

The
Hartford
Catholic
Worker



St. Martin De Porres House
St. Brigid House

"The Poor Tell Us Who We Are" -Philip Berrigan



Again

Brian Kavanagh

*AGAIN a word from
the new language
we'll need it
when our golden trumpets
bring the walls down
ALL walls*

*Revolutionary Patience-
When he comes again.*

Dorothee Sölle

Advent/Christmas 2019

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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, Dwight Teal Jr., Sasean Sanders, Jacqueline, and Christopher Allen-Douçot.

At the Hartford Catholic Worker, aka The Green House, we fill:

- ☺bellies with apples and grapes, tacos and tuna noodle casserole
- ☺afternoons with art, sewing, homework, science experiments, and friendships
- ☺minds with confidence and possibility
- ☺Saturdays with basketball and the Beloved Community
- ☺Summers with swimming, fishing, walks in the woods, and the scent of the pine forest
- ☺book bags with books, pencils, crayons, and notebooks
- ☺homes with groceries and furniture
- ☺futures with college and careers
- ☺our neighborhood with a loving community
- ☺and lives with joy.



Friends, a recent story in the *Boston Globe*, [Positive relationships](#) can buffer childhood trauma and toxic stress, Oct. 15, 2019, has made clear that the work we are doing at the Green House is essential. Many of the kids who come here have been traumatized by poverty and/or violence. The study, published in the *Journal of American Medical Association Pediatrics*, shows that children who have had “multiple negative childhood experiences, such as abuse, neglect, or severe family dysfunction” have a “dramatically reduced... likelihood of developing depression and other mental health problems [as] adults” if they “had at least two nonparent adults who took genuine interest in them...” Dr. Andrew Garner said: “these positive experiences may give kids a flashlight into the future.”

Last year Jackie introduced Jory to Shawn, a nine year old dynamo who witnessed his father’s murder. In his submission to our essay contest “*Why I come to the Green House*”, Shawn wrote: “*Saturdays are the best because you get to meet more people. I get to see my mentor Jory and we get oranges. I also like the Kindness club. If you be kind you get praise.*” Jackie and Jory are flashlights...

But here’s the thing

Flashlights Need Batteries!

Can you be a Green House battery?

- ⚡ We need some rechargeable AA batteries willing to make monthly \$25 contributions
- ⚡ We need some 9 volt batteries willing to make monthly \$100 gifts
- ⚡ We need some car batteries who are able to pledge \$200 a month to keep our flashlights shining.
- ⚡ We need a few of those whole house batteries that Tesla is selling who have the resources to make donations of \$500 or \$1000.

⚡ **Batteries in the form of checks can be sent to: HCW 18 Clark St., Hartford 06120.** Rechargeable batteries can be had by setting up automatic monthly donations to the Hartford Catholic Worker through your bank, or through the [Donation button](#) on our website.

⚡ Of course, we are also always looking for new flashlights. If you are interested in joining this beloved community of our please give us a call at (860) 724-7066.



Jesus, the Child Desaparecido

Christopher J. Douçot

Advent, the season of hope, is upon us. Hope: the confidence of faith that Good will always outlast and overcome evil. Advent is the season of hope because we are reminded again that Christ came to proclaim the Kin'dom of God is in our midst. The Incarnation was not an isolated historical event, but rather an ever-unfolding infusion of the Divine. Christ is not done being born into, and amongst, us. This is God's plan, by entering the world in temples of flesh utterly dependent on others to survive, God joins fates with us. Thus intertwined the choice before us is: love or perish. As evidenced by full nurseries around the world, God is betting on love. So are we.

That Jesus was born into a Jewish family subjugated by the Roman empire was also a part of God's plan. The precarity of subjugation meant that loving this child required risk. Love in the shadow of empire will always require resisting violence and rejecting the edict to fear strangers. Jesus the child refugee survived because he, Mary, and Joseph were welcomed- or at least tolerated, in the land where their ancestors were once held captive.

Between July, 2017 and October 2019 5400 children were [separated from their parents](#) at the US/Mexican border; 207 were under five, 31 had not celebrated their first birthday. Since a June 2018 court order prohibiting child separation another 1090 have been separated. Conditions at the detention centers have been described as deplorable by members of Congress. [Republican Matt Gaetz](#) of Florida told NBC news in July that "the human condition" he "observed in Yuma was the worst state of the human condition that [he had] ever seen in [his] life" with children sleeping on overcrowded concrete floors, receiving inadequate and [insufficient food](#), and inadequate health care. For example, the flu [vaccine](#) is being withheld an especially dangerous denial

in overcrowded living conditions. Children have also been [drugged into sedation](#) in order to make them more manageable.

Attorney Laura Belous from the



[Kelly Latimore](#)

Florence Immigrant & Refugee Rights Project [told NBC](#): "Our clients tell us that they have seen CBP (Customs and Border Protection) agents kick other children awake, that children do not know whether it's day or night because lights are left on all the time, and that they have had food thrown at them like they were wild animals."

There have also been reported incidents of [child sexual assault](#) perpetrated by CBP agents.

It may be that not every child in detention would meet the legal definition of a refugee which according to the U.N. Commission on Refugees is someone "who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group." But very many Mexican, Guatemalan, Salvadoran, and Honduran families are fleeing the violence of street gangs and the drug cartels as well as the

violence of right-wing paramilitary groups and government forces. The United States bears some responsibility for this violence.

The drug related violence would not exist without the demand created by our illicit drug use. Meanwhile, American responsibility for political violence is even more obvious.

Starting with the 1954 CIA sponsored overthrow of Jacob Arbenz the democratically elected president of Guatemala who proposed turning over unused land held by the United Fruit Company to landless peasants, and through to the support of the Obama administration for the [2009 coup](#) that replaced Honduran president Manuel Zelaya with a repressive regime that has attacked the poor and the press, the United States has been a consistent actor on the wrong side of Latin American history.

Far from being a champion of freedom and a defender of human rights our policies, weapons sales, troop deployments, and trainings of foreign nationals have been in the service of right-wing dictatorships. This support has included the training of assassins and death squad leaders responsible for: the [rape and assassination](#) of three American nuns and their lay [colleague from CT](#), the assassination of Catholic archbishop Oscar Romero, the assassination of six Jesuits and their housekeeper and daughter, the massacre of the entire village of El Mozote- [save for one witness](#)... and the list goes on.

Aside from those displaced for the above "political" reasons, millions of Latin Americans have been displaced for economic reasons- unfortunately the powers to be at the U.N., in Brussels, and Washington don't recognize "economic refugees". Nonetheless the economic machinations of the IMF and the World Bank have kept the former/current colonies of Europe and the United States- the Global South, at an economic disadvantage via debt burdens (often accumulated by dicta-
(Please see: *Desperacido*, p4)

Desaparecido, cont.

tors buying American weapons) and the forfeit of economic sovereignty via so-called [austerity measures](#) and [structural adjustments](#) imposed by the IMF and World Bank.

The livelihoods of Latin American workers and family farmers were also undermined by NAFTA. [Mexico lost](#) 120,000 jobs related to pig farming, more than 2 million Mexican farm workers lost work and/or were displaced, and Mexican wages fell by 22%. These economic realities pushed more than 10 million Mexicans out of work and into the United States between 1995 and 2005. When your nation's economy is undermined, and you can't sell your corn for more than it cost to grow- or for less than the cost of American corn dumped in your market, what are you supposed to do? These people are refugees too.

The wave of people on the move from the Global South/Africa and Latin America to the Global North/America, Western Europe, and Australia is the whirlwind of imperial conquest. The relative wealth and political stability of the Global North is had [at the expense](#) of the impoverishment and political instability of the Global South.

If you had been born into a conflict zone and/or a country where you had little chance to provide for your children, and if you became a target because you worked with a union or your church to agitate for a better life, wouldn't you head to a land which has billed itself as a "city on a hill"? A land which claims that a better life for your children can be gained by hard work and honesty? If you're of European descent that scenario is the exact scenario your grandparents likely faced.

The White House announced in early November that only [18,000 refugees will be allowed into](#) the U.S. in 2020, a decrease of over 50,000 since 2016. According to the very conservative [Cato Institute](#) 49 nations (including Somalia, Uzbekistan, Bangladesh, and Yemen!!) welcome more [refugees](#)

than we do. The United States now accepts the [fewest](#) refugees, per capita, in the world. In 2018 the [US accepted 3 refugees for every 1000](#) American citizens, meanwhile Lebanon accepted 156.

Unbelievably, on 2 occasions 1500 of the separated children who were transferred out of border detention centers and into foster care around the country have been lost by our government! LOST! [WE LOST 3000 CHILDREN!](#) Some of those children may end up being [adopted](#) and forever



separated from their moms and dads.

In 1976 the [U.S. backed](#) a coup in Argentina that removed president Isabel Peron from office. Over the next seven years a military junta fought a "Dirty War" against political opponents, labor unions, and student activists who were labeled as terrorists. 30,000 people were "disappeared". Some were taken by helicopter and dropped into the sea. Pregnant women were held until they gave birth and then their children were sold or given to military families affiliated with the junta. At least 500 children were raised by those complicit with the murder of their actual parents.

Mothers of the disappeared orga-

nized and marched in [La Plaza De Mayo](#) in Buenos Aires every week for years demanding the return of "los desaparecidos"- their children and grandchildren. These women have not [stopped looking](#). In recent years some have successfully found their grandchildren, now in their 30's and 40's, who are [left reckoning](#) that their "moms" and "dads" were complicit in the murders of their actual moms and dads...

We need not be complicit in our nation's shameful replay of this nightmare scenario. Fact check what you've just read and ask yourself if closing our border to the impoverished and persecuted is any way to welcome Emmanuel- Christ among us.

Grandmothers living under repressive military rule risked their lives to demand the return of family. Neither you nor your children will be disappeared if you speak out about other people's children being disappeared.

So speak with your friends and family about this. Demand that your pastor, priest, imam, or rabbi preach about the command to welcome strangers. Ask your teachers and professors to lecture about American support for coups, the legacies of imperialism and the Cold War, and about the global extent of the refugee and migrant crisis. Write letters to the editor in defense of migrants and refugees. Support the [work of local agencies resettling refugees](#).

Stand on a street corner with a sign [expressing support](#) for refugees and migrants. Demand that your elected officials support the rights and well being of migrants and refugees, and maybe open your home to someone in need.

Soon carolers will sing with joy: "O come, all ye faithful. O come, let us adore him." If we are to adore him, we must find these children, recognize in their faces the clearest possible reflection of the Christ child, and welcome him and his holy family to dwell among us in peace and dignity. To do otherwise is to let Jesus the child refugee remain Christ the Desaparecido. Ω

If you came to this place expecting a tame story, you came to the wrong place.

If you came for a story that does not threaten you, you came for a different story than the one we tell.

If you came to hear of the coming of a God who only showed up so that you could have a nice day with your loved ones, then you came for a God whom we do not worship here.

For even a regular baby is not a tame thing. And goodness that cannot threaten complacency and evil is not much good at all, and a God who would choose to give up power and invincibility to become an infant for you, certainly didn't do it just you could have dinner.

But.

If you came because you think that unwed teenage mothers are some of the

strongest people in the world.

If you came because you think that the kind of people who work third shift doing stuff you'd rather not do might attract an angel's attention before you, snoring comfortably in your bed, would.

If you came because you think there

WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR?

are wise men and women to be found among undocumented travelers from far lands and that they might be able to show you God.

If you came to hear a story of tyrants trembling while heaven comes to peasants.

If you came because you believe that God loves the animals as much as the

people and so made them the first witnesses to the saving of the world.

If you came for a story of reversals that might end up reversing you.

If you came for a tale of adventure and bravery, where strong and gentle people win, and the powerful and violent go down to dust, where the rich lose their money but find their lives and the poor are raised up like kings.

If you came to be reminded that God loves you too much to leave you unchanged.

If you came to follow the light even if it blinds you.

If you came for salvation and not safety, then: ah, my friends, you are in the right place.

Quinn G. Caldwell

Los Desaparecidos

Steven Van Zandt

*Were you shaken, by the thunder
It will pass with the night
Don't you be frightened my child
Rest your head here awhile
I must tell you about your papa
and the price that he paid
For speaking his heart out one day
They came and took him away*

*Fighting here is all that remains for us now
We've stopped trying to hide our hatred inside
We're crying out loud
baby we once were so proud
Jesus where are you now*

*Where have you gone desaparecido
I hope someone remembers your name
Where have you gone desaparecido
How can they just turn their backs to our shame
Where have you gone desaparecido*



*I taste your blood in the roots of this land
Where have you gone desaparecido
Mi querido, only yesterday I held your hand*

*There's a dark road no one speaks of
But we must live with the truth
It runs from the Plaza De Mayo
To the Rio Sumpul
They say someday, when we die, we'll ride
Wild horses in a world without end
But what do we do until then*

*Standing here and staring straight into the lies
They can steal all we have
But never can they steal the hope from our eyes
Baby our heart must survive
How many times must we die*

*Where have you gone desaparecido
I see your face in every grain of sand
Where have you gone desaparecido
Mi querido, only yesterday I held your hand Ω*

By Sue Weisbar, Ph.D.

The position Donald Trump has taken towards immigration since he launched his campaign for the presidency is undeniably racist and divisive. From calling immigrants rapists, murderers, and animals and their homelands “shithole countries,” Trump has forsaken the “dog whistle” appeal to voters’ worst instincts favored by many modern nativist politicians for blatant and crude race-based fear mongering and scapegoating.

The major objective of his policy and legislative actions on immigration, from ending DACA to decimating the U.S. refugee resettlement program and terminating Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for tens of thousands of in the early 1920s. In *Takao Ozawa v. U.S.* (1922), the Supreme Court ruled that since only Caucasians were white and Japanese were not of the Caucasian race, they were not white and therefore ineligible for U.S. citizenship.

Three months later in *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind* (1923), a national of India was found to be Caucasian as defined by anthropologists of the day. The court nevertheless ruled that Mr. Thind was not a “white person” as “used in common speech, to be interpreted in accordance with the understanding of the common man” and that he, too, could not naturalize.¹ According to historian Mae Ngai, these two decisions cast Japanese and Asian Indians with Chinese as “unassimilable aliens” and helped constitute the racial category of “Asian.”²

Earlier, in 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, one of the first attempts by the U.S. to regulate immigration along racial lines. This piece of legislation was driven largely by concerns to maintain white “racial purity” and a widespread anti-Chinese movement in California where Chi-

nese workers were blamed for declining wages and economic malaise.

The Chinese Exclusion Act paved the way for a series of laws between 1882 and 1904 that severely restricted immigration from China and provided for the deportation of many Chinese immigrants already residing in the U.S. Restriction on Chinese immigration would last until 1943.³ Immigrants from southern and eastern Europe began arriving in the U.S. in greater numbers during the last decade

ADAM
2008
THE DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN
AMERICAN
AND
EUROPEAN
CULTURE



of the 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th century.

This change in the demographic status quo alarmed many Americans, including the editors of the best-selling magazine in the U.S., *Saturday Evening Post*, who warned that continuing migration patterns would yield “a hybrid race of people as worthless and futile as the good-for-nothing mongrels of Southeastern Europe.” The 1924 National Origins Quota Act was developed to curtail such migration by establishing immigration quotas based on two percent of each nationality’s proportion of the foreign-born U.S. population in 1890, before widespread immigration from Italy, Greece, Poland, Russia, and other countries of southern and eastern Europe had begun. President Calvin Coolidge enthusiastically signed the

bill. He wrote that “racial considerations [were] too grave to be brushed aside” and that “divergent people will not mix or blend.”⁴

The offensively named Operation Wetback was a massive immigration enforcement effort executed as a military operation in 1954 by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to apprehend and deport undocumented workers from Mexico, especially in the Southwest. At its outset three thousand workers a day were returned to Mexico by bus, train, and boat, often with little concern for their welfare or legal status. One Mexican labor leader reported that “wetbacks” were brought into Mexico “like cows” in the back of trucks and unloaded in the desert 15 miles south of the border. Eighty-eight braceros (temporary agricultural workers recruited from Mexico under a 1942 Mexican Farm Labor Agreement) died of heatstroke in a round-up conducted in 112-degree heat.

A Congressional investigation described a cargo ship that transported workers to Vera Cruz as an “eighteenth century slave ship” and “penal hell ship.”⁵ By the time the program was terminated in 1955, it is estimated that as many as eight hundred thousand Mexican workers had been deported.⁶

At the height of the civil rights movement and a global Cold War debate over the merits of western democracy vs. communism, the National Origins Quota Act had become a national embarrassment. Fulfilling a campaign promise of John F. Kennedy, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (INA) at the foot of the Statue of Liberty. This act literally “changed the face of America” by ending an immigration-admissions

(Please see *Racism*, p8)

Elizabeth McAlister and the Spirituality of Advent

Fr. Terrence Moran

In the early hours of Thanksgiving, 1983, Jackie Allen, Clare Grady, Dean Hammer, Elizabeth McAlister, Vern Rossman, Kathleen Rumpf, and Karl Smith entered Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome, New York to prayerfully defy the [state religion of nuclearism](#) by hammering and pouring blood on a B-52 bomber. This was a profession of faith in the God of peace and vulnerable love.

While she was serving time for this Plowshares action in the Federal Penitentiary in Alderson, WV, Elizabeth McAlister wanted to be present to her husband, Philip Berrigan and their three children as the Christmas season approached and also to share prayer with them and the other members of the Jonah House community in Baltimore. So she drew and colored Christmas tree ornaments on cardstock, connected by yarn to handwritten reflections. The Jonah House community read one per evening at evening prayer and then hung them on their living Christmas tree.

Her daughter Frida still has them and uses them faithfully with her family each Advent. Elizabeth McAlister turned 80 on November 17. As she celebrates the eighty years of her remarkable life, she awaits sentencing, an Advent of its own kind, for her participation in the Kings Bay 7 Plowshares on April 4, 2018. Her 1984 reflections, which this article explores, present a remarkable spirituality of Advent.

As we enter Advent of 2019, may Elizabeth McAlister's reflections, and even more the witness of her life, inspire our following of the non-violent, disarmed God of Bethlehem and impel us to works of peace and resistance.

For McAlister, Advent is uniquely the season of the peacemaker. She implicitly rebels against the tendency to celebrate Advent as if Christ is born anew every year; a four week focus on an empty manger to be occupied by

a pudgy Christ Child on December 25. For McAlister, Advent is focused more properly on the second coming of Christ in glory. But it is not the coming of some other world at the end of time. It is the transformation of this world already in progress. Christ comes again in glory not in a Technicolor Apocalypse but by the transformation of our beings, our energies; by transforming our fraudulent and death-dealing culture with peacemaking and active resistance.



To live the Advent spirit is not to engage in sentimental cooing over the child in the manger. Advent exacts a stern discipline of us. The Advent scriptures call to watchfulness, to living wide awake, to avoid sleep-walking through life. To our peril we ignore the frequent advents of God that come to us principally in noticing and attending to the needs of others. *"A sun has risen that know no setting. An energy was released in Christ that will not rest until all darkness is made light. Advent asks us to be moved by that energy – to make the work of Christ our work."*

Advent is a season of profound faith in the reality of God's promises. McAlister points out that no Christian would doubt the truths of creation and redemption but we reckon that God's promises of a new heaven and a new earth are less reliable. We settle for a

rapacious economy, nuclear stockpiling, racial inequality and treat the Isaiah prophecy of a world transformed as a poetic dream rather a practical program, an agenda for Christians. *"Our advent hope calls on us to write, with our lives, a new history, the history of lives lived in justice and peace."*

Dorothy Day loved the phrase of John Ruskin that we have *"a duty of delight."* McAlister echoes this thought in saying that Advent imposes on Christians a mandate of joy. Joy is not something that is present in agreeable circumstances and absent from disagreeable ones. It is the quality of mindfulness that believers bring to every circumstance. *"More than a call,"* McAlister says, *"joy is a command – to recognize joy, to trust it, believe it, and begin to live it because God is near."* What a wonderful Advent practice that is – not to let passing circumstances dictate our moods but rather to walk into each day with trust in the joy it will contain because of God's nearness.

McAlister focuses several meditations on the biblical messengers that are present in the Advent readings.

The angels who spoke to Mary, to Joseph in dreams, to the shepherds, counsel us to the daily practice of silent listening and to becoming ourselves the messages we hear.

The Spirit makes children prophets and inspires dreams in the old grown cynical. The Spirit impels us to live our prayers, not merely to long and desire and to live lovingly and justly now, making our flesh and our lives the fulfillment of God's promises. The heavens and the earth are themselves messengers, portents that we must learn to read.

"We cannot mess with the earth and the heavens without messing over our own spirits and bodies." Advent calls us to the ecological conversion that is a central theme of the pontificate of Pope Francis. Not merely to live in sustainability, as important as that is, but to discover

(Please see Advent, p8)

Advent, cont.

that, *“the universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person’s face,”* (Laudato Si’, 233).

For McAlister, John the Baptist, the Advent messenger par excellence, urges us to challenge Jesus as John did with the question Are you the one who is to come? In prayer we plead with Jesus *“to fill the gap between his promises and the reality of so much suffering and injustice;”* a shockingly frank Advent prayer! McAlister calls us *“to make the plea of Isaiah with all our hearts and minds and bodies;”* - Rend the heavens and come down! (Is. 64:1)

McAlister then turns to the content of the Advent messages, the first being peace. Advent challenges us to hear the call to peacemaking in our lives, in the signs of the times, in prayer. And when the call is heard, a faithful response is demanded. Advent further issues a call to justice. We prefer to live by laws in which every circumstance is foreseen and every obligation delineated. Justice instead calls us to live in “creative imagination” of what a life of limitless love demands of us.

Finally Advent is a season of light – the fragile flames of the Advent wreath, the flickering lights of the Christmas tree. Doubtless, McAlister was thinking of the nuclear cloud when she wrote, *“Today we face a darkness so vast as to snuff out even the sun.”* Our longing for light must transform itself into a resolve to become the light of Christ ourselves.

Racism, cont.

policy based on race and ethnicity for one based on immigrants’ family relationships with U.S. citizens and legal residents and, to a lesser degree, job skills. The act unexpectedly set into motion widespread changes in the racial and ethnic makeup of the U.S. when immigration from Europe fell flat and interest in emigrating from non-European countries after the end of colonial rule grew.

In parallel with the termination of the Bracero program in 1964, the INA

The Advent believer does not huddle in the darkness scanning the horizon for a sign of dawn. Rather they walk boldly into the darkness confident that they themselves are carriers of light.

McAlister concludes her Advent reflections directing our attention to three journeys. The journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem recalls the great Exodus journey of Israel. Its incredible 40 year length reminds us that the crucial purposes of that journey are only accomplished over a long period of time – to become a community and to live in freedom. Doubtless McAlister was speaking out of the experience of the founding, with her husband Philip Berrigan, of the Jonah House resistance community in Baltimore.

To learn that community and freedom are not in competition but require and enable each other is the task for a lifetime of Advents. The second journey is that of the Magi – kings who learn to relinquish their kingdoms for a “kin-dom.” *“Like them, we have to leave so much behind, to let go of so much, to make the journey at all.”*

The third journey is that of the shepherds – the first proclamation of the Incarnation was made to religious and social outcasts who then *“went with haste”* to become the first preachers of the Incarnation. Are we capable of hearing the preaching of the gospel from those without *“privilege, possessions, power, and prestige?”*

McAlister concludes her Advent reflections not with Christmas but with the Feast of the Holy Inno-

cents, December 28. That feast for the Jonah House community has been a day of resistance at the Pentagon since the days of the Vietnam war until the present. And so we must turn from the vulnerable, threatened child of Bethlehem to the vulnerable and threatened children of today:

“Whenever Jesus enters our world, the prince of this darkness works overtime.

Satan’s weapons are always the same: Death, war, hatred, uncaring negligence.

Children are always the first victims.

Like Rachel, we must not be comfortable until the children are safe.”

(Fr. Terrence Moran is the Director of the Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, NJ.) Ω



Dwight Teal Jr.

also inadvertently contributed to steep increases in undocumented immigration by limiting legal immigration from countries in the Western Hemisphere (which previously had no cap).⁷

The oldest trick in the political playbook is divide and conquer. Politicians throughout our history have stoked fear of the immigrant “other” to great effect. Pope Francis reminded legislators not to repeat such injustice in his address to Congress in 2015: *“When the stranger in our midst appeals to us, we must not repeat the sins and the errors of the past. We must resolve now to live as*

*nobly and as justly as possible, as we educate new generations not to turn their back on our ‘neighbors’ and everything around us. Building a nation calls us to recognize that we must constantly relate to others, rejecting a mind-set of hostility in order to adopt one of reciprocal subsidiarity, in a constant effort to do our best.”*⁸

We would “do our best” by rejecting the racist, nativist Trump agenda (reprinted from JustSouth, the quarterly of the Jesuit Social Research Institute, College of Arts and Sciences, Loyola University New Orleans. [For footnotes click here.](#))Ω

Notes, cont.

hopeful because all the work I am doing right now is not only preparing for a brighter future for myself, but for the bigger community I am a part of. As a representative of [Public Allies/Husky Sport](#) and the Catholic Worker I spend my time building connections. I am connecting kids with teachers, volunteers with my HCW people, and representing my neighborhood to the bigger community.

The kids respect me so much because I am a young Black man who grew up on the same streets they did. The UConn students also respect the work here on Clark Street and my part in it. I feel hope in being a resource to the kids, the teachers, and also my co-workers.

I am teaching by example showing kids and adults what it means to live in community. Community is so important because when there is no community or collaboration our kids suffer. Knowing that the Green House kids, especially teenagers, can see a future for themselves as college students means an educated community. That's what we are all about here. Ω

Baby Beth: "Lately I am finding hope in YOU (i.e. Jackie) and the Grady Sisters, and the King's Bay Plowshares. Knowing that so many people are out there fighting for nuclear weapons free world, trying to change the priorities of our spending from war to PEOPLE! All of you still going strong after so many years of resisting. You are letting people know so they can DO something about it.

I have learned a lot. And now there is hope in young people like [Xiuhtezcatl Martinez](#), youth director of Earth Guardians, and Greta Thornberg fighting against Climate change.

I love when the Green House kids come to after school program excited after learning something. Journey learned at school about the bombing of Hiroshima. She was horrified and began teaching the other kids about it.

We have been having an essay contest for the 8 years and up crew and we had to change it to seven because the seven year olds

watched the bigger kids and began a rebellion! I find hope in watching our kids here grow up and into the community. I feel like I am doing important work on that.

For example, I am a water protector, and when we wash up for meals kids learn that water is not to be wasted or taken for granted. Paper towels are trees...recycling matters. They



are eager to compost when they learn how it gets used to grow our gardens and flowers.

I am hoping that they will love to learn more about mindfulness and deep breaths as we get ready to start some after school meditation time after Christmas. I love when I go to hang up their art and see my name on it and when they ask for hugs. I have a new favorite quote It helps me stay positive in spite of the meanness and cruelty in the outside world... "don't let the ugly in others kill the beauty in YOU." Ω

Dwight Teal: Hope is being around good friends working together. I listen to "[Democracy Now!](#)" every day. I hear about bad things going on in the world but good things too. Today there was news of a massive prisoner release in Oklahoma ...462 non-violent offenders in one day. Hearing about people planting trees, working on climate change, investing in solar power, using e-bikes to reduce the carbon footprint: that is HOPE!

My art teaching here at the house gives me hope. The goal is to help every kid find out that they are an artist. It works cause they all come back for more. They become more engaged. Their imaginations begin to grow. They look at shapes and how they con-

nect- it's hands on.

This means they can focus better when they switch over to reading, homework, or science lab. It may seem weird that even when a kid cannot read well or has trouble with homework they can be a really great artist. That was true for myself. You can "feel" a flower, sense it's shape and create something when just seeing the word has no meaning. That translates to street signs, architecture, ...it connects the world and makes it more understandable. I find hope in my work here. Ω

Chris finds hope in the fact that my house article is not 3 weeks overdue like it usually is. And I find hope in God's willingness to give us another Advent to welcome the Christ child in our home in the guise of homeless brothers and sisters. Chris and I feel like we talk all the time about our hopes in these pages so we will end with another great quote by Thomas Merton...

"Do not depend on the hope of results. You may have to face the fact that your work will be apparently worthless and even achieve no result at all, if not perhaps results opposite to what you expect. As you get used to this idea, you start more and more to concentrate not on the results, but on the value, the rightness, the truth of the work itself. You gradually struggle less and less for an idea and more and more for specific people. In the end, it is the reality of personal relationship that saves everything." Ω



Notes From De Porres House

Jacqueline Allen-Douçot

Dorothy Day wrote in a 1966 [Advent meditation](#): “When I go to the crib this year I will think, as I always do, that we are not dependent on the governments of this world for our safety, ‘but the government will be upon His shoulder.’”

This year, with so much strife and turmoil in our nation, and the world at large, I was feeling more than ever the need to reflect on HOPE. As Catholic Workers our hope is tied to our lives as we join together in community. I decided to speak to some of the folks in our community about what gives them hope. I Share these with you now.

Brian Kavanagh: “I tell people I need two things to keep hope alive: community and a sense of humor. Community because you can’t do this alone, and a sense of humor so you don’t take yourself so seriously. The idea is not to think that you are always right, but to hold fast to the obligation to resist the injustices being done in our name.

You have to keep the faith... because it helps to know that is not all up to us. Keep the faith and do what God compels us to do. We know what we are looking for- a more just and equitable world that consid-

ers the needs of the least of our brothers and sisters with hearts of compassion.

The hardest thing is the complete abandonment by the older generation of the caretaking of our environment. I find great hope in movements which we get to see and be a part of as Catholic Workers. Young people are turning up for the earth. You have the “[extinction rebellion](#)”, indigenous folks at Standing rock, the Amazon people trying to save the rain forests... If white people can just sit and listen we could learn a great deal from people who we have stripped of money and resources. They have such wisdom. They know the consequences but are a faithful remnant. Their work keeps the angels of darkness at bay.

The Black Lives Matter movement, Moral Mondays... People of color leading a nonviolent movement for racial justice. We steal their lives, steal their music, clothing styles, lingo, passion, fist bumps... then we hang them and shoot them in the back! And they rise! They are teaching us.

They are leading us because we have lost our culture, and the sense of joy that comes from the struggle for justice. Ω

Sasean: I am feeling **(Please see: Notes, p8)**

