

SAN DIEGO CATHOLIC WORKER



Published Three Times a Year

Fall 2010

Vol. 31, No.3

This year's Dinner and Silent Auction will be the best ever

The 2010's Gourmet Meatballs and Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction will be held at the usual place, St. Mary Magdalene Church Hall on Ilion St., at the usual time, from 6 to 10 p.m., but on a slightly later Saturday, Oct. 30.

However, this year's celebration of Catholic Worker friendship promises to be an extraordinary one. The auction will be better than ever: we already have a kit for and assistance with building an 11-foot sailing skiff and two trips for four people each in a classic wooden schooner on San Diego Bay; and we are keeping our fingers crossed for a giant flat-screen TV and a holiday home for a week in Ireland.

Of course there will be lots more to go at the usual bargain prices to the highest bidder. Now that we have our House of Hospitality up and running, we have new expenses that we have not had in the past, so donations of items to be auctioned or cash will be gratefully accepted. More than ever, we are counting on our supporters to pull us through.

If you have an item for the auction, please contact Tina DiStefano (858.552.0817) or Katie Gosen (858.663.8842 or 619.298.3755).

First impressions

House is open and ready for hospitality

By Christopher Morales
San Diego House of Hospitality

I just spent my fourth night in the Catholic Worker home at 2428 L St. I appreciate how much work has been done over the past nine months to make the house ready for residents, yet little things are still happening every day. Furniture is being moved in; the oven is hooked up; curtains are being put up; towel racks are assembled; bedrooms are set up; walls, doors, and staircases are painted; food is cooked; and the house is filled with life. With every small effort made, the rust-colored house on L St. becomes a home.

I have begun to meet the neighbors, one by one. Everyone is very welcoming. Most have no idea about the Catholic Worker. So far, all have been from south of the border: El Salvador, Mexico. I rarely hear English spoken in this neighborhood.

Street vendors add color

There is a lady who walks down the street pushing a basket with wheels calling out to all those who might want to purchase her to-males. Small taco stands and various vendors of other traditional Latin American cuisine abound on the streets. There are *mercados*

(markets) selling *carne asada* and *caldo* (soup broth), among other items. A rooster crows somewhere behind the house every morning. I feel as though, in this little pocket of San Diego, I am already in Mexico. I wonder about the political line that draws a border between Mexico and the United States of America. Culturally, there is no difference between where I live now and Tijuana, just 15 miles south of here.

I ride my bike underneath the bridge to the west side of the I-5. It is obvious that the freeway separates the area into urban and suburban, much like the line that separates Mexico from the United States. There is much less Latino influence on the west side. Between the freeway and downtown San Diego there is a five- or six-square block of old industrial buildings and empty lots with brown grass and weeds sprouting. The sidewalks in this area are home to many of San Diego's homeless people. It appears that they all have their own "lot" on the sidewalk where they have set up their blankets and carts that hold their possessions. Some look ragged and hopeless. Others look well-kept and motivated. The area seethes with the forgotten or pushed-away realities of society.

Different kind of poverty

Although I have traveled through Third World countries and lived in towns and places in those countries that many would consider impoverished, living here is different. Down south, it is the norm to sleep outside, or in a small cane hut with earthen floors. Possessions are few for the majority of people. Yet all around me here, in the "nicer" parts of San Diego, are the luxuries afforded to those who have worked hard and been blessed with the comforts that a First World country could provide. Living in such places, it is easy to forget or ignore the people who have been left behind for one reason or another.

Perhaps they have been left behind because of a tragic family life and neglected childhood; perhaps it was an addiction to drugs or alcohol that led them to the streets; perhaps they are trying to escape violence or

See **Reflections**, page 4

Anti-war activist will speak about struggle for American justice

Fr. Roy Bourgeois, the Maryknoll priest who, for the past 20 years, has been holding non-violent protests against the training of South American military personnel at the U.S.-operated School of the Americas (SOA) at Fort Benning in Georgia, is coming to San Diego to speak on "Struggles for Justice in Latin America and Home."

After his ordination in 1972, Fr. Bourgeois spent three years in Bolivia before being arrested and deported for allegedly attempting to overthrow Bolivian dictator General Hugo Banzer. In 1980 he became an outspoken critic of U.S. foreign policy in Latin America after four American churchwomen, Sister Maura Clarke, Jean Donovan, Sister Ita Ford, and Sister Dorothy Kazel, were raped and killed by a death squad consisting of soldiers from the Salvadoran National Guard. Ten years later he founded SOA Watch, an organization that seeks to close down the notorious school, which was renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) in 2001.

Between 1946 and 2001, the SOA trained more than 61,000 Latin American soldiers and policemen. A number of them became notorious for human rights violations, including generals Leopoldo Galtieri, Efraín Ríos Montt and Manuel Noriega, dictators such as Bolivia's Hugo Banzer, some of Augusto Pinochet's officers, and the founders of *Los Zetas*, a mercenary army for one of Mexico's largest drug trafficking organizations, the Gulf Cartel. Critics of the school argue that the training it provided encouraged human rights violations and that this training continues at WHINSEC.

A Louisiana native, Fr. Bourgeois was born and graduated from the University of Southwestern Louisiana with a bachelor of science degree in geology. He then entered the U.S. Navy and served as an officer for four years, including one year in Vietnam during which he was awarded the Purple Heart. He then became a Maryknoller and was ordained a priest in 1972 and sent to Bolivia.

The session with Fr. Bourgeois will begin at 8:30 a.m., in the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego, 4190 Front Street, Dec. 4, and will conclude around noon with refreshments and an opportunity for people to talk with Fr. Bourgeois informally. A good-will offering will be taken up and presented to him to use in any way he see fit. A lot of people are expected, so plan to come early.

Fr. Bourgeois' visit is sponsored by Call to Action San Diego, Dignity San Diego, the Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community, and the San Diego Catholic Worker.

San Diego Catholic Worker ANNUAL DINNER AND AUCTION

6-10 p.m., Saturday, October 30,

St. Mary Magdalene Church Hall
1945 Ilion St. San Diego

An 11-foot Sailing Skiff, to Be Assembled at the Wooden Boat Show
And Many Other Valuable Items Will Go to the Highest Bidder
Live Music and Dancing

Gourmet Italian Spaghetti and Homemade Meatballs Dinner

Cooked by Fr. Gil Gentile S.J. and Friends

Donation: \$20

To reserve your place, please return the form below to
Tina Di Stefano
Catholic Worker Dinner
7844 Camino Huerta
San Diego, CA 92122
with a check for \$20 for each person you wish to invite.
No Purchase Necessary

Tickets will be mailed or held at the door in the name of the person listed below.

San Diego Catholic Worker Annual Dinner

Yes! I wish to attend. Please reserve _____ tickets at \$20 each
Enclosed is my check for \$_____

No, I regret I cannot attend, but I will help you provide meals, clothing, and other services to poor and homeless men, women and children in our community.
Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please make check payable to San Diego Catholic Worker

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See profiles of Katie and Chris, the first residents of the new House of Hospitality, on page 3.

From the Writings of Dorothy Day

Hospitality Houses not the easiest projects to manage



If it had not been for Peter Maurin, there would have been no Houses of Hospitality throughout the country. When he came to me in 1932, urging me to start a Catholic Labor paper, he had in neat and orderly outline, his program of action. It was not enough just to publish a monthly paper, pamphlets and leaflets. It was not enough to convey by word of mouth in round table discussion the program of a new social order. It was necessary to embrace voluntary poverty and the Works of Mercy, to feed, clothe and shelter people who were in need. From Houses of Hospitality to care for the unemployed, it was but a step to the Farming Commune where a combination of communal and private property would be upheld.

In September, 1933, Peter wrote a letter to the Bishops which was printed on the first page of *The Catholic Worker*. It spoke of the hospices of the middle ages; it spoke of the need of Houses of Hospitality which could be centers of Catholic Action in every diocese.

The next month we carried a story about a woman who came in response to this letter and told of the plight of the homeless who were shunted from agency to agency and from "home" to "home." Within the month we had started the first woman's House of Hospitality. Already we had rented an old apartment in a condemned tenement on Fourth Street to put up three of the men who had joined with the work. Already three more were sleeping in the little store on Fifteenth Street which was also an office, a dining room and a kitchen. ...

The large apartment for women was down the street and could accommodate fifteen. It had steam and hot water: comforts we have never had since. The rent was paid by contributions from working girls in the parish of the Immaculate Conception Church, girls who themselves lived in cold water flats. ...

Cleaning house for occupancy

In the spring of 1936 we were offered the use of the rear house at 115 Mott Street for our House of Hospitality and editorial offices. The house had not been used for some time and there was a great deal of work in getting it cleaned up and ready for occupation. Our generous friend donated paint and linoleum and Peter Maurin and Herman Hergenhan, Bill Callahan, Jim Montague and Ed Priest spent a good many days in getting it cleaned up and ready. The house has twenty rooms and when apartments became vacant in the front building the owner generously allowed us to occupy two four-room flats and the two downstairs stores. Another family of friends have moved down to another apartment. The other five apartments are occupied by Italians who have become friends and helped us in many little ways. ...

Bustling community

Mott Street is a slum street in the most thickly populated section of New York. There are factories, little bake shops, livery stables, laundries, fish markets and push carts all along the street, and in the tenements are large families, mostly Italian. But many Chinese have moved to the block north from Chinatown and are next door neighbors now to the Italians. Summer and winter, people live on the streets, and throughout the day the musical call of the hucksters and pushcart peddlers may be heard singing their wares. The pushcarts make bright splashes of color along the street.

The families are large and neighborly. Many a time they have sent in their left-over bowls of spaghetti, and ravioli and greens and on one occasion there was a delightful mess of pickled eels which arrived just in time to set before some priests who had come in to lunch. They bring us their cast-off furniture and some of them come in to our meetings. At first they distrusted us, thinking we were running a mission.

Excerpted from The Catholic Worker, May, 1939. The writings of Dorothy Day can be read on the Web at <http://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday>

Picture not all that clear

What did Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day really think about criticism of the church as institution ?

By Brian Terrell

Brian Terrell lives at the Strangers and Guests Catholic Worker Farm in Maloy, Iowa, and occasionally—according to his CV—at some of the U.S. Bureau of Prisons' more prestigious institutions.

It is often said about Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin that their radical critique of capitalism, of the state, of "bourgeois society," did not extend to the Church that they both loved and from whose traditions they drew so deeply upon. Many quotes and anecdotes from the lives of these two holy people can be employed to support the popular thesis (often offered as a contrast to many of today's Catholic Workers) that Peter and Dorothy were docile and obedient Catholics who encouraged others to be so. When put in historical context, however, and put in context with other equally evocative references from their lives and words, a more complex and nuanced picture of their faith and of their relationship to the human institution of the church cannot be avoided.

One example among many of an overly simplistic view is found in Lawrence Holben's *All the Way to Heaven*, 1997, pg. 78: "Maurin firmly believed the Roman Catholic bishops to be 'the appointed leaders of mankind' and his enthusiasm for personalist freedom stopped abruptly at the door of the hierarchical, authoritarian Church which he accepted on faith as the divinely appointed agent of God's will in the world.

"Maurin was not out to call the laity to rebellion against the worldliness or accommodationist theologies of the institutional Church or its clergy." A casual reading of the record might support this misunderstanding.

Dorothy "edited" Peter

Peter sometimes complained about his work being "edited" in the pages of *The Catholic Worker* and left the paper in protest for a time after its first edition. Mel Piel (*Breaking Bread*, 1982, pg. 62) says that Dorothy deliberately "suppressed" some of Peter's notions that she felt might harm the *Catholic Worker*. He cites in particular Maurin's "mild anticlericalism," and quotes a letter Dorothy wrote to a priest friend in 1934: "I do indeed keep out some of his stuff which attacks the bishops. I just don't think that it is politic. There are quite a number of priests who think Peter just quaint

when he verbally attacks the clergy, but who would hold up their hands in horror if we printed the stuff."

I do not second-guess Dorothy's determination made in 1934 about what was "politic" at the time for a brand new movement trying to get started and accepted in the pre-Vatican II Church, but I do mourn the loss of the "stuff" that did not make her cut in Peter's published *Easy Essays*. I also suggest that what was impolitic to say in 1934 might be crucial to proclaim now in our very different time. Dorothy herself later did not seem to worry if it was "politic" to challenge Cardinal Spellman as a strikebreaker, nor was she overly concerned what clergymen's hands might be held up in horror when she condemned the cardinal's support for the Vietnam War. "Our worst enemies are of our own household," she quoted Jesus, referring to Cardinal Spellman.

Must be dissatisfied with the church

Dorothy said in her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, 1952, that she loved the Church "for Christ made visible" but not for itself "so often a scandal to me." She admonished: "One must live in a state of permanent dissatisfaction with the Church."

Meditating on these words over the years, it grows clearer to me that Dorothy was writing in the imperative. "One must live in a state of permanent dissatisfaction with the Church." She was not saying that dissatisfaction with the Church is understandable or permissible for some, not that one might be so dissatisfied, but that it is positively required of us. Dissatisfaction with a Church so often, in Dorothy's words, "lined up with property, with the wealthy, with the state, with capitalism, with all forms of reaction" is a discipline that those who truly love the Church as she did, for Christ made visible, must cultivate.

If in the pages of *The Catholic Worker* in 1934 Dorothy deemed it impolitic to publish Peter's "stuff which attacks the bishops," she did not as editor so censor an article by Jack Cook published in *The Catholic Worker* in November, 1968: "The most profound criticism of the ecclesial establishment is the very existence of the *Catholic Worker*—in word and acts, past and present."

This article has already appeared in the Des Moines, Iowa, Catholic Worker newspaper Via Pacis.

Prayer goes together with justice in a social order imbued with the Gospel

By Pat Duffy

Pat, his wife, Damaris, and their 8-year-old son, Chris, are missionaries in Nicaragua.

I recently read a quote by Dorothy Day that I really identified with at the gut level. She said that for a long time she had been frustrated with any sort of program for social change other than the methods employed by the saints.

What were those techniques? One of them was prayer. When they needed any material thing for their Houses of Hospitality, like donations of food and clothes for the homeless; they got down on their knees and prayed. And what they needed always came. No more and no less than what was necessary for the moment.

This seems to be the way God's economy works, as Jesus tells us in Scripture: "That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, nor about your body and how you are to clothe it. For life is more than food or clothing. No, set your hearts on his kingdom, and these other things will be given you as well."

Another quote by her that I love is (as I remember it): "After my conversion, I decided that I wanted the good life and I wanted it to the full. I wanted it for others, as well."

At the heart of the method of the saints were their "daily habits" or the practice of their faith. Dorothy Day went to daily Mass and sat in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. She prayed the Rosary every evening. She prayed the Liturgy of the Hours, morning and night. Every Saturday afternoon she went to confession. All at the same time caring for the homeless, the hungry, the unemployed, the mentally ill, and taking a stand against war. Such as when she said: "that patriotism was a more powerful force in most people's lives than the Gospel."

Peter Maurin, the co-founder of the *Catholic Worker*, not only took the lives of the saints literally and imitated them, but he studied in depth the social teachings of the Church and created a program to implement them in a personal way. His dream in life was to transform society and Christianize the social order. By the time he passed away in 1949, he had shaped a vision and formed an active movement whose goal was the construction of a social order in-

stilled with basic values of the Gospel "in which it would be easier for men to be good."

The founders of the *Catholic Worker* lived out a form of traditional Catholicism that for most of us today would be considered obsolete, or ridiculous. My conclusion now after almost 30 years of being around missionary endeavors of every sort is that those "traditional Catholic practices" or an equivalent set of daily practices for today's context are exactly what is missing. They have been replaced by very good things like, leadership courses, therapy, getting in touch with our feelings, and a thousand other "meditation techniques" which usually last no longer than a month or so.

The problem is not that these other aids are not good things in themselves, but that they have become replacements for solid food and drink. We have traded \$0.99 McDonalds Hamburgers and Starbucks Cappuccinos (with free Wi-Fi) for Grandma's home-cooked meals and praying the Rosary together as a family. Instead of building our house on the solid rock of our faith, we have sold out to feel-good religion and bought into a consumeristic view of the Universe, and of even God Himself.

If we were really honest, I think we could say that, maybe, for most of us money is not our God, but "The Cult of the Next Thing" is God for the society we live in. The Gospel of this Cult has one central message, which proclaims, "Crave and spend, for the Kingdom of Stuff is here."

Sanctification is measured by never saving enough: for the cult teaches that our lives are measured by the abundance of our possessions. Those caught up in the Cult of the Next Thing live endlessly, relentlessly for, well, the Next Thing—the next weekend, the next vacation, the next purchase, the next experience. For us, the impulse to seek the Next Thing is an instinct bred into us so young it seems genetic."

The Good News is that there is a way out of this dead-end, meaningless lifestyle. We can correct our course. We can change the world! Starting with our own world and starting with—myself. Here is how we can start: by learning from Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin and practicing the corporal and spiritual works of Mercy.

Welcome to the San Diego House of Hospitality



Spent last year working in Hartford homeless shelter

Katie Gosen was born 23 years ago in San Diego, but grew up in Poway where she attended Poway High School and involved herself in lots of extracurricular activities, including the Associated Students and lacrosse. She was also a youth minister at her church.

However, she says, the time she spent at the University of San Diego, were her most formative years. "It was there I realized the greater global community and the importance of being a part of it through travel and immersion trips. It sparked a curiosity for the greater world and how I could play a part in it," she said recently. So she spent a summer in the Dominican Republic working with Haitian refugees, and traveled throughout El Salvador, Nicaragua and Mexico. She spent another summer in Europe.

It was also at USD that Katie found the Jesuit Volunteer Corps whose four core values—spirituality, social justice, simple living and community life—made a deep impression on her. Her experiences of poverty abroad had inspired her to seek and experience poverty at home, so she signed up with the JVCs and spent a year with them in Hartford, Conn., living in community with six others and working in a shelter for homeless men. Whereas many shelters only accept people who are "dry," Katie's particular responsibility was to take care of men who were "wet," people who were still abusing alcohol or drugs. "We were meeting them where they were at" she said, "not trying to change them, very much like the Catholic Worker."

After a year in Connecticut, she decided to come back to San Diego but to live simply and serve others. "I wanted to continue living in community, living a simple life, and working for justice with a grassroots organization," she said.

As the Holy Spirit would have it (others would say "luck"), the San Diego Catholic Worker had just acquired a house and a promise of funds that would partially cover the cost of running it, and was looking for people willing and able to take on the task of opening the first real House of Hospitality in the city for more than 20 years. Katie wrote and asked, in all humility, if she would "qualify."

After coming to San Diego twice to meet local members of the Catholic Worker, she decided to stay full-time as soon as her Hartford stint was up.

She moved in Sept. 1, and immediately began getting to know the surrounding Barrio Logan community and the day-to-day lives of the people. And like a true Catholic Worker, Katie says she is willing to take on whatever she can do to help the people living around her, whatever that may imply.

"I am definitely very open to seeing where the path leads us and where God wants us to go with the House. It could go in many different ways."

Katie is the eldest of four girls; her Mom is an elementary school teacher in Poway and her Dad is a member of the administration in the Athletics Department at USD.



Comes to San Diego with experience in Nicaragua

To cut a long story short, this is how Chris Morales became one of the two "charter" members of the San Diego House of Hospitality: He took the scenic route.

The longer version goes like this: Some time last year Chris got up on his bike and cycled to Oaxaca in Mexico, and then took a bus to Guatemala where he worked in an orphanage on the banks of a river in the middle of nowhere; then, after cycling around Guatemala to meet people, he took a bus back to San Diego; enrolled in the University of San Diego, before cycling to Ventura and then taking a train "home" to Marin County, and finally driving to San Diego.

Chris, 27, had grown up in Corte Madera, and attended Marin Catholic High School where he made friends who have remained with him ever since. "I learned how that's very valuable," he said, "having a strong core of friends and family that know each other."

He came to USD to study biology, not necessarily with a science career in mind, but simply because he had a huge love for nature. "I took general biology courses, from things that were broad in nature, to things that were deeper, such as cell biology and insect physiology," he said. He minored in Spanish.

He loved research and landed a job with Althea Technology, a San Diego company that makes custom drugs for clinical trials to treat cancer and genetic disorders. They did not do research.

He enjoyed his work, but after three years he wasn't sure what he wanted. "I probably felt like I was removed from the people I was trying to help," he says now. "All I knew was I needed to change. My spirit was lost."

It was then that Chris took off on his bicycle and ended up helping out in an orphanage with a school in Guatemala. "As a child who was given immense opportunity by my family, community and country, I began to question the circumstances that had stripped these children of the same opportunities," he said.

He met people living with extreme poverty and violence, and concluded that a lot of their suffering was caused by economic policies driven by First World countries. "People here do not realize how their consumptive behavior affects other people," he said. "I came to realize that I could do more for Guatemalans by coming home, raising awareness, and living a good example modestly, within my means."

Chris is enrolled in a 17-month master's program at USD's Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice and is living in the Catholic Worker House of Hospitality, where he will be serving the homeless and needy in the neighborhood. "I believe this will weave perfectly with my studies in peace and justice as I seek a greater understanding of where peace and justice in the world must come from."

Chris is the youngest of seven children, his father is an architect and his mother an school teacher in Marin.

With the opening of the new House of Hospitality on L Street, the Catholic Worker begins a whole new era of service and witness in San Diego. It took a huge act of faith to get to where we are and we are confident that with God's help—and Dorothy Day's and Peter Maurin's and our supporters'—we will grow as time goes by.

It also took a huge amount of work on the part of a whole lot of people, some of whom we had never even met before, to get the house ready to be occupied. That's nothing new: See the 1939 Dorothy Day column on the opposite page about the travails of some of the early New York Houses of Hospitality.

Of course our expenses have expanded greatly and so we welcome any donations people might like to make. We also still need some items for the house such as single or bunk beds, a replacement gas wall heater, help with a refrigerator that needs a new compressor (we think), construction of a hand rail for the front porch, and some simple items like garden tools, a weed whacker, bath towels and soap.

If you wish to donate money for the house, please designate it for the House of Hospitality, or write the check to the Catholic Worker House of Hospitality. For the items listed above, contact Nancy Green at 858.483.4485.

Day by Day

A selection of thoughts that readers bring to the attention of the editor from time to time. To submit a thought of your own, please e-mail denyshorgan@att.net

Priorities Upside Down

"They obviously recognised that I'm a peace activist, and peace activists have to be observed. That's the world that we live in, peace activists are a danger, mass murderers can be driven around with armed guards."

—*Peace activist Niall Farrell after he was ejected from a Tony Blair book-signing in Dublin. Blair, the former British prime minister, continues to be a staunch supporter of the war in Iraq.*



Going with the flow

*When the tides of life turn against you,
And the current upsets your boat,
Don't waste those tears on what might have been
Just lay (sic) on your back and float.*

—*Ed Norton, alias Art Carney, in The Honeymooners, CBS TV 1955–56.*



The fact is war does not work

"A year ago, 14 of us, including a number of priests and nuns, walked onto Creech Air Force Base in Nevada, headquarters of the drone program. We walked on with roses and knelt down and prayed. They almost opened fire on us. They arrested us and put us in jail. ... The future is not the drones. We need to abolish these evil weapons and pursue nonviolent ways to resolve international conflict. ... I'm a full-fledged ex-con. I can never vote again. I cannot travel to several countries. I am monitored and followed closely by the government. ... I don't have to say much anymore and everybody either loves me or hates me. All I've been saying for 30 years is war doesn't work. Jesus was non-violent and said to love your enemies. ... If you follow this guy, you can't make war. He said blessed are the peacemakers. Many people freak out about that and just blow up."

—*Jesuit Fr. John Dear, on hearing he is to receive the Pacem in Terris Peace and Freedom award. He says the government considers him a terrorist and has been jailed or awaiting trial constantly since 1984.*



No Such Thing as a Free Lunch?

Who said that? There's one every Friday at Christ Lutheran Church on Cass St., in Pacific Beach. And a very good one it is too. Above is a sample of the sit-down lunches we serve: salad and garlic bread, rice, fresh asparagus and turkey breast smothered in gravy, apple tart, fruit salad, an apple and orange, with a nice cup of hot coffee to wash it down. Practically all the food is donated, so the menu changes from week to week. The meal is prepared and served by a devoted group of helpers, including some homeless people or next-to-homeless people, and some Catholic Workers. Guests can be as few as 80 or as many as 100, depending on how close it is to the beginning of the month. Everybody's welcome. Come and join us. It is free.

September 11, A Day We Can All Pray for Peace

By Fr. Gil Gentile, S.J.

Fr. Gil is spiritual director of the San Diego Catholic Worker

On Nov. 28, 2001 I travelled back to New York City, my home for almost 40 years, with a heavy heart. As we came in for the landing at JFK International Airport, I saw with a pang of deep sorrow that the once familiar outline of the World Trade Towers that had dominated the New York skyline for 30 years was gone. It was difficult to take it in even though I had watched on television the unfolding of the destruction that happened in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania on that day 9 years ago sitting in my bathrobe in the living room of my Jesuit community in San Diego, California – seemingly a million miles away.

The day after my arrival I felt compelled to go to see the sight in person. Despite the fact that I had seen countless images on television and in newspapers and magazines, I was not in any way prepared for what I saw. It was a scene of complete desolation. The first thing that I noticed as I approached what came to be called “ground zero” was the sight and the acrid smell of the black and gray smoke that rose from that sacred burial mound of twisted steel and concrete. It was hard to believe that it was still burning, deep down in the belly of the earth after more than two months. I was dumbstruck and I wept and I prayed. It was hard to imagine that human beings could do something so horrendous to other human beings—and all in the name of religion.

Fast forward about nine years. This morning I listened—once again with a heavy heart—to reports on National Public Radio of suicide bombings in Iraq, the ever-increasing number of deaths in Afghanistan, the daunting task of renewed peace talks in Washington between the Palestinians and the Israelis (against the backdrop of renewed violence in the Holy Land) and I felt a profound sadness. I also felt a deep sense of frustration, helplessness and almost a sense of hopelessness. In my morning prayer I forced myself to remember that in the face of all of this negativity I must pray for peace.

For a number of years I have been somewhat aware that the Knights of Columbus (of which I am a proud member) has promoted a “World Day of Prayer for Peace” on Sept. 11. However for some reason this year when I was reading about it in the July 2010 Knights of Columbus newsletter, I just knew that I had to bring this to my council of the Knights as a way of commemorating that terrible day.

I must admit that I was pleasantly surprised at the tone of the invitation to join in this day of prayer. I might have expected that the Knights would have called for “A Day of Patriotism” to remember that awful day: Patriotism, along with charity, unity and fraternity, is one of the virtues that we espouse as Knights of Columbus. However, rather than a day to promote our nation or our democratic ideals or our power and strength, we are promoting peace and reconciliation in calling for a “World Day of Prayer for Peace”!

I was quite struck by the words of our Supreme Knight, Carl Anderson, in talking about this commemoration: “The World Day of Prayer for Peace will bring to the world the Church’s message of peace and reconciliation, so that religion will always be a cause for mutual respect and harmony, and never for violence or hatred”

Referring to Pope John Paul’s plea that the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 be remembered with prayer that the “spiral of hatred and violence will not prevail,” the Supreme Council of the Knights resolved to reject hatred and violence and recite the Our Father every day.

When I brought this resolution to my brother Knights at our August meeting there was unanimous and heartfelt approval. And so, our Queen of Angels Council of the Knights of Columbus, 10118, celebrated a Mass for Peace on Saturday, Sept. 11, 2010.

A statement on one of the Knights of Columbus Websites sums up very well the intent of this day of remembrance: “The Knights of Columbus World Day of Prayer for Peace seeks to unite Knights, Catholics and all people of good will—regardless of their religious faith—in prayer for peace. It is a way to commemorate this tragedy with dignity and hope. While Sept. 11 will always be remembered for the tragic loss of life, Knights hope that this somber occasion will be the foundation of an annual opportunity for a day of earnest prayer for peace in the world”

Kroc Institute of Peace Studies and Center for Christian Spirituality at USD

Calendar of Events of Interest

August 15 – December 15

“Stirring the Fire”: Photography and Film by Phil Borges
Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice Fine Art Galleries.

Thursday, Sep. 16, 7 p.m.

The Northern Ireland Peace Process: Then and Now.
Lecture by Joan B. Kroc Peace Scholar Paul Arthur.

Tuesday, Sep. 21, 12:15 – 2:15 p.m.

International Day of Peace Celebration.
B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, Garden of the Sky Plaza.

Wednesday, Sep. 29, 7 p.m.

“From Peace Talks to Gender Justice.” Monica McWilliams—Chief Commissioner of the Human Rights Commission of Northern Ireland.
Peace and Justice Theatre.

Sep. 29 – Oct. 1

Women PeaceMakers Conference 2010: “Precarious Progress: U.N. Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.”
Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice.

Tuesday, Oct. 5, 7 p.m.

Women Peace Makers Panel.
Peace and Justice Theatre.

Wednesday, Oct. 6, 7 p.m.

A Talk by Social Documentary Photographer Phil Borges
Peace and Justice Theatre.

Oct. 12, 14, 19, 21, 1-2 p.m.

Conversations with Women Peace Makers
Peace and Justice Theatre.

Thursday, Oct. 14, 8 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Ending Prohibition? Proposition 19, Marijuana Legislation, and its Effect on Drug Trafficking in Mexico.
UC Forums AB.

Thursday, Oct. 21, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Faces of Spirituality Series: “Teresa of Avila: Wise Teacher of Prayer,” by Mary Frohlich, RSCJ, Ph.D.
Hahn University Center, Forum A/B, USD.

Friday, Oct. 29, 7 p.m.

Bergman Lecture on Women, Children, and Human Rights.
University Distinguished Visiting Professor Michael Perry.

Nov. 2, 4-5:30 p.m.

Cuidad Juarez: the Definitive Neoliberal City.
Lecture by Veronica Leyva.

Thursday, Nov. 4, 7:30 – 9 p.m.

Keynote Lecture: “Christian Spirituality as a Way of Living Publicly,” by Philip Sheldrake, Ph.D.
Shiley Theatre, Camino Hall, USD.

Monday, Nov. 15, 7-9 p.m.

In the Time of the Butterflies (Las Mariposas).
An evening with author Julia Alvarez and dance performers by Eveoke Dance Theatre.

Thursday, Nov. 18, 7-8:30 p.m.

The Peace Corps at 50.
Panel discussion with returned Peace Corps Volunteers.

Saturday, Dec. 4, 9 a.m. – noon

Faces of Spirituality Series: “Dorothy Day and Oscar Romero: Promoters of Faith Doing Justice,” by Annice Callahan, RSCJ, Ph.D.
Hahn University Center, Room 107, USD.

Friday, Dec. P 10

International Human Rights Day (events to be announced).

*For more information, please contact:
USD Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies
(619) 260-4600 or peacestudies@sandiego.edu*

Reflections

Continued from page 1

even worse poverty in another country. Yet living here, in my new home, these people surround me, and it is impossible to forget about them or ignore them. The ugly face of injustice and inequality rears itself into my view and mind every day.

I thank God for the gracious opportunity that He has given me to reside in this house on L Street. I thank all the supporters for receiving me into this house and your community with open arms. I thank you for your constant support during the move-in process—the food, the furniture, etc. I pray that the Holy Spirit fills my soul and gives me the courage, strength, and wisdom to turn this blossom into a beautiful flower, whose magnificent radiance can be seen and felt throughout the community and eventually over all the land.

Send us your E-mail Address

The San Diego Catholic Worker is in the process of compiling a list of e-mail addresses so that we can disseminate information about Catholic Worker events in a more timely manner. If you send us your e-mail address, we will add you to the list. We promise that we will use this list only for Catholic Worker purposes and will never provide it to anybody else. Send the address to: info@catholicworkersd.org

Catholic Worker Meetings

There has been a change in the format of the San Diego Catholic Worker montly meetings. For the foreseeable future we will celebrate a Eucharist with Fr. Gil at 7 p.m., immediately after our Board Meeting. Everybody is invited to this Mass. The meetings will be held and Mass will be celebrated in the Catholic Worker House of Hospitality, 2428 L Street, in San Diego on the second Monday of every month beginning at 5:30 p.m. The next meetings will be held Oct. 11, Nov. 8, and Dec. 13.

For up-to-date information about Catholic Worker activities in San Diego, please look at our Website www.catholicworkersd.org.

Mission Statement

The San Diego Catholic Worker is committed to the following actions that imitate Christ: a call to service, a belief in the human dignity of all, and an interrelationship with a compassionate God and one another.

As Catholic Workers, we struggle to carry out our double mandate: to minister to the needs of society’s forgotten people, and to challenge and offer alternatives to the attitudes, institutions and structures that create and perpetuate suffering and violence.

Following Christ’s example, we also believe it is our duty to spread the word of our work and provide others with the opportunity to serve.

The San Diego Catholic Worker will achieve its goals by the grace of God and by working together to bring about a world of peace and justice as envisioned by our founders, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin.

The San Diego Catholic Worker Newspaper is published three or four times a year and distributed free of charge to anybody who requests it

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The San Diego Catholic Worker welcomes everybody and provides services to all, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, handicap, sex, or sexual orientation.

San Diego Catholic Worker

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Please note new Web Site: www.catholicworkersd.org*

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“NEVER AGAIN, WAR!”