

The Hartford Catholic Worker



St. Martin De Porres House
St. Brigid House

“Fear is useless, you need to trust and believe...” - *Jesus*



Brian Kavanagh

*What do we own
when the clasp of our life
loosens and breaks?
No recourse
but to find the narrow road
the thin line through bramble and brush
where God walks ahead of us
more houseless than the fox
poorer than the mouse in its grassy nest.*

Catherine de Vinck

Advent 2012

The Hartford Catholic Worker

Established November 3, 1993

Volume 20 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 a 501c3 tax exempt organization. We do not seek or accept state or federal funding. Our ability to house the homeless, feed the hungry, and work with the children depends on contributions from our readers. 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, Christina Napolitano, Jacqueline, Christopher, Micah and Ammon Allen-Doucot.

Please support the Hartford Catholic Worker by purchasing Christmas cards featuring Brian Kavanagh's artwork. This year we are offering three separate packs, each of which includes ten cards of two designs. Packs are **\$15 for 4.25" x 5.5" cards** and **\$20 for 5" x 7" cards**. Please include an additional \$1 per pack for postage and packaging.

Peace Pack: 2 new peace themed illustrations *Isaiah 11:6 & Peace*

Nativity Pack: 2 nativity scenes *Here Comes The Son & North End Nativity*

Visitor Pack: *Angels and Shepherds & Three Wise Men.*

Contact Marie McKenna at (860) 704-8360 or bcmarie98@yahoo.com to purchase cards or to obtain a poster to help promote them.



Wondering what to give those hard-to-shop-for people on your list! Consider giving a donation to the HCW and we will send an original design HCW Christmas card to those whose names you give us, acknowledging your gift to the HCW in their honor.

Lily and the Grump: A Conversion Story ³

Christopher J. Doucot

Nobody has ever mistaken me for a happy go lucky kinda guy, especially if you only “know” me through reading the handful of essays I write every year for this little newsletter. In my defense, I was told long ago to write about what I know and about what I’ve seen. Well, I’ve seen war up close in a half dozen countries, I’ve seen genocide in Darfur, and I’ve seen my neighbors bury their children. I’ve seen the grim stuff that very many in our society have turned their gaze from despite the sober reality of wars being fought in our name and kids being killed on my block so that kids in the suburbs can smoke a bong.

Well, I’ve been seeing something, or rather someone, else lately- a little girl named Lily. Lily is the year old baby girl of Morliana Evans. She spends every Thursday and Friday night with us. With her arrival on the scene it’s time for Beethoven to move over because she is an unparalleled ode to joy. *Deo Gratias!*

We first met Morliana eleven years ago when she came to us as a homeless high school girl from the Caribbean island of St. Lucia. When she moved out six years later she had graduated from high school and Capital Community College and she had become our daughter. Morlianna is the youngest of 4 daughters and one of 13 children. Growing up in St. Lucia her chore was to fetch water at the bottom of the hill every morning for the homestead; a corrugated Aluminum roofed shack that had no electricity. With a gregarious laugh she confesses that occasionally she would snatch a mango from her blind neighbor’s tree. Morliana came to America while still a teenager searching for a better life just like my great-grandparents did when they left the shores of Italy.

She came seeking opportunity, not charity. During her time with us she dutifully took shifts on the house and on Tuesdays, our house cleaning day, she had elbow grease to spare.

St. Lucian’s, at least the ones we know, still seem to embrace the extended family. After most of her children had left the island for Hartford Mo’s mom came north as well to live with two of her daughters. At first she helped raise a granddaughter but with the changing seasons of life her daughters care for her.



At one point a few years back Mo’s mom was rushed to the hospital surrounded by a half dozen daughters. One room over Jackie’s mom was also on a gurney surrounded by half a dozen of her devoted daughters. Together the women kept vigil; holding and praying for each other. Like Mo’s family Jackie’s family was also an anti-nuclear family.

Jackie’s mom had one daughter live below her and another above her in the house they grew up in. She was in her glory sandwiched between two clutches of her grandchildren singing vintage Irish nursery rhymes for her constant companions. At one point Granma was completely surrounded by grandchildren after Jackie and I also took up residence for the first year of our marriage. She dutifully moved into a

smaller room so we could have hers.

Granma gave me my first lessons on how to be a dad teaching me how to change a diaper and prepare a bottle when Micah was abruptly discharged from the hospital after Jackie became gravely ill hours after childbirth. Ma Mick helped raise a gaggle of grandchildren. When she passed in the room Jackie, Micah and I had long since returned to her she was surrounded by eight of her children, several son’s-in-law and a few grandchildren. We all held her hands, her arms and shoulders and two of her daughters caressed her cheeks as her chest fell but did not again rise. During Mick’s closing weeks her children took turns sitting with her, bathing her, and just caring for her basic, yet intimate, needs. Across town Morliana, her sisters and brother, did the same for their mom. And now Morlianna does this tender work with the nanas and poppas of families she doesn’t know for a scant salary barely north of the minimum wage while most the rest of us have gone to bed for the night.

Not long after their mom’s passing Mo, her sister Agatha, and their brother Hazel jointly bought a two family home. They share the first floor and basement and rent the second floor to help pay the mortgage. They all work long, overlapping shifts cleaning suburban houses, fixing things at a downtown hotel and caring for old folks. They share the responsibilities of the house and they help each other with child care.

By choosing to embrace extended-family values they have been able to secure a piece of the American Dream- a home of their own that might otherwise be beyond their grasp. Mo’s extended family does include Stan, the father of Lily and her sister Desteni Rose. Their dad is

(Please See: *The Grump* p4)

The Grump, cont.

an amiable leviathan of a man- most of the Celtics' roster would look up to him and Tom Brady's famous steel nerves would be reduced to overcooked spaghetti if he lined up across from Stan. He works nights as a prison guard and days as a welder. His plan is to toil like crazy while he is physically able to do so in order to be able to send his girls to college. He has asked Mo to marry him but she has steadfastly declined declaring "In my culture the husband is the king of the house but in my house I am the king."

Last Thanksgiving eve last year Mo stopped by to offer her thanks to us. She was seven months into her pregnancy and not weary but ill. A call about some blood work results prompted an immediate trip to the hospital. Her belly was blooming with Lily but the rest of her body was bulging in an awful way. Fluids weren't passing. Stretched like a taut balloon there didn't seem to be any space left inside for the baby and so Lily joined us on the outside a couple of months early. With a full head of dark, wavy hair and big beautiful eyes, she looked an awful lot like a baby version of Halle Berry- except that she fit in one hand. Perplexed that she weighed more the day after Lily was born than the day before, the doctors kept poking and prodding Mo until they diagnosed her with Lupus. **Lupus** is a chronic autoimmune disease of unknown origin with a wide array of symptoms ranging from fatigue and hair loss to heart and lung problems. The disease is more prevalent, and more virulent, among Black women than the general population. There is no cure.

With Lily ready to be discharged from the NICU and Mo looking at an extended stay in the hospital she asked Jackie if we could take Lily in and just like that I went from being Grumpy to Grampy. This past year has been one of the happiest in my life. The suffering that visits us daily hasn't disappeared but, rather, the simple presence of this child in my life and in my home has been a pow-

erful and constant reminder that we live in a state of grace sharing our space with the Most Holy. Indeed, we share our most intimate space, our very bodies, with the Divine Presence. Changing diapers, patting out burps, and wiping a snotty nose are authentic sacramental acts for those of us who believe God entered the world through an infant. Like a stubborn Yankee avoiding the interstate, God still takes the same route into our midst. The Incarnation is complete but not finite, full but not over. God is not dead but still being born.

Lily has been a balm; lingering wounds have been salved. To witness my teenage sons in her presence, consoling her when she cries and cleaning her when she poops, is to witness the reawakening of that portion of their being that had been subdued, but not vanquished, by the strictures of American-style masculinity. We are all unabashed in our affection and unashamed in our adoration.

Our work doesn't stop when Lily arrives but our lives do focus. When she is with me I pay closer attention to the rhythm of life and the way the Holy Spirit dances in the spaces in between all of us. When she nods off on my chest while we rock in the chair that calmed my boys twenty years ago my breathing slows in synchronicity with hers. With a soft tuft of her curly snug under my chin I daydream about the wind rustling through the leaves clinging to the trees across the street. I ponder the fish in the river and how they duck behind rocks seeking relief from the endless pull of the current. I wonder where the wind is carrying me, and I imagine who are the rocks I hide behind. As the minutes pass warmth radiates between us and, for a time, I leave this world. She sleeps. I pray. We just sit and breathe but soon I am marked with a halo of sweat, emmanuel's silhouette.

The ongoing reproduction of the Incarnation in little ones like Lily is an incomparable act of trust in humanity. The au-

dacity of God to continually enter this world enveloped in the frailty of flesh, utterly dependent on others from the moment of conception, is the boldest declaration possible that we have the capacity to love without bounds. In my halting attempts to imitate Christ with my life I've mistakenly focused exclusively on the *doing* of the adult Christ: feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless and caring for the sick. This utilitarian devotion unwittingly serves to undermine the very sacredness of the lives it seeks to serve. Lily reminds me that we don't need to do anything to be holy. We are sanctified not because we imitate Christ but because Christ animates us.

Perhaps the hope of Advent is that God uses our simple *being* to consecrate the world. By being vulnerable and needy we imitate Christ as he first appeared- a baby dependent upon a family, and a community, to survive. It is the recognition of Christ in the vulnerable and needy that compels us to share, to comfort, and to demand justice; but it is imitation of the vulnerable, needy Christ that knits us closer into community and impels us to be gentle, to accept help, and to be humble. By constantly coming to us naked, defenseless and mute God masterfully draws us into a conspiracy of caring that further reveals the Kingdom in our midst.

My sociologist friends tell me that children learn how to be human by imitating the adults around them; perhaps adults ought to learn from children how to be holy. Ω



Lailah, Harahel, Enaijha and Me ⁵

Christina Napolitano

I can't believe it's been two months since my first day living at the Green House. I was a senior at Simsbury High School when I decided to spend some time here during my gap year after graduation. I couldn't wait to tell everyone about what I was sure would be a pivotal chapter in my life. I eagerly explained to anyone who would listen about the program here, the people I had met during my few visits, and how I was putting college on hold to volunteer. I naively expected that my plans would always be met with positive words of encouragement, and oftentimes I was right. Nonetheless, I have also encountered a steady stream of pessimism and disapproval for my decision.

You'll get raped. Your car is definitely going to be stolen. Why would you ever want to live there? Is this some sort of white guilt thing? Let somebody else do it. You could do so much more with your life. You must be crazy.

I continue to be shocked, hurt, and angered by these judgments. Shocked because I expected so much more from my friends and teachers. Hurt by the lack of support from my home church, and angered by the harsh reality that people could look down on others so blindly. It pains me to think that many in my hometown only see the negative aspects of Hartford's North End and assume that everyone here is uneducated, unemployed, or unreasonably violent. I realize there seems to be good reason to be a bit wary of coming to Hartford, especially if you're not familiar with the area. It can be easy to focus on stories of violent crime and rampant drug abuse instead of realizing that unless you're looking for trouble, you won't be in much danger. To me it makes

sense to be extra cautious and use common sense. But acting out of pure fear and prejudice, as many I know have done by completely avoiding the city at all costs, is only a sign of an incredibly selfish fool. I can remember several cases where nervous parents wouldn't allow their kids to go on school field trips to the Wadsworth Atheneum or Mark Twain House simply because the destination was Hartford. There



is no way stereotypes will ever be broken down unless those from rural and suburban areas feel comfortable traveling into the city and vice-versa.

I believe forming real relationships with people here in the North End can help to ease the fear a lot of my peers associate with Hartford. Time and time again I've seen apprehensive new volunteers blossom and form bonds with kids in the after school program. If only everyone could see Timmy's impish grins, hear Enaijha's adorable giggle, get one of little José's warm hugs, or watch how Nana rushes out the door to meet Big Josh whenever she sees him coming. Seeing such warm moments is a foolproof way to make this community much more approachable.

I've come to love how lively the days can be here. When the weather was warmer and I sat reading on the front porch I could always count on someone coming over to chat.

When I walk from the Green House to the Purple House there's almost always someone who will wave and smile. This is much more of a neighborhood than the semi-Stepford wife feel of suburbia that I grew up with. Building relationships with people here helped Hartford to become a real place to me, instead of just a random assortment of newspaper articles and trips to work in a soup kitchen.

According to Jewish tradition, unborn children know all the secrets of the Torah and of heaven. Just before they are born, the angel Lailah uses her finger to shush the child, thus creating the philtrum, or the little dimple above your upper lip. The baby forgets everything and must spend the rest of his or her life trying to rediscover that sacred knowledge. I find this idea very comforting. It attests that everyone has some level of morality and holiness inside, something that may be clouded but certainly can never be lost.

I believe ignorance is a regrettable yet imitated state. When I think of some people in my hometown, blinded by fear and misinformation, I often get incredibly aggravated. But I've come to realize my anger is misdirected and my expectations are too high. In my graduating class there were only two black students whose families actually lived in Simsbury. A handful more were either bused in daily from Hartford or stayed at the ABC (A Better Chance) House during the school year. People refer to the cluster of \$1200 a month condos on the outskirts of town as the "ghetto of Simsbury." This skewed perception of poverty and intense lack of diversity in Simsbury is a perfect recipe for bigotry. I know this does not make my fellow Simsburians

(Please See: Lailah, p8)

Parting With Sister Anne Montgomery

Kathy Kelly

Anne Montgomery died yesterday. I remember her words to me and to our young Iraqi friend Eva, sitting in the Al Monzer hotel in Amman, Jordan. This was in 2006, and she'd waited three weeks for a visa to enter Iraq as a peace witness. Anne had crossed into zones of conflict more times than any other activist I'd known. During these weeks with us, she'd been meeting and working with Iraqi refugees, many of them undocumented and struggling to eke out a living in Jordan.

Now the wait was over. The visas were not forthcoming, and Anne had decided she was needed most in the Palestinian city of Hebron, where the [Christian Peacemaker Team](#) had requested a month of her time. She was going to attempt the crossing into Israel by taxi. Since Israel could very well have refused her entry we were to save a bed for her. But for the moment, we treasured the chance to learn from her in case this was a parting.

It was, and a greater parting has now come, so I take comfort in her words, and rededicate myself to taking direction from them.

I asked Anne about one of her contemporaries, Barbara Deming, who had been active in the movements for civil rights, women's equality and an end to the Vietnam War. While acknowledging that to succeed peace activists must become "many more than we are now," Deming had nonetheless insisted that activists must joyfully and determinedly engage in what she termed "the further invention of nonviolence." So I asked Anne for her recommendations about inventiveness and nonviolence. She said:

I think this has always been a big question because we need to be creative and not always reactive ... I felt it in Palestine when the wall was being built there between Israel and the West Bank.

We waited too long. It's important to get there before it happens. To see something coming and not have to repeat the crisis ... to try to dissolve the crisis before it happens.

Of course, you can't always repeat what you've done before. When I joined CPT, I'd spent 10 years doing [Plowshares](#) work [including the [Thames River Plowshares](#) with Jackie Allen-Doucot]. I thought, "Maybe we should try something new." What surprised me was that young people kept coming along and joining in the [Plowshares](#) actions. They were thinking of their own creative way of doing



Thames River Plowshares activists. Anne is to Jackie's left

actions. They took this idea, this spirit, and found out where it fit in the issue that concerned them — their campaign to close a spy station or an airstrip or whichever nuclear or conventional war threat they faced. I think that creativity is very important.

It's also important not to look for immediate effectiveness, thinking it's got to work and we've got to see the results, or it's no good. Massive marches against U.S. immigration law have taken place, recently, in many places. These laws cause horrible death and destruction, and the mass marches have really affected the government. The same happened with the Vietnam War. Sometimes it's very appropriate to have massive marches. But consistency is also needed even in doing small things.

Eva asked Anne what she meant by small things. She responded:

Well, I'm thinking of small groups.

I'm thinking of our two friends who just came out of Baghdad. When they [both CPT members] left last week, people were crying because CPT was the one group that had stayed. Consistency is terribly important. If it's the right thing to do, keep doing it.

In December [2005] I walked with a group of 25 people [including Jackie Allen-Doucot] to the furthest gate we could reach near to Guantanamo. It was a tremendous experience that went on for 10 days.

But you can't just go home and leave it. Now people have met and drawn people from the wider community. Something will happen as a next step. I think it's important to be able to do something and not give up. You've done the right thing. If it changes ourselves and the people we know and the people we work with, then it makes a bit of a difference... You pray, think and reflect together. You come to these gatherings from some deep place inside yourself. You're inspired by something. You don't focus just on prayer, reflecting on a book... you go out and find some action that needs to be done. Some ongoing work that builds peace.

It happens, person-to-person, community-to-community, and then networking begins. We have a network of people now — the Atlantic Life Community — who meet from Maine to Florida, from time to time. Many find their community in these gatherings. You gain a sense that you're not alone, that you're helping build a community. We commit ourselves to a disarmament action together at least once a year. There's not much structure ... Instead, we say we are responsible for our way of life, and for far more than one action with no follow-up.

In the 1970s, working in schools run by her religious community, the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Anne contributed to antiwar work mostly by encouraging her students to ask questions as she taught them English, history and philosophy. After three decades of teaching mainly in private schools, she felt intensely aware of the poverty that she called

“the other side of New York City,” and asked to begin working in a “street academy” with disadvantaged students.

The street academy had been intended to draw students back to school that were dropouts. “They taught me a lot about where government money was not going,” said Anne. “They didn’t even care about voting because it wasn’t doing them any good. Some of them joined the army just to get off the streets.”

As her activism expanded in scope, Anne continued learning from people who lived in the “mean streets” at home and abroad, in places where people don’t have a stake in the economic benefits of their society. She was punished with lengthy imprisonments for participating in Plowshares actions. She’d spoken with people in the open-air prisons of Central American dictatorships, joining in faith-based actions to help them free themselves. And she’d listened to and learned from the conditions on streets that were being bombed and in neighborhoods — in Sarajevo, Hebron and Baghdad — where sniper shots and mortar explosions were common.

Having personally watched Anne map out routes in large and sometimes hostile cities, covering long distances on foot, I had grown to fiercely admire her ability to chart courses. During that meeting in 2006, I asked her if she could discern any patterns from her decades of peace team work for activists like me to follow.

She said the pattern was first, forming communities, and second, thinking carefully about means and ends: not trying to sustain a difficult life of activism on one’s own, and always insisting that the means you employ determine the ends you arrive at. Anne explained:

It’s not just a matter of blocking doors, shouting, doing a Plowshares action or whatever, but in every aspect it’s nonviolent, and not just resisting but doing it peacefully. One person said you use two hands: with one hand you say no but with the other hand you say come join us, be part of us. And two feet: with one



foot you do charity work but the other foot is the foot of justice. You try to see what’s behind the injustice, the hunger, and work to change it.

There’s also the call for people to intervene nonviolently and take the same risk as soldiers. Many groups do this type of work. They take a risk and say there’s a third way. You’re not limited to making war or giving in. You can resist nonviolently and be in a place to protect people nonviolently.

In every case, there is an oppressor and those who are oppressed. Structural violence must be understood, along with the consequences of combat and attacks with weapons. It’s important to get at that structural violence and tell the truth about it.

In Sarajevo, the U.N. peacekeepers were running around in tanks with bulletproof vests and guns. We didn’t do that. We tried to live alongside people and understand their situation. We were running around in shorts and T-shirts, right along with them, trying to find water.

In Mostar, I remember that some soldiers would sit in their tanks and talk to people. They really did try to have some kind of relationship, but they were still in their tanks. They were not disarmed. Soldiers in Iraq ask us, “What are you doing outside without a gun?” We say, “We’re safer this way.” Some soldiers tell us, “Maybe you’re right!”

I asked how her religious faith affected her efforts for progressive change and nonviolent direct action.

“I admire people like Camus who **7** claim to be atheists,” said Anne, her eyes alight with sincere appreciation for one of her favorite philosophers.

He worked for progress and change and made a tremendous commitment without having what faith gives us by way of strength, hope and nourishment. For me, the sacraments give a sense of the sacredness of earth. The Eucharist is very important to me.

When a group forms based on faith and has the sense of the spirit of God working on the Earth and in people, it gives a great strength. And you don’t worry so much about results. If we believe in planting seeds, and if we act in that spirit, it helps even when you feel like you’re useless.

When people can relate to each other by praying together, you get to know them better. Little irritations aren’t so great because you see what’s important and deep in people. It helps give community and strength and spirit. When something happens like Tom’s death, we turn to faith. [Tom Fox, a Christian Peacemaker Team member, was taken hostage in Iraq and (unlike his three surviving colleagues) killed by his captors in 2006.]

Faith helps when you are in prison. People come. A little group forms. People look for that kind of strength, when they’ve been isolated and abused.”

Eva had been wondering, even before our conversation, how Anne overcomes fear, in the face of risks like that Tom Fox had taken. Anne was characteristically matter-of-fact in her answer.

My nature in crisis is to become more directive. I don’t feel that much fear. It doesn’t agitate me terribly. You suddenly come up against a tank with the guns pointed at you and stop. I don’t freeze. I begin to think at that moment.

There are times when I have been afraid, for instance, when I’m alone in a strange city in the dark. I was mugged in Palestine, and there wasn’t much I could do except struggle. The people who mugged me grew afraid and ran off. When soldiers are charging at you, and there’s a sudden decision to be made, I can still think and figure out whether it’s best to sit there or move to the side. It’s

(Please See Sr. Anne, p8)

in my nature. It's not courage; it's the way I react.

My fears are more in the line of hating to argue with people. For example, I don't like to argue with Jewish settlers. But sometimes if you stick with such an argument, you find out how hurt they are that they lost a son or experienced a trauma. But I hide behind the banners at demonstrations; it comes from being shy.

Eva told Anne how much she admired her. Anne gave a slight shrug and an endearing smile. "It's important to be consistent and not to give up."

(ed. Note: The three founding members of the Hartford Catholic Worker were privileged to have walked with Anne. Jackie walked with her on the way to Guantanamo and into court and prison witnessing for peace. Chris walked with her across the front lines in Bosnia seeking a cease fire. Brian walked with her in the West Bank seeking justice. Today she walks with the cloud of witnesses who encourage us to conspire for peace with justice. Kathy Kelly co-coordinates *Voices for Creative Nonviolence* Ω



President Obama and Mitt Romney spent more than \$2 billion dollars, \$27/second, during the general election. With that amount UNICEF could have bought:

Vaccines (\$757 million)

2.5 billion doses of vaccine reaching 58% of the world's children

Pharmaceuticals (\$203 million)

389 million de-worming tablets
41.3 million malaria treatments

13.1 million packs of antiretroviral formulations
\$11.7 million worth of co-trimoxazole for HIV treatment and prevention of mother to child transmission

International Freight (\$104 million)

Over 10,000 international shipments

Medical Supplies and Equipment (\$102 million)

Over 73 million malaria diagnostic tests
\$20.4 million worth of cold chain equipment
176 million HIV tests

Construction (\$138 million)

Support provided to 41 countries engaged in construction activities mainly related to education projects

**What Can Ya Get for \$2,000,000,000?
1 Election or**

Nutrition (\$117 million)

633.5 million Vitamin A capsules
190 million zinc tablets
225 million sachets of multiple micronutrient powder
20,700 metric tonnes of peanut-based Ready-To-Use Therapeutic Food

Bednets (\$116 million)

23 million long lasting insecticidal nets

bad people; it just makes them badly informed. Each generation tends to imitate the sense of entitlement and subconsciously racist attitude they see in their elders, thus creating a cycle of ignorance and prejudice that the perpetrators themselves view as normal.

I believe the cycle can indeed be broken. It helps me to think back to the angels I wrote about before. I remember that everyone has the same capacity for love and compassion. It just takes some longer than others to open their minds to what is already hidden inside their hearts. We can't wait for a visit from the angel of knowledge, Harahel, to know our neighbors. The first step is getting out of our comfort zones and actually come to a place like the North End. Once we do, it's almost impossible not to see just how ridiculous our fears were and how wrong stereotypes can be. I feel I must take it upon myself to use my position here in Hartford to help guide my friends towards this first step in acquiring a greater understanding of community and poverty.

I look forward to each and every day here at the Catholic Worker. Knowing that I have much to teach as well as to learn makes this experience extraordinary and enthralling. I'm starting to dread the day I will move out. 18 Clark Street has become much more than an address to me - it has become a home. Ω

Water and Sanitation (\$88 million)

123 billion water purification tablets
500,000 hygiene kits

**4,346 hand pumps
Education Supplies (\$72 million)**

165,941 education kits and 10,267 recreation kits

18,053 early childhood development kits

Printing (\$68 million)

UNICEF prints education materials. In 2010 they printed over 13 million textbooks and distributed them to more than 5,500 schools in Zimbabwe

[Support the work of UNICEF](#)

Notes, cont.

In a world where 24,000 children die each day of preventable causes...the money spent on the Presidential Race alone, some \$2 billion all told, is a sin. Despite rhetoric to the contrary there is no seamless garment candidate that defends the right to life from womb to tomb. To choose either candidate means to murder by drone, abortion, torture or starvation. No Green party candidate is allowed to debate the corporate controlled Democrat or Republican nominees. There will be no reform that takes into consideration the lobbyists who move from Congress to corporate world and back, ensuring that our democracy has in fact been made null and void for profits. In contrast to this I have been thinking a great deal about the nuns that I know. The nuns show us a very different model on how a society can, and should, order itself. We could learn a great deal about leadership through sacrifice from them. They live simply and in community. They share possessions. They make space and time for prayer and worship alongside service. They choose the life-giving work of justice-making; prioritizing care and education for the most needy and vulnerable. I think of my spiritual advisor Sr. Carmela, leading retreats and counseling. I admire chair of our board, Sister Betty (whom we half-jokingly call the pastor of St. Michael's) living in the aged rectory and being neighbor to the women recently released from prison who live at Marte House that she helped to found. I wish that Sr. Elaine, another board member, would run for president!! She would make sure things got done...and only the right things.... And I remember fondly Sr. Anne Montgomery who passed on August 27. Anne was a tiny wisp of a woman who stood with the poor and against violence. Her faithful witness to the gospel led her to prison for hammering on nuclear weapons and to several war zones where she worked with victims of war while calling upon the warmongers to lay down their arms.

The following words are from a commencement speech on leadership given by Sr. Joan Chittister at Sanford University last May.

"If you really want to lead, you must rebel against forces of death that obstruct us from being fully human together. If you want to really be a leader, you must be a truth-teller.

If you want to save the age, the Irish poet Brendan Kennelly writes, 'Betray it. Expose its conceits, its foibles, its phony

moral certitudes.' Remember, there will be those among the powerful who try to make you say what you know is clearly not true because if everyone agrees to believe the lie, the lie can go on forever.

The lie that there is nothing we can do about discrimination, nothing we can do about world poverty, nothing we can do about fair trade, nothing we can do to end war, nothing we can do to provide education and health care, housing and food, maternity care and just wages for everyone in the world. Nothing we can do about women raped, beaten, trafficked, silenced yet, still, now, everywhere. If you want to be a leader, you, too, must refuse to tell the old lies.

You must learn to say that those emperors have no clothes. You must see what you are looking at and say what you see. The heroes you make for yourselves, the people you idolize, will be the measure of your own character, your own ideals, your own legacy.

If you want to lead the world to compassion, you must surround yourself with the compassionate, rather than the uncaring.

If you want to lead the world to wholeness, you must follow the peacemakers, not the warmongers.

If you want to lead the world to the freedom you learned here, equality for everyone must mean more to you than domination by anyone.

Justice must mean more to you than money. People must mean more to you than fame. Ideals must mean more to you than power or politics or public approval. Speak up loud and clear to the powers of this world that use their power for themselves alone. The great leaders of history are always those who refuse to bend to naked kings: Mahatma Gandhi, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Nelson Mandela, Rigoberta Menchu, Aung San Suu Kyi, Dorothy Day, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman.

The great leaders of history

have always been those who refused to barter their ideal for the sake of their personal interests and who rebelled against the lies of their times.

If you want to be a real leader, if you want to give a new kind of leadership, you cannot live to get the approval of a system, you must live to save the soul of it."

Amen Sister! May the Holy Spirit enter the hearts and souls of all elected officials who hold the world and its resources in the power of their hands. May the coming Season of Advent give us the strength of Mother Mary to say yes to God and be people of faith in spite of our fear. May we welcome the Christ child in his present form of the addict, the terrorist, the tax collector and the politicians because although it is sometimes hard for us to see it... Christ does still dwell within the heart and soul of every one of us on earth. It will only be through the recognition of the Godliness in each other that we will ever be able to reach across the divides of race, class, gender, status, culture, OR party to build a community where human rights are upheld, the earth can be healed and we can ALL claim a victory! Ω



Brian Kavanagh

18 Clark St.
Hartford, CT 06120
(860) 724-7066

Notes From De Porres House

Jacqueline Allen-Doucot

The Halloween party has just ended. Imagine if you can, the bedlam of 60 kids lining up for face painting and looking through 20 years of accumulated costumes. In the kitchen Jen O'Neill had her confirmation class cooking lunch...no easy feat because it needs to be healthy but not filed in the "nasty" category by the monsters who will be devouring it soon. (Nasty is the 2nd N word I do not allow the kids to use!) There have been eyeball relays, mummy wrapping and lots of prizes. We never give out the candy bags until it is time to go home! It is hard to believe that in a few weeks we will be hauling turkeys to about 150 families. Fall is been flying by.

On October 12th the Green House kids were able to participate in a wonderful event at Elizabeth Park called 'NIGHTFALL'. Inspired by evening's change from day to night and season's change from fall to winter there were giant puppets, dance, illuminated lanterns, music and spoken word. Buba, Josh and I were lantern heads...and about 20 Green House peeps were light bearers. We made lanterns out of recycled milk quarts and at the finale of the show we led the way for the solstice puppet! A good time was had by all, and I loved having the kids experience art and drama. In the words of Joan Chittister...*"One of the greatest gifts a society can give its children is a love and understanding of the arts. The generation that makes this possible is the generation that saves the next one."*

Just in time for the cold weather St Theresa's in Granby did its annual collection

of sheets and blankets for us to give out to the families in our community. This generous community has been sharing linens with our



neighbors for nearly twenty years! We were able to distribute all the warm goods just in time make space for Halloween decorations.

We are very sad, but glad for him, that my nephew Kevin will be leaving the Green House community in November to move to his own place. Kevin has been the elder/wiser resident of the 3rd floor for almost four years now. He came to us after four years of sobriety. Kev has spent the time here paying off an enormous credit card debt from his days as an addict. He has done a great service to the community by helping with N/A meetings at the prisons and is currently enrolled in college to be a drug counselor! He promises to return for

Sunday brunch. We will be able to move Floyd (who has his 2 year old Gigi from Thursday to Sunday) into the space Kevin is leaving so they can have more room to move about. Floyd currently occupies the smallest space at the Green House.

Christina has become an indispensable part of our work. She cooks!! She cleans! She sorts donations like a pro! She ends disputes at the swing set. She does EVERYTHING without Chris ever having to remind her or ask twice! I cannot even think of what will happen come Christmas time when she will be leaving us for Africa. She is cheerful, organized and disciplined (girlfriend even gets Dwight, Bubba and I to Parker Rec Center for morning workouts). We are doing the full court press to see that she returns when her 3 months in Gambia are finished. Pray for us that she does...please.

We are sad (very sad) that Ammon will not be making it home for Thanksgiving. He and Nate only get 4 days off...and the train would be a full 2, so they are opting to stay at Goshen. Thank God for Facebook or I would never know what he is up to. We do try to Skype on Sunday mornings... but it is still very hard for me to have him so far away.

During this time just before the elections I find myself struggling to be positive. As Christian anarchists we have no faith in any Powers or Principalities to rescue us from the wars, poverty, homophobia, racism, or environmental degradation that threatens to destroy the fabric of God's beautiful creation.

(Please see: Notes, p9)