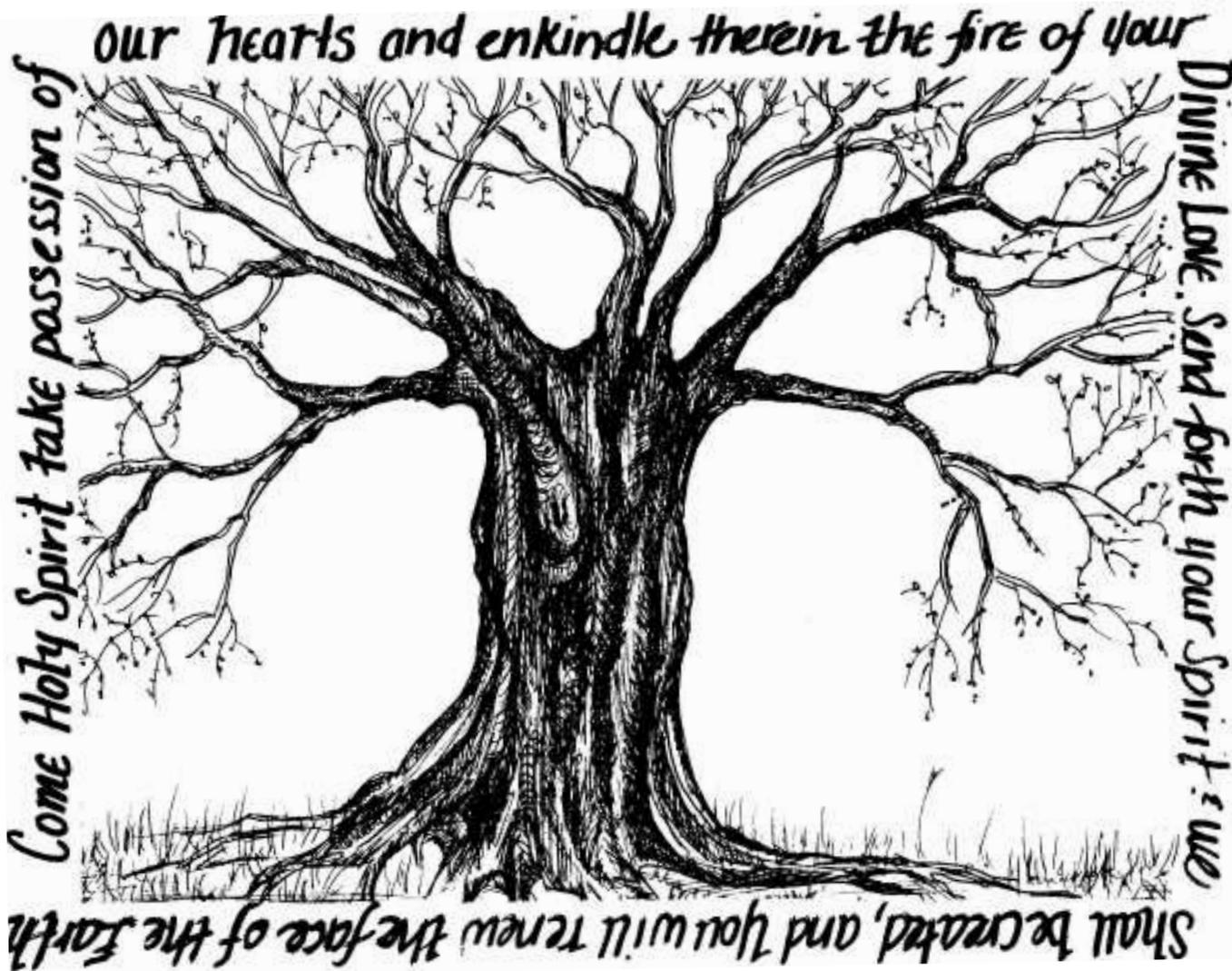


# THE HARTFORD CATHOLIC WORKER



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*



*Jacqueline Allen - Doucot*

EASTER 2007



## 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 [www.hartfordcatholicworker.org](http://www.hartfordcatholicworker.org) We are: Brian Kavanagh, Sarah Karas, Angela Thomas, Jacqueline, Christopher, Micah and Ammon Allen-Doucot.

April 12th 2007

Dear Catholic Worker,

I've met you guys one time and it was great going to the UConn volleyball game. I'm only seven and my name is Jared. I hope I come with you again.

Me and my mom gave up dessert for Lent and we saved up money to give you.

I hope you had a wonderful Easter!

Sincerely,

Jared Nelson

*Dear Jared,*

*We did have a wonderful Easter. Your donation and your note really made our day. Thanks!*

*Brian, Sarah, Chris, Jackie and Angela*

# OUT OF THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE:

## A REMEMBRANCE OF KURT VONNEGUT

### Stephen Kobasa

It was the week before Kurt Vonnegut died that I looked at my father and saw that he was old. What does it mean that they were contemporaries? Their present was always the same because their past was - innocents caught up in that now long ago war ("the children's crusade" as one of Vonnegut's subtitles described it) - seeing things that were beyond believing, and which later filled their dreams.

In all that I read of Vonnegut's work - especially *Slaughter-House Five*, but also marking the rest of what he wrote - it was clear that living with his survival was a nearly impossible task. The litany of "so it goes" always had something desperate about it. Ironic, certainly, but also hopeless. Vonnegut had escaped the fires of Dresden, but it was no unmitigated gift. He could testify to the horrors, personify the rant of conscience in a world trained to

indifference, but never succeed in soothing his own soul.

He did offer the rest of us the vision of



the bombing runs in reverse, the planes flying backwards and the weapons disassembled into their component minerals which were then hidden in the ground where "they would never hurt anybody ever again." But the compound wars which followed his - one after the other down to Iraq and Afghanistan today - rendered that hope a painful fantasy.

There was one evening when I was in the same room as he was, but I made no attempt to speak to him. I didn't know what I could thank him for, nor could I think of any consolation to offer. There is a passage in *Slaughter-House Five* which points out that "every so often, for no apparent reason" the central character - Billy Pilgrim - "would find himself weeping." I am convinced that Vonnegut himself was nearly always in tears, even while the rest of us only heard the angry laughter. Ω

*I saw Jesus at the bowling alley, slinging nothing but gutter balls. He said, "You've gotta love a hobby that allows ugly shoes." He lit a cigarette and bought me a beer. So I invited him to dinner.*

*I knew the Lord couldn't see my house in its current condition, so I gave it an out of season spring cleaning. What to serve for*

*dinner? Fish? the logical choice, but after 2000 years, he must grow weary of everyone's favorite seafood dishes. I thought of my Granny's ham with Coca Cola glaze, but you can't serve that to a Jewish boy. Likewise pizza, all my favorite*

*toppings involve pork.*

*In the end, I made us an all-dessert buffet. We played Scrabble and Uno and Yahtzee and listened to Bill Monroe. Jesus has a healthy appetite for sweets, I'm happy to report. He told strange stories*

*which I've puzzled over for days now.*

*We've got an appoint-*

*ment for golf on Wednesday. Ordinarily I don't play, and certainly not in this humidity. But the Lord says he knows a grand miniature golf course with fiberglass mermaids and working windmills and the best homemade ice cream you ever tasted. Sounds like Heaven to me. Ω*

### HEAVEN ON EARTH

*Kristin Benkey - Abbott*

"With you always"



# THE CATHOLIC WORKER KIDS GO TO COLLEGE

## Stephen Dahlem

On Friday April 6, "Good Friday", thirty members of the Hartford Catholic Worker community, including 25 of our kids, traveled to UCONN in Storrs, CT and met up with a similar number of student-athletes from the Husky Sport community. What resulted was a powerful day of relationship building and mentoring. As Christians on this day-of-days, we were especially aware of the supreme sacrifice made on our behalf over two thousand years ago. As this day proceeded, without once invoking His name, no one paying attention could help but marvel at His presence in these two communities coming together.

The Husky Sport program was created two years by Dr. Jennie Bruening, who is an Assistant Professor of Sport Management and Sociology at UCONN. In 2005, she sought out Chris Doucot from the Hartford Catholic Worker to learn about our work and to see what she and the people in her program could contribute. Together they began to build a relationship. From the start, they recognized that the athletes from UCONN that Jennie taught, especially the female athletes, were exactly the kind of mentors the children of our community desperately needed. That first meeting has led, over the past two years, to a significant group of athletes from UCONN traveling to the Green House in Hartford (and to the Anderson Center, and to Clark School) to spend quality time with our kids. The positive effect that these relationships have had cannot be overestimated.

For most of the Husky Sport athletes, the fulfillment of meaningful service hours to meet their course requirements has been accomplished. But, amazingly, for a growing group of the athletes, relationships have been established that have continued well past any course requirement. Gabbey LaChance and Jodi Hope

are two of the athletes who have become regular members of our community. Gabbey is a coxswain on the Women's Crew Team, and Jodi graduated from UCONN last year and is a Graduate Assistant Coach also on the crew team. Gabbey and Jodi, working with Dr. Bruening, and four other current Husky Sport members, Katie Ringel, Kelly Dwyer, Kyle



Archer, and Robert Theoudele, planned and arranged the April 6 field trip. Katie works for the Special Events Staff, Kelly is also a member of the crew team, and Kyle and Robert are both members of the football team.

The day started very early at Coventry Lake, just south of Storrs, in near freezing temperatures and 15 MPH winds. We witnessed, and experienced firsthand, the teamwork, the camaraderie, and the downright hardiness of the Women's Crew team, as they competed in a dual meet against Villanova, and won every one of their races. They began racing early in the morning before we even arrived. We spent about an hour in the cold windy weather, watching the racing before we left for the main campus. After we left, the racing continued for at least another hour. In our short time there, we were turned into a frozen, complaining, ball of shivering whining flesh, as we huddled to stay warm. The most common complaints heard were: "I'm going to die", "I can't feel my feet", "this is the worst trip ever", "he stole my blanket", "I'm never

going to go to another crew race", "I hate you Steve", and the classic, repeated incessantly before we had even seen one race, "can we go yet?". But, our shared hardship in this epic adventure was fun (please note, my perspective on this may not be widely shared), our appreciation for the Crew athletes grew exponentially, and the experience gave the

adults in the group a powerful behavior modification tool. As the day went forward, whenever the group started to get out of control, we would just threaten to take them back to the crew races, and order would immediately be restored.

After leaving the races, Katie, Kyle and Robert took us to the Burton Family Football Complex, which is the new indoor football facility adjacent to Gampel Pavilion. We learned later that this was no

small act of kindness, as groups are usually not allowed to use the field. This indoor activity was the perfect antidote for the Crew races. Imagine a warm, climate controlled, indoor, cushioned, state-of-the-art, synthetic turf football field. Replete with footballs, jump ropes, pitching machines, tackling dummies. Big enough to easily swallow the substantial noise level that our two youngest girls, Mary and Dawn, could possibly generate. Upon arriving, the most common exclamations heard were: "this is the best trip ever", "you're great Steve", "can we stay here all day?", and "I'm never going to another crew race".

Over the course of the next two hours, we were joined by six or seven additional members of the football team, as well as Gabbey and Kelly after they finished racing. We also met Coach Jerry Martin, who graciously showed us the adjoining strength and conditioning area of the facility, and gave us a lesson in personal integrity. If you were there with us, you would have witnessed a spirited game of flag football

that included most of our kids and five or six members of the UCONN football team; gymnastic floor exercises being practiced along the sidelines; several football players being schooled and getting schooled in double-dutch rope-jumping by Mary and Dawn; a ball catching contest using the pitching machine; a football passing contest led by UCONN's quarterback; and many pass catching patterns and sprint races. Twenty-five kids, at full throttle, having as much fun as they could ever imagine.

After leaving the football facility, we were treated to lunch in one of the cafeterias on campus. On the short walk there, we were surprised and very happy to meet several members from the Women's Track Team, including Alyssa Evering and Mandela Graves-Fulgham. These women, and several of their teammates were first introduced to us last year by way of Husky Sport, and like Gabbey and Jodi, they have become important members of our community. Since they have been "in-season" during the winter and spring, we've seen less of them recently, but they clearly have not been forgotten. In a wonderful expression of the feelings our kids have for them, there was a spontaneous group hug on the sidewalk outside the cafeteria, as the kids all at once tried to renew their relationships. Without too much persuading, Mandela, Allyssa, and several of their teammates joined us for lunch, and for the rest of the afternoon.

In my experience, since the Green House has opened, I have never been there that there wasn't a basketball game occurring in the backyard. Every day, rain, snow, cold, no matter what the conditions, at some point one kid starts dribbling and shooting, the noise attracts others, and a game forms. Several of our players are starting to make a name for themselves in Recreation League games in Hartford, and Latiqqa Patterson, as a Freshman, was a starting member of the Weaver High School Girl's Basketball team. Knowing the dedication most of our kids have for basketball, it was an added bonus that during the trip we were able to

meet several of the UCONN basketball players, who we had only previously seen on TV. Joining us for lunch in the cafeteria, and sitting at one of our tables, was Jeff Adrian from the Men's Basketball team. And then, after lunch, on the way to the Field House, we walked through Gampel Pavilion, and had a chance to meet Brittany Hunter and Coach Auriemma from the Women's Basketball team. Latiqqa and one of our high school volunteers, Ally, both being varsity basketball players, were especially excited to meet and get their pictures taken with Coach Auriemma and Brittany.

To finish the day we went to the Women's Crew offices and their workout room in the



Field House. Picture a workout room barely large enough to line up thirty indoor rowing machines side by side. (These athletic torture devices used by the team for dry-land training, are also known as ergometers, or "Ergs" for short.) This cramped room had no windows, minimal lighting, no discernible ventilation, a low ceiling, and the smell of years of serious aerobic perspiration permeating from every surface. I know what you may be thinking. These kids, as they have already vocalized to me on several occasions, hate crew racing. On top of that, they've just finished fun activities in the "state-of-the-art" Football and Basketball facilities. You probably imagine this final activity had no chance of success, but you would be wrong. We met in the office outside the Erg room and began coloring some personalized hand stenciled tee shirts that Gabbey and her group had made for us, and which the kids loved. Then, totally unplanned,

one or two curious kids wandered into the workout room and starting trying out the Ergs. Before you knew it, the music system was cranking, all of the Ergs were in use, and all of the kids and adults were in the workout room furiously rowing. Jodi gave us some basic instruction on rowing technique, and this spontaneous unplanned C.R.A.S.H. B sprint crew workout proceeded for almost thirty minutes, and served as a fitting conclusion to the day. It might be a stretch on my part to say the kids learned to love rowing, but they had enough fun, that we are going to get some of them involved in Jodi's novice rowing program this summer on the Connecticut River in Hartford.

It should be noted that, in addition to the Husky Sport community, the success of this trip also depended on the adult volunteers from the Hartford Catholic Worker who gave their time, and used their cars and vans to transport the kids. The volunteers who the kids and I are most thankful for are Angela Thomas, Lynn Mogielnicki, Jim Conway, Octo Martin, and Kate McLaughlin. We were also helped throughout the day by Ally Campagne and Katie Ferns, who, even as High School students, have already become significant members of our community.

Earlier in the day, before leaving the football facility, as we do every time we meet, we joined hands with our new and old friends, in a prayer circle to express our thanks to each other, and to God. During the prayer, I couldn't help but recognize how our circle has grown since Chris and Jackie and Brian first established the Hartford Catholic Worker back in 1993. And, how it has grown since Jennie first sought out Chris back in 2005. The synergy of these communities coming together is amazing to witness. These children, that our society has shown a willingness to reject, have become for us the cornerstone of our ministry, and everyone who comes in contact with them is awed by their energy and their spirit. Standing in that circle, in His presence, on Good Friday, holding hands with my brothers and sisters, filled me, and filled us all, with hope and with certainty in the value of our work. **Ω**

# LOVE IN THE SHADOW OF THE TRUE CROSS

*Rex Fowler*

*Where there is great love, there are always miracles.*

– Willa Cather, author

*Enrique's Journey* is a story of great love and the miracles that accompany it.

Seven years ago Sonia Nazario, a reporter for the LA Times, received a phone call from a humanitarian group in Texas which tended to incarcerated, undocumented immigrants. The group sought Nazario's help in bringing attention to the plight of Mexican and Latin Americans who flee to the US, not out of a hunger for riches or the 'American Dream', but simply out of hunger, and a desire to help those they love back home escape the same hunger and desperation. Already sobered by the stories she had heard from the Guatemalan mother who cleaned her house on occasion, Nazario flew to Texas, where she met a typical immigrant - a 17 year old from Honduras named Enrique. Nazario chose to spend much of the next two weeks listening to Enrique's story, largely because she learned his was such a common story among immigrants, then wrote a series of articles about Enrique's odyssey that appeared in the Times – the story of a journey to be reunited with his mother who had left him 12 years earlier in a desperate attempt to find work in the US.

The series won dozens of awards for Nazario, including a Pulitzer Prize. But she knew there was much more to Enrique's story than she had written in the articles. Nazario then took a leave from the Times and spent much of the next four years retracing Enrique's footsteps, beginning in his hometown of Tegucigalpa. She rode atop the trains with other migrants, rode

buses along the path where Enrique rode buses, and hiked where Enrique hiked, seeing – and in some cases experiencing – the same obstacles Enrique encountered, from bandits, gangsters, and rapists, to corrupt police and numbing discomfort from the scorching heat of the valleys to the freezing temperatures of the mountains. Nazario conducted hundreds of interviews



in the process, with Enrique's family members, his friends, and those who helped – or hindered – his efforts along the way. The result of her painstaking research is captured in *Enrique's Journey* (2005; Random House Publishers).

The Journey begins when Enrique is five years old and his mother, Lourdes, too poor to feed her children, leaves Honduras to find work in the United States. The move allows her to send money back home to Enrique and his sister so that they can eat and attend school past the third grade.

Lourdes promises Enrique she will return quickly, but life in the States doesn't turn out like the American TV show she had caught a brief glimpse of back in

Honduras. She struggles. Years pass. Each time she calls her family in Tegucigalpa, Enrique begs his mother to come back. Lourdes tells Enrique to be patient – she'll be home soon. But her promises are never fulfilled.

The writer of Proverbs said that 'Hope deferred makes the heart sick'. As a consequence of his mother's twelve year absence and failed promises, Enrique has lost hope. And he has become sick. And so he decides that if his mother will not return to him, he will go to her.

Enrique sets off alone from Tegucigalpa, with little more than a slip of paper bearing his mother's North Carolina telephone number. With no money, he will make the dangerous and illegal trek up the length of Mexico the only way he can – clinging to the sides and tops of freight trains, hitchhiking, sneaking aboard buses.

The United States is not the only country which frowns upon the arrival of unexpected foreign visitors. After traveling from Honduras through Guatemala, Enrique is captured numerous times upon entering Mexico and sent home.

But on his eighth attempt he succeeds in eluding Mexican authorities at the dangerous southern border checkpoints and journeys atop a freight train up the eastern side of the country, first through the hostile state of Chiapas, then into Veracruz.

When the trains from the south enter the state of Veracruz, the first sight riders glimpse is that of a towering 60 foot statue of Christ, standing atop a mountain. He is dressed in white and his arms are extended,

reaching out across the valley of sugarcane below. It's almost as if he is welcoming visitors to Veracruz.

Where Enrique had stones hurled at him as he traveled through Chiapas, in Veracruz (true cross) the people are different. One night, not long after passing under the statue of Christ, the whistle of the train blows and Enrique notices more than a dozen people suddenly rush out of their houses in the nearby farming village. After his experience riding through Chiapas, Enrique fears the worst. He notices the villagers, many who are women and children, clutching small bundles. They catch up to the train and shout "*Orale, chavo! Here, boy!*", as they toss up a cylinder of crackers. Others are throwing bundles of bread, tortillas, sandwiches to Enrique and the other migrants riding the traintops. The gifts flying, it's as if a giant piñata in heaven has been shattered and Enrique and his companions are simply there to catch the bounty.

Riding through other villages in Veracruz, Enrique experiences the same spirit of generosity. Again and again, families would run to greet the trains, throwing sweaters, plastic bottles of lemonade, pastries, animal crackers. In growing season, some would bring oranges, pineapples, watermelons, or bananas to share with the migrants. Those who had no food to offer would bring plastic bottles of tap water. Those who had no food or bottles came to the tracks to kneel in prayer for the migrants as they passed.

Nozario notes that Veracruz is an unlikely place for people to be sharing with strangers. The World Bank has estimated that over 40% of Mexico's 100 million citizens live on less than \$2 a day. In rural areas, like the one Enrique is riding through, the poverty is often worse. Over the course of her research in Veracruz, Nozario met one woman, Maria Luisa Mora Martin, who was hunched over and fragile at more than 100 years old, but who filled plastic bags with tortillas, salsa, and

beans. Maria would then hand the bags off to her 70 year old daughter, Soledad, who would listen for the train whistle and then run to the tracks to toss the packages of food to the migrants.

"If I have one tortilla, I give half away," one of the food throwers told Nozario. "I know God will bring me more." The grace of the people of Veracruz would often bring tears to migrants, many who had frequently gone days without eating.

Nozario tracked one source of such generosity to a local bishop, who frequently reminded church goers in the region of the words of Jesus in Matthew 25: "*For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me.*"

In dozens of parishes throughout the diocese, Nozario witnessed priests and their congregations practicing what Jesus preached. Parishes have converted their holy sanctuaries into shelters and buffet tables for the weary migrants, while overflow guests are welcomed into homes where they can enjoy a shower and a hot meal. Parish leaders stand with the migrants when police threaten to arrest them. One 63 year old priest donated all of his retirement savings – about \$37,000 – to buy land on which to build a shelter for the migrants.

Nozario met a middle-aged woman in

Veracruz named Francisca who lived in a one room home with her son and daughter. Over a two year period, more than 80 migrants had shared the room with her family. Many stay a week, some longer. Francisca's only income comes from selling small bags of black beans on a street corner. Although she barely has enough to feed her own children, she goes to the tracks four times a day when the trains roll by, to pray and offer food to the Central American travelers passing through.

And Christ looks out over the valley with his arms extended.

No one knows the true numbers, but officials estimate that each year, between 500,000 and 1,000,000 immigrants enter the United States illegally. *Enrique's Journey* is not a political position paper on the immigration controversy. It's not about invading the United States or stealing social services or jobs from American workers. *Enrique's Journey* is a story about love. It's about family. And it's about miracles. Ω





Brian Kavanagh

## BOOKS AND POETRY OF INTEREST

### ***The Trouble With Our State: A Collection of Poems Written and Read*** by Daniel Berrigan

This audio CD is accompanied by a 32 page booklet of the poems along with artwork by Hartford Catholic Worker artist in residence Brian Kavanagh, among others. We have copies of the CD's available for \$15. Proceeds to benefit the work of the Hartford Catholic Worker. Contact Brian at 724-7066. Ω



### ***Interrupting White Privilege: Catholic Theologians Break the Silence***

by Laurie M. Cassidy and Alexander Mikulich

Alex and Laurie are friends of the Hartford Catholic Worker. This book will be reviewed by Bishop Peter Rosazza in a future issue. Ω

### Members of the Hartford Catholic Worker community were interviewed for: ***Touching the World: Christian Communities Transforming Society*** by Dan McKanan

From the days of the apostles to the present, Christians have formed intentional communities. While some Christian communities withdraw to avoid contamination from "the world," others reach out in loving service to, and dialogue with, their neighbors. Dan McKanan advocates the latter approach: Christians must be willing to "touch the world" in order to unleash the transformative potential of their communities. In this book, McKanan explores two contemporary community movements that touch the world by honoring the diverse spiritual and vocational paths of the families and individuals who join them. One of these movements, Camphill, derives its inspiration from the esoteric vision of Christianity outlined by Rudolf Steiner. The other is the well-known Catholic Worker movement founded in

New York by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. The Worker movement today includes nearly two hundred urban houses of hospitality and rural farms, along with countless individuals who have taken Day's and Maurin's ideals into everyday life. Blending theological and ethnographic approaches, McKanan builds his study on participant observation, archival research, and interviews with members of more than twenty communities. What emerges is a winsome and optimistic vision of the impact transformative Christian communities can have in a blessed and broken world. Ω



### ***No Mass in July/August***

Mass resumes on Tuesday, September 4. Mass is celebrated every first Tuesday at 7:30.

## NOTES CONT.

community life she has found time to visit us in Hartford one day a week. She is a big help since she already knows the drill here and many of the children are glad to have her back, especially a one Mary Pipkin!

"Angela the Brave" has initiated an after school girls night that meets once a week on Thursday. She hosts a small group of teen girls from our neighborhood for dinner and an activity. She has also been taking classes in the Marshall Rosenberg method of nonviolent communication, which aims to "help people connect compassionately with themselves and one another through Nonviolent Communication language." She seems to be really enjoying it and has learned a lot about conflict and its potential for deeper understanding and communion with one another.

This past week I got to participate in a video project with middle school students who wrote, directed, shot, edited and screened a film about their culture in five days. I had a great time working with them and learned a lot about doing film with kids. I would like to eventually do a video project with some of the children in our after school program but for now that will have to wait until the documentary about Frances Crowe and Juanita Nelson is finished.

Our three school boys (Chris, Micah and Ammon) have been working very hard on their studies. In between his school work Chris continues to give talks and is sometimes joined by Micah to talk about the Sudan. Chris has been heading the project to rebuild the back porch of St. Martin House. We hope to start work on this soon. If you are interested in donating time, materials or money please contact Chris; we would very much appreciate it! Baseball season just began for Ammon and Chris his coach. They won their first game! When not doing his homework, cleaning his room or playing baseball Ammon is working diligently on his blog

(online journal) and training Reilly, our nine month old Pit bull. Micah has been gearing up for this year's fishing and already caught three fish today in Keney Park, all of which he cleaned and filleted himself! On March 28 Micah celebrated his 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, if you can believe that!...Our little boy is growing up!

I am happy to report that Ms. Morliana has been very well. Although we are seeing less and less of her at the house she is keeping herself busy elsewhere



with school, work and family. We wish her many blessings as she embarks on this new chapter in her life and thank her for all she has given this community. So, even though this isn't goodbye we just wanted you to know that we love you!

And last but not least the one the only Jacqueline Allen-Doucot! Jackie is the recent co-founder of Worse and Worse Plumbing, Inc., which we hired to fix the leaking toilet in the downstairs bathroom. We (Jackie, Ange and I) figured since Chris is at school and cannot do all the maintenance by himself, we gals could handle the situation just fine...long story short we had to drain the entire heating system in the house after cutting a hole through the baseboard heating pipe with the Sawzall- thus the company name. Not too swift!

On a brighter note and, in the spirit of self empowerment and earth day, I would like to mention Jackie's effort to build a counselors cabin at Camp Ahimsa. Last year when one of our neighborhood children, Herbie, was killed in a drive by

shooting, Jackie wanted to do something to memorialize his life and work harder to prevent similar acts of violence. We began to incorporate a peer mentorship component to our youth summer camp to train our middle and high school aged children to be peer mentors as well as to provide them with employment during the summer. We wanted to give them a space of their own, while in Voluntown, and so came the idea of building a cabin just for them, but not just any cabin, a "cord wood" cabin that would be built, eco friendly, by the community. She has since dedicated much of her time essentially teaching herself how to build this cabin including taking a workshop in up state New York and researching information about making blueprints and collaborating with various people in order to get this project closer to realization. If anyone has any ideas about this or would like to be a part of this process please contact Jackie and let her know, she would be happy to hear from you!

Well, that about wraps up this addition of the house news. In honor of Earth Day I leave you with this prayer (found at [www.appleseeds.org/](http://www.appleseeds.org/)):

"O God, We thank you for this earth, our home; for the wide sky and the blessed sun, for the ocean and streams, for the towering hills and the whispering wind, for the trees and green grass. We thank you for our senses by which we hear the songs of birds, and see the splendor of fields of golden wheat, and taste autumn's fruit, rejoice in the feel of snow, and smell the breath of spring flowers. Grant us a heart opened wide to all this beauty; and save us from being so blind that we pass unseeing when even the common thorn bush is aflame with your glory. For each new dawn is filled with infinite possibilities for new beginnings and new discoveries. Life is constantly changing and renewing itself. In this new day of new beginnings with God, all things are possible. We are restored and renewed in a joyous awakening to the wonder that our lives are and, yet, can be. Amen." Ω

# Notes from De Porres House

## Sarah Karas

Greetings all! There is no way I can top Ammon's 20 minute house article writing skillz from last month, however it is my turn to write and so I will give it a go...

I write on the thirty-seventh anniversary of Earth Day; a celebration began to bring attention to the vast environmental degradations our lifestyle has caused. The hope of Earth Day is through awareness, and sense of community with the earth, we will be inspired to action on her behalf. Our own well-being is indelibly connected to that of the earth's. Active engagement to nurture and sustain her life will sustain our lives as well. It is on this beautifully clear and warm Spring day, and in this spirit of communion with the earth, that we continue our work here at the Hartford Catholic Worker.

On Good Friday we prayed the Stations of the Cross procession outside the sub base in Groton, CT. About 40 or so of us gathered. We hung images of victims of American torture, and of those being held captive in our gulags in Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib, on the fence surrounding the base. At each Station a reflection on torture made the connection between torture victims and the crucified Christ. At the culmination of our prayers Chris Doucot, Cal Robertson, Rev. Emmett Jarrett, Rev.

Catherine Alder, and Mary Emily Wells participated in an act of civil disobedience in order to continue the witness in court.



Our community celebrated Easter by distributing dinner baskets, donated by local families and parishes, to about 100 families in our neighborhood. Also, our very own Brian Kavanagh was honored at St. Patrick's and St. Anthony's of Hartford where they including one of his prints in their "Stations of the Cross" themed exhibit.

Jackie, Angela, Keyanna and I accompanied him to the opening reception, which included really good free food and hob-nobbing with the artists. It was nice to see Brian's work being honored along with other local artists and I hope there will be more of that to come.

Our after school program seems to be busier than ever. This month our children were extra spoiled with two big field trips, one to visit the UCONN campus and the other to see the Harlem Globe Trotters perform at the Civic Center. We owe a big thanks to Steve Dahlem and Steve Pitura for their efforts in organizing these trips!

We are especially excited about the enthusiasm from our growing number of volunteers. We cannot do this work without them! Recently our community met for a roundtable discussion with a core group of our volunteers to discuss some of our hopes and dreams for the children we work with and how better to form our work around those goals. Our conversation lasted until ten o'clock at night! We are hoping to make this meeting a monthly occurrence.

Speaking of after school...we would like to welcome back Kate Foran! Kate used to be part of our live in community. She is currently living at the Voluntown Peace Trust. Even though she is very busy adjusting to a new living situation and

(SEE NOTES P.9)

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