bread and wine
when we
can't be,
won't be
touched.

The gentleman
won't force the matter.

He is
the perfect guest.

Brenda McLaughlin



*I am no prophet... I am a herdsman and a
dresser of Sycamore trees.*

Amos 7:14

WHY

Floyd Grier

Why the Green House is so fun to me is because I have so many friends that go there. It is so fun to play with them and I can't stop coming here. I love playing with the little kids and having fun and I love the back yard where the basketball court is at. I like playing basketball and winning sometimes and most of all hanging out with Jackie and her family.

St. Martin's Calendar

✦ Please join us on **Tuesday, October 3, November 7 and December 5 at 7:30 PM** for the celebration of Mass at St. Brigid House, 18 Clark St, Hartford.

Ω **Thursday, September 21:** International Day of Peace. Fasting and Pray **12:30-12:55** and Prayer **7:00-8:00** Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry, 285 Church St. Hartford Calll 756-4034

☞ **Thursday, October 5, 7PM** Kathy Galloway of the University of Glasgow will speak on *Hope in a Time of War* at St. Thomas Aquinas parish in Storrs. For details call Marilyn Pinto at: 487-0770

α **Saturday October 7, 9:00-3:00:** Respect Life Conference, Holy Angels Parish, 585 Main St. South Meriden. (203) 235-3822

🌐 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.

CAMP AHIMSA 2005: WHAT I LEARNED AT SUMMER CAMP

Jacqueline Allen

This July we went down to Voluntown for summer Camp Ahimsa. We had our usual 5000 pounds of baggage needed to feed, cloth and shelter 40 children (sleeping bags, beach towels, food, art supplies and bug spray). This summer it seemed as though we carried a lot of extra psychic baggage as well. As most folks already know, it has been a rough year for the kids from Hartford. When camp began about two months had passed since our friend and neighbor K.J. had been killed. On the eve of camp the 27 year old mom of one of our 12 year old campers died after a long battle with a chronic disease. And another 12 year old girl camper was in the process of moving away because her mom needed to get her older brother away from the gang he was running with. One of our oldest kids was told by his father (who had just come back into his life) that he had to stop being gay or he would be disowned, another of our girls has been acting out and we discovered her dad had been arrested for a sex crime. Needless to say, we were feeling uncertain as to how to help and support our small community of kids in the face of so much trauma.

We had made the decision not to attempt a "program" with the kids this year (such as HIP: Help Increase the Peace, AVP: Alternatives to Violence Project, or Teaching Tolerance) because the children had been "power hour"ed and "super Saturday"ed out from all the CMT coaching during the school year; plus almost all of them would be enduring weeks of summer school. We could barely get them to focus for 20 minutes during the after school program. It was not only a matter of energy and attention levels, we also did not feel that there was any one program that could address the wide range of needs and issues we felt we wanted to

be able to work on with the kids. What program could encompass sexual abuse, death, family violence, gang membership and conflict resolution? We did know that we needed to increase the amount of creative activities to make up for the things that had been removed from the school



curriculum to teach for the CMT tests. In the end we decided to focus more on creativity as a way to provide some safe space and time. We wanted to carve out a place for them to begin to be able to talk and listen and share. It ended up being a wonderful summer, and we learned a great deal from each other. We know that our relationships have been strengthened and hope that on top of having a great time, they were able to learn and heal and grow.

The first week, as part of our keep the older kids away from the gangs strategy, we had a week long counselor training. It was a tough week for the boys. Instead of just swimming and goofing off, they attended and passed a rigorous CPR and first aid training (thank you Peggy Burns for the grant that made that possible!). We also had them cutting, peeling and hauling logs that will be used for the counselors cabin

being built next Spring. It took us 2 weeks to figure out that we needed to lower our unreal expectations of how much work/responsibility we could squeeze out of these boys (some of whom were spending their 1st week away from home). By week 5, though, they were right where we needed them to be. We were thrilled to see the transformation from "but I don't know how to do dishes" of week one to feeling confident enough to step into the crazy Timberland boot giveaway back in Hartford. They were able to look around and find a place where their help was needed without even being asked. I guess our nagging (I mean formation) paid off!

During our first week of camp we mixed our campers with a group of suburban kids from my sister Ronnie's after school program from East Hampton. We painted murals, swam, and did some empathy and listening games together. For many of the children, it was the first time they had ever camped or played baseball with kids of a different race, class or culture than their own. Sadly, it was during our "diversity week" that we had a horrible racially motivated incident occur. A family across the street from the camp had been robbed. The husband came up to me in front of a van load of our kids on the way to the movies. He said "I don't want to seem like I am racially profiling, but someone stole from me today. I noticed that there are black kids hanging around here, and we usually don't have too many of those around here." While it was a great challenge for me to maintain my nonviolence with this man, it did provide us with the opportunity to speak with the kids about racism. One of the kids related to us how terrified he was in the movie theater when he turned around and saw only white

(PLEASE SEE: CAMP P6)

NO CLEAN WAR:

A FORMER MARINE'S REFLECTIONS ON WAR AND PEACE

The following is an interview by former Hartford Catholic Worker community member Kate Foran of her father, Joseph Foran, "United States Marine Corps, repentant." Joe served in active duty combat during the Vietnam War, from January 1969 to July 1970. He has since become a voice for peace. His activism has become more contemplative in recent years, especially as he deals with the end stages of lung cancer.

K—Why did you sign up to fight in Vietnam?

Joe—I was easily propagandized by my childhood TV viewing, and by the war stories of the World War II generation heroes. Also there was a sense of not having any meaning in my life or having done anything to contribute to my world. So I thought being a soldier was the way to gain self-respect and community respect. I thought patriotism was the noblest sentiment, and I already had a warrior ethic because of my childhood need to be seen as a badass tough guy. Part of my persona was to put myself to many tests, tests of courage and cowardice and facing death and proving that I could have the hardness of heart to kill. That hardness of heart was presented to me as virtuous, and I bought all of that. I had no idea of the history of Vietnam, or the Vietnamese peoples' past wars with other imperialists and tyrants. I was sold by the TV images of the war on the after-dinner news every night in our homes. There were always tales of great camaraderie and enduring hardships together as soldiers, as a team. So I didn't examine the morality of war. I didn't know anything about Asia. The domino theory of the threat of Communism sounded credible to

me. It was up to America to put an end to that threat, and I thrilled to the uniforms, weapons, pride, and the glory it all portrayed.



Neue Galerie

K—Didn't you enlist against your father's wishes?

Joe—My father [a World War II veteran] was early on an anti-war demonstrator and political activist for the campaign of peace candidate Eugene McCarthy. My father saw the Vietnam War as a great big shining lie, as a product of imperialism and corporate profit-driven motives, unjustified and immoral. But I wouldn't listen to my father, especially because all the other messages around me were saying the opposite. I was alienating myself from my father during that period as I was demanding my independence. I had already heard many years of his ethics lectures and I was fed up with all of them.

K—So you weren't necessarily naïve to

the ethical implications?

Joe—I think I was naïve. I think if I had gotten a good strong dose of anti-war propaganda at that time, I might have gone that way. That's an important point—a reason to support the work of the War Resister's League, counter recruitment efforts, or the Conscientious Objectors' movement. If I could have been swayed as easily as I was by the war propaganda, I might have been that much more influenced by exposure to alternatives. That shows a role for reaching young people.

K—When did you first start to think the war was wrong or to change your opinion about it?

Joe—I was shocked when I saw fellow marines who had been deployed longer than I—I saw their hatred, venomous and ugly—and I saw the end product of mutilated innocent peasants, and saw that the

Vietnamese were a quiet and meditative people who just wanted to work and grow food; their kids wanted to play like our kids, like kids everywhere; mothers and fathers wanted to provide for families. But the communist propaganda machine was strong. The only way for the whole mess to be possible was for enough people to be swayed or brainwashed to the communist threat. Even the more well-off Vietnamese were susceptible to being sold out to a United States puppet government. It is too tempting for simple people when they are hungry to pass up a job working for the Beast which would provide all their needs. This is what we do today in Iraq—it's a phony country there now, a phony democracy, with thousands bought off by our taxes, paying them to keep accepting the

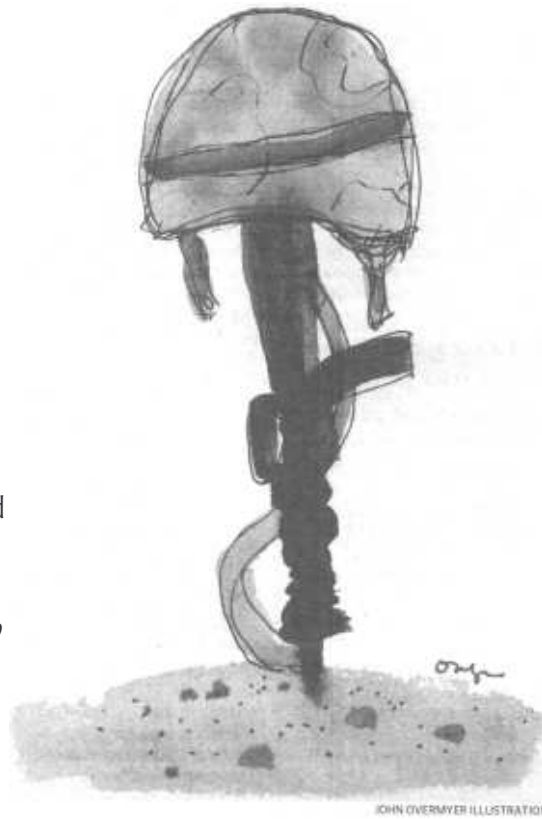
occupation. We buy them off with jobs, food, and income.

After my first reaction to the ugliness of war, I started learning how to hate too—it just took witnessing a few mutilated Americans that the enemy ambushes left. If you look at a human body that is distorted by explosives or whatever, and you're filled with an overpowering fear. You look at that monstrosity of a human and you imagine that it's you. You see yourself. And then they are your enemy and you don't care about any ethics or who's right or wrong. You want to kill them, before they can kill you. And most of us would have accepted dropping nukes and killing them all just to save our own sorry asses and go home.

The military trains you with duplicity. They teach you Geneva Convention ethics, and then they teach you that there are no rules in war except winning and living. They teach you that there are no extraordinary means of killing—all are acceptable. In training they showed us films of World War II Japanese soldiers entrenched in dug out positions attacked by American GIs with flame throwers, and then explained to us that flame throwers were outlawed. But then they went on further to explain that *if we tell you to do it, do it, because it's what the enemy is going to do*. Then they showed enemy flame throwers roasting American GIs. It was soon the accepted wisdom of field soldiers that there is no clean war, only survival. I stayed in that mindset until my time was up and I got out of there. And then I didn't become a pacifist, not truly, until years later, even though all the returning Vietnam Vets that I knew ran around with peace medallions and peace signs. Our main agenda was not to speak out against the immorality of the war we just came back from. Our focus was anger and outrage against our own government and country for having jeopardized our lives for lies. We wanted the military and the

government to get their comeuppance, and there were only a few that I knew early on that had purer motives in joining the peace movement.

But gradually, after I had returned, and after I had already been out in the street protesting, it did bother me more and more to think of what was happening to the Vietnamese. My compassion grew. As time passed I matured a little, and I saw that so many of us Vets were still telling war stories, trying to relive our jungle book stories and trying to impress everyone else and each other with our great hardship and



heroism and the warrior marine image. As time passed, I gave thought to the Vietnamese and to our country's other victims as I started to learn that it was not just that war—Korea had been another fraud, unnecessary and immoral. It had nothing to do with my homeland security or my family's safety. The more I learned to feel some compassion, the more I learned the extent of the lies. The highlight of the war story is never the civilian victims, or the communities that are destroyed. It's

always the brave warriors on either side that need monuments, memorials, or a new holiday on the calendar. But it's pretty simple reasoning after a while when you see repetitive behavior and the same results. It's a good bet that all America's other wars were lies too, though History has done a good job of presenting them in the victor's opinion.

K—Was your turning toward nonviolence concurrent with your turning back to the Catholic faith of your childhood? What is the connection? How does your faith inform your political perspective?

Joe—It wasn't so much returning to Catholicism, though I've found much peace and challenge there. When I embraced Christianity, which was, I don't know maybe. . . well, I never stopped reading about Christ, even after I left my childhood church, I still kept learning about Christ. After a couple of years of satisfying religious thought which evolved for me into the metaphysics of Swedenborgism, I started to see some more meaning in Scripture for me. And then I spent considerable time just studying the King James Bible. I saw that through all the lies that I told you about earlier, all piled together to make a life experience, that the Gospel of Christ was Truth. And so that's the measuring line, the yard stick, the gold standard. Any other human inventions or ideologies we give sacred rank to—these were all false directions and detours. The answers are always in the Gospel as far as what's valuable, what's meaningful, what's freedom, what's love. It's all taught to us by Jesus and all the substitutes are bogus, whether it's patriotism or unionism or whatever movement or "ism" that you're willing to devote energy to. If it's not proved out in the Gospel, then for me it's standing on rubber legs.

(PLEASE SEE: NO CLEAN WAR, P7)

CAMP AHIMSA 2006, CONT.

people behind him. That made me realize both how segregated our society still is, and how sad I was that I could not provide a safe place for my kids to be free of trauma for even a few days. When the First Selectman of Voluntown (whom we lovingly refer to as Mayor Gill) heard about the incident he was moved to action. Every Friday he hosted a pool party and barbecue at his house. He apologized on behalf of the town for the racist, and explained to the kids that like every other town, Voluntown had good decent friendly people, but some ignorant racist people too. The kids enjoyed his hospitality, antique cars, and beautiful collie dog-Elvis.

At the end of the summer we adults ended up meeting with the wife of the racist man. She was kind and embarrassed, and made excuses for her husband. We tried to help her to see how hurtful his accusations had been for our kids. On a brighter note, many other folks in the town went out of their way to make our campers feel welcome. A woman brought her horses to Ahimsa for some of the children to ride. A man saw how much the kids enjoyed fishing and gave us a pole and some bait.



Our great neighbor Jim McBride took the boys out on his boat (even letting them steer)! There was a lot of bragging back in Hartford that Friday.

We have always been rather surprised by how much our campers seem to enjoy our morning meditation time. We all seemed to feel very connected to each other, enjoying the space for ritual and symbol that nourishes our spiritual life. We usually light many candles, play some mellow music, and read some earth centered poems or reflections. After a period of silence, we ask them to put out a candle with the snuffer and either name something or someone they are grateful for, and someone they think might need some love and support. It became a wonderful way to start our day.

During older girl week we only had 5 girls (due to 3 no shows). We decided to keep that week small and intimate. It gave us a wonderful opportunity to have great discussions with these girls who are so vulnerable and have already been exposed to so much sexual violence in their young lives. We were very affirmed about our girl garden, and they look forward to having more girl time together with us in the Fall.

We brought 2 wonderful teachers to work with us this year. On our art and music program Sarah's aunt Margaret came down every week to share her gifts with our aspiring artists. Some weeks she walked the kids through the woods and helped them choose a walking stick. She showed them how to peel the bark, mix paint colors and make patterns for a one of a kind design. On other weeks, she brought down beads, wire and glass balls and taught us how to make beautiful garden wind chimes. For our music program our friend Sagacity (who is also a substitute teacher in Hartford) came down to do a hip hop teach-in. He did a great job sharing the history of rap and hip hop. He also was able to help them break down the lyrics to talk about the change in the music from the late 70's social



commentary to the frequently misogynist and gang-banger lyrics of today.

Throughout the weeks we tried to keep a consistent theme of community, responsibility and creativity. It was encouraging how constantly these threads came together as the weeks went by. We feel strongly that these are the themes we need to continue to work with as we move into Fall and our after school program. They are not only what give our kids structure and keep order when things feel chaotic, community, responsibility and creativity are the things that will help keep the kids focused on their own futures.

The bottom line is that we are a small community frequently feeling overwhelmed by the incredible problems facing these kids we have grown to love. More and more it seems our best chance of keeping them in school and out of trouble is making them feel like they are part of a beloved community. If the gangs can steal our children, because they are providing them with jobs and a sense of belonging, we will do them one better. We will love these children as if they were our own- and they are so lovable! It is a blessing to swim and laugh and play kickball and eat ice-cream with them. To see their joy as they painted and sang and kayaked and ate marshmallows. Sarah and I were the lucky ones who got to experience the pleasure of seeing these kids forget about the mean streets for awhile and just be kids!!!

One of my favorite things in the world is to bring a child that has never been out of

NO CLEAN WAR, CONT

K—So, can you make a statement of how your faith informs your position on war?

Joe—I think that Christ mandated that we care for one another and we give extra care to the weaker among us. This means extra care for victims of state military violence driven by dollars or lies. We have to help them in whatever way we see we can, especially the children and orphans and widows. The way to behave was laid out and taught to us by Christ. We don't need anything more than that for guidelines. We don't need debates, and we don't need to intellectualize world problems. Keep it simple like children. We need to imitate Christ, who said "Love your enemies."

K—What was it like to be a Christian and a war resister at your work at the International Fuel Cells factory, in a hostile culture? I've found among your papers the graphic images of wounded Iraqi children and other anti-war messages that you would post on the bulletin boards at work. Many of them are ripped or have holes poked in them, and there are many angry responses taped onto them. Why did you feel the need to speak up? What reaction did you get?

Joe—Well, I felt an extra obligation to speak against mass murder by my government because of my military past. I had been a willing warrior for the growing monster of America. I did it with no

excuse, never exercising my intellectual powers to examine what I was doing or whether or not I should be doing it. As easy as it is to blame childhood enculturation, in the end that doesn't wash because I was created with a healthy, functioning brain,



with all the information at my fingertips to learn better. So in the workplace my voice was not appreciated by most because they believed the multi-media spin from Bush and his neocons, and many had kin in harm's way in Iraq. I think that for a parent, if your kid is in the war, whether you advised him to go or not, it comes naturally to begin to let your opinion only be shaped by the war makers, to justify your child's participation, especially if he or she is wounded or killed. For many

parents, their children's death must not become anything less than sacred—they need to believe that their child was honorable, serving God and country. The parents take that trifolded flag home from the graveyard, and that's what they grieve with. You can't tell a parent that their kid is dead for an unjust lie. That's too hurtful, even if deep down they know it.

So a lot of my coworkers are fed every day by the TV spin. Plus my corporation has a long history of military contracts and war machine production. So you're not welcome to say that your corporation is immoral too for participating while you're in there with them getting your paycheck. A percentage of coworkers see you as a naïve flower child idiot. Others see you as a radical malcontent idiot, and a lot more see you as a threat, as unpatriotic for not supporting country in time of war.

It was very stressful to encounter hostility. This whole war was very stressful, and I think it contributed to my disease. But it was also satisfying to know that Jesus was backing me up.

K—Have you come to any peace with your past? How?

I've come to complete peace with my past through the sacrament of reconciliation. Reconciliation and absolution have left me free, and I don't carry any guilt anymore, through the grace of Christ. I would add, though, that we all should pray and we all should pray *more*. And we should make peace with the people in our immediate world—family, neighbor, coworker. Start there. **Ω**

Hartford (or our block for that matter) to see the ocean for the 1st time. I had that pleasure more than once this summer, which more than makes up for the exhaustion of 5 weeks of camp!

We have to give a shot out of thanks for all the people and communities that made camp possible. We start out with the McKenzie-Hamilton family. Joe gave up weeks of swimming and took the burden of removing

the camp injury curse by breaking his arm very badly during our setup weekend. We thank Mary, Harold, and Danny at the Voluntown Peace Trust for garden goodies, hospitality, respite and support. Marylou and Katy Joslyn and Gill Grimm for hosting fabulous parties. Bill and Pat (the bike guy and babe) for lending us their van (which -EGADS!!!- we have yet to return) St. Tim's, Corpus Christi, St. James

Episcopal, St. Peter Claver, the Hartford Foundation and too many individuals to name who all provided supplies and financial support for the camp! God bless you all.

Please keep us in your prayers as we get ready to begin our after school program. Though the problems are many...we echo the words of our founder Dorothy Day who said the "the only solution is love." **Ω**

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND ABORTION:

David Cruz - Uribe, SFO

This past May, anti-abortion groups began to post ominous warnings on their websites: "Amnesty promotes abortion," "Amnesty International to declare abortion a human right." The condemnation from the right was immediate, but concerned progressives also spoke out. In Connecticut the Catholic Church reacted swiftly: the bishops ended all cooperation with Amnesty, and parishes were forbidden from participating in Amnesty's Weekend of Faith in Action on the Death Penalty.

Is there anything behind the hype, or are anti-abortion groups crying wolf? Unfortunately, there is: Amnesty International has begun a multi-year consultation on "sexual and reproductive rights," and one potential outcome is that Amnesty could declare that abortion is a human right. This is not the only possible outcome, but there is a significant constituency in Amnesty pushing for this to happen.

To understand the current situation it is helpful to review the history of Amnesty International (AI). AI pioneered human rights work by focusing exclusively on its "mandate," drawn from treaties such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: protecting prisoners of conscience, seeking release for political prisoners, ending the use of torture, and abolishing the death penalty. AI quickly gained a formidable reputation for its objectivity, independence, and scrupulous research. Because of this it has considerable moral capital and is regarded by many as *the* voice for human rights.

From its inception, Amnesty viewed human rights as arising from the dignity of the human person. Human rights were not abstractions but principles that had consequences for real people. The work of AI on behalf of prisoners of conscience fulfilled one of the corporal works of mercy, **visiting those in prison (Mt. 25:36).**

Recently, however, Amnesty has been rethinking its personalist approach. In 2001, Amnesty replaced its "mandate" with a new "mission." It broadened its definition of human rights to include "social, cultural and economic rights," and expanded its approach to defending them. This new approach reflects a change in the way AI sees itself. Traditionally, AI relied on its moral authority: by focusing on abuses that were universally regarded as crimes it was seen by all as speaking truth to power. Now, however, Amnesty wants to devote more energy to advocating for positions that are not universally held, and may even be controversial. Paradoxically, AI believes that to be a more effective advocate for human rights, it must abandon the moral high ground.

As a consequence of its transition from "mandate" to "mission," AI began to discuss abortion. Traditionally, Amnesty maintained a neutral stance on abortion: "*AI takes no position on whether or not women have a right to choose to terminate unwanted pregnancies; there is no generally accepted right to abortion in international human rights law.*" But in 2005 AI called for the creation of a coherent policy on "sexual and reproductive rights." While this covers many things—such as opposing forced sterilizations and abortions—it is widely understood as involving a "right to abortion."

In the spring of 2006, Amnesty UK passed a resolution asserting that "*the full realization of human rights should be understood to mean that a woman's right to physical and mental integrity includes a right to. . . legal, safe and accessible abortion. . .*" In May, Amnesty Canada also passed a resolution about abortion. The resolution itself was not made public, but various documents were leaked to the press, sparking the current public outcry. On its website AI Canada described the resolution as focusing on

Decriminalization of abortion. . . individuals will not be jailed for seeking an

abortion or performing an abortion. . . Access to quality health care services. . . to ensure that mothers will not die from complications that arise as a result of an abortion, be it legal or illegal. . . Access to abortion in cases of rape, sexual assault, incest and when the continuation of the pregnancy will risk the life of a woman.

In April, Amnesty USA passed a resolution on abortion but officials will not discuss its contents, claiming it is an internal matter. Reports indicate that it lies between the British and Canadian resolutions, and contains language urging AI to adopt a pro-abortion stance. During the debate a significant bloc argued that abortion is a human right.

The reaction to these resolutions has been sharp. Most anti-abortion groups have condemned Amnesty, though some have oversimplified the situation. The action of the Connecticut bishops has been mirrored elsewhere: the USCCB has broken off cooperation between the Catholic anti-death penalty campaign and AI, and Cardinal Renato Martino, head of the Pontifical Council for Peace and Justice, publicly condemned AI. In England, Bishop Michael Evans, a 30 year member of AI has protested the resolution by Amnesty UK. On his website he wrote:

The world needs Amnesty International. It has touched the lives of countless numbers of people across the world who have been wrongly imprisoned for their beliefs or subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment.



WAL DENHAM ILLUSTRATION © 1981

Long may it do so - hopefully with the active support of Catholics worldwide. But this will be seriously threatened should Amnesty adopt a policy supporting the right to abortion.

In the United States, the Consistent Life Action Network started a petition urging AI to maintain its neutral stance on abortion. As this article was being written there were over 350 signatures. The petition is online at www.petitionspot.com/petitions/consistentlife.

The outcome of Amnesty's consultation is still open. It is not a forgone conclusion that AI will declare abortion a human right; it may maintain its current neutral stance. Nevertheless, a vocal minority of AI activists wants to declare abortion a human right, and many more want to weaken its neutrality in some way.

This is a terrible mistake by Amnesty, both practically and morally. On a practical level, abortion is a divisive issue on which people committed to the defense of human rights disagree strongly. Given the many grave threats to human rights throughout the world—not least the “war” on terrorism—it would be disastrous to both divide the

human rights movement and abrogate the moral authority that Amnesty has earned: **“no household divided against itself can last.” (Mt 12:25)**

The anti-death penalty movement has already suffered repercussions. The Catholic Church opposes capital punishment, and thousands of Catholics are active in the



abolition movement. At the urging of the late John Paul II, the hierarchy moved this issue to the foreground, launching a major campaign against it. At the same time, AI's Campaign to Abolish the Death Penalty has relied on support from the Church. Now that support is in jeopardy.

On a moral level, abortion contradicts the very heart of Amnesty's philosophy of human rights: the dignity of the human person. All other rights presume a right to life, and to have meaning these rights must be defended in proportion to the vulnerability of those affected. As was taught by Vatican II, *“From the moment of its conception life must be guarded with the greatest care, while abortion and infanticide are unspeakable crimes.”* (Gaudium et Spes, 51)

To maintain its moral authority, Amnesty International needs to fully embrace its own understanding of human rights and reject abortion as a human right, or even as a regrettable solution to the real problems of the world. In the words of the USCCB, AI must deny *“the tragic illusion that we can defend life by taking life.”* **Ω**

NOTES, CONT.

members of her family and her church, the Greater Bible Way Temple of Praise, helping sort shoes, control the crowd and match feet with boots. Thanks to Peter Dillon and Timberland Shoes for donating these shoes.

This summer we have also begun receiving wonderful food from Roma Foods. We are so excited when it comes because we know that there is such a great need for the basic necessities for families in our neighborhood. Thank you Roma!

The down side to my summer has been learning of more friends who have been diagnosed with cancer: “That deadly thing”. I pray everyday for an end to this nightmare. As I am writing this I am horrified of how many people are going to ask me how my Mom's doing? Every time I am

asked how she is doing, I feel very sad. I am forced to think of how much pain she is in all the time and that she is never going to get better.

At the beginning of the summer my mom was not taking Chemotherapy treatments because her cancer was stabilized. Not taking Chemo meant her hair was growing so beautifully, her nails were actually getting back to their original color and she was slowly getting back her strength. Her appetite was getting there and she was craving for Stew Chicken.

During all of her progress I knew that she had a very important appointment coming up. To cut the story short because I am getting very teary, her doctor said that the Cancer was growing more rapidly and that they will have to start the Chemo treatments again. My heart sank to the ground. The way these treatments work is

they get her weak, nauseated and cut her appetite before she can get “better”.

Well, my mom is still hanging in there and is keeping her faith. My family and I are just taking it step by step one day at a time. This journey has been draining. Please keep my mom and the rest of the world that is struggling with this “Thing called Cancer” in your prayers.

Keep the faith. Peace Moe **Ω**



Illustration by Sincere

Notes From De Porres House

Monliana Evans

Hello everyone! It is the once a year voice from the Hartford Catholic Worker. It is that time again when the new school year begins. Micah has been rubbing it in my face that my school open before his. Once again I lose the more vacation days contest. Micah and Ammon will be attending school on the fifth of September.

Joining the going back to school crew this year is Christopher. We all are very excited to return to start school. Merci! (Thank you) from the Hartford Catholic Worker to everyone that made it possible for Chris and I to attend school this semester. Chris and I will not let you all down. By the way rumors that Chris is no longer going to be a Catholic Worker are untrue!- though he has cut back on his House responsibilities for the time being. Again we are very grateful.

Let's not forget our neighborhood children that will be returning to school also after Labor Day. We saw some report cards and they were very impressive. We were so glad to see that type of good news. The Summer Camp has come to an end for this year and so has our Summer Program. Both programs went very well and the kids had a blast. The glow and enjoyment on the children's face every Monday morning was a sight to see. Our friend Keyanna said, "The Catholic Worker Camp is the best!" Great

thanks to the churches, schools, individuals, families and organizations that made this powerful and exciting adventure possible for our children. While Jackie and Sarah and some times Chris were



gone it was Brian, Angela and I in Hartford holding down the fort. The summer program in Hartford was great as we met some new kids. These kids were very excited that they could come to play and read for three hours a day at the Green House. Special Thanks to all of our helpers that came to make this program a success.

Word to the Y's, without our extended community the Hartford Catholic Worker would not be where it is today. Thank you all for supporting the work we do; your contributions of time, prayers, school supplies, food, furniture and money are all very much appreciated.

Our community gardens did well. Angela, Sister Betty and Sheila grew

some good-looking squashes and tomatoes from the community garden, behind the Clark School. Chris' sunflowers, roses, tomatoes and hot peppers were unbelievable. His tomato trees grew so many tomatoes this summer that Brian got canker sores eating them all.

I have some bad news and I wish that I was not the one announcing it. Here it goes. This summer Grace the community dog was put to sleep. She had a problem with her bladder and could not control her urine. When she was caught next to urine puddles she would look so embarrassed. She would put her head down and slowly walk away. In addition, the vet told

us that she was in pain. During camp Grace attacked another dog. We had to make the decision to put her to sleep. We find comfort in knowing that she is in Doggy heaven with no pain and is chasing squirrels out in the open.

The good news is Jackie got a dog from our neighbor from down the street. the dog is black and white. I have to admit the dog is cute but none of us know what to call it since Jackie and Ammon can't agree on a name!

On Wednesday, August 30th we gave out 700 pairs of Timberlands shoes to people in the our neighborhood. We had great volunteers from Trinity College, the neighborhood, and our dear Edna brought

(SEE NOTES P.9)

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