

The Hartford Catholic Worker



St. Martin De Porres House
St. Brigid House

To act in Hope is to Resist the tyranny of Fear.



Brian Kavanagh

Believe!

*Women will conceive, bring forth
new ways of seeing, of touching,
of being alive and free.*

*Catherine de Vinck
from Poems of the Hidden Way*

Advent/Christmas 2017

The Hartford Catholic Worker

Established November 3, 1993

Volume 25 Number 1

The Hartford Catholic Worker is published quarterly 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, purplehousecw@gmail.com and www.hartfordcatholicworker.org We are: Brian Kavanagh, Baby Beth Donovan, Charles Macaulay, Alaina DiGiorgio, Dwight Teal Jr., Erin Bergen, Jacqueline, Christopher, and Ammon Allen-Douçot.

We Get By With a Little Help From Our Friends

Do you need somebody to love? Could it be anybody? No? You just need someone to love. Well, how about us? We need your love in the form of your time, talent and treasure. The Hartford Catholic Worker utterly depends on help from our friends. We do not seek, and will not accept, money from the government. Neither do we pay ourselves a whole heck of a lotta money. Still, it takes money to heat the buildings, fix the doors that break and toilets that leak, help the kids who go to college with scholarships, pay the kids who are our counselors... **We need your financial support.**

November 3, 2017 was our 24th anniversary, thus we have begun our 25th year of living and loving in the north end of Hartford. We are hoping to raise enough funds this year to do more than pay the current bills. In particular, we are hoping to raise sufficient funds to resurface the basketball court which has several cracks and a couple of pot holes. We are also hoping to paint both St. Martin and St. Brigid House. Both of these projects are overdue and necessary. Repaving the basketball court is a matter of safety for the dozens of kids who play thousands of hours of basketball there every year. Painting the houses is not simply an aesthetic issue but a question of good stewardship. A good paint job, and some minor repairs, would protect the buildings and save us from more expensive repairs.

These projects could cost as much as \$25,000!@%o?* *Yikes.* We know none of you has an extra \$25,000 laying around, but maybe you have a few bucks you could send our way? Maybe you've shot hoops on our court? maybe on an all-star team that included kids from our neighborhood as well as UCONN stars that are now in the WNBA and NBA and so you want to keep the court open and safe. (Maybe one of you actually has an extra \$10,000 for the court. If so, we would name the court for you!- or your mom if you're the sentimental type.)

In recent years we have had several donors become regular monthly donors by having their bank automatically send us a monthly check. These kind souls keep my regular worrying about how to pay the bills to a minimum. Maybe you could join this group and let me worry about something else? Like whether the Red Sox will do better next year.

How do I feel at the end of the day?

I get by with a little help from my friends

With a little help from my friends.

Don't we all?

-Chris

On Kintsugi and Red Velvet Stilettos

Christopher J. Douçot

I was heading to the Star Hardware, next to the Star Chinese Restaurant, last week, with Sedrick riding shotgun, when I noticed a pair of [red velvet stilettos](#) hanging from the wires above us- not a pair of worn out Chucks, but red, velvet stilettos. This sight has been stuck in my mind since; kind of like when a song gets stuck in your head.

Were they thrown up there in anger by a jilted lover- a reminder to the ex of a good thing forsaken? Were they tossed in joy by an exuberant lover after a long night of dancing when they were of little use? Maybe they were boomeranged around the wires by a little sister who was told she couldn't borrow them? Or by a mischievous little brother looking to stir up trouble?

The hanging high heels dangle above the east end of Elmer St.; a quarter mile long, one way, side street connecting Clark and Main streets, that is long on trouble. A de-



cade ago a stolen SUV screaming down Clark St. flipped on its side when its driver tried to turn onto Elmer St. Two tons of metal and a hundred-something pounds of flesh came to an abrupt stop when they hit a telephone pole. I ran over to administer first aid but was waived off by the driver as he staggered down the street, clutching a plastic handle missing its boombox. Not long after another vehicle managed to stay upright as it turned onto Elmer St. spraying bullets into Kerry and Janice's home. Their 14-year-old son KJ was killed that night.

When we first moved to the neighborhood there were a half

dozen abandoned buildings on Elmer St. And there was a six-year-old boy who shot himself with a gun found in the trash. The child survived. Three quarters of the way down the street lives a group of brothers who once played at the Purple House. Now they deal drugs. They usually ask me how I'm doing when I walk to the bodega next to their spot, but they avoid eye contact when I drive by. The bodega, by the way, sells five-pound bags of MSG on the shelf next to the flour, sugar and salt. No lie.

Elmer Street is full of litter. This urban tumbleweed of chip bags, McDonald's wrappers and cheap wine bottles, proliferates faster than bunnies on fertility drugs. This is the truth of Elmer street; but it is not the whole truth.

Elmer Street is where a kid found, and returned to Jackie, photos of Micah and Ammon that were discarded after her purse was stolen from the Purple House. The corner of Main and Elmer is

where Micah, Ammon and I would wait for the school bus. The south corner of Elmer and Clark is where two members of the school board once lived. Kerry and Janice still live on the north corner of Elmer and Clark. Kerry is a retired Hartford firefighter and a former Santa Claus for the Green House. He never fails to smile and wave when I drive by.

Catherine lives with her grandparents down by the dangling stilettos. As a wiry, surly little girl Catherine shot hoops at the Green House. By the time she was in high school Catherine was a beloved part of our com-



Catherine Cruz and Leah William from HuskySport, 2010? or so?

(Please see: *Kintsugi*, p7)

Barbara Pivarnik

(Barbara has been a supporter of the Hartford Catholic Worker since our first days in Hartford.)

Since the Hartford Catholic Worker first opened its doors at St. Martin de Porres House welcoming their neighbors in the north end, their mission has been one of witnessing God's love and mercy and tirelessly working for peace and justice for all God's children.

When Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin began the first house of hospitality, Maryhouse, in New York City in 1933, the corporal and spiritual works of mercy were the center of every encounter with the poor, (*ed. note: and also with the not so poor*) while working for an end to violence, injustice to workers and a conscious, prayerful response to the gospel mandate to love our enemies while being instruments of witnessing instead of war.

The works of mercy continue to be practiced today at St. Martin de Porres and St. Brigid Houses. Confronting racism, violence, fear and often a sense of hopelessness the Catholic Worker consistently, courageously and compassionately responds to these injustices in the community and the world.

How do the Catholic Worker founders and supporters survive and persevere in their mission? A mission Dorothy Day said was to transform "*a new society within the shell of the old*," welcoming the poor, feeding, clothing and sheltering the hungry, the fruits of which, often unseen, could change the course of their lives. A strong foundation of prayer made and continues to make all this work not only possible but on many occasions miraculous.

The Catholic Worker in Hartford has a radical desire to discern God's will while trusting, no matter how difficult, in Divine Providence.

This powerful and profound trust is witnessed as the community comes together on the first Tuesday of every month as it has done for the past 24 years to celebrate Eucharist.



Bread is broken as each of us who comes to the table is nourished and strengthened as we continue our unique mission and journeys. It is truly the banquet table of the Lord.

In earlier years people gathered in the living room of the "Purple House" to share a simple meal together but now, after eating, we walk to the "Green House" for Mass. We pray alongside the large wooden cross that is etched with the names of those who have sacrificed their lives in the nonviolent pursuit of peace.

Priests from various churches preside at the liturgy with everyone present invited to share their reflections on the gospel. The music chosen reflects the richness of various cultures, genres and traditions, calling us to listen more carefully to different voices, while recognizing Christ more intimately in ourselves, and in our sisters and brothers especially the poor and marginalized.

In particular, in the Hartford Worker community there is a deep

respect, appreciation and reverence for the wisdom, leadership and unique gifts of women in our church and the world. The dark skinned and beautiful Blessed Virgin Mary overlooks the altar reminding us of her perfect faith and courage and continued loving and powerful intercessory role in our lives.

[Meister Eckhart](#) said, "*If the only prayer you would say in your entire life was thank you that would be enough.*" During these days of Advent we await the Lord's presence among us. We especially thank God each time we gather again and remember that "*On the night before He died, He took bread and blessed it and gave it His disciples.*" We share the Eucharistic meal, receive a blessing as we leave in peace to serve God and one another.

We give Thanksgiving for Chris, Jackie and Brian whose lives faithfully witness the gospel of the works of mercy. This witness is now carried forward by Ammon, Erin, Beth, Dwight, Charlie, Alaina and all faithful companions and supporters of the Catholic Worker who continue to offer hospitality, the prophetic witness of nonviolence while giving, receiving and being Christ, being LOVE to all who knock at their door.

Thank you for welcoming us here to the north end to work and play, to share and serve, to teach and learn and make new friendships. And most of all, to discern how to respond to the crosses carried and challenges of injustice faced by so many of our brothers and sisters; we thank you for reminding us that in God's eyes we are ONE. We pray, that we, like Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, can recognize the power and gift of Eucharist as the foundation of all we do and who we are as Catholic Workers. Ω

Barbara Deming: Peace Activist, Author and Feminist⁵

Shai Cassell

Born in 1917 in New York City into an upper middle-class family, [Deming](#) was one of four children and the only girl. From an early age, she observed the unhappiness that her mother endured because of a loveless marriage. Her mother once confided to her that she only stayed with her husband because she would have lost her children otherwise.

That was a formative experience for Deming and planted the seeds for her later feminism as well as her vow to never marry as she felt her life “would be diminished” if she did so and limit what she could accomplish.

From 1934-1938, Deming attended Bennington College, majoring in Drama and English. She immersed herself in various aspects of theater and, after graduating, went on to spend most of the 40’s working in theater, either directing, producing or film critique, eventually hoping to earn a living as a writer. This didn’t work out as she hoped and after a series of failed relationships and having not settled into a successful career, she decided to travel.

Deming visited Italy, Greece and Spain and when she returned to the States in the early 50’s, she wrote [“A Book of Travail”](#) based upon her travel journals. In this book, Barbara unabashedly revealed her sexual experiences with women and found few friends who weren’t embarrassed about her naïve openness in discussing this taboo subject. It wasn’t until 1985 the book found a publisher, a year after Deming died.

In 1954, Barbara met artist, Mary Meigs and continued a relationship with her, on and off, for many years. Not always on the same page in both politics and life in general, Barbara took some space and travelled to Japan, Israel and concluded in India.

In India she met and read extensively the works of Mahatma Gandhi. This experience would have deep and profound consequences on her life. Her trip to India was followed by a visit to Cuba shortly thereafter. Here, Deming encountered and had a brief conversation with Fidel Castro who had led a violent revolution.

Though Deming had great respect for his wish to “free” his

including in *The Catholic Worker!* She had found her causes and voice!

Deming’s partner, Mary Meigs also became drawn to the work of the CNVA and impressed by the words and activism of Deming, she briefly joined, long enough to finance the purchase of a farm in Voluntown which would serve as a training ground for non-violent action and resistance. It is this farm

I think the only choice that will enable us to hold to our vision... is one that abandons the concept of naming enemies and adopts a concept familiar to the nonviolent tradition: naming behavior that is oppressive.

-Barbara Deming

that would change hands and later evolve into the [Voluntown Peace Trust](#), where the Hartford Catholic Worker has been taking kids for summer respite since 1994!

people from the grip of Baptista, Deming never embraced the notion that Cuba was now an ideal society under Castro. She would, however, return to the States and because of these pivotal experiences with Gandhi and Castro begin to develop a burgeoning passion for a more just society. In 1960, she became involved in the [Committee for Non-Violent Action](#) (CNVA), which addressed issues of war, racial injustice and nuclear disarmament.

In 1960, Deming attended a 16-day non-violence training program in New London, CT and joined in [protests](#) at the Groton sub base against the submarines armed with Polaris missiles with capacity to carry hydrogen bomb warheads. She later wrote “all the trainees shared an extraordinary spontaneity – the sense that an individual can act and has weight”. Her experience in New London became the basis of a well received and circulated article titled [“The Peacemakers”](#) and *The Nation* accepted it as first in a series of articles Deming would write. Deming would go on to write numerous articles and books that would receive wide distribution and publication,

Deming’s life took many twists and turns but her deep commitment to non-violence to achieve social justice was immutable, though she would agree that, in certain situations, violence may be necessary to overthrow an oppressive government or authoritarian situation. She endured criticism from some leftist war resisters because of her pacifism but always earned their respect. Jailed many times over the course of her life, her prison experiences served to deepen her resolve to ending all forms of oppression yet took a tremendous physical toll on her health, particularly after being jailed for 30 days in Georgia in filthy, crowded and inhumane conditions.

In 1966, Deming went to Hanoi during the intensification of the Vietnam War and at the behest of the North Vietnamese Government. Horrified at the wreckage and destruction she witnessed in many towns and villages, she became convinced the U.S. Government was lying about the extent of its bombings and totaling underestimating the total number of deaths as a result. She

(Please see: Deming, p8)

Swords into Solar Panels: The 2017 World and the Environment Conference

Fr. Terrence J. Moran

Some statistics will give a flavor of the incredible wealth of the 2017 World Beyond War Conference: War and the Environment – 52 speakers (including the virtual presence of Daniel Ellsberg and Edward Snowden), 4 musical groups, 2 movies, 2 delicious vegan lunches, and the boundless energy and creativity of over 200 participants. The Conference, held at American University in Washington, DC. September 22-24, focused on War and the Environment – both the environmental consequences of warfare and climate chaos as fueling violent conflicts – “No Oil for Wars. No Wars for Oil” as the slogan says.

Part of the first evening’s program was the presentation of the 2017 Award from the [Sam Adams Associates for Integrity in Intelligence](#) to Seymour Hersh, Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist who reported on the [My Lai](#) massacre, the [Abu Ghraib](#) scandal, and alleged misrepresentations of the [2013 Ghouta attack](#), and the [2017 Khan Shaykhun attack](#). Edward Snowden congratulated Hirsch by live video – a reminder of the harsh price whistleblowers pay for speaking truth to power.

The pervasive presence of the USA military – some 800 bases in more than 70 countries – in addition to contributing to political instability also contributes to massive climate instability. The US military has the largest carbon “bootprint” on Earth. As panelist Mike Stagg pointed out, the Pentagon is primarily an oil protection service. “Pay your taxes-Go to Gitmo,” he said – since when we pay our taxes we are contributing to an overseas terrorist organization.

A wide variety of strategies were suggested for resistance to the contribution of the military to climate chaos. Terry Crawford-Browne,

former international banker and advisor to Archbishop Desmond Tutu on the banking sanctions campaign against apartheid, promoted the [“Don’t Bank on the Bomb Campaign”](#) and demonstrated the power of civilian moral resistance. Pat Elder, creator of the website [Counter-Recruit.org](#), which documents the deceptive practices used by the US military to recruit students into the armed forces, showed how high school gun clubs, in addition to indoctrinating students into a culture of violence, also exposure of students to dangerous levels of lead particulates. Nadine Bloch, training director for [“Beautiful Trouble”](#) shared creative tools for activism in the spirit of Saul Alinsky’s principle, “a good tactic is one that your people enjoy.”

Both in terms of presentations and informal conversations, there was a great desire for a deeper coalition among the movements for environmental protection, peace, economic, and racial justice. Several speakers noted the need for “deep empathy” – cultivation of the ability to find common ground on most fundamental human levels with people of often radically different perspectives and political affiliations. The gathering of small groups of people around shared local interests can have

a powerful political impact. As Maine peace activist Bruce Gagnon said, “Don’t go to Congress and beg. Make a splash in your local community and the politicians will come to you.”

One of

the most powerful presentations for me was by Tim DeChristopher, a climate activist and co-founder of the environmental group [Peaceful Uprising](#). In December 2008, he protested a Bureau of Land Management oil and gas lease auction of 116 parcels of public land in Utah’s red rock country by successfully bidding on 14 parcels of land (totaling 22,500 acres) for \$1.8 million with no intent to pay for them. DeChristopher was removed from the auction by federal agents and taken into custody, eventually serving 21 months in prison. Currently a Unitarian seminarian, Tim’s presentation was deeply spiritual. He said, “We need to push back against the narrative of fear. Fear is the gateway drug. We need to disrupt the path of fear that leads from scarcity to war. We need to rediscover the power of our vulnerability to connect us to one another and the world.”

If you weren’t able to attend, all the plenary sessions, break-out sessions, and music are available online <http://worldbeyondwar.org/nowar2017/>. Watch a few and join in the effort, in the words of Steve Baggaly of the Norfolk Catholic Worker, “to beat swords into solar panels.”^Ω (Fr. Terrence J. Moran is the Director of the Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.)



Jacqueline Allen-Douçot

munity and our ambassador to Elmer Street. When she met ‘Toya, a young woman who was confined to a wheelchair and isolated in her grandmother’s house, she brought ‘Toya to the Green House. Actually, Catherine stood on the back of ‘Toya’s electric wheelchair and ‘Toya brought Catherine to the Green House and then she recruited Floyd and Josh to carry ‘Toya in. By the way, ‘Toya’s grandma, Mamie, is the unofficial grandmother to all the kids on Elmer Street providing a watchful eye, and at times a stern voice of caution, to the children playing in the street.

The back yard of the Green House meets up with the back yard of an orange house on Elmer Street. Last year a windstorm felled a tree that took out a section of our fence. I asked the landlord of the orange house to fix it. He told me he tried to file a claim with his insurance company but was told that “acts of God” aren’t covered. Good grief. The wind produced by clashing weather systems knocked over the tree, not God; and thank goodness it wasn’t God, because who wants to pay a deductible for God to act? I was

grumpy, and probably a bit gruff, with the landlord, who replaced the broken section of fence on his own. His act was an act of God working through him despite my being crotchety.

Beauty can be found anywhere we are willing to get close enough to see it.

Regarding the red pumps on the wire; I see a defiant speck of beauty hovering over us. Regarding our neighbors: maybe you only see them on the “news” when something bad happens, or maybe you “see” them portrayed as junkies, thugs, poor people or victims in the movies, or maybe you don’t see them at all. I guess it all depends on where you choose to stand.

We stand on Clark St. We see the beauty of our neighbors in good times, and their struggles in the tough times- blessed at all times to be a part of this community. The folks of this neighborhood are complicated: they are generous and difficult, troublesome and helpful, joyful and angry and sad and human. That is, the folks of this neighborhood are just like the folks of your neighborhood. We are all broken and yet, we are all loved- because we all love.

When broken people gather to form the beloved community its akin to the Kintsugi, the Japanese practice of repairing broken ceramic bowls with gold. The gold which binds us, and makes us more beautiful together than we were apart, is our love for one another. So, why don’t you mosey over to the Green House in all your brokenness, join us in all our brokenness, and together we can make something beautiful as we cobble together the Beloved Community one broken person at a time. Ω

Dick Gregory

(October 12, 1932 – August 19, 2017)

“If you don’t stand for something...

you
will
fall
for
anything.”



“Pubic Citizen #1. President of the United States in Exile. Inaugurated 3-4-69”



Our Lady of the Harvest

Brian Kavanagh

Kintsugi: the Japanese Art of Golden Repair

Mollie Grant

*I want to know
what it feels like
for reconciliation
to wash over
my fault lines.*

*Take my cracks
and paint them
with gold.*

*Let me glimmer,
gleam,*

and glow

redemption.

*Illuminate my mistakes
and let my skeleton
frame out a museum
of triumph Ω*

Barbara Deming, cont.

went on a speaking campaign when she returned to the U.S. to reveal the truth to the American people and was the target of a concerted effort by the government to undermine her credibility. She frequently shared her fear “that we Americans are on our way to becoming the world’s bully, while the majority of us are confident in our hearts that we are well-intentioned people and therefore incapable of atrocities”.

Until her death in 1984, Deming

wrote, protested and continued to speak out wherever she saw injustice. In the 70’s, as the feminist and gay rights movement came to the fore, she found her energies engaged in efforts to liberate women and change the laws that deprived gays of their full civil rights.

Her list of authored books and articles is extensive and leaves one incredibly impressed that one woman could leave such a literary trail while also having taken part in

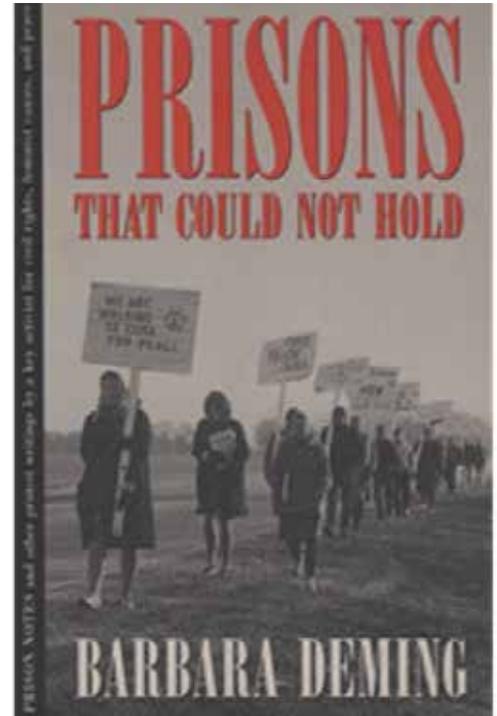
so many grassroots protests and social justice efforts.

8

We can take pride in knowing that her imprint is on the sacred land in Voluntown that provides shelter, solace, learning and fun in an environment that treats each child with respect and utmost acceptance knowing that Barbara Deming would expect nothing less. Ω

But the end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the beloved community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opposers into friends. The type of love that I stress here is not eros, a sort of esthetic or romantic love; not philia, a sort of reciprocal love between personal friends; but it is agape which is understanding goodwill for all men (and women). It is an overflowing love which seeks nothing in return. It is the love of God working in the lives of men (and women). This is the love that may well be the salvation of our civilization.

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.
from “The Role of the Church in Facing the Nation’s Chief Moral Dilemma,” 1957



If I Didn't Have Your Love

Leonard Cohen and Patrick Leonard

*If the sun would lose its light
And we lived an endless night
And there was nothing left that you could feel
That's how it would be
What my life would seem to me
If I didn't have your love to make it real*

*If the stars were all unpinned
And a cold and bitter wind
Swallowed up the world without a trace
Ah, well that's where I would be
What my life would seem to me
If I couldn't lift the veil and see your face
And if no leaves were on the tree*

*And no water in the sea
And the break of day had nothing to reveal
That's how broken I would be
What my life would seem to me
If I didn't have your love to make it real*

*If the sun would lose its light
And we lived in an endless night
And there was nothing left that you could feel
If the sea were sand alone
And the flowers made of stone
And no one that you hurt could ever heal
Well that's how broken I would be
What my life would seem to me
If I didn't have your love to make it real Ω*

Notes, cont.

campus minister at CCSU and Trinity, has been faithfully coming with students from his schools. And Mrs Gillespie from Northwest Catholic continues to bring her students every Thursday. Mary Burton comes weekly for tutoring and she outfitted every Green House kid with brand new sneakers through [Footwear with Care](#). Meanwhile, the women's squad of Marybeth, Carol, Kathy D., Denise, and Diane fill in the cracks around the student helpers. Marybeth brought us tons of pumpkins for the kids to paint and take home. We are growing a lovely community of people all working together for the greater good... and for the most part it is a great deal of fun. The hardest part is mentoring the teens who are counselors. It has always been a rough transition between being a kid and having fun to having your first job and having to leave the basketball game to set tables and serve food.

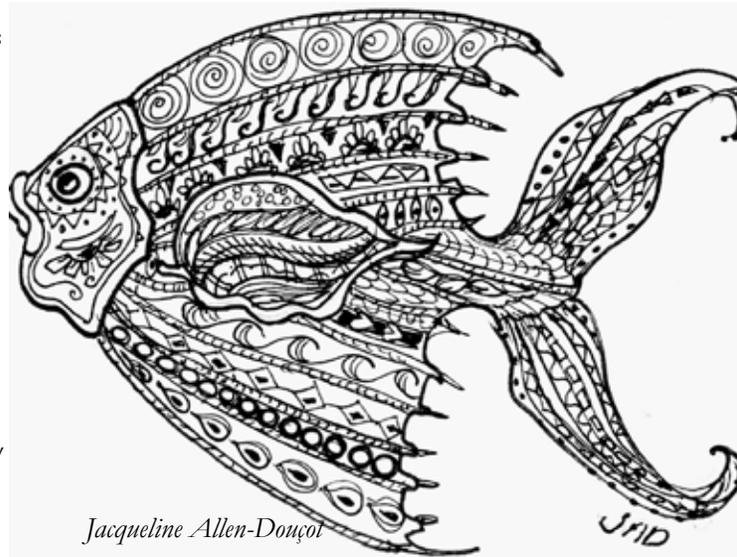
As the days get colder I have started making apple crisp- thanks to Carol from St Patrick/St Anthony for the bushels. Carol was also kind enough to deliver our CSA veggies every week, and she brings us yummy food from a downtown restaurant once a week! You rock, Carol.

Paul and Pat Robotham, who recently celebrated 60 years of wedded bliss, have been bringing us bread left over from Chrysalis Center on Thursdays. With the knocks on the door looking for help growing more steady we are grateful to the Robothams, UCONN, Carol, Denise, St. Tim's, St. James, and all the other generous souls and communities that keep our cupboard full. Aside from food we are seeing more moms seeking diapers and clothing for their children as well as sheets and blankets. St Therese's parish of Granby has been collecting sheets blankets and towels for us for about 20 years now! When their recent collection filled up the whole front room we thought we would be all set... but folks are still coming by asking for more. Weekly we get calls for help with security deposits and electric bills, and baby formula...and we can help because of the generosity of our readers. Thank-you for allowing us to be God's middlemen and women as we all participate in the ongoing miracle of loaves

and fishes.

This week daylight savings will be upon us. The after school program will close a half hour earlier so that the kids don't walk home in total darkness. We have been blessed to give them hot healthy food on most days before they head out the door. With shorter hours there will be less time for art lessons, crafts and homework. By the time they have eaten snack, and played in the yard to let off steam from being in school all day, it will be time to head home.

For me it has been very good to have these works of mercy to bury myself in. The state of affairs in the world are beyond troubling. With every new mass shooting, drone strike,



Jacqueline Allen-Douçot

and racist incident I am reminded of Fr Daniel Berrigan's warning to us made during the Vietnam war. Dan lamented that eventually the violence, and weaponry we spread throughout the world would come back to haunt us...as "our chickens come home to roost". Calls from Washington for travel bans and executions, only drag us further down. The leadership refuses to acknowledge that years of war, torture, starvation and environmental degradation all contribute to the hardening of souls at home and abroad. I'm reminded of the bumper sticker quip: "We're making enemies faster than we can kill them".

Meanwhile, budgets for health care and mental health care face the ax while the president is calling for a tenfold increase in our nuclear arsenal. Cheap, easy access to guns, the scapegoating of our Muslim brothers and sisters, and of people of color make it hard to be hopeful. Just this weekend 26 people were

gunned down while praying in church, and ⁹ despite it having disappeared from the news, we are but a few weeks removed from the massacre in Las Vegas. It all no longer seems possible to comprehend what is happening.

Where is the willingness to try something new? War and violence have never been effective in bringing about peace. Is it our unwillingness to follow the gospels? Is it that we read the words of Christ to "love our enemies and pray for those that persecute us" but find his words too difficult? Was Fr. George Zabelka right when he said "we believe in Christ, but we don't believe what he said"? Is it that so many powerful people who profit from war and weapons production are not interested in true Peace?

Pope Francis tells us "[Spending](#) on nuclear weapons squanders the wealth of nations," and that "To prioritize such spending is a mistake and a misallocation of resources which would be far better invested in the areas of integral human development, education, health and the fight against extreme poverty." "Peace to the peoples who suffer because of the economic ambitions of the few, because of the sheer greed and the idolatry of money, which leads to slavery," he said.

As we approach the season of Advent we ask God to give us the strength and hope to carry on with love, as Jesus did. Just as Christ loves us even as we betray him with our violence and selfishness, we must love others, especially those who have harmed us. This is the only way to change the world. This is the only way to share the resources and gifts from God that were given to all. This is how we keep alive the Spirit of Love that was born so long ago to Mother Mary, a refugee who had no place to call home. This is what Advent leads us to.

We wait in great darkness, believing that the light of peace and love can, and will, be born in us again, and that through us into the world that light will shine.

We thank you all for keeping us going. Together our lights will never allow the darkness to have permanent dominion over our brothers and sisters.

We are grateful to share in this journey with you. Merry Christmas. Ω

Notes From De Porres House



Jacqueline Allen-Douçot

It is always hard for me to let go of summer. It has been easier the last few years as we have had very warm weather for September and October- so warm that I took my last swim in the ocean on Oct 25th! I think because it is so much easier for us to have all the Green House kids spread out to play basketball, and enjoy the backyard we cringe as the days grow shorter and chillier. It means we will be more crowded and the inside spaces will be louder.

On Saturdays we have had up to 70 folks gathering as part of our Beloved Community. Last weekend was our Halloween party. We hosted over 75 children, and at least 20 adults as well. The kids had an eyeball relay race, and donuts-hanging from strings eating contests with prizes. Maria Karas, Dwight, and I painted a lot faces and the kids chose costumes from our treasure chests. At the end of the party the children went down the cellar stairs to a creepy witch to get a candy bag. Adding to the creep factor were the horseshoe crab carcasses lining the steps. Jen O'Neill and I had gathered them from the beach after a recent storm.

Since school started we have shared at least 70 back packs with the kids thanks to the generosity of Corpus Christi, St Ann's, and St. James Episcopal parishes. We have many new kids, and so we are very grateful for our partners at HuskySport who bring students, nutritious snacks, and healthy lunches. The HuskySport crew are great mentors. John Cambell, Catholic

(Please see: Notes, p9)