

# AGITATOR

## CHRISTMAS APPEAL

### DOWNTOWN GANGSTERS GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

“I’ll tell you why I love the Hippie Kitchen, because they are DTGs!”

“What you talkin’ about, man? The Hippie Kitchen don’t slang no drugs.”

I finally had to break into the conversation. “What is a DTG?”

“DTG is DownTown Gangsters.”



Marshall came over to me, took my hand, looked me straight in the eye: “I been here thirty years. I seen a lot of people come down here. They come down here to sell drugs; they come down here to make money; they come down here to take. DTG means: You give back, you a part of the neighborhood. It means you a part of the culture, means you belong here.”

This Christmas, if you think serving the poor with dignity and respect means being part of the neighborhood, part of the culture, then please give generously to the “DTG” Hippie Kitchen. Thank you.

SEASON’S BLESSINGS,

*Jeff Dietrich*, for the Los Angeles Catholic Worker, DTGs.

Graphic by Salvador Coronado

**THIS IS THE DAY  
OF RECKONING**

*I watched my 85-year-old wife with her arthritic knee, bad back, and white hair gleaming in the sun, hunched over her red three-wheel walker as she pushed towards the line of twenty Military Police dressed in full riot gear.*

**GROW OLD AND BE STRONG**

By JEFF DIETRICH

As she slowly walked toward the judge with the assistance of her ever-present cane, my 85-year-old wife Catherine, though bent with arthritis, was as fierce as ever. I am not saying that she was not nervous. On the contrary, she was having the same human reaction all of us have whenever we have to stand before a judge and explain ourselves, whether for a traffic violation or murder.

Calm on the outside her stomach was doing flip-flops on the inside. Would she get the maximum sentence of six months in prison, would she get four months like I did in 2016, would she get one week like Tensie Hernandez from the Guadalupe Catholic Worker did last year? This is the day of reckoning, even though you have been here scores of times before, it never gets easier. The courtroom is designed to elevate the regal, be-robed judge on a dais and diminish the lowly, frightened defendant.

Before Court began we talked about U.S. Attorney Sharon McCaslin. Sharon is our own "personal" Federal prosecutor, not unlike the character, Inspector Javert in Victor Hugo's novel, *Les Misérables*, she is determined to pursue and prosecute Catholic Worker miscreants to the full extent of the law. Over the years she has prosecuted us more than 20 times, even up to the U.S. Supreme Court. She is always prepared to list our innumerable crimes against the state from blocking the downtown L.A. Federal Building front door to pouring blood and oil on the steps of the Federal Building, to delaying expensive missile launches. She never fails to insist on the maximum sentence: "They won't pay fines, they won't cooperate with probation, they refuse community service. You might as well put them in jail."

As Catherine stood in front of Judge Louise LaMothe, with her fearsome facade and flip-flopping stomach, I was reminded of the day last August 6, Hiroshima Day, when Catherine decided that she would cross the green line painted on the road at the entrance of Vandenberg Air Force Base and risk prosecution for trespass onto government property.

We travelled to Vandenberg as we had for the last 20 years to protest against nuclear weapons and their delivery systems that are routinely tested there. Periodically nuclear delivery systems, or to be a bit clearer ICBM missiles with non explosive depleted uranium warheads, are



This photo of Dorothy Day about to be arrested came to mind as Catherine made her way down the road to face arrest.

***As she slowly walked toward the judge with the assistance of her ever-present cane, my 85 year-old wife Catherine, though bent with arthritis, was as fierce as ever. I am not saying that she was not nervous. On the contrary, she was having the same human reaction all of us have whenever we have to stand before a judge and explain ourselves.***

tested by firing them down range in the South Pacific approximately 5000 miles to Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands, not far from where the U.S. tested hydrogen bombs in 1946. The islands, where the original inhabitants once fished and gathered fruit, are now uninhabitable, polluted with radioactive waste.

The cost of maintaining and testing these delivery systems runs into the billions and we are now spending more than one trillion dollars on upgrading our nuclear arsenal, using much needed dollars urgently required for the health and welfare of the nation and its deteriorating infrastructure.

These thoughts ran through my mind as I watched my 85-year-old wife with her arthritic knee, bad back, and white hair gleaming in the sun, hunched over her red three-wheel walker as she pushed towards the line of twenty Military Police dressed in full riot gear: knee pads, chest pads, crash helmets with face masks pulled down, steel batons at the ready.

Catherine normally, out of self-reliance and a bit of vanity, refuses to use a walker. But in this case she was fortunate there was one available because in order to be arrested she had to walk about 200 yards towards the police line, not something she could accomplish using just her cane.

There was not a dry eye in the crowd as we sang *Carry It On*. "There's a man by my side walking, there's a voice within me talking, there's a voice, within me saying, carry it on, carry it on..." as Catherine walked toward the police line and arrest. Many of us in the crowd were no doubt reminded of the famous Bob Fitch photo of 75-year-old Dorothy Day on the picket line with the United Farm Workers Union in Delano, California just before she was arrested for violating a court injunction prohibiting picketing. Dorothy, a harmless looking senior citizen sitting on a stool wearing her straw sunhat and thrift store house dress with a hand sewn patch pocket for her "hankie" is framed by two uniformed police officers in riot helmets with their pistols and batons highlighted ominously in contrast to this obviously frail but fierce, elderly woman.

Five years ago, for her 80th birthday, the photographer sent Catherine an autographed copy of the photo of Dorothy on the picket line at Delano, writing: "Grow old and be strong, Happy Birthday Catherine."

My musings were disturbed when the court clerk called the court to order and stated: "The United States

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Photo by Bob Fitch

CALM ON THE OUTSIDE HER STOMACH WAS DOING FLIP-FLOPS ON THE INSIDE

# HOSPITALITY AND RESISTANCE AT THE VENICE CATHOLIC WORKER

By LISA REDMOND

In the 2004 adventure film National Treasure, Nicholas Cage's character summarizes a key passage from the Declaration of Independence as, "If there's something wrong, those who have the ability to take action have the responsibility to take action."

In my west Los Angeles neighborhood of Venice, there is something wrong and it was time for me to take action. And so I have formed a Catholic Worker community in Venice, part of the LACW sister house network.

Aaah, Venice. Few can resist its "spirit of bohemian style in the heart of a beach town," a place that beckons the "artist in all of us," as one tourist website promises. However, for long time Venice residents, this postcard image no longer exists.

The space allowed here will not fit all that led to Venice's current circumstances. So, in short, after the collapse of the "Venice of America" resort in the mid 1920s, Venice was a lower income working class beachside enclave with a large African American and Latino population. Residents accepted the homeless population who were attracted to the beach lifestyle. Starving artists, poets/writers, musicians and other creative types could afford to live in Venice, and gave it the reputation of a cool, desirable, funky place to be: the Beat Generation, The Doors, Dogtown, Dennis Hopper, and Charles and Ray Eames.

Outsiders looking for reasonably priced beach homes with a hip vibe wanted in. A gang injunction was put in place by the city in 1999, and the door swung wide open for gentrification. The race commenced to knock down old beach cottages and bungalows in favor of modern, oversized, fortress-like glass and steel boxes.

Then came the perfect storm. About eight years ago, *GQ Magazine* named local Abbot Kinney Boulevard "the coolest block in America," and Venice-based social media app Snapchat was released and exploded in popularity. Rents and property values skyrocketed. More tech companies came, including Google. Mom and pop businesses were pushed out when investor-backed partnerships were willing to pay 120% rent in-



Lisa Redmond

creases. The growth of online vacation rentals, such as Airbnb, motivated landlords to empty out long-term rent-controlled units to use instead as hyper-profitable, short-term rentals for tourists. In just a few short years, Venice was forever changed. Venice was now a home for the wealthy, and any ties to low income or working class communities were just the fading memories of a dwindling number.

Today's "colonizers," the derogatory term old Venice residents use when referring to new Venice residents, no longer want the old funky Venice that attracted so many in the first place, and want what seems more like a Brentwood-by-the-Sea. But their plans were muddled by an unplanned crisis, a homeless population that surged like a tsunami. While Los Angeles saw a significant 12% increase over last year in its homeless population, our little 3.1 square mile neighborhood experienced a whopping 33% increase of people experiencing homelessness, or 3% of our population, approximately 1,200 individuals.

The increase in homelessness has produced an insoluble dilemma for the new Venice. Homeless encampments abutting seven-figure homes, and situated alongside the corporate walls of tech giants, present an overt contrast to wealth and economic viability. Well-funded neighborhood stakeholder organizations sued the city to keep the homeless population out, and installed giant planter boxes on sidewalk parkways as hostile architecture to prevent the unhoused

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# AMMON HENNACY

By KALEB HAVENS

Anka Montgomery is 92 years old this year, but she was a mere 23 when she first met Ammon Hennacy, (an Atheist!) Catholic Worker whose tireless efforts for peace and justice inspired the name of our houses of hospitality, the second of which is now entering its 42nd year of service to the unhoused. I recently spoke with her about Ammon.

Ammon, who was initially described as "some bum outside who wants to see you" by Anka's landlord, sought out Anka and her then-husband Bob in 1950 while they lived in Phoenix, because of a shared interest in peace activism. Anka and Bob were Quakers, and soon found themselves sharing meals with Ammon in their one-room home after he was done working the fields for the day or protesting outside the Phoenix Post Office, as he had done every day since the 1945 atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Anka says Ammon was tall and lean, but his teeth were in shambles. He walked everywhere, bought greens from local farmers, and always carried a wooden bowl he used when eating, but would only wipe clean (never wash with water). Ammon bonded with Bob and Anka over their son's conscientious objector status and the need to stop nukes.

During the course of his life Ammon would go on to fast for 40 days along with attending countless anti-nuclear demonstrations, many outside the offices of the Department of Energy in Las Vegas that operated the Nevada Nuclear Test Site.

She admits he never exactly said he was in love with Dorothy Day, but the way he talked about her, Anka and Bob always thought Ammon not only admired her, but was also deeply in love with her, to the point where he talked about her so much they teased him.

Anka thought it was Dorothy's influence on him that sparked Ammon to open a men's shelter in Salt Lake City. His neighbors were not happy about his idea to turn a simple home into a shelter for several dozen men, who at the time had nowhere else to go. But Ammon followed Dorothy's example and provided radical hospitality, often by himself.

Anka says he was also proud of his daughters, his four grandchildren,

and five great-grandchildren. In 1959, before Ammon travelled to Whittier (an L.A. suburb) to see them, where Anka still lives, he had his teeth fixed.

Anka remembers Ammon as a man with strong convictions and a goodness of heart. In these days with images and news of Trump everywhere, the kind of tripe Anka cannot think about because of her heart condition, and where sometimes she thinks the only god is the dollar, she says she is glad we at the LACW are doing this work in a house named after Ammon.

I too am glad and take a lot of inspiration from Ammon's dedication and example. Ω

*Kaleb Havens is a Los Angeles Catholic Worker community member.*

# MY SUMMER AT THE L.A.C.W.

By GLORIA GÜNTHER

I am from Leipzig, Germany, I am 20 years old, I studied nursing in Germany and before I came to L.A. I worked as a nurse for one year. My parents lived and worked with the Catholic Workers in Amsterdam when they were young, and we spent holidays in Amsterdam when I was a child. This summer I wanted to try something new and thought immediately of the Catholic Worker, and through the international website I became interested in the internship in Los Angeles.



When my application was accepted, I was really looking forward to my new experience and travelling to L.A. The first days here were very

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## DIETRICH, cont'd from page 1

of America versus Catherine C. Morris, case number cc21-9366503, please come forward and state your appearance." Catherine indicated to Judge LaMothe that she wished to represent herself.

The judge then asked the prosecutor to tell Catherine what the maximum sentence for her crime of trespassing could be: "The maximum penalty the court could impose for this violation is a term of imprisonment of six months, a fine of up to \$5000... and if probation is imposed, it could be a term of up to five years." Catherine pleaded guilty. The Judge then told her that before sentencing she could make a statement.

Catherine spoke: "Well, it is known that the date of the citation is August 6, the commemoration of the bombing of Hiroshima, and so we closed our soup kitchen so that we could come up to Vandenberg for the planned protest. Know that I really hate to close the kitchen because it deprives anywhere from 500 to a

thousand people from a very good hot lunch, but we did it because of the importance of the event.

But then while I was standing there at Vandenberg, I was thinking about the people who live on the streets of Skid Row in Los Angeles, and it

brought to my mind my disapproval and disagreement with the budgeting of monies by the United States, that while half of the money collected in taxes goes to military expenses, citizens of this country sleep on the streets because there is inadequate

care and human resources available. With that thought in mind, and also this thought mind—it is not up to us to fix everything, God initiates breaking into the chaos with blessings. And I thought, what blessing can I take home to the people on Skid Row, to the chaos they live in?

I did not have a lot of choices, but I thought the least I could do is walk down the road to that line (of Police) that are waiting for someone to cross the line, and so I did. The people who eat at our kitchen know that we are activists, and know the kind of risks we take, and they consider it a blessing that we are there."

After Catherine finished speaking, a hush fell over the court. I restrained myself from clapping. The judge thought for a moment but imposed no prison time, no fine, only a five-dollar "processing fee" and a ten-dollar "special assessment," which Catherine will not pay. Ω

*Jeff Dietrich is editor emeritus of the Catholic Agitator and retired LACW community member.*

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Photo by Megan Ramsey

Photo by Mike Wisniewski

## ▣ L.A.C.W ▣ RESPONDS TO TORTURE

By MIKE WISNIEWSKI

One of the most abominable and deplorable policies of the U.S. Empire exists in the caging and torture of migrant children and those seeking asylum, indeed all human beings, but specifically children and their parents. To literally tear a child away from a parent who is seeking asylum or migrating to this country for their own safety and well being, particularly for economic reasons (mostly because of U.S. foreign policy in their homeland), is unconscionable and the personification of diabolical cruelty. Therefore, it must be challenged and resisted, no matter the cost.



Outside the plaza where Prudential Financial is located

We at the Los Angeles Catholic Worker have decided that we must make a public stand on this spiritual, moral, and legal issue (as elucidated in my article, "The Silence Is Deafening," in the August 2019 *Catholic Agitator*) and concluded that targeting a company that profits from this policy is one way to approach it. One (of many) of these exploitative companies is Prudential Financial, which holds 4% stock in GEO Group (the company that owns and operates most of the private for-profit concentration camps used to cage and torture migrants and asylum seekers. (They also have a horrendous record of abuse, human rights violations, and torture). We believe that calling for Prudential Financial's divestment from GEO Group is a positive step.

Not only has GEO Group recently moved to reopen a shuttered prison in my home state of Michigan that will hold 1,800 immigrants for at least the next ten years with annual revenues totaling at least \$37 million, but they are also aiming to violate the will of Californians by building three additional camps in California before a new law prohibiting private for-profit prisons in California takes effect in January 2020.

For these reasons we began forming a coalition, and on September 25, with twenty of our friends, we visited the Prudential Financial office in suburban Sherman Oaks and held an informational protest outside the office building where they are located. Protestors outside held a press conference and informed the public of Prudential's complicity in caging and torturing children, while two Catholic Workers, Kaleb Havens and I, went to Prudential's 15th floor office to blockade their doors and occupy the office until (1) we were able

to dialog with an executive from their corporate office asking them to divest from GEO Group and get assurance that it would become policy, or (2) we were arrested for trespassing.

However, to our dismay, all branch managers and corporate executives were in a corporate meeting and could not be reached. During our two+ hours inside, we spoke with the interim-office manager and other employees informing them of their employer's complicity in GEO Group's immoral and inhumane activity as we blockaded the entrance with chairs and our bodies. The building management and security notified the police, and ten uniformed officers responded and attempted to discourage us, then asked us to immediately leave the premises or face arrest, which we declined to do. After lengthy discussions between the office manager and a police sergeant,

we were informed that we could stay if we wanted, but nothing would happen. We chose to leave, possibly returning at a later date.

Since then, we have had discussions and decided that at least in the short term, because of the gravity of the situation, we would make this an ongoing campaign. By the time you read this we would have already carried out the next action (November 13)—a banner drop on three consecutive overpasses on Interstate 10 Freeway near downtown, L.A.'s busiest east-west freeway, calling for divestment. (You can watch a short video of this action on the Los Angeles Catholic Worker Facebook page.)

The next planned action will be on Wednesday, December 11, at Prudential Financial in Sherman Oaks, which will include a nonviolent direct action with anticipated arrests.

As I stated in my last article, it is incumbent upon each and every one of us, as part of the mystical Body of Christ, to hear the cries of the poverty-stricken children being caged and tortured with our tax dollars and act according to the Holy Spirit's guidance. Ω

Mike Wisniewski is a Los Angeles Catholic Worker community member and an editor of the *Catholic Agitator*.

### PLEASE JOIN US

For our next action at Prudential Financial on Wednesday, December 11 at noon. Meet at 5301 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks, 91403 For more info text or call Matt at 818-590-1085

## ▣ OPEN ▣ THE DOORS

By NATHAN SHEETS

A definitive theme of the papacy of Pope Francis has been about reigniting some of what Catholic Worker Co-Founder Peter Maurin referred to as the 'dynamite' of the Church. No assertion has been more foundational than the Pope's call to 'open the doors' of the Church. Unfortunately, fear has nearly atrophied the missionary zeal of many church communities, despite the call of Jesus, and



Welcoming the unhoused inside

subsequently Pope Francis. While built to provide sanctuary, and foster community, church buildings are often closed while those experiencing homelessness lie just outside their doors. However, some communities have recently taken the Pope's request as a call to action.

Inspired by the Pope's call, Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Hollywood is now open for the community entering from Sunset Boulevard. Inspired by San Francisco-based non-profit the *Gubbio Project* and the rich history of active Jesuit-inspired social justice work on the campus, Blessed Sacrament staff and volunteers heeded the Pope's call in a real and powerful way beginning last Ash Wednesday. In partnership with The Center at Blessed Sacrament, a vibrant non-profit homeless service provider on the same campus, the Urban Sanctuary has welcomed more than 1,000 individuals, many of whom were experiencing homelessness. The Sanctuary has a mission of allowing guests to *Rest, Restore and Renew*, while providing linkages to other care services at The Center or through other local service providers.

Each Wednesday, Thursday and Friday morning at 7:30 a.m., Sister Pia St. Romain, Yolanda Lichtman, volunteers and staff of Blessed Sacrament open the doors receiving whomever is waiting outside. Those who are welcomed into the space are able to *rest* in the pews of the church or drink a warm cup of coffee (or tea) as they sit. Many choose to participate in one of the daily groups, which offer an opportunity to *restore* from the hecticness of life on the Hollywood streets. Groups include poetry, guided meditation, and scripture study. Ultimately through these opportunities, guests are able to *renew* through building relationships with each other, from rejuvenating and essential sleep, and/or while also being offered opportunities to connect with other services or resources.

The Urban Sanctuary takes a great deal of inspiration from the *Gubbio Project*, now in its 15th year of operation out of St. Boniface Catholic Church, and The Episcopal Church of St. John the Evangelist in San Francisco. With a vision of *Sacred Sleep, Community & Sanctuary*, the *Gubbio Project* opens its doors

5-days per week to the unhoused community of the Tenderloin and Mission District. Citing that "lack of sleep" is one of the most-critical issues for individuals without housing, the *Gubbio Project* efforts to provide a safe and low-barrier space to provide a critical but often overlooked need. Named for the little town of Gubbio, Italy, where—according to legend—St. Francis of Assisi welcomed a hungry wolf into the town after years of eating villagers, the central theme is one of 'welcome' even toward those who (at first glance) we do not know, or may even fear.

For the previous several years, the Sunset Boulevard-facing doors of Blessed Sacrament remained mostly closed on weekdays, aside from time before and just after the 12:05 p.m. daily mass. Yet, for decades, Catholic churches like Blessed Sacrament were known for their openness; for their available safe space for the elements, for prayer, and for providing for the spiritual needs of a community, especially in the inner cities. Throughout the course of years, and with perceived increases in crime, threats (or experiences) of vandalism, and smaller and smaller support staffs, churches like Blessed Sacrament began closing their doors. Despite this, and paradoxically, the need for sanctuary grew.

St. Augustine in his treatise on community living asserted the necessity of Christian mutuality and communal ownership. Citing the Acts of the Apostles, Augustine wrote that the early Christian communities: "possessed everything in common... and distribution was made to each in proportion to each one's need" (*Praeceptum*, Ch. 1-3). Despite this, the Church often lost this philosophy toward itself, aligning instead with the mostly-Western European influence of private property and accumulation philosophies. Church spaces have often not allowed for what Augustine, Dorothy Day, Pope Francis, and others, have imagined about sanctuary spaces being *open* to (especially those) who most need safe space. The Church—in many regions and dioceses—has become risk averse and hyper-vigilant due to internal legal troubles.

This reality elicits a call that may rely on an increased activism of the laity. In many churches, like Blessed Sacrament, the laity leadership (particularly women) are the driving force for renewal, and Gospel-centered openness. These leaders are the true Church of today; leaning not on tired, spiritless religion but on the vibrancy of Christianity as a *revolution* of action, faith, and love, directed at welcoming those who need safe spaces. Pope Francis has said: "I prefer a church which is bruised, hurting, and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security."

Perhaps the Urban Sanctuary at Blessed Sacrament, like predecessors the *Gubbio Project* and Dolores Mission's *Guadalupe Homeless Project* in Boyle Heights, can give examples of how more Churches can heed the urging of the Pope to be a Church not 'confined' and 'clinging to its own security.' And, just maybe, with these models and an embrace of the untapped energy and spirit of the laity, we can better realize the Kingdom of God in the here-and-now, and better live in the spirit of true welcoming that faith in Jesus encourages. Ω

Nathan Sheets is a friend of the Los Angeles Catholic Worker and Executive Director of The Center in Hollywood.

Photo by Jed Poole

Photo by Nathan Sheets



REDMOND, cont'd from p.2

from having a place to lay their weary heads.

For someone who has been involved in the Catholic Worker movement for nearly 30 years, I found these circumstances disheartening, to say the least. I wanted answers to soothe my soul. And though a Nicolas Cage movie might spout good advice, I turned to my faith. The Bible is filled with several verses about doing nothing in the face of evil. But I came to appreciate a passage from the Proverbs collection known as "The Sayings of the Wise:"

*If you do nothing in a difficult time, your strength is limited. Rescue those being taken off to death, and save those stumbling toward slaughter. If you say, 'But we didn't know about this,' won't He who weighs hearts consider it? Won't He who protects life know? Won't He repay a person according to his work? (Proverbs 24:11-12).*

As I continued to witness the Venice unsheltered population multiply at an alarming pace, and the blatantly hateful behavior of my neighbors towards them, I found myself lingering at a crossroads. Do I continue on my way along the somewhat easy road I am on, or take the extremely rocky and harshly difficult path that has always called to me, tugged at my heart, and felt like the one true way? My soul this time, bolstered by prayer and faith, encouraged me to finally take the path I want as a Catholic Worker, and to not stand frozen by fear or indecision any longer.

It is always easier to do nothing in a difficult time, but I believe that is not what we were created for. God wants initiative, shown by the example of Jesus, who contended, contested, confronted, and challenged those who were making it necessary to feed the hungry and give respect and dignity to the poor.

I have been blessed with a prophetic spirituality to be a Catholic Worker. I believe God wills good for us all, and that God wills me to be part of that goodness for all. Peace activist and Catholic Worker hero Daniel Berrigan said, "The prophet is one who speaks the truth to a culture of lies." That is what prophetic spirituality is, being able to step into that will of God for all. For the upstart Venice Catholic Worker, that will is serving oatmeal and hot coffee on the street to our unsheltered sisters and brothers, and advocating for their rights.

For more information on the Venice Catholic Worker, visit: [venicecatholicworker.org](http://venicecatholicworker.org). Ω

*Lisa Redmond is a longtime friend of the L.A.C.W. and founder of the Venice Catholic Worker.*

GÜNTHER, cont'd from p.2

exciting for me. The many helicopters and police, the different climate, speaking a different language, leaving my family and my partner behind, eating different foods, drinking water with chlorine, other traditions and behaviors... everything felt totally different than in Germany. But the community and the many friendly faces have made it easy for me to quickly feel safe

BETTER KNOW A VOLUNTEER  
LINDA AND ALBERT WINGATE



Linda and Albert work at our kitchen almost every Tuesday, arriving earlier than most volunteers—indeed, earlier than some Catholic Workers. They immediately put their Texan work ethic to use: Albert, chopping onions, Linda buttering bread and chatting with Sister Elizabeth, who, according to her husband, is her best friend at the kitchen.

Linda, our reliable spork distributor, finds that the job gives her the opportunity to grace guests with a smile, "maybe brightening their day." Albert, who usually serves water to our guests, believes the experience to be one of communion. "To share water is as important as

and comfortable.

I can remember my first day at the Hippy Kitchen very well. Everything seemed so big, the sound of the kitchen was loud, the many homeless people, the beautiful garden that made me speechless—everything was so colorful. From the beginning I enjoyed my work very much and made friends, so I quickly felt at home and the initial excitement subsided. Now after six weeks, I do not regret my decision. The time here has broadened my view, has brought me an experience in another world with other problems, and has made me more confident in myself. It has been beneficial for me to come out of my everyday life in Germany, to change my perspective and to experience how life can be when I am surrounded by others.

I have also noticed how much more difficult the circumstances here are for the homeless than in Germany. It is hard to believe that the most wealthiest and powerful country in the world cannot take care of its own people, and that the

sharing wine," he says. "It certainly gives life." Linda tells me that this work "fills up [her] soul."

When the couple is not volunteering at the kitchen, they often take care of their young grandchildren. Linda volunteers at the children's school, and the two drive them back and forth from their various activities. Albert and Linda also host the kids at their home four to five times a week. According to Albert, "they come in and take over!"

We will be missing Albert and Linda during the month of November, as they vacation in Thailand, growing a long list of countries they have visited. The two have also headed their own transportation, sailing themselves through the Greek Islands, for example. Albert, at one point a private pilot, used to fly his own plane from Missouri, where they lived, to Louisiana, where his folks resided.

"We have had a very blessed life," Linda acknowledges, "that is why it is nice to give back. We have enjoyed ourselves." Ω

*Better Know A Volunteer is written by Maria Teresa Kamel.*

ignorance of most rich and powerful people in this country is too great to change anything.

Soon I fly back to my secure life in a social-welfare state, knowing that only my birth gives me these privileges, which is crazy and makes me incredibly sad. I hope that the world will change in the future so that every human being has a right to have a home, food, and education, no matter how much they have or what their backgrounds are.

Dear God  
Give us the strength to do our work peacefully and kindly. Give us the strength to master difficult times and to emerge stronger than before. Give us the strength not only to think for ourselves, but also to perceive the suffering of others. Give us the strength to act in unjust situations and to stand up for our rights and the rights of others. And give us the strength to see the beautiful when everything seems sad. For this we pray. Amen. Ω

*Gloria was a Los Angeles Catholic Worker summer intern.*

COUP  
IN BOLIVIA

By MIKE WISNIEWSKI

Could the U.S. be at it again? On November 10, longtime President of Bolivia, Evo Morales, and his vice president and other high officials, resigned following what Morales described as a military coup, which sent the nation into a state of political crisis.

Since the October election there have been numerous protests over what right-wing opponents called irregularities in the vote count. Anti-Morales opposition leader Jeanine Añez, who is a fundamentalist Christian and was the second vice president of the Bolivian Senate, has taken control of the government as interim president until another election can be scheduled.

Morales announced his resignation in a televised address shortly after the Bolivian military took to the airwaves to call for his resignation.

Evo Morales was the longest-serving president in Latin America, as well as Bolivia's first indigenous leader, who strongly believed in socialism. He was credited with lifting nearly a fifth of Bolivia's population out of poverty since he took office in 2006, but he faced mounting criticism from some of his former supporters for running for a third and then a fourth term.

However, hours before resigning, Morales agreed to call for new elections after the Organization of American States (OAS) issued a report alleging there was "clear manipulation" in the election results. According to official results of last month's election, Morales won 47% of the vote and just narrowly avoided a runoff election. As of this writing, the OAS has not provided any evidence of actual vote rigging.

Moreover, in the media there have not been any experts saying that there were irregularities with the vote count. Furthermore, it is well known in some circles that the OAS observation mission was under a lot of pressure from U.S. Senator Marco Rubio and the Trump regime to do this, because for a long time they wanted the socialist Morales government out. The OAS has in past reversed an election result, like in the 2011 first-round presidential election in Haiti, without any statistical test, recount or reason. It was purely political.

There have been other world leaders who have criticized the ouster of Evo Morales in Bolivia. Argentina's President-elect Alberto Fernández has said, "What's happening in Bolivia is that there is a dominant class that will not resign themselves to losing power to the hands of a president who is the first Bolivian president that looks like Bolivians. That is what's happening." And British Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn stated, "To see Evo Morales who, along with a powerful movement, has brought so much social progress forced from office by the military is appalling. I condemn this coup against the Bolivian people and stand with them for democracy, social justice and independence."

Historically, the CIA has played major roles in previous coups in Bolivia, in 1952, 1964, 1970, and 1980. It now appears that 2019 can probably be added to this list, as this resembles a classic military coup supported by the United States. Ω

*Mike Wisniewski is a Los Angeles Catholic Worker community member and an editor of the Catholic Agitator.*

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Photo by Maria Teresa Kamel

# ON THE LINE

## KINGS BAY PLOWSHARES UPDATE

*A jury found them guilty, but Trident is the crime.*

On October 24, the Kings Bay Plowshares 7 were convicted by a jury in federal court in Brunswick, Georgia. The 12 jurors deliberated for two hours before finding the nuclear disarmament activists guilty of conspiracy, destruction of property on a Naval Station, deprecation of government property, and trespass.

Supporters and defendants, except for Fr. Steve Kelly, S.J., left the courtroom singing the hymn, *Rejoice in the Lord always*. The six were released on bond while Fr. Steve was remanded back to Glynn County Detention Center, where he will get credit for the 18 months he has already served.

The sentencing date will be set upon completion of pre-sentencing reports expected within 60-90 days. They face a maximum sentence of 20 years in federal prison for their April 4, 2018 disarmament action.

Please keep Fr. Steve, and his six co-defendants, (Martha Hennessy, Elizabeth McAlister, Clare Grady, Mark Colville, Carmen Trotta, and Patrick O'Neill) in prayer.

For more info visit: [kingsbayplowshares7.org](http://kingsbayplowshares7.org) or visit their two Facebook pages.

## POPE FRANCIS AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Pope Francis has brought attention to the dangers posed by environmental

degradation, income inequality, global capitalism, and the "culture of waste." Now he will turn his focus to nuclear weapons when he visits Hiroshima and Nagasaki, two cities bombed by the U.S. with nuclear weapons in August 1945. Nagasaki has been the historic center of Japan's Catholic community since the sixteenth century, and on Sunday, November 24, Francis will have given a public address at the city's ground-zero site.

This will mark the third time since 2017 that Francis will add to the Church's position away from its support of nuclear deterrence and toward advocating for the abolition of nuclear weapons and condemning their "very possession." In Nagasaki, Pope Francis will have called for "the total elimination of nuclear weapons."  
—[newyorker.com](http://newyorker.com)

## HUMAN KINDNESS WINS (FINALLY)

Federal court jurors in Tucson drew a line between harboring and compassion on November 20, when, after a second trial they acquitted border aid worker Scott Warren on felony charges for the assistance he gave to two Central American men last year. The jury deadlocked on the first trial in June.

The jury deliberated just two and a half hours before arriving at a not guilty verdict. "The government failed in its attempt to criminalize basic human kindness," Warren stated after it was over.

The volunteer for the Tucson-based

humanitarian aid group No More Deaths, was indicted on two felony harboring charges after authorities raided an Ajo migrant aid station known as "the Barn" in January 2018.

Defense attorney Gregory Kuykendall told the jury that, "Being a Good Samaritan is not against the law. Practicing the golden rule is not a felony." Warren, however, still faces prison time or probation for separate misdemeanor charges related to leaving humanitarian aid on the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge west of Tucson in 2017.  
—[tucson.com](http://tucson.com)

## LEONARD PELTIER UPDATE

Leonard Peltier, a member of the Anishinabe and Lakota Nations, and longtime activist and leader for Native American rights, was wrongfully arrested, tried, and convicted of killing two FBI agents on June 26, 1975, in a raid and shoot-out on the Pine Ridge Reservation, and subsequently illegally imprisoned for more than 44 years, even though his co-defendants were found innocent on the grounds of self-defense.

Leonard, now 75, earlier this year, requested a transfer from the facility where he is currently incarcerated in Coleman, Florida, to the facility in Oxford, WI, which is approximately 1,300 miles closer to Peltier's home, family, and other Native communities (as is U.S. Bureau of Prisons policy). He suffers with multiple medical issues, some extreme and potentially life threatening, and has not been

able to get proper treatment while in Coleman. Oxford, on the other hand, is in proximity to the Mayo Clinic and Federal Medical Clinic in Rochester where he could receive proper treatment. However, he was flatly denied the transfer, but an appeal is in process, although a date has not yet been set. Without proper medical treatment his life is in danger. Also, for the last four months his unit has been on lockdown, which has taken a further toll on his (and others) health.

For full info about Leonard and his case and learn how to support him in the ongoing effort to have him released visit:

[whoisleonardpeltier.info](http://whoisleonardpeltier.info)

You can write him—using only white paper and white envelope (no stickers) to: Leonard Peltier #89637-132 USP Coleman I P.O. Box 1033 Coleman, FL 3352

## PEACE VIGILS

If you live in west L.A. and would like to join ongoing peace vigils: **Mar Vista Peace Vigil** - Corner of National and Barrington (in front of Whole Foods) at 5pm - each first and third Friday of the month.

**Jewish Voice For Peace Vigil** - Third Street Promenade, 3rd and Arizona, in Santa Monica, at 2pm each 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month. [rdoyphoto@ca.rr.com](mailto:rdoyphoto@ca.rr.com) for info

*On The Line* is compiled and edited by Mike Wisniewski.



It was another action-packed summer and early fall here at the Los Angeles Catholic Worker. Our summer program wrapped up in August, and our summer interns each went on to pursue different activities.

**Kaleb** enjoyed a weekend experience at a Jedi gathering in Lake Arrowhead in August, where he met interesting and thoughtful fellow students of the Force. The group committed to reading together a list of anti-oppression books, and had an intentional policy of respect and inclusivity among group members.

In September, the LACW again participated in the Skid Row block party put on by our inspiring and courageous neighbors, the **Los Angeles Community Action Network**. LA CAN served hot dogs, we made and served the chili, there was music, and many other creative activities going on. We were delighted to join the party.

On the first weekend in October, the LACW and other Catholic Workers from our sister house network gathered for our annual Sister House Retreat. For many years, the retreat had been held at the beautiful La Casa de Maria in Montecito. Tragically, their center was heavily damaged by mudslides in January 2018, and they are still working on rebuilding. So, this year we tried a new location, Tehachapi Mountain Camp in lovely Tehachapi, CA.

The theme for the retreat was planning the vision and content of future retreats. The discussions were facilitated by **Julia Occhiogrosso** of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker. We were happy to have with us many friends from near and far, including Casa Colibri in Hostotipaquillo, Mexico, New Jersey, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Guadalupe, San Bruno and Las Vegas. A contingent of our friends and co-workers from Santa Clarita were also there--the indomitable **Patty, Martha** and **Ann**. As well, we had **Lisa Redmond**, who recently formed the newest Sister House in Venice, CA. We enjoyed participating in the discussions as well as renewing friendships, eating a lot of delicious food, and enjoying nature.

The weekend after the sister house retreat, **Julia** and **Gary** from Las Vegas and I participated in the Los Angeles Printer's fair at the International Printing Museum in Carson, CA. Gary was selling some of his collection of printmaking equipment and memorabilia, and I was invited along to sell prints of my art. Other LACW folks visited the booth and checked out the fair, which had lots of art vendors and also demonstrations of antique printing presses.

Later in October, **Lisa Redmond** joined us to give us an overview of her new Catholic Worker in Venice.

Read more about the new CW's activities on page 2.

We celebrate with the Elizabeth, New Jersey sister house, Broad Street Benches, that they were recently able to find an indoor location from which to serve their hot meals. They had been serving faithfully on the street, but shelter from the wind, rain, and snow will make it that much more logistically helpful for them and also comfortable for their guests.

**Jeff** and **Susan Dietrich** were able to attend the funeral of New York Catholic Worker **Joanne Kennedy's** father, **John Kennedy**, at St. Hedwig's Catholic Church in Los Alamitos. Though a somber time, they were also able to visit with Joanne, her family and friends.

In mid-October, longtime community member **Theo Kayser** returned to St. Louis to spend time with his family.

Also in mid-October, **Catherine Morris** had her court date (page 1).

A few days before Halloween, we were delighted to be invited to a spooky and fun costume party at LACW North, aka the Santa Clarita Flamingo House Catholic Worker, hosted by **Martha, Jesse**, and **Ann**. Creative costumes abounded. **Ann Bowden** won "Most Creative" costume for her ensemble depicting roadkill. One elegant witch (**Patty**) was heard to remark to another (**Martha**), "I see we have the same milliner." **Mike** and **Bonnie** took home the award for best couple's costume for their matching pirate ensembles. All present ate a lot of tasty chili. Some watched the movie *Coco* with X-Men's Professor X (**Jesse Lewis**). Thanks to that fun household for having us all over.

Continuing in the Halloween vein, **Jed** was in charge of distributing candy at the Hennacy House. While it looks like actually the perfect spooky

haunted house, not many folks turned up for candy—maybe it is a little too authentically run-down and haunted looking on Halloween night?

The **Gregorian Chant group** marked the Day of the Dead at Hennacy House with an evening of chant in front of the house's altar honoring the many folks connected with the community who are now a part of the great cloud of witnesses.

**Susan Dietrich** was able to take a well-earned vacation to visit some of her friends in Philadelphia. She had a good time as many were connected with the Philadelphia Catholic Worker, and enjoyed eating Italian food and watching the track meet victory of the son of her longtime friends.

In November, we had a visit from long-ago community member **Paul O'Conner**. Paul spent time helping us at the soup kitchen, catching up with Jeff, Catherine, and other friends. He also gave us a Culture Critique on his current social justice work at the Pat Finucane Centre in Belfast, including a powerful documentary, *Unquiet Graves*, about one aspect of their work, uncovering police collusion in civilian murders in the counties of Armagh and Tyrone in the 1970s.

**Megan Ramsey** organized another culture critique for us in honor of **Karan Found-Benton**. A few years ago Karan, along with Megan, volunteer **John Dentino**, and others, worked on a recording of Karan's performance of the short play, *Driving the Body Back*, created from poems written by Iowa poet **Mary Swander**. It was bittersweet to see Karan, who passed away a year ago, doing what she loved, while remembering that she is no longer physically with us.

*House Journal* is written by Sarah Fuller.

## RAINY SEASON NEEDS

With the rainy season upon us, our friends on the street are in need of inexpensive lightweight disposable rain ponchos to protect themselves, and tarps to protect their meager possessions. If you can provide either or both, please send or deliver them to 632 N. Britannia St. L.A. 90033-1722.

*We also need adjustable metal canes, and inexpensive domino sets.*  
We, and our friends, would greatly appreciate your generosity. Thank you.

### PLAN NOW TO ATTEND:

Pacific Life Community Faith & Resistance Retreat, February 28–March 2, 2020, at Pilgrim Firs Retreat Center in Port Orchard, WA (<http://pilgrim-firs.org>) with a nonviolent direct action witness at Naval Base Kitsap–Bangor.

For further info and to register contact: Elizabeth Murray - [emurray404@aol.com](mailto:emurray404@aol.com)

**STAND AGAINST TRIDENT, THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE NUCLEAR WEAPON ON THE PLANET**

### THE LOS ANGELES CATHOLIC WORKER

The Los Angeles Catholic Worker, founded in 1970, is part of the international Catholic Worker Movement, which was founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933. We are a resistance community that operates a soup kitchen in Skid Row, a house of hospitality in Boyle Heights, and publishes this bi-monthly publication—the *Catholic Agitator*. Visit our website - <http://lacatholicworker.org>.



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# AGITATE

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# CATHOLIC AGITATOR

DECEMBER 2019 Vol. 49/No. 6

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#### LOS ANGELES CATHOLIC WORKER:

<http://lacatholicworker.org>

1. Ammon Hennacy House of Hospitality  
632 N. Britannia St., Los Angeles, CA 90033-1722  
(323) 267-8789
2. Hospitality Kitchen (aka Hippie Kitchen)  
821 E. 6th St., Los Angeles, CA 90021  
(213) 614-9615

#### ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY

500 W. VanBuren Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89106  
(702) 647-0728 <http://lvcw.org>

#### ISAIAH HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY

316 S. Cypress Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92701  
(714) 835-6304 <http://ocatholicworker.org>

#### SADAKO SASAKI HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY

1321 W. 38th St., Norfolk, VA 23508  
(757) 423-5420

#### HOUSE OF GRACE CATHOLIC WORKER

1826 E. Lehigh Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19125  
(215) 426-0364

#### KIERAN PRATHER HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY

672 2nd Ave., San Bruno, CA 94066  
(650) 827-0706

<http://catholicworkerhospitalityhouse.org>

#### BEATITUDE HOUSE

267 Campodónico Ave., Guadalupe, CA 93434-1501  
(805) 343-6322 [www.facebook.com/beatitudehouse](http://www.facebook.com/beatitudehouse)

#### ST. BENEDICT HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY

4022 N. Cheryl Ave., Fresno, CA 93705  
(559) 229-6410 <http://sbcw.org> [lizaOSB@aol.com](mailto:lizaOSB@aol.com)

#### CASA COLIBRÌ CATHOLIC WORKER

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011-52 - 386-744-5063 - [casacolibricw@gmail.com](mailto:casacolibricw@gmail.com)

#### AMANI HOUSE - NAIROBI, KENYA, AFRICA

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9 Caldwell Pl. #3, Elizabeth, NJ 07201  
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#### NEW ORLEANS CATHOLIC WORKER

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<http://neworleanscatholicworker.weebly.com>

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