

CATHO AGITATO

Jeff
Dietrich
Arrested Again
Over Iran War &
Immigration Policy

LODGING, LANDLORDS, LANDBACK



Graphic by Erik Ruin - See page 5

**LODGING, LANDLORDS,
LANDBACK**

*We are not talking about something that does not exist in the world.
The redistribution of land is a fact in many parts of the world.*

ABOLISH RENT

Leonardo Vilchis and Tracy Rosenthal are co-founders of the L.A. Tenants Union (LATU). Their new book, *Abolish Rent: How Tenants Can End the Housing Crisis*, invites readers to explore the history of L.A. housing, to question the landlord/tenant relationship, and to imagine a different housing future for our City of Angels. *The Agitator* spoke with Leonardo to learn more.

AGITATOR: Los Angeles is often a bellwether for our country. How is L.A. at the forefront of the struggle for dignified housing, where are we “behind,” and where are we moving in the wrong direction?

VILCHIS: We have the largest autonomous tenants union in the country, run entirely by volunteers. These are people who do not come from traditional organizing fields, but who are rooted in and committed to addressing the problems in their communities.

Our leadership is mostly immigrants. Though immigrants are everywhere and impact everything, they have historically been ignored. Here, they really are taking their leadership and making a different set of demands around housing.

Tenants in L.A. have more rights than anywhere else in the world. But the only way you can defend those rights is in eviction court. That is just absurd. Without an attorney or resources, your ability to exercise, defend, and implement those rights is very small. So what we need are different kinds of policies that actually preemptively protect tenants, preemptively recognize the rights of unions and the rights to organize, and preemptively penalize landlords who abuse communities.

In our Democrat-run city, in the richest state in the world, our policy makers have run out of imagination and do not know what to do with what they have.

AGITATOR: Until we do the hard but beautiful work of building the new society in the shell of the old, there will be landlords who get to decide what kind they will be. If you were trying to appeal to folks who were open to pursuing a more ethical vision of landlording, what sorts of practices would you invite them into?

VILCHIS: When Union de Vecinos (UdV) [the predecessor to the L.A. Tenants Union] came out of the housing projects, fighting against their demolition, we ended up with a lot of mom and pop landlords. Approaching them from a traditional



We have the largest autonomous tenants union in the country, run entirely by volunteers. These are people who do not come from traditional organizing fields, but who are rooted in and committed to addressing the problems in their communities.

leftist practice, this relationship could immediately become antagonistic and confrontational. But coming from the church, part of our approach was to start with dialogue, with the tenant and the landlord getting to know each other, rehumanizing the relationships.

We had situations where landlords who had retained tenants for the last 30-50 years were feeling the pressure of the economy and feeling the tension with their tenants, and they started to become very aggressive. No matter how bad things were or how tense the relationships had been, UdV started to intervene by saying let’s sit down and talk. And it was amazing how things started changing: negotiations for public space, rent reductions, debt forgiveness, and building repairs became possible because we acknowledged things had become detrimental and we decided to restart the relationships.

Speaking to landlords: I believe the important thing is for landlords to remember that there are human beings who live in these units and everything that is happening around them is not caused by the tenants alone. Remember you have also played a role in the process. And we have to remember that there is a way to collaborate in addressing our issues.

And when there is generational tension, how can we appeal to the older generation and the history of why they started doing this work to engage the younger generation?

AGITATOR: I imagine having a tenants union in a complex might, at first, feel like a threat to a landlord. How have you seen the presence of a tenants union actually add health and value to a people and place?

VILCHIS: The moment we establish a space where people can talk to each other, tenants can understand that problems are not individual. If there are roaches in the apartment, it is not just the problem of one tenant. Everyone suffers. And everyone has to collectively address it. If tenants come together and realize they are all suffering the same situations, that they have a right and duty to respond to it, and that there is a relationship and entity that protects them (the tenants union), they become more proactive in addressing issues. That changes the conditions of the housing.

At the social level, the construction of a community that responds to problems together and looks for common solutions helps everyone.

Continued on page 2

BOOK REVIEW:

Creation or Empire: A Choice of Religions in the Bible and Beyond
By Wes Howard-Brook, Orbis Books, 2026, 224 pages, \$26.

By MIKE WISNIEWSKI

I begin my review by quoting fellow Catholic Worker Art Laffin in his written praise for this book: "This book is an invitation to practice radical discipleship." It is indeed that, and much more.

Although *Creation or Empire* is a stand-alone work, Howard-Brook also wrote it more or less as a concise overview of and as an introduction to two other related outstanding epic books that he authored: *Come Out My People!: God's Call Out of Empire in the Bible and Beyond*, Orbis Books, 2010, 525 pages, and *Empire Baptized: How the Church Embraced What Jesus Rejected 2nd - 5th Centuries*, Orbis Books, 2016, 342 pages.

Howard-Brook, in *Creation or Empire*, takes us on an extremely interesting and enlightening Biblical journey from Genesis to Revelation in his explanation of the difference between the "religion of creation" (ROC), and the "religion of empire" (ROE) found in scripture, and how and why so-called church "fathers" and Biblical writers subverted YHWH's directive on how we are intended to live as people of faith, to adapting and living by imperialist methodologies.

Howard-Brook has long challenged and invited people of faith to read and understand the Bible on its own terms, in its original cultural context, rather than how we have been taught to understand and live faith in a modern imperialist culture, which is radically different.

Michael Morrell, in the book's Forward, emphasizes that "Constantinian Christianity— (Christianity after the Emperor Constantine, in 313 CE, became "Christian" and made Christianity the state religion) is a faith that made peace with military power, wealth, and control, betraying the poor crucified Christ" (ix). This is

how our Christian faith has existed to the present.

Christians faithfully support, participate in, and have made an allegiance to empire in various ways from voting and supporting political candidates, running for and holding political office, serving in the military, working in the weapons industry, law enforcement, standing placing hand over heart and either pledging allegiance to the flag or singing the national anthem, gaining wealth off the backs of others, exploiting people and the environment, actively investing in the capitalist system (Wall Street), and turning a blind eye to empire's vast and varied victims, is a partial list.

Most Christians have lived and continue to live a ROE faith that has little resemblance to what Jesus Christ actually lived, taught, and required of his followers. The directives in the Sermon on the Mount/ Plain, and in Matthew 25:31-46, are largely ignored, and often scorned. Racism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia, xenophobia, patriarchy, greed, indifference or disdain toward the poor, and violence abound.

What is most distressing is how Christians have tragically bought into ROE, that they are willing to put on a uniform and, on order, massacre other human beings created in YHWH's image and likeness, other sisters and brothers in the human family, and devastate God's "good" creation. *Creation or Empire* has this to say: "Jesus' disciples must reject the temptation to take up violence according to the religion of empire and imitate the Lord in being willing to take up the cross" (125).

This book enables the reader to better understand how and why Christianity became a religion of empire and what we must do to rectify our waywardness and make the decision to "come out" and live how YHWH meant from the outset of creation, aligning our life with creation, and with empire's victims, not with empire itself.

Again referring to the book's Forward, it is explained that "Religion of empire is often about *us* observing external rituals for show, whereas the

Continued on page 6

THE CONTINUING CORPORATE ATTACK ON SKID ROW

By LA CAN'S HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Skid Row residents are once again under attack from the highly influential Los Angeles business lobbying group Central City Association (CCA). CCA's policy platform, called "Revive DTLA," claims to be about making downtown, including Skid Row, a better, more economically viable place, but it is actually a blueprint for criminalization of poor and unhoused people and a call to remove us to make downtown more profitable.

CCA is an organization of hundreds of businesses, including some of the largest multinational corporations in the world, like Amazon, AirBNB, Chevron, and Bank of America. It is dominated by the finance and real estate industry, with members including CBRE, the world's largest commercial real estate company, and AEG, a major investor in downtown properties.

The plan, which they describe as focused on "short-term, implementable actions," is divided into four components: public safety, homelessness, beautification, and activation. Their public safety plank relies on police occupation and punishment. They call for more police foot and bicycle patrols, and substations throughout the community. They demand the District and City Attorneys "prioritize prosecution of DTLA crimes," including minor infractions. They offer their private Business Improvement District (BID) security forces to assist police enforcement.

The homelessness section ignores the lack of affordable housing, instead calling for encampment destruction and shelter through the Inside Safe program, forced mental health and addiction treatment, strict enforcement of laws like LAMC 41.18 and 56.11 that criminalize people for existing in public spaces,

and building a new jail. The beautification section emphasizes sanitation sweeps and "cleaning surges," as well as strict enforcement against minor violations of law. The "activation" section proposes supporting businesses and promoting cultural events, that would seem to ignore the Skid Row community, while elevating the wealthy new residents of downtown.

CCA has a long history of seeking to "revive" or "revitalize" or otherwise takeover downtown L.A. In the 1950s and 60s, then known as the Downtown Business Men's Association, they advocated aggressively for the destruction of the working class neighborhood on Bunker Hill and its redevelopment into a corporate-owned commercial and shopping district, with housing for the very wealthy and offices for the real estate and finance industries. CCA, especially through "adaptive reuse" to convert commercial buildings to expensive residential, has led efforts to gentrify the "Historic Core" area, transforming it from primarily affordable housing for low-income people to 75-percent market rate housing.

Deeply intertwined with their efforts to revitalize for profit have been their efforts to remove poor people. As far back as the 1930s, they have been advocating for criminalization of poor people. In 2002, they issued a report labelling unhoused people in Skid Row as drug addicts and criminals who should be removed from the area. A few years later, they supported LAPD Chief William Bratton's "Safer Cities Initiative," which saturated Skid Row with police officers arresting and citing people for thousands of minor violations of law in an effort to drive poor and unhoused people into hiding or out of the neighborhood. CCA birthed the various Business Improvement

Continued on page 6

VILCHIS cont. from page 1

AGITATOR: In your book you talk about how "appealing to the moral conscience of politicians is often like asking our slumlord to fix our sink." How do you weigh using "unconventional" avenues for change (like showing up to your landlord's house) as you seek to transform the problems and honor the dignity and needs of the vulnerably housed?

VILCHIS: We follow the goal of rehumanizing the relationships with landlords, and the Gandhian tradition of trying to engage in dialogue with your enemy.

Tenants used to be very scared about who the landlord was. And some of these landlords, after many attempts to dialogue, would refuse to engage in conversations. It was very important for us to overcome that fear and understand the contradictions.

The first movement of what became the shaming of the landlords was basically an attempt to understand one major contradiction: the difference between where you live and the condition of your housing and that of the landlord. This is a person who refuses to engage in a conversation. So, now we have to go and visit.

Understandingly, there are two sides of this. On one side, the tenants become more aware, developing a voice and acting out of that voice. Yet also, we help the landlord understand that they can no longer hide in their

communities, and let their neighbors know that there is a bad player amongst them.

AGITATOR: It's a powerful move, and the landlords do not have to let it get to that place, they can choose to act differently, and sooner.

VILCHIS: Exactly, and if we look at this from the Christian perspective, we have Jesus who names things the way they are, naming the contradictions and putting them in the face of everyone so people can choose how to respond.

AGITATOR: "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you... if they will not listen, take one or

two others along... If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church..."

(Matthew 18: 15-16). Now, to change housing realities, most people think to focus their energy and attention on policies, on increasing the supply of housing itself, and on those who develop and profit from housing, not as much on renters and the power they can build and wield. Why have you found the strategic place to put your energy to be organizing tenants?

VILCHIS: The parish has a geography. Coming from the experience of working in the church, there is a community of people who live there, who know and take care of each other. I have found it important to build and

grow the relationships within that geography.

Living and working in the housing projects, starting with the church-based community, we saw the construction of a democratic process, of democracy in decision-making that gave meaning to people's lives. This, in contradiction to the dominant U.S. system that tells you that you are an individual in your house, here we had networks making us better.

And the question of tenancy at that moment was the question of remaining in the place that you helped build. [When you look at the history it took to develop the community we call Palestine, and the attacks against them, it is the right to have a place where you build your own history and culture.] So a tenant who lives in the neighborhood in a building has helped build a network that must be preserved and valued.

People can choose to come in and out of that place, but if people do not have the right to their place or home, they are in trouble. And of course that home has to be dignified.

But then there are also the changes in the economy. When you look at the gig economy, when you look at the industrialization in the U.S., labor now lives in the geography of the neighborhood. And that is another reason why organizing to keep people housed is very important.

Another layer is the financialization

Continued on page 6

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With support from Pope Leo XIV in his ongoing battle with President Trump over the war in Iran and his immigration policies as an example, who tells us to regard our neighbors with the Gospel values of love, compassion, and kindness, I was arrested.

HEROES OF THE HEART

By JEFF DIETRICH

With shouts of “Resist Trump” from myself and the 25 protesters gathered, I was arrested on Friday, April 10, 2026. With the implicit Gospel support of Pope Leo XIV, I stepped in front of an ICE van with my sign that read RESIST TRUMP in bold letters and blocked the front of the “hell-hole dungeon” outside the Metropolitan Detention Center in protest of President Trump’s ongoing war with Iran and the abhorrent immigration policies with people dying in detention centers without medical attention, worms in their food, and rancid drinking water in conditions that are truly appalling.



With support from Pope Leo XIV in his ongoing battle with President Trump over the war in Iran and his immigration policies as an example, who tells us to regard our neighbors with the Gospel values of love, compassion, and kindness, I was arrested.

This is one small act of resistance to President Donald Trump’s attack on democratic values: shredding the Constitution; violating international law by threatening to wipe out a whole civilization and bombing them back into the stone age; using federal power to control the inner workings of universities, law firms, and corporations; putting the U.S. military on the streets of Portland, L.A., and Chicago; and murdering Renée Good and Alex Pretti, among others.

And so, I can hold my head up high with all my “Heroes of the Heart:” Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr., Mother Jones, Fannie Lou Hamer, Dan and Phil Berrigan and Liz McAlister, Fredrick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, and of course Dorothy Day, who inspired more than 250 Catholic Worker communities throughout the world. These are the heroes that formed my heart; these are the people that I write about in my new book; these are the heroes of justice and democracy, resistance, and resurrection that have sustained me and my wife, Catherine Morris, over the years.

For more than 55 years we have created a Catholic Worker Community on Skid Row in Los Angeles that has stood faithfully for the Gospel principles of justice and peace. We have thrown blood and oil on the steps of the Federal building, cut the fence around the nuclear test site in Nevada, and we have been arrested countless times. We have fed the multitudes of thousands of homeless people at our “Hippie Kitchen;” we have given out thousands of shoes, blankets, clothes, and tarps.

We have lived simply in our own home with the poor and the homeless, some of whom have died with us as we prayed with them in our hospice room. We have influenced public policy so that Skid Row has become an Ellis

Island for the poor and homeless with tents and tarps proliferating the sidewalks and streets proclaiming that the neo-liberal capitalist system is broken. Rosa Parks, keeping her seat on the bus and inspiring a movement; Dan Berrigan hammering on nuclear weapons that led to his incarceration; Harriet Tubman guiding slaves out from the South to her own peril; Mother Jones at the funeral for the dead miners proclaiming, “Don’t mourn, organize!,” Dorothy Day who said: “Our problems stem from our acceptance of this filthy, rotten system.”

These are the “heroes of my heart” who inspired me to do the ongoing work of resistance and service to the poor.

In these perilous times of “Trumpian Disorder;” these are the “Heroes of the Heart” who defied the authoritarians of their day. They defied the slave masters, they defied the racist bigots, they defied the capitalist businessmen. They are the resisters who still challenge us to deify the authoritarians of our day.

I have written these stories to inspire a younger generation to join in the struggle to save American democracy and the Gospel values of human dignity upon which they are based:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

President Trump is handling foreign policy as if he were back on the reality TV show *The Apprentice*:

Greenland: You are fired!

Denmark: You are fired!

NATO: You are fired!

Iran: You are fired!

Venezuela: “We want your oil,” You are fired!

Strait of Hormuz: “We need you to be open,” You are nuked!

We hope this does not happen, but President Trump is handling foreign policy as if he were a spoiled, rich, angry child, and that is disastrous. With its “might makes right” bombast and bravado, this reality TV show rhetoric has no place in the world order the U.S. has created since WWII.

“This is truly unacceptable,” Pope Leo said of President Trump’s statement that “we are going to wipe out your civilization and bomb it back into the stone age.”

In his Easter message Pope Leo XIV urged the people to: “Let those who have the power to unleash wars choose peace!” He proclaimed “... not a peace imposed by force, but through dialogue, not with the desire to dominate others but to encounter them!... The power with which Christ rose is entirely nonviolent.” The pope also said in his message:

“This is the true strength that brings peace to humanity, because it fosters a respectful relationship at every level; among individuals, families, social groups and nations...” (All quotations from the NCR April 5, 2026).

Pope Leo on Easter Sunday called for all people to: “...abandon every desire for conflict, domination, and power, and implore the Lord to grant his peace to a world ravaged by wars and a marked hatred and indifference that makes us feel powerless in the face of evil...”

Pope Leo continued with his Easter message, “The world is growing accustomed to violence, resigning ourselves to it.” Pope Leo said: “[We have become]...increasingly

indifferent to the deaths of thousands of people, as well as to the repercussions of hatred and divisions that conflict sow and the economic and social consequences they produce, which we all feel.”

Pope Leo continued his anti-war diatribe on April 12, aboard a plane headed toward Africa he said: “Too many people are suffering in the world today, too many innocent people are being killed, and someone has to stand up and say there’s a better way.” (“Pope Leo Says He Has No Fear,” NCR, 4/13/26)

With Dorothy Day, the co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, of which I am a part, I continue to believe in the Resurrection. I am a part of the Resurrection Community. I believe that each time we serve a meal on Skid Row, each time we stand on street corners protesting injustice to the derision of passers-by, that each

time we go to jail to protest President Trump’s policies on the War on Iran and immigration we strike a blow for the Kingdom of God. We give witness that the power of the Resurrection is stronger than the power of death.

It may be delusional, as I have difficulty believing in the actual physical, bodily resurrection. Like most 21st-century skeptics, I have difficulty believing in such a preposterous phenomenon. But I believe in the Gospel Story. And the Gospel Story tells us that goodness, mercy, and justice will ultimately triumph over evil and inhumanity. I believe with Martin Luther King, Jr. that: “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.” Ω

Jeff Dietrich’s new book, “Rage, Rage Against the Dying of the Light:” Warriors, Prophets, and Saints in the Revolutionary Tradition, will be published this summer by Walton Well Press.

DEMOLITION CROSSES

By ZOE KISSELBACH

sin is to refuse to love one’s Neighbors
and, therefore, the Lord himself; the builder
beats the swarming biters from his pantlegs
snaps drywall towel, drywall clouds touch down
pyroclastic, ozone laden, fallen
firmament dissolving, coating lungs and
long stemmed poppies spring, still child colored
somehow, they are all still child colored.
sin is to refuse to love one’s Neighbors
and, therefore, the Lord himself; creation
sowing cancer seeds in popped soil,
making potter’s fields of new deal playgrounds.
and there are many crosses in the walls
of these projects — demolition crosses. Ω

SHE IS SELMA

By KAI BROWN

She is born into streets that watch her,
streets that judge her skin
before she knows her name.

She is a child who learns early
that safety is borrowed,
that a step too far could cost every-
thing.

She is footsteps in silence,
in hallways where the white teacher’s
eyes
cannot see her,
but the world already has.

She is hands taught to fold,
to shrink,
to disappear in plain sight.

She is watching her mother come
home
with bitterness tucked under her
smile,
with a heart broken
by a government that refuses to see
her worth.

She is learning injustice
as a whisper,
as a shadow
that stretches longer than her small
body.

She is a sister.
She is tethered to another soul,
a hand that squeezes hers
when the world tries to tear them
apart.

She is marching barefoot in spirit,
in courage she didn’t ask to have,
carrying signs too heavy for her
shoulders,
letters too sharp to speak aloud.

She is seeing her friends dragged
away,
her sister cuffed like a criminal
for wanting what is already theirs.

She is hearing the cries,
the whips of fear and anger,
the drums of hatred
that beat against her chest.

She is stepping onto the road
to Montgomery,
to a future she cannot touch,
but feels trembling in every bone.

She is pride,
and she is trembling,
and she is sorrow
and she is hope.
She is learning the world is cruel,
and still, she chooses to stand.

She is growing older
but the blood of Selma
runs through her hands,
through her work,
through every fight she dares to take.

She is proof
that the smallest feet
can leave the deepest prints,
and the quietest voices
can shake the sky. Ω

*Kai is a middle school student in a
Los Angeles Catholic School.*

There are many stories of meaningful action for the Church and other people of conscience to be inspired by, stories arising all across Turtle Island. A kind of “re-storying” is taking place, and slowly relationships between land and people are beginning to heal in small but significant ways.

HEALING AND REPAIR: EMBRACING LAND JUSTICE

By ERIC ANGLADA

Ten years ago, my Catholic Worker community and I moved to a 25-acre piece of land in southwest Wisconsin that we named St. Isidore—after the patron of farmers—to heal the land and ourselves. On this hilly spot not far from the great Mississippi River, a core commitment of our community (four adults and two children) has been to steward this sacred place into greater abundance.

We continue to learn and grow into our skills of building up more and more life, both human and otherwise. With our no-till regenerative gardening and extensive composting, we strive to build up topsoil that is teeming with life while sequestering carbon into the ground. We have been planting and tending native plants, shrubs, and trees. So many of them—especially the Oaks, a keystone species that host and support more creatures than any other—are now thriving.

Bit by bit, we have replaced some of the lawn with prairie flowers and grasses. We have also begun to utilize fire, a crucial feature of Indigenous stewardship for millennia, to regenerate the land. We have marveled as the land has responded to this varied engagement by producing an abundance of healthy food and attracting a multitude of different creatures.

Only a few months before we moved here, my wife Brenna and I had a profoundly transformative encounter with Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican storyteller Jim Bear Jacobs. A Christian pastor, Jim Bear says that he is a “missionary in reverse,” bringing white folks to Indigenous ways. Having received permission from Dakota elders in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Jim Bear tells, in place, the stories of both the genesis and the attempted genocide of the Dakota people. For Brenna and me, listening to these stories tapped into not only a profound sense of grief, but also a call to listen and learn more deeply and to act.

We had no idea where this call might lead us. Yet we emerged from that encounter with a strong desire to be a part of the healing and repair of the manifold wounds of colonialism.

As white Catholics, a part of the work that we are grappling with is trying to reimagine our relationship with the land. Writing about the colonial mindset, white writer Ben Ehrenreich says, “only once we imagined the world as dead could we dedicate ourselves to making it so” (*Desert Notebooks: A Road Map for the End of Time*).

Instead of engaging with the living world as “a resource” or a “thing” to be dominated, then, we are taking active steps to be in relationship with the world as relatives and kin worthy of respect, care, and attention. This reimagining—away from property and towards sacred creation—is part of the process of undoing colonialism and is connected, I believe, to Pope Francis’ call for an “ecological conversion” (*Laudato Si’*).

We continue to learn from what Jim Bear calls the “story of the land.” In the Indigenous worldview, according to Jim Bear, stories are held in place. We have been privileged to be able to learn in places like Standing Rock and northern Minnesota where Indigenous people, par-

ticularly women, are leading the defense of sacred water and sacred land. We have traveled to powwows and seen Indigenous-led food sovereignty work, listened to stories of Native boarding schools and the impact of racist mascots. We have learned about land dispossession and the reality that white people own 98% of private, agricultural land.

And we continue to learn from powerful Native writers like Linda Hogan, Patty Krawec, David Treuer, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Angeline Boulley, and Louise Erdrich. Tragedy and humor, genocide and resurgence, violent upheaval and cultural reclamation: slowly these learnings and stories are becoming part of us, inspiring and challenging us, urging us to become collaborators in the vitally necessary work of repair and healing.

Our St. Isidore Catholic Worker Farm community is made up of descendants of settlers to this continent that many Indigenous people call “Turtle Island.” So many of the European peoples who arrived to this continent carried stories of an empty and open land. “Whether it is the stories settlers tell or the theologies they develop to interpret those stories,” Osage theologian George E. “Tink” Tinker writes, “something appears wrong to Indian people.”

The Catholic Church is deeply entangled in these faulty stories and the pain they have caused. When Brenna and I encountered Jim Bear, we also learned of the “Doctrine of Discovery,” a series of papal proclamations in the 15th century that provided the legal and moral justification for colonization and slavery. The popes used words like “invade,” “vanquish,” “conquer,” and “subdue.” Their ideas that Indigenous people had no inherent right to their own land provided the moral foundation for the European colonization of this continent.

Devastatingly, that belief was then enshrined in U.S. law in 1823. Hardly a marginal decision, the Johnson v. McIntosh ruling is the foundational ruling of all U.S. property law and was cited as recently as 2005 to deny the Oneida sovereignty over their ancestral land in New York state.

On March 30, 2023, in response to decades of pressure by Indigenous people, the Vatican formally repudiated the Doctrine in a short, nine-paragraph statement. But while the Vatican claims that the Church is committed to “foster[ing] efforts aimed at promoting reconciliation and healing,” the statement will be empty without the weight of meaningful action toward repair.

And there are many stories of meaningful action for the Church and other people of conscience to be inspired by, stories arising all across Turtle Island. A kind of “re-storying” is taking place, and slowly relationships between land and people are beginning to heal in small but significant ways.

Last Fall, for example, up in the Northwoods of Wisconsin, I had the chance to participate in a land back ceremony between the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration—who ran a boarding school for Native children for much of the 20th century—and the Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe community. The sisters returned their retreat center on Trout Lake to the original caretakers. The Ojibwe community will now use that land for cultural revitalization.



Catherine, Jeff, Susan on the LACW's 56th anniversary



Sergio interviewed by the press at Good Friday Stations of the Cross

The sisters found a concrete way to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery and point a path towards collective liberation from colonialism. Tribal chairman John Johnson called it “an historic event for all of us” and “a return of relationship, balance, and hope.”

In upstate New York, the BIPOC-led Soul Fire Farm is one of the most exciting land-based communities in the country. Since 2010, they have built over a foot of topsoil while offering “solidarity shares” of food to low-income folks in Albany—all while training the next generation of Black and Indigenous farmers.

Soul Fire collaborated with the Northeast Farmers of Color in order to create a “Reparations Map,” which enables white folks a chance to offer direct reparations to BIPOC farmers with tools, money, or land. “Our food comes from the earth, from the soil, from the land,” says Leah Penniman, one of the farm’s co-founders. “And if we don’t own any and we don’t control any of it, we don’t really have a voice in the food system.”

Inspired by the “voluntary land tax” movement of non-Native people in the U.S. who recognize that we are living on stolen land by contributing financially to land return, in the Midwest, Brenna and I helped launch Honor Native Land Fund (HNLF). HNLF collaborates with the Indigenous-led Great Plains Action Society,

which has liberated an acre of land in Iowa City to build a new Resilience and Innovation Hub, offering a healing space for Indigenous and other folks. The Hub is creating a “first foods” garden, starting a mutual aid cafe, and creating space for BIPOC folks to create their own economies.

Sikowis Nobiss (Cree), the Executive Director of the Great Plains Action Society, refers to these types of reparative actions as part of a process of what she and many other Indigenous people call “rematriation.” ReMatriation, she writes, “describes the Indigenous fight to defend Mother Earth. It is a call to reestablish Indigenous landscapes, bring back Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge and to give stolen power back to the feminine.”

This month marks ten years of our St. Isidore community. Ten years in which we have expanded our gardens, planted hundreds of trees, installed solar panels, hosted visitors, restored prairie, and more. But that work only really finds its meaning and power in this wider web of land justice, in these emerging stories of healing and repair. We cannot heal racism without healing land. We cannot heal land without healing racism. Everything is connected. Ω

Eric Anglada is a founding member of St. Isidore Catholic Worker Farm.

Photo by Matt Harper

Photo by Joseph McKeller



St. Paul High School students on Walk for Hunger



Good Friday Stations of the Cross

Photo by Hannah Petersen

Photo by Joseph McKeller

Existing institutions already struggle with expanding their efforts to provide more services, like the SLC Diocese-run Weigan Center, which was denied an expansion by the city in 2023.

Bill Tibbitts, deputy executive director of Crossroads Urban Center, raised the following concerns about the proposed “Accountability Center”: “A 300-400 bed mental and behavioral health facility that people are not allowed to leave is not a shelter but an incarceration option,” Tibbitts told *Utah News Dispatch*. “Having such a facility co-located with a shelter would probably lead to a sense that if you do not follow the rules in one facility you could be moved into the other... Would wandering away from the shelter without permission be something that gets you placed in the detention center?”

This is Trump’s vision for the future. In contrast, *Dilexi Te* looks to the past, naming Catholic saints that served the poor and showing how we as Christians have grown complacent and come to treat the care of the poor as something the State must oversee, instead of welcoming the poor into the Body of His church as Jesus intended and the early Christians actually practiced.

Peter Maurin, co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, summed this up nicely in one of his “Easy Essays.”

In the first centuries of Christ the poor were fed, clothed, and sheltered at a personal sacrifice and the Pagans said about the Christians: “See how they love each other.”

Today the poor are fed, clothed, and sheltered by the politicians at the expense of the taxpayers.

And because the poor are no longer fed, clothed, and sheltered at a personal sacrifice but at the expense of taxpayers Pagans say about Christians: “See how they pass the buck.”

But what does our current Pope have to say? “The poor are not there by chance or by blind and cruel fate. Nor, for most of them, is poverty a choice. Yet, there are those who still presume to make this claim, thus revealing their own blindness and cruelty. Of course, among the poor there are also those who do not want to work, perhaps because their ancestors, who worked all their lives, died poor.”

However, there are so many others—men and women—who nonetheless work from dawn to dusk, perhaps collecting scraps or the like, even though they know that their hard work will only help them to scrape by, but never really improve their lives. Nor can it be said that most of the poor are such because they do not “deserve” otherwise, as maintained by that specious view of meritocracy that sees only the successful as “deserving” (*Dilexi Te*).

The idea that people might be punished

for not being able to afford shelter with incarceration and forced labor is a step back in the wrong direction. A vision of the future that honors God is one where we invite Him into our homes ourselves. We as Catholics are called to see Jesus in the beggar, the widow, and the criminal. “In the early Christian community, acts of charity were performed on the basis not of preliminary studies or advance planning, but directly following Jesus’ example as presented in the Gospel” (*Dilexi Te*).

This is embodied today by the Catholic Worker movement which maintains Houses of Hospitality. At a House of Hospitality, people have access to resources and shelter regardless of church affiliation or any other criteria. On a smaller scale, Christ Rooms are a way Christians can embody God’s “preferential choice” for the poor by keeping a room for “Christ in disguise:” the beggar, the refugee, the orphan. I myself have operated a form of a Christ Room. While not being blessed with my own spare room or property, my partner and I allowed a man to use our shower, laundry machines, and couch in inclement weather as we helped him to find housing. Our dear friend Lance has now been housed for more than a year after being homeless for 30 years. I have also lived at the L.A. Catholic Worker and London Catholic Worker, and visited the two NYC locations, Maryhouse and St. Joseph’s. I have seen firsthand how they can stretch a dollar and how effective hospitality becomes when you live and work alongside the people you serve. If Utah needs any new services, it is a House of Hospitality, not a modified prison for the poor.

Grace Bardugon is dreaming of re-opening the Joe Hill House of Hospitality in Salt Lake City, UT.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Erik Ruin is a Michigan-raised, Philadelphia-based printmaker, shadow puppeteer, paper-cut artist, and more. He is a founding member of the International Justseeds Artists’ Cooperative, and co-author with Cindy Milstein of the book *Paths Toward Utopia: Graphic Explorations of Everyday Anarchism*, PM Press, 2012. To contact email: ErikRuin@gmail.com or check out his website Erikruin.info or his Instagram: @erikruin

THE HOMELESS CAMPUS

By GRACE BARDUGON

The Gospel takes away our right forever, to discriminate between the deserving and the undeserving poor.

—Dorothy Day, Servant of God

Under pressure from Trump’s executive order criminalizing the unhoused, Utah has revealed their plans for a 1,300-bed “homeless campus.” This campus will fundamentally violate the dignity of those housed there and will not properly take care of our poor, which is a core focus of Catholic ministry.

Dilexi Te, Pope Leo XIV’s first Apostolic Exhortation of his papacy (a document written by the pope that typically encourages a particular virtue or activity) speaks about God’s “preferential choice” for the poor. It describes how Catholics, as well as nations, should approach those experiencing poverty and homelessness.

The “preferential choice” of God towards the poor is a core component of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and puts

the emphasis on listening to the experiences of the marginalized and prioritizing human dignity above all. This “Homeless Campus” is inconsistent with CST, as emphasized in Pope Leo’s *Dilexi Te*. This proposal is not an expansion of services but a punitive, inhumane workhouse.

This does not change the fact that locally and nationwide, people need more resources and support. We cannot demonstrate God’s “preferential choice” for the poor without honoring their human rights and dignity. The Catholic Worker movement and Houses of Hospitality give a glimpse of a tried-and-true method that honors human dignity above all and uses the Works of Mercy as a framework for the care of the poor.

The new “homeless campus,” pushed by Republican Spencer Cox, will have at least 300 beds set aside for “civil commitment.” This is when a judge orders someone to comply with treatment or face jail time: often going to a rehab or state hospital, all of which are extremely understaffed and have long wait lists.

VILCHIS cont'd from p.2

of the home, where the home is no longer just a place where people live. It is an investment, material for speculation. So the tenant is at the center of all these places.

People have a right to a place, the right to build community and culture and, at the same time, a right to have an economy that takes care of their needs in a way that is not just for the production of profit and the financialization of goods.

AGITATOR: It strikes me that the work of building tenant power, of deepening tenant's organizing skills, of cultivating the value of generative conflict, and of nurturing tenants' sense of dignity could impact much more for tenants than simply their housing reality. How have you seen other dimensions of renters' lives impacted by their tenant union work?

VILCHIS: Once people become organized, a lot of this consciousness begins inserting itself in all these different places. I love how people start moving from their own building to the other issues in the larger neighborhood.

Like here in Boyle Heights, we have installed five stop lights, changed I don't know how many crosswalks, and cleaned up a couple of miles of alleys. And the fight against the art galleries a couple of years ago when people from the community said we do not want these galleries and the gentrification process following them, we have to resist. And that is building power. Because now they are taking ownership of their homes and neighborhoods.

The struggle to construct the tenants union is focused mostly on the subjectivity of the tenants and the utility of the tenants themselves. Historically, we have had a lot of advocates. But the first 10 years of our existence the question has been: how do we elevate the voice of the tenants? How do we make the stories of our people more visible and clear?

We uplift these stories to change the conditions so that people can stay where they live, can have dignified housing, and can ensure the homeless have a place to live.

In the long term, Liberation Theology reminds us that, when the voice of the poor emerges, when the voice of the poor becomes loud enough, when the voice of the poor creates the contradiction, we will be in a different place.

And thus we want to do things by ourselves, on our own terms.

AGITATOR: Given your work is deeply concerned with acknowledging and addressing the legacies that moved us to where we are today, how do you consider our responsibility to indigenous communities while doing your work of trying to keep people housed and anchored in their communities?

VILCHIS: We are in deep relationship with *Apache Stronghold*, and we are very clear that it is very important for our community to know and learn from the stories and histories of colonization. And as a mostly-immigrant community deriving from Latin America, our history is part of that. So our process is for people to learn the histories of struggle and for the members to also understand our own struggle to preserve and protect the places where we are living.

AGITATOR: I picked up a lot of spiritual language and visions in *Abolish Rent: How Tenants Can End the Housing Crisis* as I read it. How do you see this struggle as a spiritual one as much as a political, cultural, and social one?

VILCHIS: When you look at the participation of LATU organizers, activists, and those in solidarity, the spiritual spectrum is very broad: from atheists to Marxist Christians. But our

center is about coming together for the creation of a larger vision. This world as it exists is not the world we are meant to live in.

The small picture: the faith of the community, the religions they believe in, are integrated into the whole process we follow. The big picture: we believe what the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) does: our struggle is about a world that is not here yet but which we believe is possible. And our faith in the possibility of creating that world is really what drives us to keep going and try different ways of doing this.

And the only way we maintain that spirit and vision is by building that community of believers every day. That is constructing the place and organization and way of fighting so that that world becomes real.

When we go to the community, knock on their doors and visit them, we invite them—after working, after sitting with your children to eat, after making love—to attend our meeting. For many, there is something behind this work that is much bigger than just the politics.

AGITATOR: In your book you write, "Rent is a fundamental engine of inequality and injustice, a transfer of wealth from the poorest to the richest, the most vulnerable to the least, which drives millions into debt and despair and onto the streets." Can you articulate briefly some of the dimensions of this alternative vision: what would rent abolition actually look like?

VILCHIS: In Brazil, article 185 of the MST states that if land is not being used for a social purpose, the people who occupy and work on it have a right to it. In Mexico, if you occupy land after a certain period of time, you have a right to that land if no one else claims it, and the government has a duty and a responsibility to give it to you. So we are not talking about something that does not exist in the world. The redistribution of land is a fact in many parts of the world.

In the United States, that happened during Reconstruction, until racism and the economy and all sorts of things took it away from us.

And during the pandemic when people decided they were not going to pay rent because they had to buy medicine and pay for food, the world did not fall apart: people continued to have electricity, water, and a place to live, and landlords did not die of hunger. So we know that is possible.

The possibilities become more clear every time our government covers the debt by paying landlords; the state and world have a capacity to make new things happen. And when you look at the history of people who have taken over land and made it their own, and have built cities and communities around that land, we know what is possible.

We know that the U.S. is way behind on that process but it is our mission to have the poorest of the poor teach us that it is possible to live in a world where you do not pay rent and you still have a place to live.

AGITATOR: Any closing reflections you would like to share?

VILCHIS: Here in Boyle Heights there is a corner with two benches that residents from the *Comité Esperanza* built for their seniors who wait for the bus. For six years, the community kept stopping traffic to help elders and children cross the street until the city council member became pissed enough to give us what we wanted: a stop light.

Two blocks from that street, in a building that is controlled by one of our tenants, they distribute food for 50 families each week. Nearby there is an alley that we periodically close to have meetings, dances, and movie

nights. The women in this community have been working for more than 25 years building the world that they believe in. And it is these tenants who have decided there is another way of doing things and are pushing that forward for everyone. Ω

Leonardo Vilchis has been organizing tenants in Boyle Heights for 40 years and is a founder of Union de Vecinos and the L.A. Tenants Union.

WISNIEWSKI cont'd from p.2

religion of creation is about *Spirit* observing and transforming us from the inside out" (ix).

Wes, in the Introduction, conveys that "Both the first and final books of the Christian Scriptures portray a Creator God who calls people to avoid human-made empires and to live in harmony with each other and all of creation" (xvi). Later he emphasizes, "The Jewish Jesus engages this long controversy and sides clearly with ROC, condemning ROE as an instrument of 'the devil' or 'Satan.' For this, the Jerusalem supporters of the ROE that justified the elite's collaboration with empire rejected Jesus and turned him over to be executed" (xviii).

Another premise of ROE maintains that the faith journey is primarily—at times exclusively—a private matter between me (my soul) and God. What happens in the world around me—imperialist and corporate policies and practices, and individuals' actions, all of which create a multitude of victims—humans, other creatures, and nature—are secondary at best, or outright ignored.

Creation or Empire is made up of five parts: I) Religion and the Bible, with three chapters; II) Religion of Empire and Religion of Creation in the Hebrew Scriptures, with three chapters; III) The Gospel of Jesus and Paul as Religion of Creation, with four chapters; IV) How the Anti-Imperial Gospel of Jesus Became Imperial Christianity, with three chapters; V) The Religion of Creation and Religion of Empire Today, with two chapters; and ends with Sources for Further Reading and Engagement with the Bible from a ROC Perspective.

Each part contains an immense treasure of wisdom and exceptional Biblical insight, and each aspect is clearly explained. *Creation or Empire* is a brilliant work, a good read that will enlighten an awareness of how far we have drifted from YHWH's original intent for the human family and creation, yet provides significant information and actions needed to turn around, to reject allegiance to empire and its oppressive and violent aggression, and fully live by the religion of creation, dedicated to the radical gospel of love—for YHWH, each other, and creation.

I have read Wes's other books and have been blessed with being able to attend Bible studies and presentations by Wes, and I find him to be in an elite community of theologians and Biblical instructors that includes Ched Myers and Jim Douglass, among others. His insights are exceptional. I therefore highly recommend this, and his other books. You will have no regrets. I also recommend his YouTube channel called *Radical Bible* ([youtube.com/@radicalbible](https://www.youtube.com/@radicalbible)), a new form of Bible commentary for the 21st century.

In John 16:13, Jesus conveys, "The Spirit of truth will guide you to all truth." I believe *Creation or Empire* is part of that message. Ω

Mike Wisniewski is a semi-retired Los Angeles Catholic Worker community member and co-editor of the Agitator

LA CAN cont'd from p.2

Districts with their "security teams" whose main purpose appears to be harassing unhoused people.

CCA's "Revive DTLA" plan is simply a continuation of this history and their relentless efforts to expand their grip over downtown and to remove poor people, especially Black and Brown people who live in Skid Row. They are using the upcoming World Cup, Super Bowl, and Olympics to add urgency to their calls for criminalization and gentrification. The CCA advocated fiercely for the city to invest billions of tax dollars that could pay for housing, healthcare, education or other essential needs into rebuilding and expanding the Convention Center—a move expected to profit the real estate developers, hotel and restaurant owners, and financiers that make up their membership. Not surprisingly, the city awarded Convention Center development contracts to CCA members AEG, Plenary Americas, and PCL Construction.

Mayor Bass, who has secured CCA's endorsement in her re-election bid, has supported the plan, including taking steps to add more LAPD officers, stating her support for more use of "CARE Court" downtown, and maintaining her "Inside Safe sweeps and shelter program." Councilmember Ysabel Jurado has signaled support for aspects of the plan, along with her strong advocacy for the Convention Center expansion. Assembly members Matt Haney and Mark Gonzalez have appeared at events supporting CCA and their development plans.

More disturbingly, many Skid Row service providers, whose stated missions would appear to oppose criminalization and banishment, are not only members of CCA, but have publicly endorsed or supported the "Revive DTLA" plan: Downtown Women's Center, The People Concern, and Chrysalis, to name a few. Most notably, Downtown Women's Center (DWC) CEO, Amy Turk, spoke at CCA's event introducing the plan and said, "I'm proud to stand with the Central City Association and more than 100 other members who came together to create this action plan." Former CCA Executive Director Jessica Lall, now with CBRE, is on DWC's board of directors. The People Concern (TPC) CEO John Maceri has spoken favorably of the "Revive DTLA" plan. TPC is listed as a CCA member. Chrysalis is a CCA member; their CEO, Mark Loranger, sits on their board of directors. These service providers' involvement with CCA and endorsement of their criminalization and gentrification plan provides cover for CCA's corporate agenda.

Despite CCA's influence, the Skid Row community, with LA CAN's leadership, is fighting back and challenging them. People are becoming educated about their plan. LA CAN held a town hall meeting in April to warn about CCA's latest moves, but also, and more importantly, to build a platform of what the community needs to improve people's material conditions. The platform includes meeting basic needs, like well-maintained, permanent housing, healthcare, nutritious food, clean water, and sanitation; providing opportunities for people to better themselves, to make art and contribute to culture; self-determination and control over decisions about our own lives; respect for civil and human rights, including an end to criminalization and destructive sanitation sweeps. LA CAN calls on all members of the community to join the fight. Ω

Los Angeles Community Action Network has been organizing unhoused residents of Skid Row for 27 years

ON THE LINE

CONGRATULATIONS

On April 25, 2026, Rev. Kathleen Bellefeuille-Rice, (Roman Catholic Womanpriest), mother of former community member Clare Bellefeuille-Rice, and our longtime friend and founder of the "Washington Clippers" footcare team that came to the LACW for two weeks every January from Olympia, Washington, to care for the feet of our Skid Row friends, was ordained a bishop in the Roman Catholic Womenpriests (RCWP) movement.

The movement has grown considerably in the past two decades and includes womenpriests in Europe, the Americas, Africa, Asia, and 34 states, and now includes men and all genders. It is noted that the movement combines the spirit of the Catholic Worker with the gender justice of feminism. We congratulate Bishop Kathleen and extend our full support in her new position.

TRUMP GRIFTING MACHINE

The Internal Revenue Service made a taxpayer-funded \$1.77 BILLION settlement in Donald Trump's lawsuit against the IRS that ensures the *entire* Trump family could potentially get away with defrauding the IRS in perpetuity.

Under the settlement, the IRS is "forever barred and precluded" from prosecuting and pursuing any and all claims and other actions against the Trump family, regarding unpaid taxes.

The landmark judgement in a civil fraud case against Trump found that his two eldest sons were implicated

in an extensive financial and tax fraud scheme along with the president.

The corrupt Trump family is now exempt from our tax laws while everyone else has to obey them.

An amicus brief was filed in *Trump v. IRS*, which aimed to block the creation of an "Anti-Weaponization Fund" as part of the deal for the president to drop his lawsuit against the tax agency, which he filed over a leak of his tax returns.

This "slush fund" could be used to provide monetary rewards to people convicted of felonies in connection with the January 6, 2021 insurrection.

—commondreams.org

NUCLEAR WEAPONS SPENDING

Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles (PSR-LA), recently calculated the full cost of all nuclear weapons programs. For FY 2026 (Tax Year 2025), the total U.S. nuclear weapons programs expenditure was more than \$137.2 BILLION.

This is an approximately 24% increase from the previous fiscal year. The significant increase in spending came from a rise in the Department of War's nuclear spending and funding for the Trump regime's "Golden Dome" project.

—preventnuclearwar.org

ANOTHER ZIONIST FLOTILLA ATTACK

On May 19, Israeli forces, in an act of piracy, attacked and seized more vessels that were participating in the latest Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF)

attempting to break the illegal and immoral blockade of Gaza amid the ongoing genocide.

Video posted by Global Sumud Flotilla shows Israeli forces in inflatable boats firing their weapons toward at least two GSF vessels, even though they were stopped and the activists aboard them had their hands held in the air in surrender shouting "Do not shoot." The seizure occurred in international waters between 90-100 miles off Gaza's coast.

GSF said that hundreds of activists from more than 40 countries were "being forcibly transferred" to Israel, where past flotilla participants say they were physically and psychologically tortured by their captors.

—commondreams.org

POPE LEO AND THE U.S. EMPIRE

For several weeks, Pope Leo has been a vocal critic of the U.S. war in Iran, and of those who have used religious language to justify it. In an April 10 tweet, the pope declared, "God does not bless any conflict. Anyone who is a disciple of Christ, the Prince of Peace, is never on the side of those who once wielded the sword and today drop bombs." Some conservative Catholics, and others, have severely criticized the pope's words.

Yet, for half a century, popes have condemned war in sweeping terms—war itself, not just a specific war.

In 1965, Pope Paul VI said, "Never again war, never again war!" In 2003, on the eve of the Iraq war, John Paul II stated: "No to war! War

is not always inevitable. It is always a defeat for humanity." In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI declared: "War, with its aftermath of bereavement and destruction, has always been deemed a disaster in opposition to the plan of God, who created all things for existence and particularly wants to make the human race one family."

And in 2013, Pope Francis said: "War always marks the failure of peace, it is always a defeat for humanity."

—commonwealmagazine.org

APPALACHIA AND LITHIUM

Geologists have confirmed that the Appalachian mountain corridor, running from Maine down to Georgia, sits atop one of the largest lithium deposits in North America. Appalachia has been here before, where something valuable gets discovered underneath extremely poor people.

Coal built fortunes. Timber came through like a haircut. Tobacco kept the Carolinas and Virginia in a kind of indentured agricultural grace for generations—until the lawsuits arrived.

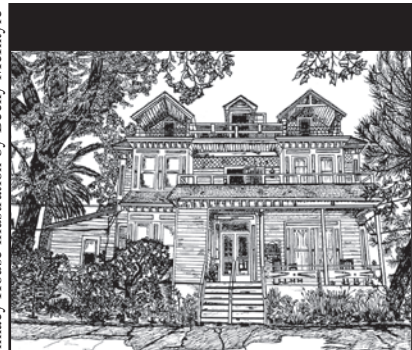
Then came OxyContin. Coal took the lungs over generations, the Sacklers took everything else in about fifteen years.

Each boom followed the same basic script: outside capital arrives, extracts, departs, leaves behind a workforce physically, emotionally, and financially damaged, and the environment devastated. It is about to happen again.

—counterpunch.org

On The Line is compiled and edited by Mike Wisniewski.

Hennacy House illustration by Becky McIntyre



THE HOUSE JOURNAL

It is easy to see the things we have not accomplished or had time to attempt. I am good at identifying and naming these things. However, a brief perusing of what the last two months have held reminds me, again, that much is afoot at the L.A. Catholic Worker as well.

Roughly 200 students from **St. Paul High School** embarked on the 53rd annual, 26-mile, March for Hunger. The LACW had a good showing of Workers who walked from Boyle Heights to West L.A. to help students cross safely near the Wilshire Federal Building. A giant protest of Iranian Americans in support of U.S. attacks on Iran brought a deluge of car and foot traffic.

We continued to be joined by immersion groups from **Sacred Heart, Fairfield Prep** and **Our Lady of Peace** high schools looking to learn about Skid Row and worship at our in-home liturgy. We have been growing the Zoom attendance for our Wednesday

evening liturgies and had the chance for two special services: For Earth Day, **Alexandria** hosted a special liturgy around Goddess Spirituality, and for Worker Remembrance Day, Fr. Mel hosted a liturgy centered on the plight and on-the-job deaths of workers.

A big thanks to all our presiders who help us stay spiritually rooted together.

In addition to our opportunities to worship in our more traditional avenues, we also sought expanded and new ways to move people of faith and conscience into the streets. We collaborated with other communities to bring 200 people out for our annual Stations of the Cross before spending a number of months planning an outdoor mass (unfortunately, unforeseeable challenges forced us to have to postpone it). But energy builds for the planning team hoping to keep this work going.

And we continued to find other ways to keep our resistance work growing.

Alexandria also led a witness at UCLA against the school's employment of Professor Mark Tramo (who was named repeatedly in the Epstein files). She also led another protest and a culture critique in support of the women and girls of Afghanistan who have had nearly all their rights revoked.

We joined **Centro CSO** for our local May Day events to stand with workers. We have continued our weekly vigils outside the downtown Federal Building and have met with clergy who continue to go each Friday to minister to those in detention there. Worker guest **Amadeo** invited us to have a deep conversation about pacifism and nonviolence before departing for her next journey.

As thus, people continue to come and go. **Megan** stepped away for a month to work her yearly Sci-Tech

job, **Matt** and **Hannah** visited the New Orleans Catholic Worker, **Jed** spent time in Japan, **Susan** visited friends and family on the East Coast, and **Greg** spent time in Northern California prepping to close out his physical ties there.

Fortunately, many joined us around those times to help hold the work.

David and **Eliza** visited from Santa Clara, **Dimitri** came and went a few times, friends from the Lydia House CW in Ohio (**Mary Ellen**, **Meredith** and **Annie**) joined us for Holy Week, **Peter** stopped over for a weekend, **Sonia** visited her friend and helped out for two weeks, **Lizeth** moved in to explore our work more regularly, and **Grace**, **Itza** and **Shirley** joined us from Utah for a few days.

Harrison, Megan's 8-month-old, continues to grow rapidly, and we also learned about the death of long-time LACW friend and former community member **Christian Harris**.

We continue to find ways to deepen our relationships, to expand our community, to celebrate our accomplishments, and to laugh. **Greg** represented us at the Pacific Life Community's annual Faith and Resistance Retreat and **Jed** represented us at a Pastors for Peace Cuban solidarity event. **Matt** received the **Fr. Chris Ponnet** Award from the St. Camillus Center and a number of folks joined the **Ignatians L.A.** event to talk about vocations. **Susan** spearheaded an Easter Brunch for the 56th anniversary of the LACW and many joined in for poetry night, karaoke night, and evening festivities over the last months.

In other big news, the L.A. Catholic Worker is preparing for two big events coming up. The first is our *Community Rising - A Pentecost Celebration* that is scheduled for May 31.

This opportunity to come together, share stories, deepen community, break bread, and bask in the beauty of our diversity and lineages (not to mention the many gifts of the Spirit) will provide a counter to the heartbreak, the injustice, and unrelenting attacks on human dignity and civil society that have so characterized the last year.

Once that is completed, we will kick it into high gear as we prepare to have another large summer program. With interested fellows coming from across the country to try out the work and life at our Ammon Hennacy House of Hospitality, we are excited to share this place, our people, and the philosophy behind it all with folks curious about the Catholic Worker movement.

So, though it seems like our plumbing leaks last a little longer these days than they used to, and that piles accumulate more often (and refuse to be vanquished), and that the list of "Things We Need to Do" grows faster than it can be tamed, we push on knowing perfection is impossible and even the little we can do is better than giving in or up.

We pray that in the midst of whatever challenges and hardships you are experiencing, navigating whatever complicated emotions and struggles may be surfacing in your life, that you are drawing continual strength from whatever wells feed your spirit: faith, friends, work, art, hobbies, nature, social movements, humor, love, animals, organizing, elders, children, mentors, culture, exercise. Thank you for all you do to make hope infectious and unrelenting in these complicated and precarious times.

House Journal is written by Matt Harper.

LOS ANGELES CATHOLIC WORKER

Ammon Hennacy House of Hospitality
632 N. Britannia St., Los Angeles, CA 90033-1722
323.267.8789 • info@lacatholicworker.org

Website: <https://lacatholicworker.org>

Donation drop off welcome daily: 8am - 7pm

Hospitality Kitchen (aka Hippie Kitchen)
821 E. 6th St., Los Angeles, CA 90021
213.614.9615

Volunteer: Tue., Thurs., Sat. from 7:30am - 12:30pm

Please call Hennacy House for groups of 4-5

CATHOLIC AGITATOR - Vol. 56 / No. 3 - JUNE 2026

👉 SPECIAL NEEDS 👈

BELTS - New or slightly used. **T-SHIRTS** - Large & 2X. **BACKPACKS** (slightly used or new).
TARPS. NEW READING GLASSES 200 strength and up. **CANES** - wood or adjustable metal.

Two-blade **RAZORS. DEODERANT** - Men and Women. Large **SOAP BARS**. Men and Women's **SUN GLASSES**. Travel and regular size toothpaste. **Thank you. Many Blessings.**

THANK YOU ST. PAUL HIGH SCHOOL

Each year for the past 53 years, St. Paul High School students, parents, faculty, and alumni raise funds for our soup kitchen by walking a marathon from East L.A. to Santa Monica. We are exceedingly grateful for your dedication to help us feed the hungry. Many blessings!

SHARE YOUR EXCESS BACKYARD FRUIT

If you have fruit trees, specifically citrus fruits, lemons in particular, and have an excess, our kitchen guests would certainly appreciate whatever you will not use, and Catherine would like to use lemons with the tea she serves daily. Please consider donating. Thank you.



CATHOLIC WORKER

The Los Angeles Catholic Worker, founded in 1970, is part of the international Catholic Worker movement founded in 1933 by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. We are a resistance community that operates a free soup kitchen on Skid Row, a house of hospitality in Boyle Heights for some of our unhoused friends from the Row, and publishes this bi-monthly publication—the *Catholic Agitator*. Visit our website: <https://lacatholicworker.org> and Los Angeles Catholic Worker on Facebook.

Interested in joining us for a short-term trial period or for the long-term? Call us at 323-267-8789



L.A. CATHOLIC WORKER SISTER HOUSE NETWORK:

The Sister House Network consists of Catholic Worker houses that were either founded or assumed by former LACW community members.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY
500 W. VanBuren Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89106
(702) 647-0728 <https://lvcw.org>

ISAIAH HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY
316 S. Cypress Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92701
(714) 835-6304 <https://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 - Houseofgracephilly@gmail.com

KIERAN PRATHER HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY
672 2nd Ave., San Bruno, CA 94066
(650) 827-0706
<https://catholicworkerhospitalityhouse.org>

BEATITUDE HOUSE
267 Campodonico Ave., Guadalupe, CA 93434-1501
(805) 343-6322

ST. BENEDICT HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY
4022 N. Cheryl Ave., Fresno, CA 93705
(559) 977-3648 <https://sbcw.org> - lizaOSB@aol.com

CASA COLIBRÌ CATHOLIC WORKER
Ocampo #2 Hostotipaquillo, Jalisco Mexico C.P. 46440
<http://casacolibricw.com>
011-52 - 386 - 744-5063 - casacolibricw@gmail.com

AMANI HOUSE - NAIROBI, KENYA, AFRICA
mdavidomondi@gmail.com

NEW ORLEANS CATHOLIC WORKER
1910 Constance St., New Orleans, LA 70130
(504) 457-8062 - nocw@yahoo.com
<https://neworleanscatholicworker.weebly.com>

VENICE CATHOLIC WORKER
<https://venicecatholicworker.org>

DANDELION HOUSE CATHOLIC WORKER
13319 SE Linden Lane, Portland, OR 97222
(408) 910-7074 - <https://dandelionhouse.org>
fumi@dandelionhouse.org

SANTA CRUZ BREAD AND ROSES
1319 Laurel St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(805) 440-1298 - <https://scbreadandroses.org>

ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC WORKER
<https://stlcatholicworker.org>
StLouisCatholicWorker@gmail.com