

# The Hartford Catholic Worker

St. Martin De Porres House  
St. Brigid House



*"Those who cannot see Christ in the poor are atheists indeed." -Dorothy Day*

## **Touched By An Angel**

*Maya Angelou*

*We, unaccustomed to courage  
exiles from delight  
live coiled in shells of loneliness  
until love leaves its high holy temple  
and comes into our sight  
to liberate us into life.*

*Love arrives  
and in its train come ecstasies  
old memories of pleasure  
ancient histories of pain.  
Yet if we are bold,  
love strikes away the chains of fear  
from our souls.*

*We are weaned from our timidity  
In the flush of love's light  
we dare be brave  
And suddenly we see  
that love costs all we are  
and will ever be.  
Yet it is only love  
which sets us free.*



*Dwight Teal Jr.*

Fall 2021

## *The Hartford Catholic Worker*

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# *I Was Detainee 441*

*Mansoor Adayfi*

(Reprinted from the August 17 issue of the *Boston Globe*.)

The first time I came face to face with Americans was in the fall of 2001, after an Afghan warlord sold me to the United States for bounty money. I had been shackled and left naked and hooded for I don't know how long. When someone pulled the hood off of my head, the first thing I saw were five or six American soldiers dressed like Rambo, all pointing rifles at me, their laser sights lighting up my chest.

I heard yelling in English and an interpreter translated for me: "Where is Osama bin Laden?! Where is Mullah Omar? What's the next target?"

I was 18 years old. I wasn't an al Qaeda or Taliban fighter. I was a student researcher and I had been kidnapped by militia on the highway outside of Kunduz weeks before the United States invaded, a common practice among warlords at that time.

During my early captivity, the warlord kept me in a compound where I taught his daughter Arabic while he tried to ransom me to the Saudis. When I heard that the Americans had invaded Afghanistan, I thought I was going to be saved.

I didn't know that before they invaded, the United States dropped leaflets offering life-changing amounts of money for al Qaeda and Taliban fighters. I was neither, but my captor could get more money for me this way. Like many Guantánamo prisoners, I was sold to the United States for bounty money in the early days of the

Afghan war.

I knew Afghani farmers who were sold by rival neighbors. I knew a Yemeni man injured in a car accident who had traveled to Pakistan for brain surgery, where he was sold. I knew journalists, cooks, aid workers, engineers, and many more. There were so many of us, the Americans opened the Guantánamo detention camp exactly four months after 9/11 to detain and interrogate men and boys, mostly innocents sold to the United States as alleged fighters and terrorists. (A 2006 Seton Hall Law

School report documents this.)

In the early days of Guantánamo, when we lived like animals in cages, when we had no idea where we were and why we were being imprisoned, we tried to convince our captors that they had made a mistake. I saw that the Americans were angry and afraid and that they wanted justice for what had happened on 9/11. I couldn't even imagine a building over 100 stories tall. I felt sad for the innocent people who were killed and for their fami-

**(Please see: 441, p8)**

### **Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services**

[IRIS](#), needs your help relocating Afghans who have fled their homeland in fear for their lives. IRIS is seeking cash donations, school supplies, and sponsors for families. Please reach out to them today. 235 Nicoll St.

New Haven, CT 06511,  
Phone: (203) 562 – 2095,  
[info@irisct.org](mailto:info@irisct.org)

The Hartford Catholic Worker is hoping to take someone in when a room becomes available this winter.



Kreg Yngst

*Christopher J. Douçot*

The river was flat. With the sun still below the treetops the breeze had yet to arrive and the fog lingered. My kayak cut through the water as an eagle swooped over head and a couple of loons haunted the valley with their siren calls. A man on a river, in between worlds of water and air, I told Jackie that I was searching for smallmouth bass, but really, I was searching for forgiveness.

Around a bend a small tree had fallen into the river. It had been clinging to a rocky ledge fifteen feet overhead. The crevice in which its roots were anchored had given way when the expanding force of frozen water cleaved a school bus sized piece of stone over the winter. The stone sitting on the river's bottom now a perfect place to find my quarry.

Further upriver I went to investigate a constant crashing sound. After I paddled past the mound of a beaver's den the mist from the falls ahead covered my glasses. I ducked below the bark-less, moss covered trunks of long fallen sugar maples that crisscrossed in my way. The stones underfoot, polished by a millennium of cascading water, gave shelter to crawdads and salamanders. The slate walls were jagged in places newly carved, but smooth most everywhere else. The sun's rays streamed through, caught my eyes, and provoked a sneeze. Jackie thought this was an affectation of mine when we first met- until a newborn Micah sneezed in sunlight as well. (Autosomal dominant compulsive helio-ophthalmic outbursts- ACHOO, is a thing, really! It affects about 20% of us.)

Standing in this forest poustinia I prayed for my sins to be washed

away by the baptismal waters falling before me. But are my sins more than the nasty things I do? Do my sins include the nasty things, the lethal things, done in my name and



*Psalm 8*

*Kreg Yingst*

with my tax dollars?

Gliding back down river I pondered the power and magic of water: it breaks stone, polishes rocks, carves valleys, floats in the air, and it makes life possible. Water is holy. Water is sacred.

We, too, are holy. We, too, are sacred. We are 60% water. With headwaters in the womb a river flows within each of us; its current courses around the 206 bones that scaffold our bodies. We are more than bodies, though. The Ruach, the breath of God, first exhaled into the mud that became Adam, still infuses each of

us with the Holy Spirit. Carbon and sulfur, iron, nitrogen, phosphorous and potassium: the earth forms our flesh, the water within makes us holy, the breath we share makes us sacred.

We can visit the water and the sky but we are meant to dwell upon the earth. We shall always return to the earth.

On September 12, 2001 the New York Times ran a photograph taken by Richard Drew at twenty minutes to ten the day before. In the photo a man is falling to his death. He is upside down, arms by his side, his right leg bent forty-five degrees. One of the still standing World Trade Towers, Bengal Striped and evocative of the Banker Striped shirts likely favored by many of the other men inside the towers that day, fills the entirety of the frame. He was probably in the air for fifteen seconds before he returned to the earth. I cannot imagine his panic, his anguish, his desperation. He was not a combatant; he may have been a pastry chef at Windows of the World. He was not personally responsible for the occupation of the West Bank, or for the American military base in Saudi Arabia. The sanctions

and bombings that by then had been terrorizing the people of Iraq for a decade were not a policy of his crafting. I doubt he even knew the complaints of his executioners. I wonder if he even knew what was happening. I hope his soul is at peace. I pray for his family and their grief.

On August 17, 2021 my son showed me a photo of another falling man. The man was among the thousands of Afghans who had fled to Hamid Karzai airport in Kabul after the Taliban had retaken the

**(Please see: *Falling*, p4)**

## Falling Men, cont.

capital city, and much the rest of the country. He had clung to the wheel of a taxiing American Air Force cargo plane full of fleeing Americans. He was able to hold on for maybe thirty seconds. His body was found on a rooftop about 8 miles from the airport. The photo was circulating on social media. I cannot imagine his panic, his anguish, his desperation. Was he an interpreter for the Americans? The bombings and torture carried out by our countrymen and women against his countrymen and women were not a policy of his crafting. I doubt he even knew the true intentions of Bush, Cheney et al when his country was invaded two decades ago. He was probably a young child then; I wonder if he even knew what was happening. I hope his soul is at rest. I pray for his family and their grief.

The men falling from the sky did not belong there. They knew they would not remain there, survive there- they knew too that they were doomed if they stayed put.

Hamid Karzia was president of Afghanistan from December 2001 until September 2014. He ruled over a kleptocracy, as did his successor the fleeing, now former, president Ashraf Ghani. The United States spent \$2 trillion dollars fighting the war in Afghanistan. That is, we have spent \$3170 a second, every second of the last twenty years fighting the war in Afghanistan. American agents with [rucksacks full of hundred dollars bills](#) bought the “loyalty” of tribal leaders from the Hindu Kush to the presidential palace.

[Millions of dollars](#) flowed from Washington to drug dealers, thieves, and politicians across Afghanistan. After the thugs took their cut there was nary a cent left to rebuild the

country or feed the people. According to one [American official](#) “*The biggest source of corruption in Afghanistan was the United States*”.

Back in the 80’s, when the Soviets were the invading and occupying force in Afghanistan, Osama bin

warplanes are hollers from a false god. After they fracture the air, their payload fractures the earth knocking the breath out of God as their blasts extinguish unsuspecting souls thirty thousand feet below.

The Ru’ach is not in the cold breeze flowing from the air conditioner in a trailer in the Nevada desert where young Americans sit and steer drones in skies 7,000 miles away. The joysticks they played with as children have morphed into kill-sticks. Thousands of drones have cruised and cursed the sky of Afghanistan these last twenty years. When killing IRL mimics killing in a video game does the humanity of the targeted disintegrate by pixilation before the missile even strikes? And what of the humanity of the pilot? When he goes home what does he tell his family about his day at work? He’s much too far to hear the cries of his victims, but does he hear the cry of God?

*My God, my god, why have we forsaken you in the form of your Afghani children?*

When I’m alone on the water I can hear God. I hear God in the voice of the woman I met in an Iraqi hospital, beside her lay a six-year-old boy whose arm had been shorn from his shoulder by an AGM-130 deployed by an American “weapons systems operator”, God was speaking when she asked me: “*what did we do to deserve this?*”

“*Asif, asif.*” “*I’m sorry, I’m sorry*”, I said to her.

She replied: “*I do not hold you responsible for the acts of your government.*”

But had I, had all Americans, held her child responsible for the actions of his government?

A child?!

A government not of his choosing?

As they were returning to the

**(Please see: *Falling*, p5)**



### *Psalm 57*

*Kreg Yingst*

*Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy  
on me,  
for in you I take refuge.  
I will take refuge in the shadow of your  
wings  
until the disaster has passed.*

Laden was one of the “[good guys](#)” fighting the Soviets with the mujahadeen, Karzai was a fund raiser for that effort, [as were we](#)- the American taxpayers.

After the American invasion he organized against the Taliban, but now he is in Kabul meeting with the Taliban leaders about the future of Afghanistan.

In the midst of this mayhem where can we turn to hear the voice of God?

The sonic booms of American

# Costs of the war were steep, in both lives and dollars<sup>5</sup>

Ellen Knickmeyer

(Reprinted from [The Boston Globe](#), Aug 17, 2021)

At just short of 20 years, the now-ending US combat mission in Afghanistan was America's longest war.... its death toll is in the many tens of thousands. And because the United States borrowed most of the money to pay for it, generations of Americans will be burdened by the cost of paying it off.

**Here's a look at the US-led war in Afghanistan, by the numbers...**

Much of the data is from [Linda Bilmes of Harvard University's Kennedy School](#) and from the Brown University Costs of War project. Because the United States between 2003 and 2011 fought the Afghanistan and Iraq wars simultaneously, and many American troops served tours in both wars, some figures as noted cover both post-9/11 US wars.

## **The Human Cost:**

- American service members killed in Afghanistan through April: **2,448**.
- US contractors: **3,846**.
- Afghan national military and police: **66,000**.
- Other allied service members, including from other NATO member states: **1,144**.
- Afghan civilians: **47,245**.
- Taliban and other opposition fighters: **51,191**.
- Aid workers: **444**.
- Journalists: **72**.

## **Afghanistan after nearly 20 years of US occupation:**

- Percentage drop in infant mortality rate since US, Afghan, and other allied forces overthrew the Taliban government, which had sought to restrict women and girls to the home: **About 50**.
- Percentage of Afghan teenage girls able to read today: **37**.



Brian Kavanagh

## **Oversight by Congress:**

- Date Congress authorized US forces to go after culprits in Sept. 11, 2001, attacks: **Sept. 18, 2001**.
- Number of times US lawmakers have voted to declare war in Afghanistan: **0**.
- Number of times lawmakers on Senate Appropriations defense subcommittee addressed costs of Vietnam War, during that conflict: **42**.
- Number of times lawmakers in same subcommittee have mentioned costs of Afghanistan and Iraq wars, through mid-summer 2021: **5**.
- Number of times lawmakers on Senate Finance Committee have mentioned costs of Afghanistan and Iraq wars since Sept. 11, 2001, through mid-summer 2021: **1**.

## **Paying for a war on credit, not in cash:**

- Amount that President Truman temporarily raised top tax rates to pay for Korean War: **92 percent**.
- Amount that President Johnson temporarily raised top tax rates to pay for Vietnam War: **77 percent**.
- Amount that President George W. Bush **cut tax rates for the wealthiest, rather than raise them**, at outset of Afghanistan and Iraq wars: **At least 8 percent**.
- Estimated amount of direct Afghanistan and Iraq war costs that the United States has debt-financed as of 2020: **\$2 trillion**.
- Estimated interest costs by 2050: **Up to \$6.5 trillion**.

## **The wars end. The costs don't:**

- Estimated amount the United States has committed to pay in health care, disability, burial and other costs for roughly 4 million Afghanistan and Iraq veterans: **more than \$2 trillion**.
- Period those costs will peak: **after 2048.Ω**

## **Falling Men, cont.**

earth did the falling men ask God what they did to deserve their fate? I pray that in the rush of air buffeting them during their fall they felt the embrace of God, reassuring them that they were not alone. I hope that in the whooshing they heard God,

in the voice of those who loved them, comforting them.

We will all return to the earth. Our rivers within will seep into the aquifer to sustain new life. Our last breaths will send our souls to be among the communion of saints. But until then? Until then we must hear God in the whisper of the

breeze and the laughter of a child. We must see God in the majesty of a waterfall and the face of each other. We must respect the earth, protect the water, honor the air, and make holy our lives by loving even those whom we do not like.Ω



# Sewing and Sharing Victory Masks <sup>6</sup>

*Janice Steinbogen*

*(Janice, a Griswold neighbor and supporter of Camp Abimsa, is a retired journalist, former parochial school art teacher and longtime fabric and fiber enthusiast who was founding editor of the Four County Catholic, the Diocese of Norwich newspaper.)*

I come from a frugal family. When I was a kid, we didn't have money to splurge on the fabulous Barbie doll fashions I admired in Mattel's little catalogues. That's what prompted me to take up sewing, at the tender age of eight. While I've always seen the ability to sew as a quirky superpower, I never imagined it could become an instrument for social change and community building, but thanks to the covid-19 pandemic, that's just what it has become. The community, in this case, is called Griswold CT Masks for Heroes, which over the course of the past 15 months has stitched and passed along 17,515 masks free of charge to members of our local community and to the wider world.

Last spring, as I watched society shut its doors last and felt the sense of impending danger intensify, like many others I turned to social media to get a sense of what was open, what was changing and what was possible. And there I began to see two recurring themes: people who desperately needed face masks, and people who were making face masks already but didn't know where to donate them and were running out of elastic. That's when I felt God's elbow in my ribs, nudging me to connect the dots.

I had no clear plan or actual experience in forming a social action group, but I did have some skills in my toolbox that I knew could help

plug the hole in the supply chain. I've always been an avid sewist, so I knew what we'd need and where it was likely to be found. My nearly 40 years as a reporter had built a network of community contacts – town officials and legislators, other media folks like

community for thread, fabric, and elastic, which was particularly scarce. Sewists mined their fabric stashes, accumulated over years or even decades, to make masks that would be cheerful, girly, masculine, or fun for kids, depending on the recipients. We

bought and cut up sheet sets. Folks dug into their button boxes for buttons to add to scrub caps, designed to save the ears of our harried healthcare workers on the front lines.

My house became Mask Central. Plastic bins full of donated fabric, thread, elastic, and other supplies were set out daily on our stone wall – or kept in our enclosed vestibule in bad weather – to create a shop of sorts, where sewists could pick up supplies for free. As they completed batches of masks, they dropped them off in yet another

bin, where I could collect and sort them. The finished masks were packaged up for the agencies that needed them and returned to the "completed" bin for pick-up.

The utterly unexpected result of this arrangement was that I had the privilege of meeting just about every person who was either making masks or collecting them. Every person who came to my door was working in isolation – sewing at home or laboring on the front lines in a frightening situation. Standing outside at a social distance, or speaking through my sliding glass door, I heard tales of terrifying conditions in hospitals and nursing homes. I fielded questions about sewing techniques, mask patterns and suitable fabric choices. I commiserated about the challenges of lockdown. And again, there were two recurring themes: "Thank God I have this project to work on and a



**Gail Woodcock (l) and the author. Photo by Sean D. Eliot, photo reprinted from *The Day of New London***

our local radio station guy, regular people who knew and trusted me. That job had also taught me how to be persuasive, how to cold-call someone and ask for something, how to track down something elusive. And after years of being both a parent and a teacher, I'd learned how to delegate, motivate, and instruct, and then step back so others could make a project their own.

We hit the ground running as a Facebook group in late March 2020. Within a few months more than 200 members joined us – perhaps two dozen sewists eager to make masks, other folks interested in helping and many, many more community members who needed masks for their agency, hospital, first responder unit or place of business. With fabric stores shuttered and places like Walmart cleaned out of sewing supplies, we appealed for to the

way to help, otherwise I would go stir crazy” and “Thank you SO much, you have no idea how much this means to us.” The steady stream of people up our driveway punctuated our lockdown days, and while I felt the pleasant constant buzz of being at the hub of this effort, I could only pass along these messages virtually to our other members. I found myself wishing that these generous people and the recipients of their work could somehow cross paths in person.

The generosity was what astonished me the most. The sewists were using their skills (at whatever level... we had some experts and some rank beginners), but other folks who couldn't sew wanted to help in some way, too. Those members were assigned to launder and press fabric so it would be pre-shrunk and ready to cut – and for some projects, they did the cutting, too. Their efforts smoothed the way for the sewists to concentrate on sewing. When our local PTO asked for special masks for the high school's drive-through commencement ceremony, non-sewists clamored to help do something special for the graduating seniors who'd already lost so much. So, they did all the prep work – washing, pressing, cutting, and packaging components into kits. The sewists thus just had to construct the masks and hand them off to still more helpers, who packaged each one in individual baggies, along with a congratulatory card printed up by yet another helper.

I was adamant that no money should change hands in this endeavor. From the very beginning, the nursing homes, hospitals, fire and police departments and other agencies

that didn't have the luxury of shutting down were desperate for personal protective equipment of any kind, and I believed that they deserved to have it free of charge. I wanted the masks I was making personally to go out into the world as a mitzvah – a blessing freely given - and as it turned out, our other sewists felt the same way. People pressed money into our hands, though, to help pay it forward, and I began accepting it, channeling the funds into more fabric and elastic. I was humbled that people trusted me with their money, and I took that trust very seriously.

Local businesses also pitched in to help folks mask up. Flo White, who runs a small fabric and craft supply stall at the Jewett City Flea Market, was our first donor. When elastic was as rare as unicorn tears, she donated all she had in stock in her home “warehouse”. I packaged it up in 10-yard increments and handed it out like Halloween candy from my front door even before we acquired any fabric. Hillary Corp. in Groton retooled from its usual output of metal architectural pieces and gave us thousands of metal nose pieces. Emsig Corp./US Button in Putnam donated thousands of buttons, and Norbut Manufacturing in Fall River donated rolls of thin stretchy string that volunteers crocheted into short elastic strips of sufficient strength.

As the need for masks began to extend beyond the urgent needs of local essential workers and into the general populace, our work did the same. We

are equal-opportunity mask-makers, 7 donating our finished product to whoever needs them. We've sent masks to children's hospitals, substance abuse treatment centers, veterans' groups, the Groton submarine base, police departments, and Black Lives Matter rallies. They have ended up on our town's Giving Tree, at soup kitchens and food pantries, at a needle exchange, at Coast Guard stations as far away as Kodiak, Alaska – and at the Hartford Catholic Worker's Green House.

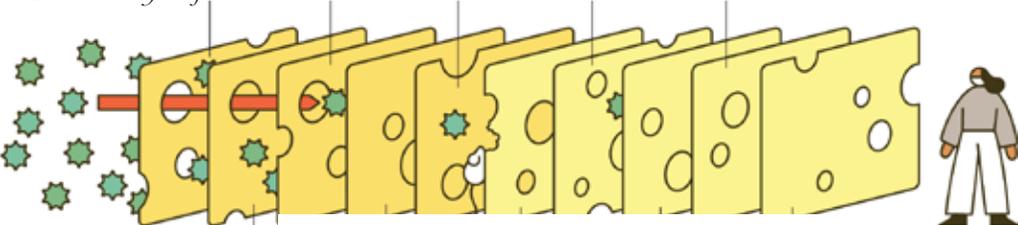
One thank-you note moved me particularly, received from a recovery agency director. He wrote that perhaps a cloth mask, hand-stitched with love and worn on the face, could provide comfort and hope in the midst of upheaval. That was a powerful image to keep in my head as I worked at my own sewing machine late into the night.

I have always understood the making of garments as the most intimate of art forms: creating something that envelopes the body and proclaims something about the wearer. We save iconic garments (a bridal gown, a military uniform, a favorite t-shirt) and they speak to us both visually and tactilely. Our face masks also make a statement, that of our care for others in our community. We sacrifice a bit of comfort and freedom to protect the vulnerable people we encounter. All of us long for normalcy to return, but I'm not planning to de-stash our group's stockpile just yet - we're still sewing. I do, however, look forward

with hope to the day when all our members who have labored in isolation can finally meet each other and see each other's generous, blessed smiles.Ω

*The Swiss Cheese Respiratory Defense recognizes that no single intervention is perfect at preventing the spread of the coronavirus. Each intervention (layer) has holes.*

<p><b>Personal Responsibilities</b></p> <p><i>Physical Distance. Hand Hygiene. If crowded, be quick. Stay home if sick. Cough etiquette. Wear a mask. Don't touch your face.</i></p>	<p><b>Shared Responsibilities</b></p> <p><i>Ventilation. Meet outdoors when possible. Air Filtration. Quarantine and Isolation. Fast testing. Contact tracing. Government messaging and funding. Vaccinations.</i></p>
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*Ian M. Mackay, James T. Reason, Rose Wong*

lies. Killing innocents is not a part of Islam. But I didn't have anything to do with it, and I thought that when the Americans understood that, they would let me go. We all thought this.

We were called many things at Guantánamo, but to most people we became "detainees," a name that implied that our situation was temporary but one which allowed us to be held indefinitely, without charges, outside of United States and international law. Stripped of my name, I became Detainee 441. I spent nearly 15 years detained, 8 of them in solitary confinement. In all, 779 men have been imprisoned at Guantánamo over almost 20 years.

US political leaders and the military have worked hard to portray us as "the worst of the worst." And yet as early as the spring of 2002, the generals in charge knew that most of us had little intelligence value. Even then-Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld complained in 2003 to "stop sending dirt farmers to Guantánamo." And yet the prison remained open, becoming another front in the war on terror, a battle lab where enhanced interrogations were tested and justified.

During that time, I saw guards, interrogators, and even generals tear themselves apart trying to reconcile what they knew to be true and right in their hearts with the impossible mission they had been given: to detain and interrogate men and treat them with such inhumanity. I know of guards who committed suicide; I

know a Muslim chaplain and West Point graduate who was harassed and charged with terrible crimes; and I know countless other American military whose lives were turned upside down because of Guantánamo. No one who came through Guantánamo left unharmed.

President Biden has now promised, "We're ending America's longest

the country I once thought it was. But that does not mean it's too late to turn back.

America must begin to reconcile with its past and with policies enacted to carry out wars like the one in Afghanistan, policies that transformed the United States into the kind of enemy it once feared, one capable of breaking its own laws and moral codes. As Biden himself recently argued, "The United States cannot afford to remain tethered to policies creating a response to a world as it was 20 years ago." Guantánamo and the current state of Afghanistan embody the failures of the war on terror caused by the politics of fear. While the United States can no longer control what happens in Afghanistan, it owns Guantánamo and controls its fate entirely.

When I was released in 2016 and sent to Serbia against my wishes, ***I had never been charged with a crime. In fact, the tribunal determined that I wasn't who they thought I was.*** Today, 39 men remain imprisoned at Guantánamo at an estimated annual cost of \$13 million per prisoner. Only two men have been convicted of crimes, while 10 others face possible charges, though any evidence to support convictions is tainted by years of torture. Nine men have been approved for release and the remaining 18 are being held indefinitely without charges.

History may not look kindly on Biden pulling out of Afghanistan and letting it fall to the Taliban. But if he can close Guantánamo and reckon with America's plunge into torture and arbitrary detention, he could be remembered as the president who helped correct America's moral compass. Otherwise, America may be gone from Afghanistan, but the forever war continues.Ω



**Guantanamo Poet**

*Jacqueline Allen-Douçot*

**"Praise God who has planted a garden and an orchard in my bosom so they may be with me always."**

*-Shaker Abdurraheem*

war." I am no historian or prominent political figure, but I have seen the war on terror up close, and I know that America's forever war can't be over until other fronts opened up to support it have been shut down, too. The US government cannot separate Afghanistan from Guantánamo.

I know now that America is not

## Notes, cont.

tion for Public Giving for funding this special assistance.

As always, the churches in our network have been a bulwark of support and consistency in these uncertain times. St. James Episcopal has continued to support our fight against hunger with groceries for our food pantry and fresh vegetables from their garden. St. Patrick and St. Anthony parish has sent food, and St. Timothy's of West Hartford ensured a safe and fun break for the families who were able to stay at Ahimsa in lieu of our hosting their kids again this year with financial support, donations of sunscreen, bug spray, goggles and beach towels. St. James', St. Timothy, St. Patrick's of Farmington, and Christ the King of Wethersfield all have donated school supplies and backpacks to assure our kids are in the best possible position as they are returning to school. Joining the churches in this regard is our generous friend Dale Faulkner and his colleagues at Faulkner and Graves, P.C., and Carole C. who also shared a whole bunch of stuffed backpacks. Thanks folks!

We have been repeatedly blessed by multiple factions of the Knights of Columbus. After buying the newly named [Juanita Nelson](#) cabin for camp Ahimsa, the Knights from St. Peter Claver parish of West Hartford are returning to build bunk beds. Hopefully we will be able to fill it with kids next summer! Meanwhile the "Columbettes"- not the "ladies auxiliary of the Knights of Columbus out of Jewett City, paid for each of the families who stayed down at the camp to have a night out at the local restaurant. One of the Columbettes also initiated a sewing effort to provide masks far and wide (see p6).

We also have recently welcomed a new community member- Sasha. I asked her to share a little bit about herself with our broader community and this is what she would like you to know about her:

*Hi, I'm Sasha Denner. I'm from Florida, and when I graduated high school earlier this year I decided to take a gap year. When I was about 15, my father had introduced me to Dorothy Day and her life's work because he had studied her for a little bit. I've always been really interested in radical women in religion, so she stood out to me. Learning about Dorothy Day obviously led me to learning about the CWM, and I wanted to know more, so I thought the best way to do that was to join a CW. So, I decided to intern*

*here at the HCW. I hope to learn as much as I can while living here and I hope that it gives me some experience for later in life.*

We are just a few days away from welcoming back our kids and volunteers, for our regular after school and Saturday programming, but welcoming folks back comes with its own risks as we are still dealing with new strains of the Covid-19 virus and under vaccinated populations. The rules we will be implementing at the Green House will be very strict, anyone who is eligible for a vaccination needs to have their Vaccination Card on hand when they arrive at the house. Furthermore we will be requiring children and adults to wear well fitting masks while indoors. Remember the best possible thing you can do for young people and immunocompromised folks around you is to get vaccinated and encourage your friends and family to get vaccinated as well.

I, for one, am excited that the Green House will be (safely) bustling soon. The neighborhood cats have claimed the backyard as their own for way too long. The groundhog under the shed has expanded its tunnels in the absence of children's stomping feet. (Editor's note: Ammon, check with Sammy. I think his dogs have reduced the groundhog population by 2.) I have never so desperately yearned for the sound of basketballs bouncing off of backboards, nor missed the dull roar of the art room at full capacity.

We have done valuable important work while we have been closed, helped families through spots they might not have otherwise gotten out of, distributed thousands of pounds of food, kept lights on and bills paid.

None of that would have been possible without you, our extended community, and we cannot thank you enough for your generosity of time, talent and treasure, we can only invite you to join us in the continued construction of the Beloved Community. I'll end with a quote from the namesake of the newest cabin at the camp, one about our capacity for personal responsibility:

*"It is, as far as I can see, an unpleasant fact that we cannot avoid decision-making. We are not absolved by following the dictates of a mentor or of a majority. For we then have made the decision to do that — have concluded because of belief or of fear or of apathy that this is the thing which we should do or cannot avoid doing. And then we share in the consequences of any such action. Are we doing more than trying to hide our nakedness with a fig leaf when we take the view expressed by a friend who belonged to a fundamental religious sect? At the time he wore the uniform of the United States Marines. 'I'm not helping to murder,' he said. 'I'm carrying out the orders of my government, and the sin is not mine.' I could never tell whether there was a bitter smile playing around his lips or if he was quite earnest. It is a rationalization commonly held and defended. It is a comforting presumption, but it still appears to me that, while the seat of government is in Washington, the seat of conscience is in me. It cannot be voted out of office by one or a million others."*  
-Juanita Nelson. Ω



**Juanita Morrow Nelson (Aug. 17, 1923 - March 9, 2015). Feminist. Pacifist. Civil rights activist. War tax resister. Simple lifestyle advocate. Critic of usury. Organizer for the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Participant in the Freedom Rides of 1947.**

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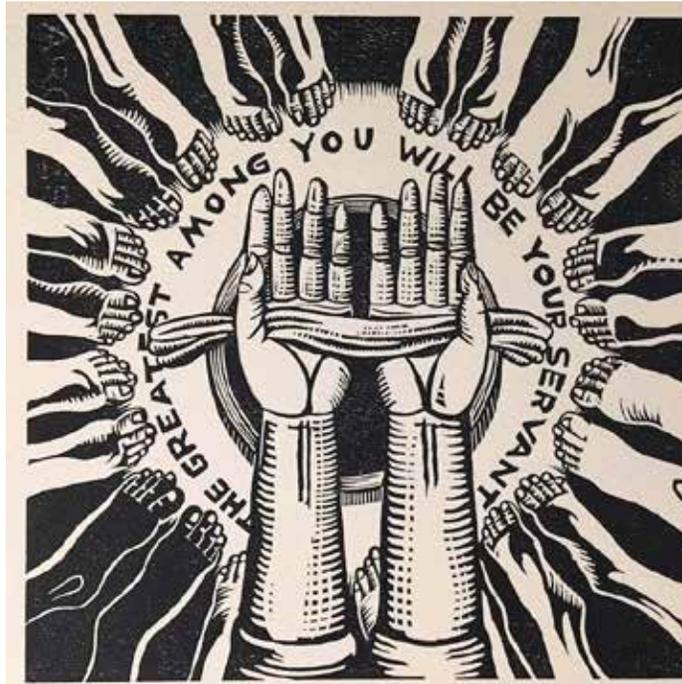
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## Notes From De Porres House

*Ammon Allen-Douçot*

The summer is winding down here at Hartford Catholic Worker, the fireworks are finally starting to become infrequent, the parties around the block have a note of finality to them, and against all odds I have not died of a heatstroke living in the third floor of the Green House. As with the end of every summer, folks around the community have been trying for some respite before the school year comes into swing. I have taken up fishing with Micah, Dad has been going on long morning bike rides as part of his ongoing recovery, Bethanne and Mom got to travel to the Dominican Republic on a well-deserved vacation (a 60th birthday gift to mom from a dear friend!), though it was slightly marred by a double ear infection Jackie caught. Sasean has completed both of his Public Allies Terms and is back



*Kreg Yingst*

to taking Social Work classes at CCC. Brian continues to vigil every Friday, and Josh has been on top of every Chrysalis donation this

summer. We are very excited to let folks know that the patron saint of broken bikes Dwight Teal is moving into a new apartment in Hartford's 'Art Space', but will still be spending time here after school and contributing art to this fine publication.

As for our broader work, the mission continues. As families continue to cope with the economic fallout of both the pandemic and a merciless economy, we have continued to do what we can to make sure their lights stay on and rent gets paid. We have continued to support our incarcerated brothers and sisters with gifts to their commissary accounts. We have also been able to help with folks transitioning to new homes, transporting beds, dressers and cribs to folks who needed them. We would like to thank the

Sisters of Mercy and the Hartford Founda-

**(Please see: Notes, p9)**