

The Hartford Catholic Worker



St. Martin De Porres House
St. Brigid House

"Fear is useless, you need to trust and believe..." -Jesus

*Look kindly, Jesus, where we come,
New Simeons, to kindle,
Each at Your infant sacrifice his own life's
candle.*

*And when Your
flame turns into
many tongues,
See how the One is
multiplied, among us,
hundreds!
And goes among
the humble, and
consoles our sinful
kindred.*

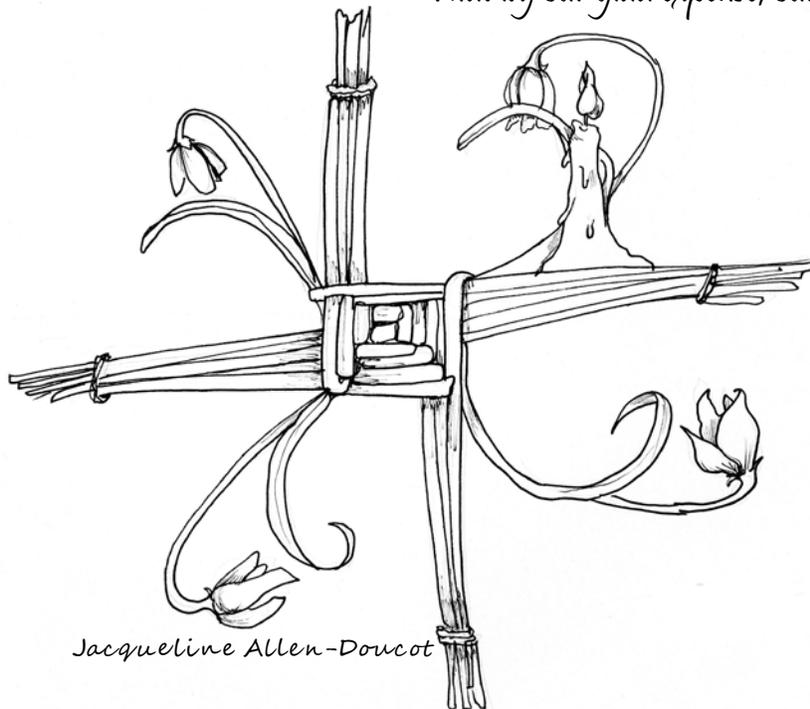
*It is for this we
come,
And, kneeling,
each receive one
flame:
Ad revelationem
gentium.*

*Our lives, like candles, spell this simple symbol:
Weep like our bodily life, sweet work of bees,
Sweeten the world, with your slow sacrifice.
And this shall be our praise:
That by our glad expense, our Father's will*

*Burned and con-
sumed us for a parable.*

*Nor burn we now
with brown and smoky
flames, but
bright
Until our sacrifice is
done,
(By which not we,
but You are known)
And then, returning
to our Father, one by
one,
Give back our lives
like wise and waxen
lights.*

-Thomas Merton



Jacqueline Allen-Doucot

Christmas 2012

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 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, Floyd Grier, Jacqueline, Christopher, Micah and Ammon Allen-Doucot.



The Annunciation

Brian Kavanagh

HCW Announcements

- ✝ Please join us for Mass on the first Tuesday of each month, except July and August. We will be celebrating on March 5, April 2, May 7, and June 4. Mass is held at St. Brigid House, 18 Clark St. Mass is preceded by dinner at 6 at 26 Clark St. Everyone is welcome at both tables.
- 🔊 **Please save the date:** On Saturday, September 14th we will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Hartford Catholic Worker community with music, dancing, appetizers, and remarks by Timothy Shriver, CEO of The Special Olympics. Details forthcoming.
- ♥ Please remember The Hartford Catholic Worker with your gifts of time, talent and treasure.
- ☺ We are always seeking mentors for our after school program on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 3-5:30.
- ☺ We are always seeking folks interested in teaching the kids a new skill, e.g. we currently have a volunteer teaching a young man how to repair bikes and another volunteer is teaching sewing and quilting to a group of kids.
- ☺ We are always seeking donations to keep the lights on. Checks can be made to: The Hartford Catholic Worker. All contributions are tax-deductible.
- ✝ Please remember us in your prayers.

Is A Voice Still Heard?

Christopher J. Doucot

When I first heard the news reports about the massacre of children in Newtown my mind was immediately filled with the passage from Jeremiah: *"Thus says the Lord: 'A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children because they are not.'"*

(Jer 31:15)

This passage of inconsolable grief is repeated in Matthew's nativity story in the aftermath of Herod's futile attempt to rid the world of God's new presence- the Christ child, by ordering the massacre of all the baby boys in the area of Bethlehem. Herod was rightly terrified that the in-breaking of God into his kingdom was a threat to his power. In a manner Herod was a mirror reflection of the disciples. He had a quicker, clearer understanding of who Jesus was than they did while also completely missing the profundity of the Incarnation as not only a historical event but a supra-historical one as well- an *"anachysm"* if you will.

God's presence in our midst is not completely defined by the birth of a child- nor is it completely confined by the death of a child. Rather, God among us, *Emmanuel*, is refined through the Incarnation to help us grasp what is otherwise ungraspable. Tragically, our ability to recognize the Divine presence is stunted; perhaps by Her very ubiquity. The holy, majestic, miracle of life has become as mundane as the air we breathe; taken for granted until something goes down the wrong pipe.

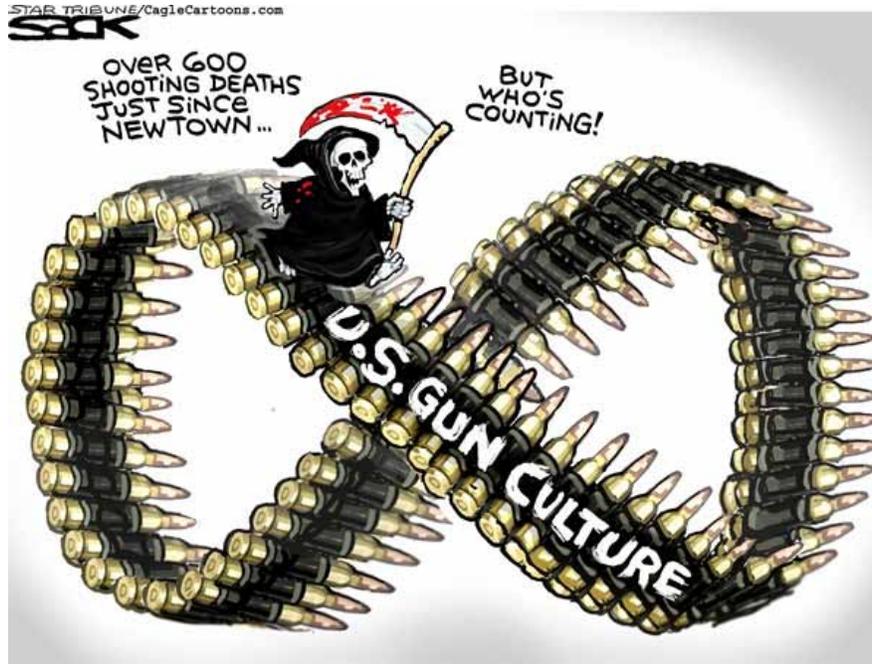
What most obscures our ability

to recognize the Divine presence in our midst is the difficulty we have accepting that God dwells in all of us. God's presence among us is Her choice, not ours. Our bodies may

child of God," clanged the church bells.

Our rage is just and warranted (and callously fleeting), but our "othering" of Nancy and Adam Lanza prevents us from gaining a fuller understanding of what took place in Newtown, and Littleton, and Aurora, and...

Likewise, calls for more gun control laws also miss the larger point. The gun Adam Lanza used *did what it was designed to do, but not to whom it was designed for.* And despite the preference for so-called semi-automatic machine guns on the part of mass murderers, the vast majority of firearms used in American murders



be *"Temples of the Holy Spirit"* (1Cor 6:19) but we are not the landlords: God cannot be evicted. The Herods among us cannot expunge His presence, nor can the bin Ladens or Lanzas among us forfeit It. Herod's tirade, and the demonization of Adam Lanza are equally futile attempts to rid the world of God.

When church bells rung twenty-six times the week following the massacre the "otherness" of both Lanza and his mother, the twenty-eighth, and the first, of God's children to be shot to death that awful day, was sealed in the public imagination.

Nancy Lanza undeniably provided the arsenal for her son's massacre. *"What kind of mother keeps a stash of high powered guns in her home?"* The public demands the slain woman answer.

Adam Lanza alone pulled the trigger and killed twenty fresh-faced innocents. *"He's a monster."* *"He's a nutcase."* The public rages. *"He was no*

are [simple handguns](#).

Why do we have guns (and missiles and drones too) to begin with? We have tools to kill because there is widespread consensus, across societies and epochs, that killing the "other" can be justified. Underlying the ethic of killing is the assumption that some people are the "other", are lacking of the holy, are void of God's presence. This existential alienation is actually a spiritual alienation. Our "othering" of another person, race or nation is nothing less than an (unacknowledged? Unaware?) attempt to remove some portion of God from our presence. With our wars and massacres we are Herod unconscious; inept, bloody and ugly. God's presence can't be surrendered or seized- only unnoticed, ignored or denied

To demonize, or diagnose, Adam Lanza is to focus entirely on the pathology of a mass murderer and largely ignore the conditions of our society at large; a society which is
(Please See: A Voice p4)

A Voice, cont.

comfortable with killing the “right” people. We don’t do this when there is a shooting in our almost entirely non-White neighborhood where ministers and politicians, coiffed talking heads and repugnant radio blowhards all bellow on about the “violent subculture” of the ghetto. Why aren’t the white shooters of Newtown, Littleton, Aurora, and Jonesboro... thought to be from a “violent culture”? (For an excellent report on the mass shootings see: [Mass shootings](#))

Unfathomably, the child victims in Newtown will likely account for less than **one percent** of American child murder victims in 2012. In 2011 there were 646 murder victims aged 12 or younger in the United States.

And who mourns the children of Pakistan killed by our **drone strikes**? Dying children and grieving parents don’t cry in English, Arabic, or Urdu. Their shrieks are heard by hearts, not ears. Our understanding is instinctual, not rational. Indeed, all attempts- this attempt- at understanding the mass murder of children with our heads runs the risk of weaving a rationalization which could soon become a justification.

I need more than rational debate from Congress and pastoral counseling from the church. I want my priest, Representative and Senators to shut up and listen to the echoes of a thousand murdered children reverberating from the battle-field, the schoolyard and the street corner. I want a pit gnawed in their bellies, and I want them to cry and curse until their eyes are swollen, their voices hoarse, and their spirit exhausted. I want them to shudder. I want us all to tremble before the memory of the slain children everywhere.

We all must quiver over what we have wrought; latter day child sacrifice, *at home and abroad*. But we don’t. That there is no outrage on our streets at the slaughter of those “other” children in Pakistan or Afghanistan reveals our more complex

attitude towards killing children.

The Newtown massacre was not the result of *either* a lone madmen *or* a mad society but damnably both. The world declared at Nuremburg that living in a mad society does not absolve individual responsibility. In the wake of Newtown it is time to grapple with the corollary notion that the actions of a mad individual do not absolve society. The morès of any society create the emotional, psychological, spiritual, political, and legal climate within which its members have the means, the justification, the approval and, sometimes, the outright glorification for killing the approved other.

What happens when people, sane or otherwise, decide for themselves who the other/enemy is? The attack on the Federal Building in Oklahoma City is what happens.

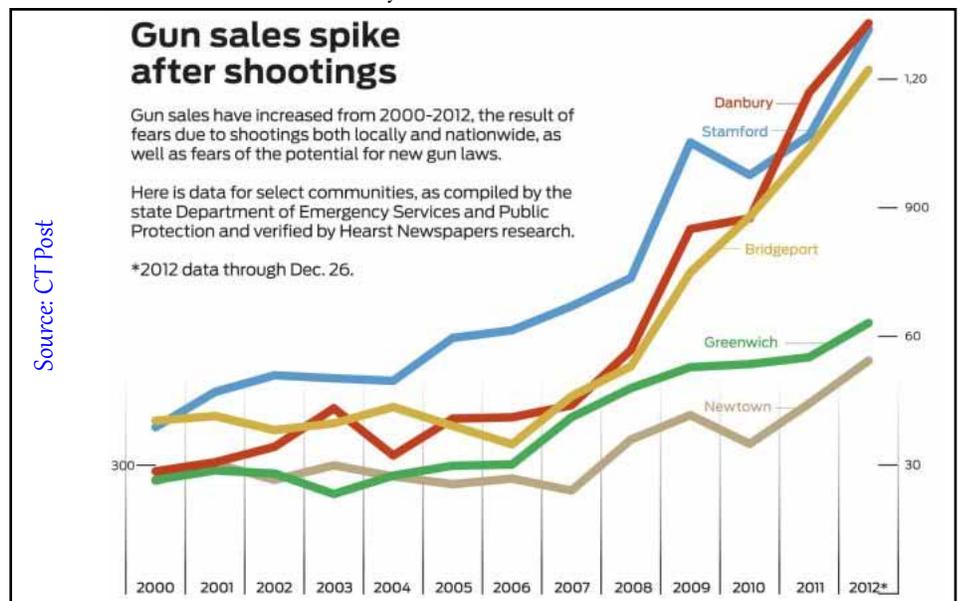
In his letters and interviews Timothy McVeigh expressed an initial difficulty with killing Iraqis. His army training, though, quickly took hold as McVeigh soon became the “best shot” in his platoon and was awarded a Bronze Star for his marksmanship. Near the end of his deployment in Iraq McVeigh participated in the mass slaughter of surrendering and/or retreating Iraqis along what has become known as the **Highway of Death**. Of the thousands killed, many were buried alive.

It doesn’t have to be this way. It

is time to forsake the values of this kingdom: violence, selfishness, hyper-individualism, fear of the other, vengeance and material gluttony- for these values have certainly forsaken us. The Incarnation is nothing more than a plea for us to choose to live in the Kingdom unveiled with the birth of Jesus Christ by choosing to practice the values he espoused during his life among us: non-violence, radical sharing, communal living, forgiveness and welcoming the strange and the stranger as ambassadors of God.

If we return to the Jeremiah passage earlier cited we read: *“Thus says the Lord: ‘Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded, says the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope for your future, says the Lord, and your children shall come back to their own country.’” (Jer 31:16-17)*

The prophet has proclaimed that work for the reign of God will be rewarded. The hope for people living in the exile of a world seeking to rid itself of God is that when we turn to our neighbors, strangers and enemies alike, and see the face of God we will have begun anew the work of the Incarnation and we will have stepped into the Kingdom in our midst. And, if the prophet is right, our children will no longer be condemned to suffer from our sins.Ω



Terrorism At Home: Hidden in Plain Sight!

(The following is an excerpt from the Dec. 20, 2012 [Fresh Air](#) interview with Tom Diaz. Diaz is author of *The Last Gun*, and an analyst at [The Violence Policy Center](#).)

TOM DIAZ: That's actually an excellent comparison because every year in the United States, more people die from gunshot injury than have ever been

killed in any terrorist act throughout the history of the recording of these acts, which goes

back well into the 1960s. In other words, I'm saying that if you take all of the Americans who have ever died in any terrorist attack that's been recorded, more Americans die every year from gunshot injury.

It's even more shocking than

that, I think. More Americans die every year in our own country from gunshot injury than people of any nationality totaled together in the world die of terrorism. Since September 11, 2001, we've spent several trillion dollars on so-called homeland security. We have made changes in our constitutional pro-

tections, particularly in the Fourth Amendment and the Fifth Amendment, against search and seizure and self-incrimination, that would have shocked people, shocked constitutional scholars before 9/11.

And yet we spend a tiny amount

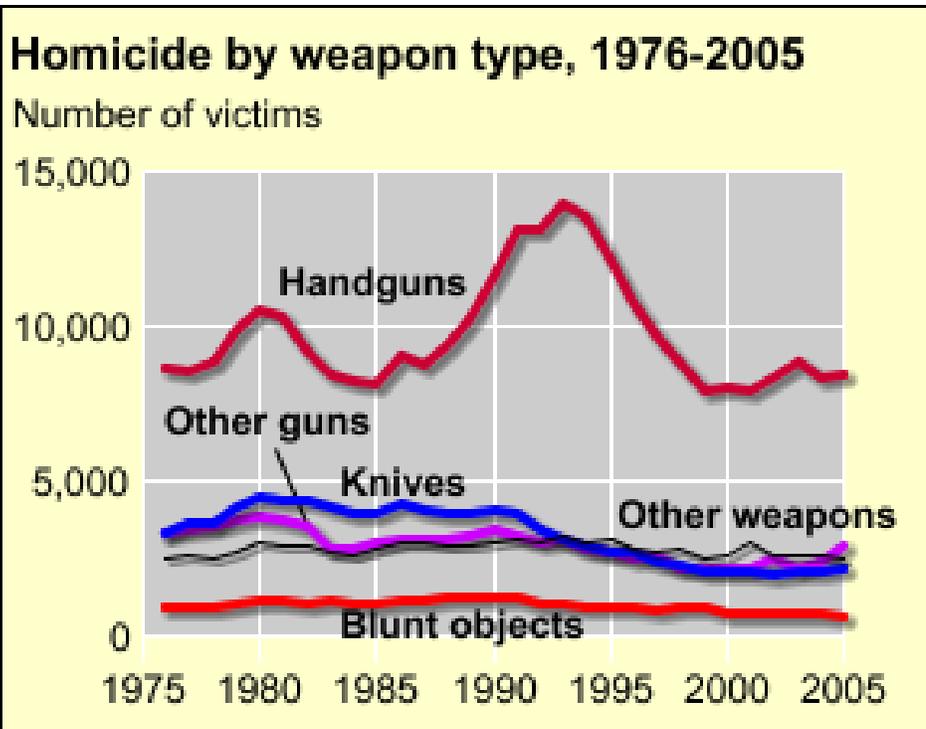
of money on public health concerning guns. We forbid the Center for Disease Control and Injury in Atlanta, part of the public health service, from actually researching gun safety. So we have seen terror as a great evil, and we've started a war on terror. We have no war on guns, and yet comparing the actual

impact on Americans, it's staggering that we have this war on terror and spend so

much money, and apparently don't care about gun death and injury.

And I say only apparently because I believe that Americans really are not aware of the extent of the problem...Ω

more people die from gunshot injury than have ever been killed in any terrorist act throughout the history of the recording of these acts



U.S. ranks highest in gun deaths

The U.S. has the highest rate of gun deaths among some of the world's richest nations.

Worst gun death rates
Per 100,000 population, 2004
(Includes homicide, suicide, accidental and undetermined deaths)

United States	9.42
Switzerland	6.20
France	4.89
Finland	4.43
Belgium	3.68
Austria	3.62
Canada	3.12
Iceland	2.67
Norway	2.58
Czech Rep.	2.27

Source: [U.S. National Institute of Justice](#). Data pertains to murders in the United States alone.

SOURCE: Small Arms Survey, Geneva AP

Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence

(The following excerpts are from a sermon delivered by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1967. To listen to this sermon [click here.](#))

...A few years ago... it seemed as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor - both black and white - through the Poverty Program. Then came the build-up in Vietnam, and I watched the program broken and eviscerated as if it were some idle political play thing of a society gone mad on war, and I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demonic, destructive suction tube. So I was increasingly compelled to see the war as an enemy of the poor and to attack it as such.

Perhaps the more tragic recognition of reality took place when it became clear to me that the war was doing far more than devastating the hopes of the poor at home. It was sending their sons and their brothers and their husbands to fight and to die in extraordinarily high proportions relative to the rest of the population. We were taking the young black men who had been crippled by our society and sending them 8000 miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in Southwest Georgia and East Harlem...

My third reason grows out of my experience in the ghettos of the North over the last three years - especially the last three summers. As I have walked among the desperate, rejected and angry young men, I have told them that Molotov cocktails and rifles would not solve their problems. I have tried to offer them my deepest compassion while maintaining my conviction that social change comes most meaningfully

through non-violent action. But, they asked, what about Vietnam? They asked if our own nation wasn't using massive doses of violence to solve its problems, to bring about the changes it wanted. Their questions hit home, and I knew that **I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the op-**



Martin Luther King Jr. Being Arrested: Martin Luther King Jr is arrested by two white police officers in Montgomery Alabama on September 4, 1958.

(Photo Credit: Bettman/Corbis)

pressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today, my own government....

Now, it should be incandescently clear that no one who has any concern for the integrity and life of America today can ignore the present war.

...At this point, I should make it clear that... I am as deeply concerned about our own troops there as anything else. For it occurs to me that what we are submitting them to in Vietnam is not simply the brutalizing process that goes on in any war where armies face each other and seek to destroy. We are adding cynicism to the process of death, for our troops must know after a short period there that none of the things

we claim to be fighting for are really involved. Before long they must know that their government has sent them into a struggle among Vietnamese, and the more sophisticated surely realize that we are on the side of the wealthy and the secure while we create a hell for the poor.

Somehow this madness must cease. I speak as a child of God and brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam and the poor of America who are paying the double price of smashed hopes at home and death and corruption in Vietnam...

This is the message of the great Buddhist leaders of Vietnam. Recently, one of them wrote these words: "Each day the war goes on the hatred increases in the hearts of the Vietnamese and in the hearts of

those of humanitarian instinct. The Americans are forcing even their friends into becoming their enemies. It is curious that the Americans, who calculate so carefully on the possibilities of military victory do not realize that in the process they are incurring deep psychological and political defeat. The image of America will never again be the image of revolution, freedom and democracy, but the image of violence and militarism..."

In 1957 a sensitive American official overseas said that it seemed to him that our nation was on the wrong side of a world revolution. During the past ten years we have seen emerge a pattern of suppression which now has justified the presence of U.S. military "advisors" in Venezuela. The need to maintain social

stability for our investments accounts for the counterrevolutionary action of American forces in Guatemala. It tells why American helicopters are being used against guerrillas in Colombia and why American napalm and green beret forces have already been active against rebels in Peru. With such activity in mind, the words of John F. Kennedy come back to haunt us. Five years ago he said, "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable." ...

I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. **When machines and computers, profit and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.**

A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies. **True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it is not haphazard and superficial. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.**

A true revolution of values will soon look easily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth. With righteous indignation, it will look across the seas and see individual capitalists of the West investing huge sums of money in Asia, Africa and South America, only to take the profits out with no concern for the social betterment of the countries, and say: This is not just."...

The Western arrogance of feeling that it has everything to teach others and nothing to

learn from them is not just. A true revolution of values will lay hands on the world order and say of war: "This way of settling differences is not just." This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation's homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into the veins of peoples normally humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice, and love. **A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.**

...War is not the answer. Communism will never be defeated by the use of atomic bombs or nuclear weapons... We must not engage in a negative anti-communism, but rather in a positive thrust for democracy, realizing that our greatest defense against communism is to take: offensive action on behalf of justice. We must with positive action seek to remove those conditions of poverty, insecurity and injustice which are the fertile soil in which the seed of communism grows and develops.

These are revolutionary times. All over the globe men are revolting against old systems of exploitation and oppression, and out of the wombs of a frail world, new systems

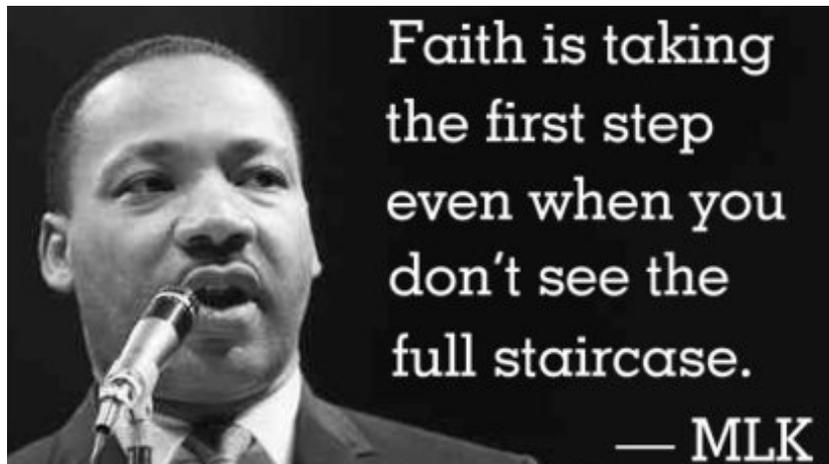
of justice and equality are being born. The shirtless and barefoot people of the land are rising up as never before. "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light." We in the West must support these revolutions.

It is a sad fact that, because of comfort, complacency, a morbid fear of communism, and our proneness to adjust to injustice, the Western nations that initiated so much of the revolutionary spirit of the modern world have now become the arch anti-revolutionaries... Our only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism, and militarism.

...If we do not act we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight.

Now let us begin. Now let us re-dedicate ourselves to the long and bitter, but beautiful, struggle for a new world. This is the calling of the sons of God, and our brothers wait eagerly for our response. Shall we say the odds are too great? Shall we tell them the struggle is too hard? Will our message be that the forces of American life militate against their arrival as full men, and we send our deepest regrets?

Or will there be another message, of longing, of hope, of solidarity with their yearnings, of commitment to their cause, whatever the cost? The choice is ours, and though we might prefer it otherwise we must choose in this crucial moment of human history. Ω



I bid you to a one-man revolution.--The only revolution that is coming

Robert Frost

I think that everyone is afraid of the dark,
but, I was still ashamed of my Mother Mary night light.

So much so that once out of sheer peer induced 6 year old bravado,
I unplugged her,
that night as I lay in bed, of nothing was I sure.

In fact I probably would have cried,
if not for one of my city's thousand street lights.

At age six those lights tinge everything gold.

It was a comfort really,
and not to get all touchy feely,
but it made me feel not so alone,
like if I curled exactly where the light shone
The monsters couldn't get me.

Nowadays the lights tinge everything orange.

Kind of like it has been dark so long that the shadows themselves have started to rust.

It's kind of funny that of all the things the night could become, it became oxidized,

because it seems like oxygen has been less than abundant lately,

My lungs are saturated with exhaust fumes,
and I scrape my feet before coming inside,

lest I leave a trail of carbon foot prints leading to my door.

Then I have to shake the orange flakes from my shadow,
cause we dont want that decay on the floor.

I take up my position beneath a skylight,
and wonder if maybe the night didn't rust,

but was obscured by the trapped in amber dreams.

Dreams people let go of in trade for things like job assurance or self confidence.

then instead of the night rusting it's burning,
because after all, what is more flammable than a dream?

and what is more flame retardent than gun powder?

Cause I dont know anything that can douse an abstract ember faster,

than a misplaced bullet... unless it was a well aimed one.

Wouldn't it be ironic if we armed fire fighters with these most fantastic extinguishers?

Send out the kids who never let go of their bright red toy truck ideals,
and let them deal with the blazing detritus of abandoned aspirations.

Mary's Light

Ammon Allen-Doucot



I think everyone is afraid of the dark,
so I understand why someone would give up a dream
light it with a cigarette
pulled from a pack called regret,
a pact they never thought they'd get.
Then curl up on the edge of the pyre,
thinking silly thoughts like:
"Maybe if I lie right here the monsters wont get me."

It doesn't matter that it has been more than a decade since I unplugged the maiden Mary.

I am still afraid of monsters.
Boogeymen named failure and solitude,
who have long dirty claws that scrape at rib cages,
and the space just behind my eyes.
I'm far too old not to believe in evil.
Far too old to think that a:
"Hail Mary, full of grace!"
could put bold monsters in their place.

I'm far too young not to try it anyways.

Isn't that why anyone prays?
because the plausible and the possible have been played,
and all that remains is grace.

At this point, most hope has been painted to black doom,
with soot from dreams burned up in exhaust fumes,
and breaths that were eaten up by the oxidized gloom.

So scared of the dark am I,
that the first time I experienced true night

All I could think was that here hide all the monsters I despise,
here where the night is new and free of rust
the monsters have their time to bide,
and no number of fiery dreams could have that night defied.

I surpassed terrified and became petrified,
my body was now a cave,
and if one were feeling brave,
they could have read the message carved into the stone of my rib cage

"Do not waste your time, this one wont be saved."

I think that everyone is afraid of the dark.

If they think aren't,
than I think they've never looked inside,
suddenly it's not so funny to think of "Where the sun dont shine."

Cause the sun doesnt shine,
on things curled around your spine,
nor does it radiate inside of your chest,
are you sure that is a heart that beats beneath your breast?

I think if I were a monster it is there I would like best.

I do not mean to be a pest,
but a little fear is healthy and for the best,
be aware that some things are wrong as you try to rest,
and if you can't handle that, try a guest,

I have one I might suggest...
her name is Mary.Ω

Notes, cont.

her white dress and bonnet and didn't even cry or squirm as Father Ford poured handfuls of holy water over her beautiful curls.

Moriana says thank you to everyone who came and celebrated with us! On December 7th I hosted my second Girl's Night. Najae and Eileen were junior counselors and helped me run the evening's dinner, art, and movie for the 6 other girls.

The following week we were busy collecting and sorting gifts. Thank you parishioners at Our Lady of Mercy of Plainville, Sacred Heart of Bloomfield, Northwest Catholic, St. Christopher's, St. Ann's in Avon, St. Patrick's/St. Anthony's, and St. Patrick's of Farmington for all the beautiful new toys! My first Catholic Worker Christmas Party was a blur of art, food, outdoor games, and of course, presents.

Santa, aka Mr. Jack Palin, patiently sat with all of our kids (and for many more than once)! It was so nice seeing such a big group of our kids together with so many of our extended community members.

The Monday after the Christmas Party we had 25 mothers come to the Green House for lunch and to pick out some gifts to give on Christmas Day. Ms. Edna cooked an absolutely delicious meal of cornbread, collard greens, macaroni and cheese, and fried chicken. We had enough games, clothes, art supplies, and toys for everyone to bag up and take home.

The Green House will be closed for the holidays until January 5th. In January we will welcome a mother and daughter from Italy in need of hospitality. These women cared for Father Kingsley, who celebrated mass for us in November and is pastor at St. Mike's across the street, while he studied in Rome and now

he's requested we help him return the favor.

As for me, I am sad to say that I moved out of the Green House on December 18th. I will be spending two months teaching in Cape Coast, Ghana. Time has definitely passed much quicker than I ever thought possible. I wish I could somehow go to Ghana, come back, and magically find that no time had elapsed here. Spending two months away seems like an eternity to me and I can't bear to think of all the little moments I won't be here for. When I first came to Hartford I thought I could do my time and then move on with the rest of my life. But, I've come to realize that the relationships I've formed here aren't ones that I want to just throw away. I am in no way ready to leave the HCW community, and so instead of saying "goodbye" I'll just say "see you later," because come March, I'll be back! Ω



Thanks to all the elves who sent toys for Santa to share with the Green House kids!

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Notes From De Porres House

Christina Napolitano

December has always been my favorite month. The days before Christmas are filled with some of my fondest memories; listening to my favorite Mel Tormé Christmas CD, ice hockey tournaments, sledding and snowball fights, peeling chestnuts while watching *It's a Wonderful Life*, listening to my Grandma tell stories from when my Dad was little, and spending hours practicing my violin piece for my church's annual Christmas Eve Concert. I have always loved the cheery excitement and anticipation in the days leading up to Christmas. Despite the stress everyone is usually in unusually good spirits and the glee is nothing if not contagious.

This year December was very different for me, but in a good way! I traded in some of my old traditions for new memories. The past weeks have been incredibly hectic but everything worked out in the end.

The holiday season started off, of course, with Thanksgiving. Never in my life have I seen so much food in one place (outside of a supermarket). Not only were we able to give out a bird and fixings to the families of all the kids in our program and some Green House veterans, but we also had enough to give to 40 assistant teachers and other minimum wage workers at Clark Elementary. Our two designated turkey deliverers from Northwest

Catholic were efficient and cheery. I probably would have lost my marbles if it weren't for them, Buba, Ms. Edna, and all the other helpers that came and worked alongside us for two



days straight.

After the short Thanksgiving break the afterschool program was back on its regular schedule. We've adopted a new rewards system. Anyone can earn a star by completing a half hour of homework or reading without procrastinating. 12 stars are worth a field trip. So far we've had one bowling trip and one out-

ing to the movies.

Jane Tait organized a Saturday afternoon field trip with the help of Kim and Andy Neild for six of our kids to the Ebony Horsewomen.

The kids came back with stories of the horses and a desire to not only return, but also ride the horses next time! We are looking forward to building a relationship with the Ebony Horsewomen and having the opportunity to continue taking our kids there.

On a more gloomy note, in the end of November a terrible fire destroyed a house on Elmer Street that our Richard, Teora, Chanel, and Malik called home. Thank you to all of our extended community members who helped us help the Turner family with furniture, a security deposit, clothes, winter coats, shoes and other necessities. We aren't looking for any more donations, but prayers are always welcome.

As we neared Christmas we made holiday crafts and decorated cookies during the

Saturday and weekday programs. Josh Rosa and Buba had the opportunity to be light bearers at The Festival of Trees at the Wadsworth Athenaeum on November 29th. On December 4th, the beautiful baby Lilly was baptized in a lovely ceremony during the regular monthly mass. Lil' looked just precious in

(Please see: Notes, p9)