

THE LONDON CATHOLIC WORKER

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free/donation



The London Catholic Worker at the 'No Faith in Trident' day at AWE Burghfield, part of the Trident Ploughshares' month of resistance against the renewal of Trident. Participants included members of Put Down the Sword, Pax Christi, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, Christian CND photo: London Catholic Worker

Catholic Workers say, 'No Faith in Trident!'

Westley Ingram

Members of the London Catholic Worker joined other faith groups at AWE Burghfield, Reading to resist the renewal of the UK's Trident nuclear weapons system. The day was named 'No Faith in Trident' and was part of the Trident Ploughshares month of action.

At approximately 6:30 on the morning of Monday 27th June, three groups blockaded the three entrances of AWE Burghfield, using a combination of lock-on tubes and super glue. Put Down the Sword blockaded the north entrance to the Mearings, members of the London Catholic Worker blockaded the south entrance and a group of Quakers blockaded the Construction Gate.

For over an hour the site was inaccessible to vehicles before police cut the blockaders out and finally cleared all entrances six hours later. There were eight arrests, five for obstruction of the highway and three under military by-laws.

At the same time an all day vigil was held by over fifty people by the Mearings north entrance, in opposition to the work of the factory. We were led in prayer, songs, workshops and reflections by the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Christian CND, Pax Christi, Quakers, Anglican Peace Fellowship, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Wake Up and the London Catholic Worker.

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Please consider making a donation!



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Giuseppe Conlon House offers hospitality to destitute refugees. We also run the Urban Table soup kitchen.

Sunday 2:30 — 4:30 pm,

The Round Chapel, London E5

OPU We organise acts of nonviolent resistance and produce this newsletter.

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The Farm offers hospitality to destitute women. We grow organic vegetables and have a poustina and hermitage retreat. Maryhouse also offers a home to four destitute women with children.

Glasgow Catholic Worker

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We offer a place of welcome for asylum seekers and destitute refugees in the centre of Glashow at the Garnethill Multicultural Centre, open Saturday 9:00—1:00pm, and a soup kitchen on Friday nights. We keep a regular vigil at Faslane Nuclear Base and hold monthly meetings and prayers.

Cross boundaries and bring people together

Martin Newell



Based on the homily given by Fr. Martin Newell cp at the National Justice and Peace Conference (NJPN), Swanwick, July 2016.

I found our speakers so far, John Cruddas MP, Jenny Sinclair and Polly Jones, inspiring, challenging and informative. I don't know if Jenny realised her Rublev icon would illustrate so beautifully the first reading we just heard, about Abraham at the Oak of Mamre, as she was talking about the relational nature of God as Trinity at the heart of our Christian faith.

But something else struck me about that reading, and today's Gospel: hospitality. Some strangers, some foreigners, some people who are different from Abraham, come by. And in his eagerness to welcome them, Abraham runs out – he doesn't just walk out – and he offers them not just what is spare or left over, but the best: 'a fine and tender calf', milk and cream. And in the Gospel, Mary and Martha are welcoming Jesus and his friends, offering them hospitality too. It's a text we can find a bit difficult. We know Martha was doing something valuable – feeding and watering her guests, meeting their material needs. But Mary was doing something usually reserved in that society only for the men. She was 'sitting at the feet' of the rabbi, the

teacher – in this case, Jesus. To say that someone was 'sitting at the feet' of a rabbi was to say that they were a disciple of that rabbi. And again, only men were allowed to be disciples. And the disciples, or 'learners', of a rabbi were the closest to that rabbi. So, while we recognise the value of Martha's work of hospitality, we also want to affirm the rightness of Mary and Jesus breaking that glass ceiling, that social convention.

So in different ways, both today's readings remind me of my own experience of offering hospitality, and sharing my home with refugees and asylum seekers, for at least the last ten years. Those who are different from me, from most of us, who are strangers before they come to stay, and who are 'foreigners', those whom many in our society wish would 'leave' and 'go home'. As in the story of Mary and Martha, it is not just the food and drink that matter. It is the spending time with, the listening, the sharing a table with those who are different to us. And maybe that is part of the lesson of this Gospel today – reinforcing what others have said in this conference. That material needs for food, drink and shelter, and spiritual and human needs for listening, dialogue, recognition and respect are both essential for full human dignity. Both/and, not either/or. And perhaps Martha needed to understand that truth.

It also reminds me of an article I read some years ago: a Catholic woman writing of being inspired by the call to practice the works of mercy: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, giving drink to the thirsty, and more. But she felt frustrated by her life circumstances, until she realised that in fact she was already doing these things, in feeding, clothing, sheltering and caring for her own small children.

We so often only notice the big and dramatic gesture and miss the small, daily ways we meet

Christ in others. In my case, we cross boundaries and bring people together daily in our house, sharing the table and the cooking with Muslims and Christians from different churches, living with people from three continents. We love our neighbour who is different by building relationships with our neighbours in our Muslim area, as well as the Pentecostal Romanians living next door.

This willingness to cross boundaries and bring people together is something we see again and again in the life of Jesus, whether it is tax collectors or prostitutes, Samaritan women or Pharisees, Romans or the Syro-Phoenician woman. Commitment to this is one of the special gifts Christianity has to offer our world, to contribute to the common good of the whole of God's family.

Other gifts we can offer are the Gospel emphasis on reconciliation and forgiveness: along with an emphasis, in our dialogue and listening, to listening first and foremost to the poor and outcast, those on the periphery, as an expression of our preferential option for the poor. Another special gift we have to offer is Jesus' teaching and practice of nonviolent resistance, which exposes the reality of violence, as taught us, ironically, by Gandhi. As also voluntary poverty, or living simply, not only enables others to simply live, but also exposes the realities of poverty, while at the same time freeing us up to commit ourselves more fully to the work of justice, peace and the defence of creation.

And we can do these things because the Christian ethic goes beyond justice, it goes beyond the Golden Rule of 'do unto others as you would have them do to you'. It goes beyond 'love your neighbour as yourself'. It perhaps even goes beyond loving others as you would Christ. It goes as far as this: Jesus said, 'Love one another as I have loved you.' And Jesus died for us, and for the human race and

all creation, as the Scriptures say, 'while we were still sinners'. He sacrificed himself for our good, for the universal good. And we can find the strength to live this love in our lives, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, and because we know that in Jesus, God has showed us that depth of Love.

This willingness to follow this Jesus, who suffered that all might have the fullness of life, can give us the strength to persevere when all might seem lost. It can keep hope alive at the darkest moment, knowing that Resurrection can be and is just around the corner at any moment. At a time when the post-war settlement is over, and a new civilization is coming about, that we hope and pray will be a global civilization of love, these words of Dorothy Day continue to inspire me to be faithful to our Gospel values,

'We are called to be faithful.
Why must we succeed?
Jesus failed
In his death on the cross.
Unless the seed
Fall into the earth and die
There is no harvest.
Our work is to sow.
The next generation
Will be reaping the harvest'

And the final written words of Gandhi, who was so influenced by his study of the Bible, especially the Gospels, help me focus on what is essential:

'Recall the face of the poorest and weakest person you may have seen.
And ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to them?
Will it restore to him or her Control over their own destiny:
Will it return swaraj, freedom To the hungry and also spiritually starving millions.
Then you will find your doubts and yourself melting away'.

Martin Newell cp, a founder of the London Catholic Worker, lives with asylum seekers at Austin Smith House, Birmingham

'Ask and you shall receive'

from *The Meaning of Poverty, Advent reflections Part II*

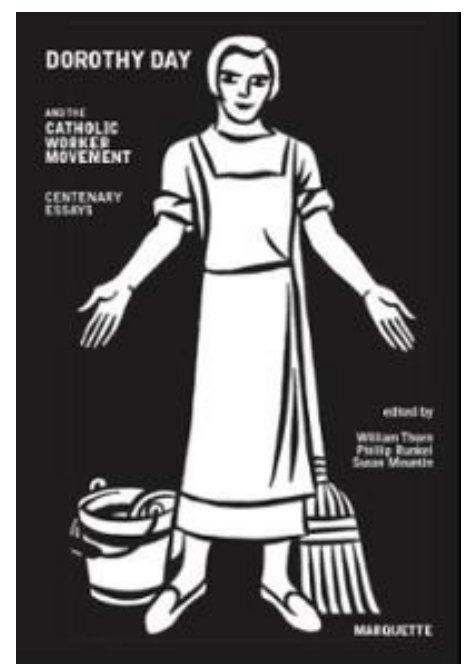
Dorothy Day

'Ask and you shall receive,' Jesus told us, and this asking may be just that question 'What shall we do?' Samuel asked it, St. Paul asked it-- 'Lord, what will you have me do?' and they seemed to get direct answers.

Paul was struck blind, literally and to everything else around him except that one great fact, 'whatever ye do to the least of these My brethren, ye do to Me.' If you feed them, clothe them, shelter them, visit them in prison (or go to prison and so are with them!), serve the sick, in general perform the works of mercy, you are serving Christ and alleviating poverty by direct action. If you are persecuting them, killing them, throwing them in prison, you are doing it to Christ. He said so.

When the crowd was moved by John the Baptist and asked, 'What shall we do?' he said to them, 'He who has two coats give to him who has none.' He also said, 'Do injury to no man. Be content with your pay.' Or with no pay at all.

(continued p 11)



Lives at Giuseppe Conlon House

Nora Ziegler

Peter Maurin said,

'We need Houses of Hospitality to show what idealism looks like when it is practised.'

Many of the articles I write for this newsletter are reflections on my personal experiences and difficulties of living at Giuseppe Conlon House. For this piece, I wanted to explore how different people I live with experience living here. I wanted to learn about the kinds of struggles people face and the different strategies they have for dealing with challenges. I was especially interested in the different ways guests and volunteers experience living in a house of hospitality. Our life together is strange; on the one hand we are a community and live together like a family but on the other hand, a small group of volunteers make decisions, enforce rules and have certain privileges. Writing this article helped me to think about the relationship between guests and volunteers and how we work as a community.

I decided to do a little research project. I carried out short interviews with nine guests and four live-in volunteers, asking each person the same open-ended questions. My academic background is sociology and social research, and it was both interesting and a lot of fun to enter into a completely different relationship, that of researcher and research subject, with the people I live and work with. As a researcher I was able to ask questions I usually wouldn't ask and people seemed to enjoy being asked, being made to feel as experts on the theme of their own life. The interview created a neutral disinterested space where

we could talk casually about how we feel, what we find difficult, what we enjoy and what we wish for.

I began with a simple opening question: what is your favourite day of the week or favourite time of day? I noticed that most people either described moments when they can socialise in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere; or times when they can be alone and enjoy some privacy. For example, several people talked about the evening mealtimes, especially on Saturdays when some of us sit around the table before dinner painting and drawing. Three of the guests mentioned that the highlight of their week is going to church or the mosque and afterwards spending time with friends and playing football. People also had different moments when they can find time for themselves. For one person it is having a shower early in the morning before others get up, for another it is the silent time during morning prayer. For one of the volunteers it is the quiet hours in the afternoon before things get hectic again in the evening, and for one of the guests it is the freedom of being able to sleep in on a Sunday morning.

I often find myself struggling to explain what exactly I do and trying to guess which version of the story the person I'm talking to is most likely to appreciate. So out of plain curiosity I asked how people describe our community to their friends and to strangers. I discovered that other long-term volunteers share my experience, that describing our life and work in detail is sometimes perceived as a direct challenge to other people's life styles and so they often just say that they help run a homeless shelter or project. With friends who are Christian or perhaps more 'alternative', they would say that it is a Christian community and a house of hospitality.

When speaking to strangers, many of the guests avoid revealing their living situation but to friends they

emphasize that the hospitality we offer is free, that we are funded by donations, and all the work is done by volunteers. One person said that his friends can't believe a place like this really exists. Another said that he always told people about the abundance we live in. There is always food; all our material needs are met. This is something I also love about our life. You have to let go of the luxury of consumer choice and learn to eat whatever is put on the table but at the same time you never have to worry about what you are going to eat. You get to feel a little bit like the lilies and birds in Christ's parable.

Both guests and volunteers said that we are a 'community' and 'like a family'. I sometimes think of us as a 'household' made up of different members: core-group, guests, volunteers, cats, temporary visitors, regular visitors, friends. A household that includes people in different situations, some who are stronger or weaker than others, some needing care, others providing care, some are friends, others struggle to get along. In one of our night prayers we say 'let your household sleep in peace'. I love the idea of this being God's household, that we are provided for by God, and, though we are all different and have our different problems and struggles, we are all loved equally by God.

Some of these problems and struggles came up in the interviews. I asked everyone what they found most difficult about living at the house. Volunteers talked about the difficulty of knowing and maintaining boundaries, of approaching people and initiating difficult conversations, and the perceived unlimited responsibility, never being able to let go or switch off. Some of the guests said that they were used to sleeping rough so they didn't find it very difficult by comparison. Others said that they didn't like the lack of privacy and independence; having to be around people when they would

rather be alone, living together with people of different cultures, the petty arguments, and the perceived lack of respect and gratitude of other guests.

In reflecting on all these answers, I found that the challenges faced by both volunteers and guests are connected to living in a small improvised space with a large group of people but are experienced in different ways. The main difference is choice. Volunteers choose to live and work in community, while guests feel that they have no better option. For guests it is difficult to share a space with people who they perceive as rude or disrespectful, who they don't like and who they haven't chosen to live with. I also find it challenging when I feel disrespected by other volunteers and guests but I have chosen to live with these people, I have some influence over who moves in, I can approach people and tell them off, and ultimately I could ask someone to leave or leave myself.

Core-group members and volunteers have more choice and freedom and this is precisely what we struggle with. We take personal responsibility for the functioning of the house, for the well-being of others and for our own self-management. The intimacy of living in community therefore becomes difficult because we can't detach. We find it hard to relax and control our stress and anxiety.

Both guests and volunteers can suffer mental illness as a result of these difficulties. So what can

we do to look after ourselves and each other? One of the guests said that you can't blame people if they become depressed and angry as a result of their situation and neither should you blame yourself for not being able to help. We have collective responsibility as a society and the only thing we can really do is be a friend; to treat people with respect as a valuable human being. This also involves challenging people's behaviour, but as someone who cares about them. Another guest said that we need strict rules to make sure people are treated fairly and know what they can expect.

As volunteers, we need to find ways of limiting and sometimes letting go of the burden of responsibility we carry. We can do this by taking holidays, spending time outside the house, and asking for support from others in the form of supervision, spiritual guidance, counselling and, of course, friendship. It seems that we all need certain structures, clear boundaries and rules, to help us manage the confusing mess of relationships that constitutes a community.

However, these structures need to make sense to us. If they feel arbitrary or imposed they will alienate us from one another instead of helping us to care for each other and ourselves. One way to ensure this might be to communicate rules and boundaries clearly and to be accountable; to let other people respond, to give feedback and be listened to.

Finally, I asked what people enjoy about living in the house. Many talked about being part of a community, enjoying the company, working together, talking or playing games like pool and chess, eating together and sharing things. You never have to experience 'forced solitude'. For some people it was praying together, living their faith with and being inspired by others. Some said that they appreciated what they learned from the challenges of living together and living as a guest in a house of hospitality. Others talked about getting to know people 'as people', learning about their lives and experiencing 'magic moments' of comfort and mutual understanding.

'Solidarity' and 'love' are ideals that we talk about, but we don't always know what they look like in practice. The reality is not always as pretty as the words. How can we speak of 'community' if we are not all equal? How can we speak of 'family' when we so often fail to understand and respect each other? In real life we often fall short of the ideal but this does not mean that the ideal is just an illusion. Sometimes we need to have faith that love is real even when we don't see it. It is impossible for us to fully comprehend and fully put into practice but it is there and we keep catching glimpses of it that fill us with hope and joy.

Nora Ziegler is a long term member of the community at Giuseppe Conlon House

Below: cartoon created by the Giuseppe Conlon House Cats



Letters from our readers

Preaching with Dorothy Day

Matthias Kramm

For the last two years I have been working as a Catholic priest in a small city parish in Germany, which involves preaching at weekday and Sunday masses. As a result of this, I have realised that my time with the Catholic Worker Movement has left a deep impression on me. My way of thinking about religion has changed considerably, and so has my way of talking about religion. Dorothy Day challenge s our common assumptions about Christianity in three ways:

Firstly, there is the question of utopian thinking. Are we allowed to believe in a better world? Or is it something we better leave up to our Marxist neighbours? 'We know there will be no utopias', writes Dorothy Day, 'we will always have the poor.' This is the sobering message we may have heard in our home parishes as well. But just a few lines before, Dorothy confesses her faith in Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace: 'We must cry out against injustice or by our silence consent to it. If we keep silent, the very stones of the street will cry out.' So, as Christians it is our duty to denounce injustice. And to believe that redemption is possible. Although we have to accept the fact of the Fall, we are allowed to believe in the Kingdom of God, a kingdom of peace and justice which cannot be brought about by violence and class struggle, but which we can only receive out of God's merciful hands.

Secondly, I found myself confronted with a passage from Matthew's Gospel

'But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.'

Does this mean that religion is restricted to our own four walls? I do not think this is what Jesus meant. Dorothy Day apparently did not either. She never ceased to believe that the gospel has to transform our society.

The same applies to Jesus of Nazareth: Jesus preached in public, he healed in public and he performed miracles in public. So Jesus does not request us to retreat into privacy, but he challenges us to invite God into our intimacy. If we live our faith just as a social convention and do not dare to meet God individually, our faith can never turn into a true relationship. But once we allow God to enter into our hearts, we will possibly come to see that our faith has political implications.

Thirdly, I asked myself: 'Was Jesus a pacifist?' If one reads the Sermon on the Mount, it seems evident. Still, in the history of exegesis a lot of alternatives have been proposed. But if Jesus Christ died for us on the cross without defending himself, without resorting to any violence, why should we as Christians resort to violence any longer? As my Jesuit brother Daniel Berrigan once wrote: "We have assumed the name of peacemakers, but we have been, by and large, unwilling to pay any significant price.'

Yes, my time with the Catholic Worker Movement keeps on challenging me. And so does Dorothy Day. Today I think that as Christians we should believe in a better world, that the Christian message belongs in the public sphere and that we should fight for peace. I am still trying hard to work out the consequences of those convictions for my homilies, but much more importantly, for my life as a Christian and a priest.

Matthias Kramm SJ volunteered at Giuseppe Conlon House from 2011 to 2014

The Parable of the Talents

Maureen Alcock

(What has gentrification ever done for us? Issue 51) I wanted to share an interpretation of this parable or to be precise a similar one in Luke 19, the interpretation of which I found in Richard Rohr's book, *Simplicity*. It comes from a Central American Base Community and to paraphrase it very roughly it goes as follows:

The nobleman who goes on a journey to a far country has always been interpreted to be God - but Jesus' audience would have recognised this nobleman to be Archelaos, the son of Herod, who had gone on a three year furlough to Rome after becoming king. It's an historical fact that a delegation of the country's inhabitants were sent to give the message, 'Don't come back' because he was so hated. When he went to Rome he left behind viceroys who could continue his unjust and extortionate administration. When he returned he was pleased with the man who had made a profit but angry with the man who had not made a profit. This man is the one who will not play the game, the one who is really prepared to take the consequences of his convictions. In the world's eyes he the outcast.

This interpretation makes so much more sense to me as the king who was a severe man, 'taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow' surely cannot represent a just and loving God?

Write in!

We warmly invite you, the reader, to comment on what is written here. Please keep your letters topical and brief. We will be including interesting letters in our next issue, Winter 2016. Contact details: page 2

Questions on the virtue, viability and inviolability of Christian nonviolence

Westley Ingram

'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.' So says Jane Austen. St Francis of Assisi was a single man whose approach to possessions and marriage were poverty and chastity. When quizzed on the lifestyle of his community he replied,

'If we had any possessions, we should need weapons and laws to defend them'.

As Giuseppe Conlon House has been considering nonviolence recently these words of St Francis have come to mind. Can wealthy, educated Europeans really make a lot of progress on nonviolence or is it just vanity to speak of it? What does nonviolence even mean and what does it ultimately require of us? How far should we take nonviolence in following Jesus Christ? When Jesus drove animals out of the temple was that violent? Did he speak harshly to a fig tree? Was his body language intimidating when delivering woes to Scribes and Pharisees? Jesus was not nonviolent enough for some while for others even nuclear weapons and capital punishment have a proud Christian heritage. Whatever it is to follow Jesus Christ we are called to carry it out to completion. This has meant to the death for some, even crucifixion. We are about a serious undertaking but our thinking is often very unclear.

Many of us are finding that conforming to the image of Jesus Christ is not turning out to be as straightforward as we had hoped. People have been trying to be faithful to God with mixed results for some time. The people of God once expected a land flowing with milk and honey as a sign of their union with God.

Now we are supposed to be satisfied with the sign of the Holy Spirit, the person of the Trinity who is the love affair between the Father and the Son. Perhaps if the promise of God had national borders then, in the words of St Francis we would 'need weapons and laws to defend them'. What is there to defend though when our prize is the love affair of the Triune God.

If we are the beloved of God and so is everyone else then violence is an unappealing option. Legitimised violence requires legitimate targets and so a list of 'goodies' and 'baddies'. What are we to do when we move from the World's regime of Judgement to the Grace regime of the Kingdom of Heaven? Then there are no goodies or baddies but only the beloved of God who know they are the beloved of God and the beloved of God who do not know that they are the beloved of God.

When our struggle is to convince the world that it is the beloved of God who then is a combatant or non-combatant? Are enemies those who challenge the security of our bodies or possessions or those who deny that God is Love and that we have no King but God? St Paul reminds us 'our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh'. Should we never attack any person in case they get the impression that we don't think they are the beloved of God? Paul goes on to say that in battle our sword is the Holy Spirit. So we are to convince the world it is the beloved of God by exercising the love of God.

What then should we do if under threat? Are some possessions still worth fighting to defend? Like our homeland, our means of sustenance or even our bodies? Not even then? How do we balance our insistence that our attacker is the beloved of God with our expectations of comfort and security? The easy answer feels like an impossible one. We follow a Lord who we are told 'emptied himself, obedient to the point of death -

even death on a cross'. Following this, Tertullian wrote in the 2nd century that 'the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church'. That was a long time ago though and we have all come a long way since then. Indeed, this easy answer feels impossible. Is it faith that we lack?

What though for those of us, the beloved of God, who are unable or unwilling to carry this out? Who can judge harshly anyone driven to violence in self defence or desperation? Perhaps the answer is in the question. How does the Grace regime judge those who fail to be perfectly graceful? I suspect that it does not judge too quickly or too harshly. It is the Grace regime after all.

Is what I have said here too simplistic? It probably is. The world is a complicated place with many horrors and we should be cautious of over simple, spiritual sounding formulations.

I have moved into Giuseppe Conlon House in the hope of making some progress on these matters. Clarity of thought is proving elusive. Nevertheless, these days when nonviolence is under fire as ineffective or immoral it is worth remembering that whether it 'works' or not our first priority is to follow Jesus Christ.

Christ's life was not particularly effective in bringing about social or political change. He did not have any property. He was offered popular support and declined it. He taught his followers nonviolent resistance. In the end he did not defend himself against his works predicted consequences. He told his followers to expect similar treatment. Having risen from the dead he told his few remaining followers to wait on the Holy Spirit before sharing the good news that the world is beloved by God. The rest is a rather mixed and bloody history.

Westley Ingram is a live - in volunteer at Giuseppe Conlon House

Maria Skobtsova House

Comforting the sick

Broeder Johannes Maertens



Volunteers of the Calais Catholic Worker visit refugees in hospital
photo: Maria Skobtsova House

One of our missions here in Calais is visiting refugee patients in the hospital. Twice a week we visit people in hospital. We take with them comfortable clothes for hospital, shampoo, deodorant, slippers and cook a spicy meal for the patients.

Many of our patients are able to speak a little bit of English. We have interpreters (volunteers who are also refugees themselves) who speak English and their own language who accompany us.

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Donations :

Association Maria Skobtsova

• 170 rue Anatole France
• 62100 Calais
• France
• IBAN:
• FR7615629026250002172700193
• BIC: CMCIFR2A
• Bank: CCM Calais, 85 rue
• Mollien, 62100 Calais, France

Your support for this work is appreciated!

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8

Sr. Sheena CSJP writes: Tuesdays and Saturdays are our hospital visiting days. Yesterday was my last days of visiting the hospital. This was truly a ministry of presence, and I was so happy to experience how God allowed our visit to these patients, allowing a moment of hope to re-enter the lives of those who had given up.

These are the words of my friends in hospital,

‘You came now four times. Each time you encouraged me. Thank you. I won’t forget your words, when one door closes God will open another.’

Another one of my friends said,

‘You came and made me feel comforted, I was not feeling like eating at all these days, you brought food and looked into my fridge, cleaned them and encouraged me to eat. Now you are going, when are you coming back?’

I assured them there will be someone else who will follow up in my place.

Life for refugees in the jungle is tough, but in the hospital it is harder. Their physical health is deteriorated, and in addition to this they feel lonely. They miss their loved ones, their friends are trying to cross the border, and they are living in a state of uncertainty not knowing how their future will turn out. In our visit, there were moments of silence, laughter, and gentle touch: above all, we were fully present to each other. So as I am leaving this place, please keep our refugee patients who are in the hospital in your prayers. Especially Usman, he is losing his muscle strength both in his arms and legs. He is unable to walk and is bound to

the wheel chair. He is in his early 20s and very much worried about his future. Reaching Calais from Sudan on foot and by sea was a hard journey. And now the journey ahead of him seems to be harder, but our presence and prayers can work miracles.

Sr. Sheena at Maria Skobtsova House, and has experience in hospital ministry.

The white flag

Babak Inaloo

Come everyone who is thirsty, here is water .

Come, you that have no money, buy corn and eat !

Come in our house we embrace you,

We don’t ask you about your nationality. We have a community with all the nationalities.

We don’t ask your passport you just need a smile for enter.

We share our languages, our cultures, we learn a lot of things from each other.

We cook together, we eat together and we live together in equality!

In our small table we have capacity to invite all the world, invite to live together in peace .

We have a country here without border, a country with a white flag.

We don’t deal with money, we deal with our knowledge, our kindness and our humanity .

We will take your tiredness and we will give you back hope.

We have borders that are open to everyone, we don’t have any government and police, we just have a God who can see us in every moment .

Babak Inaloo is a community member at Maria Skobtsova House.

Facebook: @voiceofmigrant

Giuseppe Conlon House update

Every Summer here in the House we try to take some time to relax and take a deep breath as the weather brightens and the days get longer. Volunteers head home to visit their families and friends, head off on a retreat, or simply take time out for a much needed break, and some of our regular events stop for a while so as to ease the strain on those left behind awaiting their turn to get away. Many thanks to those who helped us over this time and made it possible for members of the community to have a chance to escape London for a little while.

Put Down the Sword blockade the Mearings photo: London Catholic Worker



The reduction in activities allows us to take some time to reflect on our life in the Catholic Worker and in the world around us. Some of those reflections were rather sad as we grappled with the result of the vote for the Trident nuclear weapons system that took place in parliament in July, when the government voted to renew the country's nuclear weapons arsenal. At the end of June, our

community had helped plan the 'No Faith in Trident' day, part of the Trident Ploughshares month of action at AWE Burghfield, near Reading.

It can be difficult to stay hopeful in dark times, and many of us were deeply saddened that MPs voted to renew the nuclear weapons system, with 472 voting for and just 117 against, despite the efforts of all those who did so much to resist it.

One source of hope and inspiration came from our roundtable discussion in July, when Andrea Needham, came to speak about the 'Seeds of Hope' ploughshares action which she was a part of in 1996. The action involved breaking into a British Aerospace factory and damaging a Hawk aircraft that was to be sold and used by the Indonesian regime against the people of East Timor. Having been arrested, all the activists were found not guilty. It was a real privilege to have Andrea talk at our roundtable discussion, and we're grateful to her and all those who attended. If you'd like to know more about the action, Andrea has written a book about it called 'The Hammer Blow', which several of our community have read and can heartily recommend!

Our last vigil before the Summer for refugee and migrant justice took place outside Downing Street as part of Refugee Week in June. It was a beautiful witness, much appreciated by those who attended. We heard stories and reflections, songs, poems, and prayed together for all migrants

and refugees on their journeys and for those who have been killed in their attempt to reach safety. Remembering this with gratitude, we have now launched into our regular vigils with renewed energy. You can join us in praying for migrant and refugee justice on the first Tuesday of every month outside the Foreign Office at 12:30pm, or on the third Tuesday of every month outside the Home Office,

In September we went with some of our guests on a mini retreat to the Grange in Norfolk, a beautiful family home in Norfolk which welcomes groups, and especially people who have fled violence or persecution. We went on walks in the countryside, fed the ponies and chickens, tried our hand at pottery, and spent relaxing evenings cooking, eating and playing games. It was really special to get to know each other better in such a beautiful and relaxed setting.

Akbar making pottery on retreat in Norfolk photo: Mirjam Johansson



Recipe from Urban Table

Nora Ziegler

The London Catholic Worker helps run the Urban Table soup kitchen, in Hackney. Twice a month, live-in volunteers, guests and friends of Giuseppe Conlon House cook a hot meal for up to 60 people from the local area.

Akbar, a guest at GCH, has been volunteering at the Urban Table since May 2015. He sometimes cooks at the house and one day Brother Johannes asked him if he could help out at the soup kitchen too. Johannes added that he would have to make the food less spicy and this worried Akbar at first. But everybody loved his food and he enjoys cooking there because his food is appreciated.

Akbar told me that he is grateful to God, and to the Catholic Worker for giving him accommodation. Before he came to live at GCH he had had two major surgeries and was sleeping on buses. He likes to be able to contribute to the Catholic Worker community and to society.

He believes that 'service to humans is a service to God'.

I asked Akbar how he became such an amazing chef. He says he used to watch his mum cooking and learned from her. Later he started volunteering with different homeless and refugee centres and learned how to cook for larger numbers of people.

Akbar's Mixed Vegetable Curry

for 50 people you will need:

- 5kg of long grain or basmati rice**
- 2.5kg of onions**
- 100g fresh grated ginger**
- 6 cloves garlic, finely chopped**
- 150g mild curry powder**
- 1 tbs coriander powder**
- 1 tbs cumin powder**
- 8-10 tins of chopped tomato or 2.5kg fresh tomato**
- 3 tins coconut milk**
- 200g oil**
- 1.5kg chopped aubergine**
- 1kg chopped courgette**
- 1kg chopped mushroom**
- 1kg chopped cauliflower**
- 1.5kg finely chopped potato salt**

Soak the rice using one and half cups of water for one cup of rice. Add salt. Fry the onions in oil on

a high flame for about 15 minutes until soft. Then add the ginger, garlic, coriander and cumin powder and fry for another 5 minutes. Add the curry powder and tomato and fry for 10 to 15 minutes more.

Once the ingredients have blended together, add all the vegetables, the coconut milk, 2 to 2.5 litres of water, salt, cover and cook on a medium flame until the vegetables are soft. When the water starts to boil, stir occasionally.

Meanwhile, cook the rice on a high flame with the lid on. Once most of the water is gone, turn down the heat and stir occasionally to stop the rice from sticking to the bottom.



Ade Bethune, Works of mercy, giving drink to the thirsty, wood cut

Wish List

for advice on ethical shopping see

www.londoncatholicworker.org

- tinned tomatoes
- nuts
- raisins
- cheese
- tinned fish
- chilli sauce
- rice
- couscous
- kidney beans
- chickpeas
- lentils
- olive oil
- cooking oil

- vinegar
- mayonnaise
- spices
- sugar
- sunflower seeds
- low-fat spread
- fruit juice and squash
- herbal teabags
- hot chocolate powder
- instant coffee
- cereal and muesli
- jam and marmalade
- honey
- peanut butter,
- vegetable stock
- chocolate spread
- stock cubes
- toilet paper
- shampoo

- liquid soap
- deodorant
- shaving products
- body lotion
- cleaning products
- incense sticks
- tealights

Deliver to:

Giuseppe Conlon House,
49 Mattison Road,
London N4 1BG

We can also collect donations from north and north east London.

Call 020 8348 8212

Please! NO tinned soup, tinned spaghetti, baked beans and NO pork

from *The Meaning of Poverty*,
Dorothy Day (cont. from p3)

If you are voluntarily giving away what you have, giving your coat, don't expect thanks or the reform of the recipient. We don't do it for that motive, with the expectation of reward. We must do it for love of Jesus, in His humanity, for love of our brother, for love of our enemy.

Charles Peguy in one of his poems, *God Speaks*, tells the story of the prodigal son and comments, 'That's the kind of a Father we have, who loves even to folly, who forgives seventy times seven, who rushes out to embrace and feast the prodigal son.' This is the kind of love we must have for the poor. The kind of love which will give away cloak also if coat is demanded of you.

Nobody is too poor to help another. The stories in the New Testament are of the widow's mite, of the little boy's loaves and fishes, of the cloak, of the time given when one is asked to walk a second mile.

Another Russian story which profoundly moved me was *The Honest Thief*, by Dostoevsky, of the hardworking tailor who lived in a corner of a room, and yet who took in one of the destitute he encountered. The guest begged and drank and the tailor suspected him of stealing his one treasure, an old army coat. He spoke to him harshly, but when the thief ran away, the tailor searched him out and brought him back to his corner to nurse him in his illness. 'Love is the measure by which we shall be judged.' And by not judging we too shall not be judged.[...]

Thank God for the sacraments, the food of life which we can receive to strengthen us. Thank God for the Word made flesh and for the Word in the Scriptures. Thank God for the Gospel which St. Therese pinned close to her heart, and which the murderer Raskolnikoff listened to from the lips of a prostitute and took with him into the Siberian prison. The Word is our light and our understanding, and it is also our food.

Upcoming Events

Saturday 29th October

Christian anarchism and nonviolence workshop given by the London Catholic Worker at 4pm, all day bookstall at the **London Anarchist Bookfair** Park View School, West Green Road, London, N15 3QR

Thursday 3rd November *Just*

Peace, facilitated discussion, Henrietta Cullinan, 6:30pm

Saturday 12th November *Caring Work and Anti-Capitalist Strategy* in

collaboration with **Global Women's Strike** Refreshments provided, donations welcome. From 1pm to 5pm

Thursday 1st December, *Europe's*

response to refugees *Johannes Maertens*, founder of the Calais Catholic Worker, 6:30pm

All events held at Giuseppe Conlon House, 49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG

unless otherwise indicated



Regular events

Giuseppe Conlon House, 49 Mattison Road, London N4 1 BG

Daily Prayers Monday – Saturday 9:00 am

Clarification of Thought First Thursday of the month, 6:30 pm

Bible Study Second and Fourth Thursday of the month, 7:00 pm

Monthly Prayer Third Thursday of the month, 7:00 pm

Rosary of the Oppressed Last Friday of the Month 6:30 pm

Vigil for Refugees First Tuesday of the month, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, King Charles Street, Third Tuesday of the month at the Home Office, Marsham Street, 12:30pm

All welcome. Call 020 8348 8212 for details

We need your help!

Live-in community members and volunteers are needed at Giuseppe Conlon House. Come and

be a part of a community of hospitality and nonviolent resistance. If you want to live simply, in community with the poor, and work for peace and justice, then this is for you!

Tasks are diverse and include housekeeping, repairs, gardening, administration, case work, organizing and taking part in workshops and vigils, random creative projects and spending time with guests. We usually expect volunteers to make a minimum commitment of 3 months. We offer free accommodation and meals.

We ask potential volunteers to complete a questionnaire and provide us with a reference. It often takes about 3 months until a vacancy comes up so please let us know in advance if you are interested in joining our community.

Volunteering

There are many other ways of getting involved if you want to be part of our extended community. We have regular volunteers who come in to help cook in the evenings, pick up food donations or help us run the Urban Table soup kitchen in Hackney on Sundays. We also rely on volunteers to help us with different aspects of our work by sharing their time, knowledge and skills. For example, we often need help with DIY, plumbing, book keeping, fundraising, IT, and publishing this newsletter.

Sign up to our email and mailing lists for regular updates and to our mailing list to receive our free newsletter.

Email:
londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

Support our work with the crucified of today's world

We are a part of the radical, Christian, pacifist Catholic Worker movement started in 1933 in New York by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. There are now over 150 houses and communities in the United States and in other countries. Catholic Worker houses are independent financially. There are no headquarters, nor is there a central organization. More information is available on the U.S website www.catholicworker.com.

At Giuseppe Conlon House we run a house of hospitality for twenty homeless and destitute asylum seekers who are not allowed to work or claim benefits. In collaboration with two local churches we also serve a meal for up to fifty people in Hackney on Sunday afternoons.

Cash donations

We are not paid for this work. We receive nothing from the government. For reasons to do with our political witness, we are not a registered charity. We are all volunteers, so we are able to make the best possible use of what we are given, for the benefit of those in need.

Bills! We rely on our readers' donations to pay all utility bills, building repairs, volunteer and guest expenses, printing and household supplies.

If you would like to support our work at the house please consider sending us a donation or setting up a standing order.

£20 will pay for one day of heating at Giuseppe Conlon House

£30 covers the costs of one Urban Table meal for 60 guests

£50 covers one week's housekeeping including items like milk, sugar, margarine, toilet paper and cleaning products

£150 pounds will pay for a volunteer's monthly expenses including transport

Ways to donate

Cheque: payable to 'London Catholic Worker', to Giuseppe Conlon House, 49 Mattison Road, London N4 1 BG

Online: London Catholic Worker, Triodos Bank, Account No. 20066996 Sort Code: 16 58 10

Paypal: a 'donate button' is on the front page of our website www.londoncatholicworker.org

Please consider setting up a regular donation. You can use the Standing Order Form provided below

We would be very grateful for any help you can give us.

Our accounts are available on request

Standing Order Form Please use block letters

I wish to pay the London Catholic Worker £10/ £20/£40/other amount _____ per month/ other _____

Payments to be made monthly/ other First Payment to be made on: ____ / ____ / 16 and monthly thereafter

Name of your bank

Address of your bank

Your account name

Your account number

Your bank sort code

Please pay:

Triodos Bank

Deanery Road

Bristol BS1 5AS

For the Credit of: London Catholic Worker

Account Number 20066996

Sort Code: 16 58 10

Until further notice the sum of the value indicated above

Signed _____

Date _____

Please return to :

London Catholic Worker

49 Mattison Road

London N4 1BG

Your Name and Address

Email _____