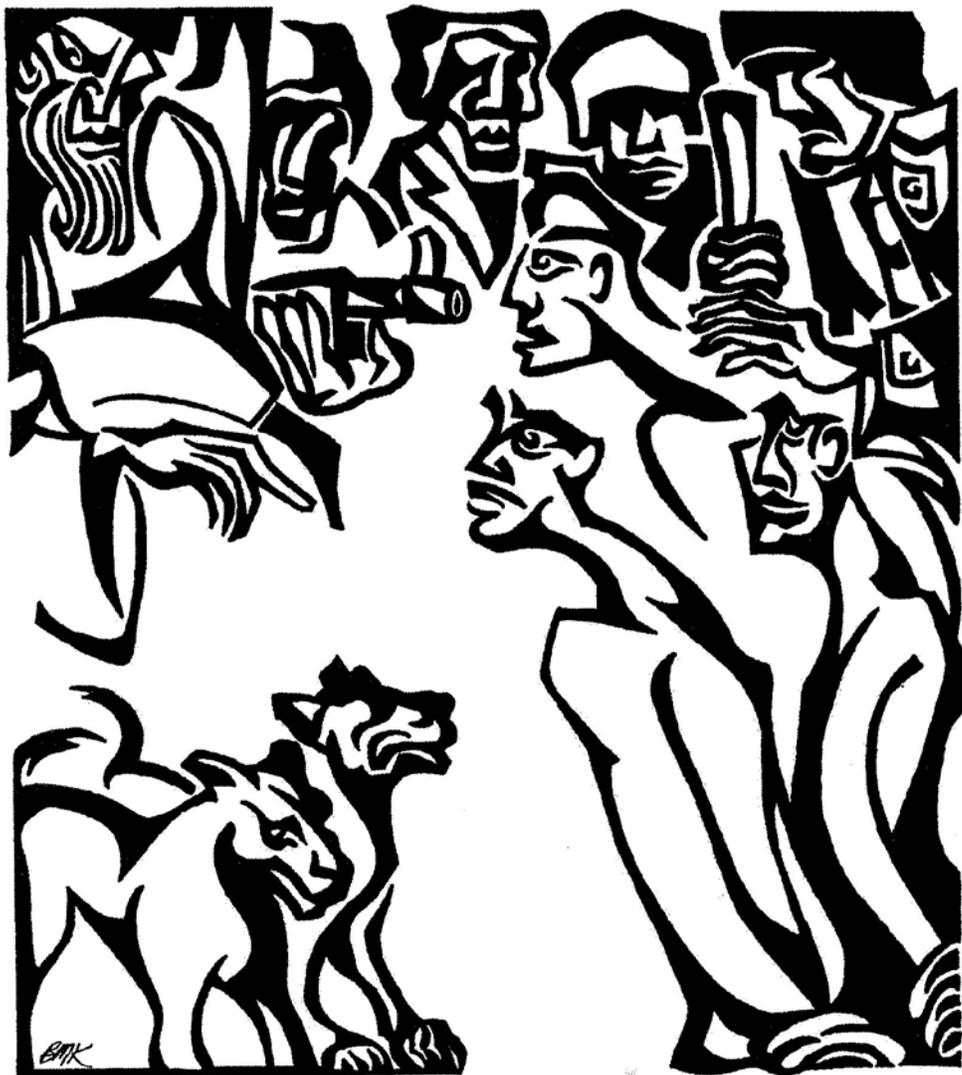


The Hartford Catholic Worker



St. Martin De Porres House
St. Brigid House

“Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.” - James



Brian Kavanagh

Be it known
to you,
O King,
that we will not
serve your gods
or worship the
golden image
which you have
set up...

Daniel 3:18

Lent 2013

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, Christina Napolitano, Jacqueline, Christopher, Micah and Ammon Allen-Doucot.

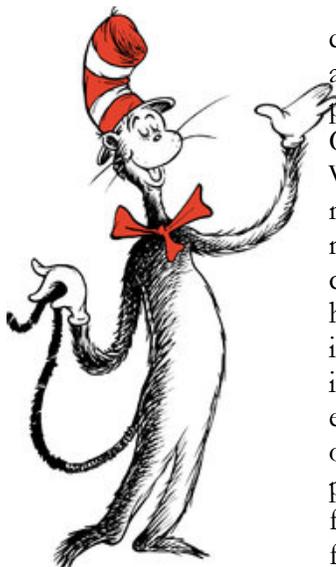
Hey You! Look At This. St. Martin's Calendar

♣ On Wednesday, April 17, our dear friend Kathy Kelly, founder of Voices for Creative Nonviolence, will be speaking at St. James Episcopal, 1019 Farmington Ave in West Hartford. Chris has spent time resisting war with Kathy in Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan and Brian was on day 37 of a fast on 9/11/01 with her outside the UN. Come hear Kathy speak from her experiences on the war in Afghanistan. Talk begins at 7:00PM

☺ On Saturday, May 18, join us for our neighborhood cleanup and cookout. This is a great opportunity for students who are scrambling to complete service hours before the school year ends. We will provide gloves, bags, burgers and litter. You provide good cheer and generosity of spirit. We will gather at 10.

■ Please join us for our Twentieth Anniversary Celebration on Saturday, September 14. We will party at St. Isaac Jogues Parish Hall, 1 Community St. in East Hartford. Light food, drinks, live entertainment and remarks by Timothy Shriver, CEO of the Special Olympics. For tickets and/or details please contact Nancy Boone at: nancyboone@sbcglobal.net

*"Today you are You,
that is truer than true.
There is no one alive
who is Youer than
You."*



Is There a Doctor in the House?

We are seeking a doctor, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner to care for Chris, Jackie and Brian. We are uninsured and not able to afford the market rates for health care and despite the hype that Obamacare is socialist it seems that it will not provide coverage for us. If anyone out there is willing to provide us with care for a fee we could afford please contact us at the address/numbers listed above. Thanks!

Please join us in our prayers for Pope Francis.

We pray that he embraces his namesake's commitments to humility, nonviolence, the natural world and voluntary poverty. These commitments of Francis were lived out by his love of the poor in his midst and of those deemed to be his enemies- most especially Moslems.

We pray that Pope Francis will lead our church away from the trappings of wealth and privilege. We pray that he corrects the historic mistake of the Just War theory which has never stopped a war but often blessed one.

We pray that Pope Francis will model a life of shalom; a life that seeks right relationships with the wealth of our planet, the poor in our communities, the outcasts in our prisons, and the despised we call enemy as the one true way toward a right relationship with God.



We Live, They Sleep

Christopher J. Doucot

I'm well aware that I've mused about zombies on these pages just last year ([On the Undead and the Everliving](#), Lent 12) contrasting the zombie-like "personhood" of corporations with the denial of habeas corpus to the Guantanamo detainees and the ICE induced disappearance of illegal *aliens* (sic). But I'm intrigued by our society's ongoing enthrallment with zombies. Consider the popularity of the *World War Z* and [The Walking Dead](#) on AMC which has a large, loyal following that includes some friends whom I consider serious thinkers- I'm talking to you Bilal Sekou Ph.D.

Meanwhile on February 11, hackers successfully infiltrated the *Emergency Broadcast System* to interrupt the broadcast of KRTV in Montana. After the three distinct screeches that are typically followed by "this is a test" viewers instead heard an ominous voice declaring "The bodies of the dead are rising from their graves and are attacking the living. Do not attempt to approach or apprehend these bodies, as they are considered extremely dangerous." (Web readers can view this [broadcast here](#)) Just as the ubiquity of nuclear apocalypse imagery in the pop culture during the Cold War (see: 1999 by Prince, *The Day After*, *Threads*, the original *Planet of the Apes*) was the product of our collective anxiety of living under the threat of The Bomb I think something similar is behind the resurgence of the undead. But what, exactly, do zombies represent? Who, or what, are the zombies in our midst? Where are these not-fully-alive but not-quite-dead sartorially challenged, brain craving creatures hiding?

Could that mug with bed head staring back at us from the medicine cabinet mirror while we brush our teeth be one of the very zombies that simultaneously fill us with fear and

fascination? Are we dead? Worse yet, are we oblivious of our own demise? These [are existential](#), not medical, questions. For many Americans these are hard times; the hardest since my grandparents were kids during the



Anonymous, *Capitalism*, 1918

Great Depression. The slow rise of the stock market to record highs is of little relief to the vast majority of Americans who don't own stock. The only wealth most Americans have is their home and according to the FDIC about 83,000 American families lose their home to foreclosure every month. 42% of American households do not have enough wealth (savings, stocks, real estate, IRA or other retirement accounts) to support their families for three months, and 46% of Americans have less than \$5000 in "liquid assets" (savings, IRA, stocks, bonds) to live on should they become unemployed. In fact, 52% of employed Americans live paycheck [to paycheck](#).

Of course in our neighborhood very few people own their home due to a history of government sponsored racial prejudice in mortgage lending. ["Between 1934 and 1962, the federal government underwrote 120 billion dollars in new housing. Less than 2% went to non-whites."](#) This history extends to current [practices](#) of racist lending policies that has led to lawsuits against [Morgan Stanley](#) and [Bank of](#)

[America](#) and has disproportionately saddled Black and Brown Americans with subprime mortgages resulting in [foreclosure rates for Black and Latino](#) Americans that are nearly twice that of white Americans.

My point here is that middle-class and poor Americans are working harder and longer to just get by. *The NY Times* recently observed:

"When we consider all working-age men, including those who are not working, the real earnings of the median male have actually declined by 19 percent since 1970. This means that the median man in 2010 earned as much as the median man did in 1964 — nearly a half century ago. Men with less education face an even bleaker picture; earnings for the median man with a high school diploma

and no further schooling fell by 41 percent from 1970 to 2010."

This "plummeting" ([Washington Post](#)) of wages is somewhat mitigated by the rise in wages for women (who on median still make only 77% of what men earn) but this is not necessarily a good scenario when consideration is made for the increase in single parent homes and the effect of having both parents working full time in two parent homes. More often, though, this fall in wages was compensated for by [borrowing](#) (using credit cards to purchase things like groceries or taking out a home equity loan to finance a child's college education, a car repair, or to weather a period of unemployment) which helped to fuel the foreclosure crisis.

Where does this leave us? At the end of the day are we too pooped to do much more than throw a prepackaged meal in the oven and collapse onto the couch in preparation for the mental enema that is t.v.? When the weekend rolls around are we too busy catching up on our domestic responsibilities to

(Please See: We Live, p4)

We Live, cont.

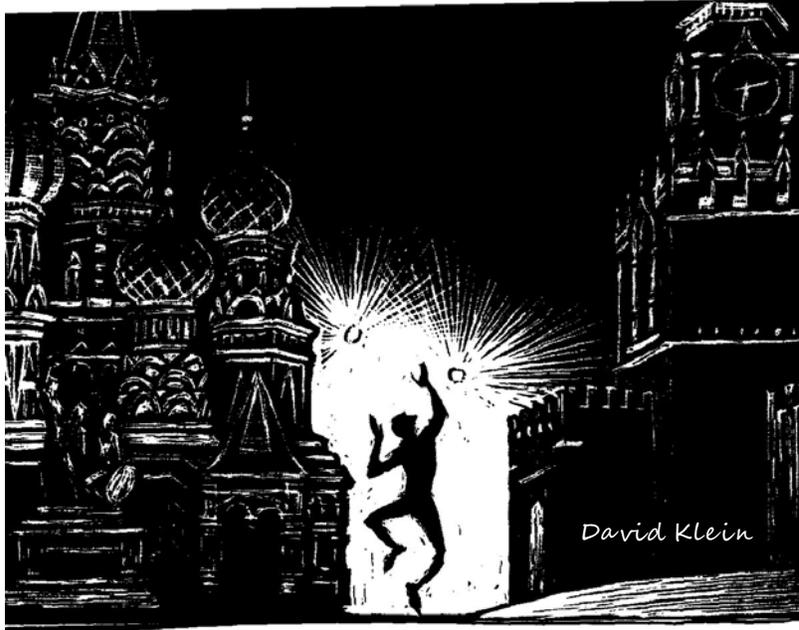
coach Little League or participate in a civic or church organization- never mind a movement for social change? What are we living for?

I'm reminded of the cult classic Jon Carpenter film "[They Live](#)". The setting of the film is present day America. Amidst a backdrop of widespread unemployment and concentrated wealth a resistance movement, along the lines of the Abolition Movement, is trying to organize ordinary people to change the system. A blind street-corner preacher affiliated with the movement warns people too busy to do anything and too tired to care: "*They live, we sleep*". The problem the movement has is that ordinary people seem to be blind. Despite seeing homeless people camping out, and unemployed people searching for work that is not there, while a smattering of rich folks wearing thousand dollar suits shop in high end boutiques, the people cannot see what is happening to their society. As it turns out an alien race has occupied America and they have begun to gradually and quietly hoard our wealth. They have taken control of the television broadcast signal and infused regular programming with a subliminal message that induces sleep walking, sleep working, sleep worshipping, sleep voting, sleep consuming- you get the idea.

The movie uses a clever device to get us to see the world as it really is by having a scientist working with the (unnamed) movement develop sun-glasses that help the wearer to see the world as it really is; an unfortunate side-effect of the glasses is that while revealing reality they also induce headaches. The truth they reveal is startling: billboards that appear to advertise consumer products really say in black and white block lettering:

"Obey", "Consume", "Sleep" and dollar bills say "*This is Your God*". It's a B grade sci-fi flick with all the subtlety of a sucker punch- but maybe sometimes we need a metaphorical sucker punch to wake up?

Many of the themes in *They Live* seem to be lifted off the pages of Saul Alinsky's community organizing bible Rules for Radicals. Saul Alinsky paraphrases the great outside observer of America, Alexander de Tocqueville "self-indulgence accompanied by concern for nothing except personal



materialistic welfare is the major menace to our future." There may be a measure of truth in this biting assessment but our experience over the last twenty years has been one of constantly witnessing the goodness of our neighbors near and far- a few rich, a few more poor, and many middle-class sharing their time, talents and treasure as a part of our experiment in radical sharing and community building. Sadly we have often heard the refrain from former volunteers that despite their best intentions they simply do not have the time to make a sustained commitment here, or anywhere, because of the demands of work and family.

The menace to our future, and present, is not self-indulgent narcissism but a creeping consumption

of our time spent at work. 4 Perhaps Alinsky's biting rebuke that "concern for our private, material well-being with disregard for the well being of others is immoral... [and] worse it is stupidity worthy of the lower animals" applies to some folks in our society but it seems to me that people today are just too busy trying to maintain a roof over their heads. Regardless of intention the effect on society is the same- too few people seem to have the time or energy to participate in the civic life and/or social movements for change which only serves to protect a status quo of great disparity in wealth, health, leisure and opportunity.

This weariness induced atomization of society not only prevents social movements from happening (or dooms them to the control of those with the privilege of time) it also breeds a sense of despair that is killing us from the inside out. Alinsky argues that "*optimism brings with it hope*" but "the outcome of hopelessness and despair is morbidity". Alinsky succinctly defines power as organized people and organized money. Poor, unorganized people are a powerless people. "*A powerless people will not be purposefully curious about life, and ... they cease being alive*". Alinsky is blunt: "*life without power is death*".

I think most people get this intuitively, even if they have not articulated it. Is a lack of curiosity about why things are the way they are nothing less than self-induced blindness? Moreover, does a society that does not actively seek the perspectives of destitute, the diffident, the deviant and the different blithely accept a status quo of widespread poverty and eroding rights because the worldview presented to us filters out the very existence

(Please See: We Live, p9)

The Man Who Caught Fish

5

(Lil' Lily picked up this children's story during a recent visit to the Hartford Public Library. The library is a great place for one year olds and one hundred and one year olds. Support your local library.)

Walter Lyon Krudop

One day, a stranger came to a village, carrying only a pole with a string attached. He stopped at the river, let the string fall into the water, and pulled out a fish.

"One person, one fish," the man said as he handed the slippery fish to a woman doing her wash nearby. She ran home to tell her sisters, and soon they, too, each had a fish for that evening's meal.

The local fishermen were amazed. They had caught little all season, but every time the man cast his line, he pulled up a fish. "One person, one fish," he said, handing one apiece to the fishermen.

A crowd gathered. Everybody wanted a fish. And everybody got one, even the servants in the king's palace.

When the king saw all his servants eating fish, he ordered that his sedan be made ready. "Take me to the stranger," the king said. "No doubt this man has a basketful of fish for me and is merely waiting for a royal ceremony so it can be properly presented."

As the king approached, the stranger said, "one person, one fish," and held up a fish to the king.

The king looked at him in surprise. He thought maybe the stranger hadn't noticed his fine silk robes and his elegantly jeweled headdress. He climbed down from his sedan. "that is fine for a farmer or a butcher," he said, "but I am the king. You must catch me a basketful of fish."

"One person, one fish," the stranger repeated.

The king felt the eyes of the crowd

upon him. "You are hereby commanded to catch me a basketful of fish."

The stranger said nothing. He handed the fish to a nearby villager and returned his line to the water.

The king stormed back to the palace, his servants dropping lotus petals before his every step. He had never been denied a wish, and now consid-



ered his predicament.

The next day, the king returned with a parade of artisans carrying a magnificent sculpture. He waved his hand. "I am a good and gracious king, and I will give you this priceless jade sculpture for a mere basketful of fish."

The stranger pulled a fish out of the river and offered it to the king. "One person, one fish."

"How dare you refuse a gift of such extravagance!" the king exclaimed. "I shall have what is mine." He pushed his way through the artisans and stalked back to the palace.

In the morning, the king returned with his royal guards, each one bigger than the next. "Guards," he commanded, "use his magic pole to catch me a basketful of fish. One fish a day is not enough for a king." But even the strongest guard could not pull the pole from the stranger's hand.

The king was astonished. "You will regret your actions," he said.

The following day, the king marched to the river. The crowd backed away in a hush when they realized he was accompanied by the royal jailer. "Now," the king announced,

"all watch as this stranger catches me a basketful of fish."

"One person, one fish," the stranger said humbly.

The king erupted. "Take him away!"

The stranger was led to the palace stockade. As he walked through the palace, his line grazed the surface of the courtyard fountain. He pulled up a fish and handed it to the gardener.

"Does a king not deserve more than a lowly gardener?" the king sputtered.

The stranger looked down at his pole and said softly, "One person, one fish."

"Lock him up!" shouted the king.

The court magicians and the royal dancers did their best to entertain the king, but his mind always returned to the basketful of fish. Soon he could think of nothing else.

Finally, the king visited the stockade. "Well," he said to the stranger, "you are ready, no doubt, to grant my wish."

The stranger put his line in a pail sitting in the middle of the cell and pulled out a fish. He handed it to the king. Then he caught one for each of the guards. "One person, one fish," he said politely.

The king dropped his fish into the basket. Then he snatched the fish from the hands of the guards and threw them in also. But when he picked up the basket to leave, he gasped in disbelief: it was empty.

The king sat amid his riches, thinking. "Will I never have my basketful of fish?" he muttered. Then, suddenly, he jumped from his seat. "Release the stranger!" he cried.

The next morning, the king received his one fish, then raced to the

(Please see: Fish p6)

We are those two Afghan children, killed while tending their cattle

Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers

Two young Afghan boys herding cattle in Uruzgan Province of Afghanistan were mistakenly killed by NATO forces on [March 2](#).

They were seven and eight years old.

Our globe, approving of 'necessary or just war', thinks, "We expect this to happen occasionally."

Some say, "We're sorry."

Therefore today, with sorrow and rage, we the Afghan Peace Volunteers took our hearts to the streets.

We went with two cows, remembering that the two children were tending to their cattle on their last day.

We are those two children.

We want to be human again.

Don't we see it? Don't we hear it?

All of nature, the cows, the grass, the hills and the songs, crave for us to be human again.

We want to get out of our seats of pride and presumption, and give a cry of resistance.

We want the world to hear us, the voice of the thundering masses.

"We're so tired of war."

"Children shouldn't have to live or die this way."

"This hurts like mad, like the mad hurt of seeing a child being caned while he's crying from hunger."

"We have woken up, and we detest the method of mutual killing in war that the leaders of the world have adopted."

We say, with due respect to the

leaders, but with no respect for their or any act of violence, "We are very wrong. You are very wrong."

"We cannot go on resolving conflicts this warring way."

Unless we see the cattle's submission upon being blown up to pieces, and understand the momen-



tary surprise of the seven year old listening to music on his radio, and empathize with the eight year old who had taken responsibility for the seven year old, and weep torrentially with the mother of the children, we are at risk of losing everything we value within ourselves.

Hearing the NATO commander General Joseph Dunford say that they're sorry makes us angry; we don't want to hear it.

and said, "One person, one fish."

The stranger looked at the king. Instead of pulling up a fish, he did something that confused the king. He handed him the pole.

The stranger took off his straw hat and bowed humbly to the king. "Thank you. You have broken the spell. Many years ago, I, too, was a

We don't want 'sorry-s'. We want an end to all killing. We want to live without war.

We want all warriors to run back anxiously to their own homes, and fling their arms around their sons and daughters, their grandsons and grand-daughters, and say, "We love you and will never participate in the killing of any child or human being again."

In the days to come, we'll remember the distraught mother and family of the two children.

We know they won't eat, or feel like breathing or living. They will remember, yet not want to remember.

Their mother will feel like giving away tens of thousands of cows just so she can touch her two children's faces again. No, she'll not only touch their faces, she will shower them with the hugs and kisses only mothers can give.

Do not insult her grief or her poverty by giving her monetary compensation for her children.

If they were alive, they would say along with their mother, "We are not goods."

We went out there with our hearts and two cows this morning. We stood in front of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, next to a trash-lined river no one wants to clean up, and we began to feel human again.

We had begun to cry for our world.Ω

proud king. One day a stranger, looking much as I look now, came to my kingdom and offered one fish to each person. Like you, I was not content with just one fish. My arrogance condemned me to take over the stranger's curse until I found another person as

Fish, cont.

back of the crowd. He grabbed a peasant. "Give me your clothes," he commanded. The peasant gladly obeyed.

The rag-clad king hid his fish as he waited his turn. On reaching the stranger, he thrust out his empty hand

(Please see: Fish p7)

Love: The Only Thing That Matters⁷

Dan Kiniry and Sarah Rome

Sarah was able to get the 2nd half of her day off so we arrived at the prison early. What do you do in this situation? I had got a letter a week ago from Carl asking me to show up and stand outside the prison while he is being executed, so here we were. In the same letter he expressed approval of the “first dance” song we had picked out for our wedding, advised that I get some dancing tips from his cousin Quince, my former roommate, and encouraged me with my work situations that I have shared with him. We got out of the car and started walking towards the ugly red brick wall of the prison. A guard on a corner tower about 30 feet up asked “Can I help you?” which sounded more like “What the heck are you doing?”

And so we walked along the walls. The weather was beautiful, perfect. The sun was shining in through a hole in the clouds; a ray of hope onto a hopeless situation. There was no one else around, except for the occasional people getting off work, and the armed guards on the corner towers. We walked around the old prison, which has held many Wild West outlaws and a Kiowa Chief who committed suicide. Now it housed Carl Henry Blue, his mom and dad, and the daughter of the women he killed nearly two decades ago.

Carl Blue is first and foremost

a man of living faith. Hope and joy shine through on every letter I receive. We have never met, but he cares so much about me. As an older brother in Christ he has given me careful, heartfelt advice on the

death penalty. In the letter, Carl wished the man good luck in retirement, and wrote “*Don’t be anxious about tomorrow, God has plans for you.*” The Eagle newspaper quoted Bill, the DA, as saying “It was a surprise because I never had received anything like that before. I believe it was sincere on his part.”

So we finished our walk, circling the entire prison, but sadly the walls did not topple down like Jericho, as I was holding out some small hope that they would. When we got back to where we started, the guards had put up some caution tape blocking our path, like you would see at a crime scene. We were told to stand at a corner across the street, catty-corner to the prison. Outside the walls it’s easy to think maybe this human death is somehow different from others; outside the tape it’s easy to feel that what is being done inside is more of a procedure; and across the street on the corner it’s easy to forget that anything is happening at all. Distance, that most subtle and deadly satanic force.

Carl’s mom and dad and uncle live on the west side of Bryan, Texas, out where rural meets urban, in a small trailer. The family of Marcus Druery, who is also on death row, lives right around the corner from the Blue family; worlds away from the homes of those who make decisions about the justice

(Please see: Love p8)

The 12th Station Jesus is Executed



Paul Fryer

struggles I have shared with him, and he has expressed so much joy with me over my forthcoming wedding. I don’t think I’ve ever met a more compassionate person.

He recently wrote a letter to the district attorney who got him the

there.

“Wait!” the king shouted, frantically trying to shake the pole from his hand. The line fell back in the water, and the king pulled up another fish.

“Remember,” the stranger called over his shoulder. “One person, one fish.” Ω

Fish, cont.

proud as I once was.”

“This is nonsense.” The king tried to throw the pole on the ground, but his hand would not let go and the line fell in the water. “I demand that you take back your fishing pole. I am the king.”

The king felt a tug on the line and pulled up the pole. The crowd watched in amazement as he brought a fish to the surface.

The stranger took the fish off the line, handed it to one of the villagers, and bowed once more before putting on his hat. Then he walked up the same path that had brought him

system.

We stood outside the prison, and I waited for Carl to call me. On the day of your execution, you get a longer than normal visit at death row in Livingston at the Polunsky Unit, from eight to noon, and then they drive you over to Huntsville, and there you get to use the phone. I wondered what it would be like for Carl to use a phone for the first time in nearly 19 years, unless you count the phones on the visiting booths at the prison, where he is kept in a cage behind thick glass from his visitors. He never gets to touch anyone, who is not a prison guard that is escorting him in shackles somewhere. On the day of your execution, you are not allowed to hug your family. They just watch you die, behind thick glass.

Carl never called, probably had a limited amount of time to talk on the phone and used it on his children. Only a certain amount of phone time, even though it's your dying day. There is no physical contact with your family, even on your dying day. No more than one visit per week, with the exception of people coming from over 2000 miles, no matter what. A procedure that is unbendable, unbreakable, unstretchable, like the shackles on your arms. Human beings do things like hug their children, say goodbye to their mothers, and would spend hours talking on the phone to their loved ones if they were about to die. Human beings have their loved ones gathered around them when they die, not on the other side of walls and caution tape, across the street. Are these necessary rules, or part of the distance that perpetuates dehumanization of those we call "criminals?"

Slowly people started showing up on our little corner. A criminology professor who looked like Joni Mitchell and two of her students from Kentucky were among the first to appear. The students from Kentucky were the only college students who showed up at the vigil, even though we were in

a college town. Some Catholics were there, a couple professors, and a small woman named Gloria who resolutely set up her loud speaker and spoke of how Texas has executed nearly 500 people since we reinstated the death penalty, spoke the name of the man who was to be executed today, and just spoke out various truths loudly upon the scene. A tiny, ancient lady, extremely bent over in her back, shuffled by with a sign that said Honk To End Executions and posted up boldly in the street. We got some honks, almost exclusively from black people who drove by, except for one man who rolled down his window and told the small crowd of liberal protesters on the side of the road, "The death penalty is a satanic ritual, and everyone who participates in it will be condemned to hell!" No one quite knew how to respond to that one.

All of the people there to vigil or protest where white, until I looked back and a small crowd of young black people were standing off behind us. Carl's family. His brothers, sisters, nieces, and nephews. Finally, a lady priest who was holding a candle, the only clergy who showed up, told his family that they should come stand with us, and they did. They were crying. And we all stood there and stared at the entrance of the prison, quietly praying and waiting.

Inside, Carl told his parents, "Hey Ma, Pa, all you people in there. I love y'all. Come together and love each other." And then he saw the lady in the other viewing room. "Hi Teri. I love you, I never meant to hurt your mamma. I hope you can forgive me."

"Tell my babies Daddy will be looking down on them from heaven."

"So y'all hang on, cowboy up, I'm fixin to ride, and Jesus is my vehicle."

As he was dying, the last word he said was "Love" and then he took

his last breath.

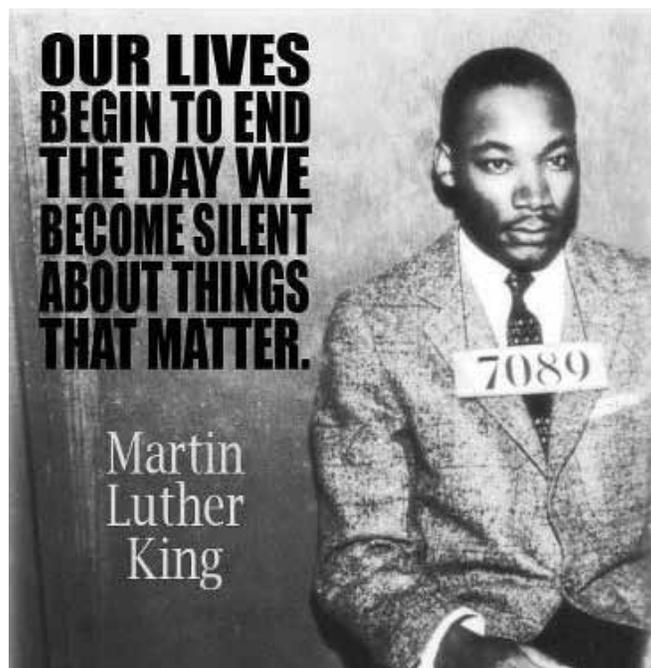
Outside, Sarah and I were holding each other, and she said "Look at the sky." It was beautiful, the sun was setting, long streaks of deep oranges and pinks and purple, as if to contrast with, on the other side of us, the ugly, menacing façade of the building. As if to remind us that God is greater than the state of Texas and all structures and mechanisms of human power, violence, and hatred.

We received word that Carl was dead. One of his nephews said "Look there's grandma!" and the family left, and we all got ready to leave.

His last letter to me ended: *I close with love in my heart for the both of you and, I keep you all in my prayers daily ok and, I ask that you'll continue to pray for me my brother and beautiful sister ok. May God always keep you'll safe in His care all in the name of, Jesus Christ, Amen.!*

Sincerely yours, Carl

Carl died, but I also believe he experienced victory. He expressed forgiveness and understanding, even compassion and a longing for conversion for those who killed him. On February 21st 2013 they executed his body, but couldn't kill the spirit of God within him. Everything was taken from him, everything except for the only thing that matters: "Love." (*Dan and Sarah are Catholic Workers in Bryan, Texas*) Ω



Notes, cont.

sure who jumped for joy more...the kids or me. She will be joining Floyd, Paula, and Josh Rosa in holding down the fort during the after school program. We still count heavily on East and Northwest Catholic, CCSU, Trinity, UConn Husky Sport program and some folks from St. Joe's to help with tutoring and mentoring. We are very grateful to snacks provided by Corpus Christi and St. Ann's during Lent.

There has been a bit of a lull in the folks who are preparing lunch for the 50 or so regulars on Saturday. Some of our peeps are down with flu and we have lost some chefs due to other commitments. If anyone has the time or energy to come and help prepare please let us know. We will pay for supplies, and we will pray for chefs!

We are now giving a star to every kid that does 30 minutes of work after school. They can do homework. They can read or be read to, they can fill out worksheets for the appropriate grade level, they can play an educational game like *Scrabble* or *Boggle*, or they can read an article from a fishing magazine (thanks Capt. Don) or sports journal. On Fridays we let them do artwork. Every 10 stars is rewarded with a field trip! So far we have done movies and bowling. One night we had a pizza/movie night at the Purple House- it took about an hour just to pick the movie and no one wanted to go home at the end. We are hoping to add fishing trips in

the spring. If you have any ideas or would like to scoop up a few kids to take for a reward just let us know. We won't even mind if you keep them for a few weeks! Meanwhile a group of our teens took in a Hartford Whale game with tickets generously donated by Brian's pubmate Geoff Muir.

We continue to feed the hungry with the blessings and benefits of the larger com-



munity. Carol from St. Patrick & Anthony brings food every week from Hartford Steam Boiler, Vicky and the Prestileos bring Panera once a week, St. Tim's, St. Helena's and St. Ann's bring goods for the food pantry, Joe Barber had the Trinity students round up a super batch of food on Super Bowl Sunday, HuskySport cooks once a month, Denise Weeks makes banana bread and healthy snacks every Wednesday, and Fred

Dauser takes me to Costco once a month with money donated by his small Christian community at Storrs. This food is shared with folks at the door, men from Amistad House, the children and their families, the Beloved Saturday community, and a bevy of teens that join us for dinner many nights. Sharing this food we are reminded that this abundance goes through us but is not from us; like all wealth we are merely stewards in possession of what is God's for the benefit of everyone.

Save the date. We are planning a 20th anniversary celebration on Sept 14th!! Tim Shriver will be our guest speaker and we will have hors d'oeuvres and music. Chris has been practicing a special jig for the event. (ed. Note: *yeah, right!*) My Irish has finally rubbed off on him! (ed. Note: *not quite*) Brian will be doing his Marcel Marceau impersonation. Andy Piefer and Sarah Karas will return to do a dramatic reading of all the inappropriate, rude, and hilarious quotes we have collected from the kids for 20 years. Micah will break dance and Ammon will perform some spoken word. Come to the celebration to see which of these things actually

happen!

Happy Easter....

"When Jesus is united with your soul, the soul's tide moves back again into its own, out of itself and above all things, with grace and power back to its prime origin. Then your fallen, fleshly self will become obedient to your inner, spiritual self, and you will in turn have a lasting peace in serving God without condition or demand." Meister Eckhart Ω

We Live, cont.

of systems that oppress? What we are left with is an incomplete understanding of the world that explains success and failure as solely the result of diligence or laziness.

When we watch a zombie movie are we just watching a reflection of ourselves shuffling to the coffee shop and then through the day, the week, and the year toiling not for the com-

mon good or the Beloved Community but for value of a stock that we can't even afford? Zombies are not created in the image and likeness of God and we are not called to shuffle off into the sunset after a lifetime of toil for the benefit of a privileged few. Zombies may be called to act numbly, love tender brains and shuffle mindlessly with the undead; but we are called *"to act justly; to love tenderly and to walk hum-*

bly with [our] God." (Micah 6:8) To do so with one another is to do so with our God as we become the Mystical Body of Christ. This is the practice of Resurrection, the fulfillment of the promise *"I am the resurrection and the life; all who believe in me, though they die, yet shall they live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die..."* (1John 11:25)

We live, they sleep. Ω

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Notes From De Porres House

Jacqueline Allen-Doucot

“Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there...” MT 21:12

In my Lenten reading I have always loved reading from some of the great mystics. I know the bible can be read and prayed with in several different layers. For instance, this passage when Christ clears the temple signifies His clash with the temple rulers who then begin their plot to destroy the One who threatens their religious AND economic power base. They begin to plan Christ's murder. For me, Meister Eckhart takes this same piece of scripture and turns it into a very personal message about how we as individuals are called to be in relationship with Christ. *“The temple God wants to be master of is the human soul.”* says Eckhart

Who are the merchants that we have allowed into the temple of our souls? What kind of trades and bargains happen there? How do we sell out parts of ourselves to forces contrary to God's love, and how do we bargain with God?

Eckhart speaks of cleansing the temple by allowing only Christ and His Love to dwell in our soul. For me one the hardest part of not being a merchant in my soul is letting go of expectations and results: my own needs for accomplishment and success or tangible change from the work with the children here. I am trying to find Christ in the failures and mistakes. Christ in the conflicts. Christ alive and well in the kids we lose to jail or drugs or the street life of moving from friend's couch to friend's couch. The

kids who find college too hard and drop out.

Some of my prayers over the last few years have been the prayers of a merchant. I bargain with God. Just make so and so be



safe and I will keep my end of the deal (the deal being living and working here another year.) It seemed to work with the IRS stuff, but wait, the results are not yet in on that one! Eckhart tells us that *“when all was cleared in the temple there was nobody left but Jesus. And when he is alone he is able to speak in the temple of the soul.”* My Lenten prayer is a kind of sweeping out of my inner merchants and trying to find Christ in the silence. Sometimes monkeys seem to be swinging from the rafters of my temple (my monkey brain)!

Having a monkey brain comes in handy living and working here at the Worker. I do

not know if I developed it here, or if being born with it made this the perfect life for me. There are always 100 things to do (and 100 people to do it with). Here are some of the crazy, wonderful things that have gone on in the last 2 months:

On Martin Luther King Day our friends from St. James Episcopal came over to celebrate with us. They made a great lunch and we finished a new mural with his quote *“Darkness can not drive out darkness, only light can do that”*. We hope to be hanging it up as soon as the snow stops falling.

On Feb. 14th we celebrated Valentine's Day by taking Lily to her first demonstration. The Mad Mom March found Brian Lily and I with thousands of CT residents calling for a ban on assault weapons, large-capacity ammunition magazines, stricter background checks and a stricter concealed weapon laws. Later of course there was chocolate!

Two days later the Green House won an amazingly large trophy at the Elizabeth Park First Annual Sled Derby! Teri Allen and I employed the help of some of the kids, and all of the adults to make a huge dragon head that Josh Rosa wore. Khari Hamblin was the tail, and in between the 2 of them were about 6 more of us on sleds. We had a wonderful time and plan to make an even bigger showing next year.

Christina has returned from Ghana with the glorious news that she has returned to the Hartford CW for a full year! I am not

(Please see: Notes, p9)