

THE LONDON CATHOLIC WORKER



Issue 58

Summer 2018

Free/donation



Activists from London Catholic Worker, All African Women's Group, Black Women's Rape Action Project, Women Against Rape, Women of Colour in the Global Women's Strike, and Legal Action for Women attend vigil

No Borders?

Nora Ziegler

On 19th June the London Catholic Worker held a vigil outside the Home Office, together with Women Against Rape, All African Women's Group, Westminster Justice and Peace Commission and other groups led by or working in solidarity with refugees and migrants. We read out the names of people who had died at European borders as well as the hostile

environment policy of the UK. We did this in order to remember them and to call for justice for all refugees and migrants. The names were taken from a list which was published in The Guardian on 20th June*.

I am sometimes asked whether I think there should be no borders at all. I find this question misleading. In order to live together and organise as communities and societies, we need to create boundaries and institutions. However, when such boundaries become oppressive and violent, we need to be able to change, resist and sometimes abolish them. Our European borders

are no natural phenomenon. They are social and political institutions which have become increasingly militarised in recent years, forcing people to take more dangerous routes and causing the death and suffering of thousands. The UK's hostile environment policy deprives people of the basic means to survive and participate in society, destroying families, people's self-worth and mental health, as well as causing deaths by starvation, lack of medical care and suicide.

Militarised borders and hostile immigration policies protect the powerful and wealthy from the

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DOVE BY RITA CORBIN

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The Catholic Worker in the UK and just across the Channel

London Catholic Worker

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Giuseppe Conlon House offers hospitality to destitute refugees. We also run the Urban Table soup kitchen on Sundays 2:30 — 4:30 pm at The Round Chapel, London E5 0PU. We organise acts of nonviolent resistance and produce this newsletter.

The Catholic Worker Farm

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

Maria Skobstova House

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Mother Maria Skobstova House is a residential community that serves people who have been pushed into the margins of society. We started working with refugees and migrants in the refugee camp called “the jungle” (February 2016) and as we discover homelessness in the city of Calais we are looking how to support homeless and poor people here and to build a community across the divide.

No Borders?

[continued from page 1]

dispossessed, the displaced and disenfranchised peoples of the world. The more power is concentrated in the wealthiest and most powerful countries of the world, the more people are drawn and pushed towards the centre of power. The only way to stop this movement is either through ruthless repression or by decentralising power, through redistribution of wealth and demilitarising borders.

In our globalised world with huge and growing disparities of wealth and power, national borders can be viewed as a form of segregation and migration as a global civil rights issue. Migrating, seeking refuge, and offering hospitality and support to migrants and refugees can be seen as acts of civil disobedience challenging unjust institutions and policies. Not only do migrants, refugees and their allies resist and subvert borders, but they refuse to internalise their underlying logic. We insist that all people have the same worth and dignity and right to move across our shared world regardless of their nationality.

There is a clear Christian vocation to welcome the stranger and challenge unjust social and political boundaries. As Christians we have a responsibility to speak out against violent borders and immigration policy. However, there is sometimes a tendency to view refugee movements only as a humanitarian issue. This approach is to help refugees who are in need without questioning the policies that cause people to move or deprive them of their basic rights. On the other hand, it is sometimes argued that, rather than criticizing national borders, one should focus on addressing the causes of migration such as wars, arms trade and climate change. However, a major structural cause of migration is the extreme concentration of power globally that is facilitated by

the existence of national borders.

What is stopping us from engaging in a deeper critique of borders? Those who are privileged by oppressive institutions such as borders may sympathise with the oppressed but fear that abolishing these institutions will lead to anarchy and chaos. The issue of borders cannot be separated from global injustice and it is certainly difficult to accept that, as people living in Europe, our wealth and power is secured by a global system of segregation. The question for Christians is whether or not we put our faith in borders to hoard abundance for ourselves or in God who promises life in abundance for all her children?

God is already among migrants and refugees, accompanying them on their journeys, in detention centres, weeping with them over their letters of refusal and giving them the hope and strength to persevere. God’s spirit was present at our vigil mourning the deaths of migrants and refugees with us and it is present in our house of hospitality enabling us to live together, to love and tolerate each other despite our differences. God’s spirit is already, has always been, quietly working to subvert our borders and oppressive institutions, to disperse power and wealth among all people.

I see it as God’s grace that the spirit finds ways of breaking and subverting the unjust rules and institutions we build and hold on to, often in good faith, thinking of ourselves as fair and kind-hearted, or out of fear and feelings of powerlessness. The challenge to us is not to devise a perfect world. It is to listen to the spirit calling in our hearts, to allow it to lead us across borders and move us to open our doors.

* Contact Nora at
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for a pdf copy of the list

Nora Ziegler is a peace activist, writer and long-term member of London Catholic Worker.



The people's weapons inspectors visit Roxel

By Nicholas Cooper

In April, members of the Put Down the Sword and London Catholic Worker became 'The People's Weapons Inspectors' and paid a visit to missile manufacturer Roxel near Kidderminster. Our plan was to 'search' the site for missile components which we believed were being manufactured for a new Saudi order of a thousand Brimstone air-to-surface missiles* recorded on the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute [SIPRI] database.

We got up early - why do protests always have to be so early? - drove to Roxel, and assembled outside the main entrance just as workers were beginning to arrive. Nora Ziegler, Jo Frew and I walked into the site through open gates as Alison Parker, Sam McDonald and others blockaded the entrance and unfurled banners reading 'site closed for weapons inspection' and 'Roxel: Stop Arming Saudi'.

I was surprised to be able to walk straight into reception. We tried persuading the security guards to allow us further into the site to carry out an inspection but they told us that the police had been called and that if we didn't leave the site we would be arrested, to which I responded, 'They won't arrest us'.

Unable to speak to any of the company executives we re-joined the others at the main gate. Then something extraordinary happened. An HR manager and spokesperson for the company, Paul Adams, left his car in the queue of traffic and came to speak to us there and then to see what we were about. As we began to film the encounter he made it clear that he was only 'there to listen' but I don't think he realised the extent to which we had researched both the war in Yemen and activities of Roxel.

We spoke to Adams for just over twelve minutes. He seemed quite calm and very polite, as I've encountered in most arms dealers. Jo and Nora very



Activists Jo Frew, Nora Ziegler and Nicholas Cooper outside of Roxel

eloquently detailed the Saudi war crimes that have been recorded by various monitoring groups and how apparent Saudi efforts to investigate and reduce civilian casualties have failed, while illegal coalition air strikes have all the more continued. I asked Paul very directly whether components for the 1000 Brimstone missiles allegedly ordered by Saudi Arabia were under manufacture at the site but I did not receive much other than a roundabout 'no comment'. We handed over a bundle of evidence detailing the Saudi war crimes against people in Yemen and a copy of the SIPRI data entry recording the Brimstone deal.

I'm actually a little surprised that anyone from the company engaged in conversation at all. When you are selling weapons to a country like Saudi Arabia, that is bombing funerals, schools, food stores and hospitals, I'd have thought that the best PR strategy would be silence, and the fact that Adams spoke to us for so long or even at all, reflects that Roxel are not very well accustomed to protest. However, in spite of assurances from Adams that Roxel would engage with us at a later date, unsurprisingly, his promises turned out to be empty ones and Roxel quickly adopted the standard arms company procedure of silence from there onwards. Roxel have ignored our efforts to follow up the conversation in writing.

During our conversation at the gates Adams pointed out that what they do at Roxel is within the law. This is a line that I have heard many times now. Every individual who plays their part in the machine of state violence

will point out that what they are doing is legal, that they are simply doing their bit or fulfilling their lawful duty. Apparently when a funeral, school or hospital gets bombed in Yemen, no one is responsible because everyone who you might think to be responsible is simply fulfilling their own unique role within a system that fights evil with evil for the so-called greater good. I don't know what effect our little and scarcely reported protest had, but in a slightly ironic sort of a way perhaps my own reasons for taking part are not so different to the arms dealers and the oath swearers, for I too was simply trying to fulfil my duty and do my best to play my part within the law, not the law of violent nationalism however, but the eternal law of God through which the restoration of divine life within the universal human family is founded upon a love that is perfectly nonviolent.

* The recent results of a Freedom of Information Request by Campaign Against the Arms Trade made in conjunction with our research for the Roxel action have confirmed the use of an opaque licensing system for UK to Saudi exports of bombs and missiles including the Brimstone missile. The UK government have been using Open Individual Export Licenses (OIEL) under which there is no obligation to publish the monetary value of any exports. It was the apparent lack of export values, in part, which drew our attention to Roxel in the first place.

Nicholas Cooper is a shoemaker and peace activist.

A call to climate rebellion

Martin Newell

There is some good news, and some bad news. The bad news is that if we continue as a society with 'business as usual' we are heading towards a climate catastrophe of unimaginable proportions. The Blue Planet series has shown us the beauty of God's world being strangled with plastic. Climate change is a less obviously visible but far more serious desecration of this beautiful creation. The good news is that there is a way out. Pope Francis has said that, 'Today, unless Christians are revolutionaries, they are not Christians.' We are going to need to act on these words.

Andy Burnham, mainstream politician and Mayor of Greater Manchester, invited climate scientist Professor Kevin Anderson to speak at the Greater Manchester Green Summit. Anderson said that, since we will exceed our current budget for emissions, the UK needs to reduce its climate emissions by 15% a year to meet the 2°C target within 10 years at current rates. If we are honest and include aviation, shipping and the emissions embedded in the goods we import from places like China, the UK carbon emissions have not started to fall. Neither have global carbon emissions started to fall.

But even the 2°C target is not enough. It is a political and not a scientific target. We in the rich industrialised nations may be able to adapt and cope at least for a while to a 2°C rise. But it would be likely to lead to widespread global chaos, primarily – or at least at first – for the poorer nations and peoples. At best, we will have left our neighbours to die by the Samaritan roadside. Which is why at the 2015 Paris Climate Summit, the Vatican among others pushed the 1.5° C target. At current rates, the carbon budget for a 1.5°C rise will be used up in about three years.

There is some good news though. The first is that technology exists to create a net-zero carbon society. It is a matter of political will. A 'war-economy' type response will do it, along the lines that saw massive re-organisation of the US economy after Pearl Harbour. This



Martin Newell and members of Rising Up protest against the proposed expansion of Heathrow outside of Labour party headquarters

was such that the previously neutral USA was soon churning out tanks, war planes, ships, submarines and all the paraphernalia of military power, and had the most powerful armed forces in the world within two years. With political will, our economy can be equally transformed to protect the climate in a few years. Which is all we have.

There is more good news. It may seem impossible to create that kind of political change, given the opposition and the apathy, but it is not. Experience over the last century, and research on civil resistance movements by such people as Maria Stephan and Erica Chenoweth (2), shows that on average it only takes about 3 - 4% of the population to non-violently rebel to change a regime. In the UK, 4% is about 2½ million people, not much more than the number who marched against the invasion of Iraq in 2003. The problem then was that we marched and then went back home again. However, at the height of the US Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, there were 3,000 people in prison, forcing the Federal Government to get involved and abolish segregation. The equivalent for the UK today would be about 1,000 people in prison. Imagine this: 2 million marching: 1% - 20,000 - staying in Parliament Square and refusing to leave: 10% of those - 2,000 - taking repeated active civil disobedience leading to arrest - and short prison sentences. All with the practical organisational and financial support of the 2 million. Rising Up! is making a start. We are looking for 50 people willing to go to prison for a week or two. This

'medium level risk' direct action is the most effective because it allows wide participation, which is the reason civil resistance is more effective than armed resistance according to the research. The combination of large numbers willing to make real sacrifices for what they believe in makes the difference. This chimes with the experience and faith not only of Christian and Catholic nonviolent activists, but with the very heart of our faith: sacrifice, redemption, and the nonviolent love of the Cross that saves and changes the world.

What I have written may scare, depress, or repel you. You may find it alarmist. Climate change is very hard to look at square in the face. I can be patient when working for what seems like positive change, but it's much harder when faced with looming disaster. But I pray that enough people can and will hear this call to conversion and action, so that we, the human race - God's family - can hear the call of *Laudato Si'* to protect the earth, God's creation - and in time, even bring it to renewal, restoration and resurrection.

We are looking for people to form a Christian affinity group to join us, in November. If you have heard this call, please get in touch:

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Martin Newell is a founding member of the London Catholic Worker. He continues this work of hospitality and resistance, now living in a Passionist house of hospitality in Birmingham.

House update

We provided hospitality for a group who took part in a hunger strike to protest the building of a new runway at Heathrow Airport. Their concern for the environment, commitment to nonviolence, and courage were hugely inspiring to us.

We were pleased to welcome two new volunteers, Kevin and Luigi, who are already settling in and doing a tremendous job of supporting the running of our busy home. We also welcomed many visitors. Scott and Claire Schaeffer-Duffy, Catholic

Workers from the US, visited and gave a talk on their many years of experience. They continue to inspire us as we read Scott's book. 'Nothing is impossible', We have also welcomed Caroline,



Claire and Scott at the European Catholic Worker gathering in Dulmen, Germany

who is working to support the Migrant Resource Centre. We bade

farewell to Nichola and to Ghazal, two volunteers who have been a wonderful presence and a huge help for our community. We wish them all the best and hope to see them again. The fundraiser for the Urban Table soup kitchen had plenty of dancing and delicious food, and it was enjoyed by all.

A couple of guests have been able to get leave to remain and are now working hard on trying to find a way to move out, a reminder that for our guests, getting papers sorted is only the beginning of a new struggle against a system that often seems so heavily stacked against those who are in need.

Fortress Britain?

Mike Wilcox

Fortress Britain? Ethical Approaches to Immigration Policy for post-Brexit Britain, edited by Ben Ryan, is published by Jessica Kingsley in association with Theos.

It is common for Brexit to be viewed as a threat to vulnerable migrants. The referendum of 2016 turned, it seemed, on concerns about immigration and the control of borders, inflamed by toxic images of a Europe under siege, and it was widely reported that racist attacks had spiked in the weeks and months after the vote.

A diverse book of essays, *Fortress Britain?* engages with Brexit as a new opportunity. It offers seven distinct contributions intended to sow the seeds of civil conversation. Ryan argues that Christian voices have earned a hearing because of churches' substantial work for migrants and because of the depth of Christian reflection on nationhood and the plight of the stranger. At the book's launch event, Ryan noted the diversity that churches often embody and the unusual space they provide for such dialogue to start.

These essays address issues from different points of view, and the reader needs to do her own work to draw out common threads. However, it is the contributions of Susanna Snyder, Biblical and theological reflections on migration and of Anna Rowlands, *On the promise and the limits of politics: faith-based responses to asylum seeking*,

that occupy the centre of the book and to my mind come from the heart of authentic Christian witness about our relation to those who come to live amongst us. I suspect that friends and supporters of the Catholic Worker will feel the same way, and find these items particularly resonate with them.

Snyder reads the Bible closely, though not to find proof texts about giving hospitality to strangers. She draws out that migration is part of our identity as humans, and reminds us that to encounter God we must journey out and cross divides. I was arrested by her image of Christ as crossing the division between the human and the divine, which works for me in both directions – Christ as God, stepping down into human limitation, but also for the human Jesus, growing in wisdom, age and grace (Luke 2:52).

Rowlands grounds her writing in the experience of women and men who she met at the Wapping Jesuit Refugee Services centre in 2017, unmasking the emptiness of moral purpose in the UK's policy of hostility towards people seeking safety from persecution. She bears witness to the deadening effect of that policy of detention and destitution on its subjects, especially in its degrading of the human sense of time: in prison you can count your days down, but in detention you count them up. Her interviewees also speak about how time spent well enabled perseverance, and praise JRS for creating a space in which people can share stories, offer support and be of service to one another. I can imagine that what Rowlands found at JRS shares much with the counter-cultural space that I have witnessed at

Rowlands puts it onto policy-makers to justify how the current asylum system enacts the good even for those whose interests it is supposed to defend, let alone for the people who are its subjects. But she also resists the state's presumption that, even at its best, it should regulate the messy social reality of obligations between persons in which actors like JRS and CW are operating,

Adrian Pabst criticises accounts of justice based on economic utility or on individual human rights, and calls for greater sanctuary for those in dire need, alongside measures so that people can be allowed to flourish without having to leave their countries of origin

Ryan himself argues convincingly for a supra-national framework of migrants' citizenship rights. David Goodhart suggests a higher profile for temporary migration, but in my opinion neglects to root this idea in a distinctive ethical perspective.

Mohammed Girma extols a notion of 'narrative reasoning' – a structured and open-hearted dialogue to heal suspicions between groups. Pia Jolliffe and Samuel Burke give a useful account of the history of child migration to the UK, up to the recent reluctant measures to protect unaccompanied child refugees.

This is a useful and in places inspiring book, which I would recommend to those who want to engage with ethical voices on immigration policy. I hope it helped me to notice and resist my own tendency to 'othering' of the stranger.

Mike Willcox is a volunteer cook at Giuseppe Conlon House.

Paul McMullen's letter

I wanted to write to let you know how important it is for me to receive your brilliant newsletter, and the articles connecting the conditions in our world with the Gospels. I have just moved to Tadley, a town that has a historic connection with the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) at Aldermaston. In fact, but for the county boundary that separates them, the plant would more properly be described as AWE Tadley. So I now live, work and move in a culture which is very accepting of and to some extent dependent on the threat of nuclear aggression. Many of the people I encounter in my daily doings interpret the idea of nuclear disarmament as a threat not only to their own safety but also to world peace and stability.

I came across the Catholic Worker movement about 15 years ago listening to the words and music of Utah Phillips, an American folk singer who was a veteran of the Korean war and who came home completely despondent about the actions of his government. In the song "Anarchy" from the album "The past didn't go anywhere" he

describes his encounter with Amon Hennacy at a Catholic Worker house in Salt Lake City. The song made me curious about Ammon Hennacy, and I managed to get hold of a copy of his autobiography which I identified with very strongly. Hennacy was a conscientious objector of outstanding proportion and his book details his periods not just in prison but in solitary confinement where he was able to develop his ideas of Pacifist Christian Anarchism. The book introduced me to Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin and I went on to read "All is Grace", the compelling life story of Dorothy and the founding of the Catholic Worker movement.

Spiritually I felt I had come home, that I had at last found a philosophy and a practice of life that I could commit to completely. From there it took me quite a long time to locate the Catholic Worker Farm outside London and Guiseppe Conlon House which I have never visited, and this has been largely because of the chaotic circumstances of my own family life. In the past 12 years I've lost a brother, a sister and my mother and have struggled to overcome an alcohol addiction and keep my own children safe and well. It hasn't been easy, but

it has been worthwhile, because in all things I find the grace of God, teaching and leading me forward. I don't think tomorrow's impossible paradise will ever happen here on earth, but we do have an opportunity to bear witness to the power of Loving Kindness and Right Understanding wherever we are and whatever we do. Life has become for me like a perpetual crossroads and an opportunity to make that choice. Your paper helps me to keep in mind that purpose and reminds me that I don't have to live in a Catholic Worker community to be a part of the Catholic Worker movement. It keeps me nourished in the absence of a "kindred community" and helps me to love the people I'm with. Of course I would love to have more contact with "CW's" in my own area, so if you are reading this and you live anywhere in the vicinity of Basingstoke, Reading or Newbury then I would be really pleased if you'd like to get in touch and, I don't know, just make some kind of connection.

Paul McMullen

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Tim Anderson's letter

I have been meaning to write for a while about Nora Ziegler's interesting article, 'Freedom of Movement- a Personal Perspective' in the newsletter (London Catholic Worker newsletter, winter 2017) which arrived at our community at La Borie Noble in France. I think it was really well considered and argued and it made me think about a few things I'd like to share with you.

The state draws lines between us that are neither fixed nor humane. They essentially say that we should care first for ourselves before our neighbours. This is a direct contradiction to Jesus' teaching to, 'love your brother as yourself'. Who are our brothers and sisters if not other human beings? So, by definition in my opinion, the state is discriminatory. Einstein said, 'I believe with all my heart that the current system of sovereign nations can only lead to

barbarism, war and inhumanity'. As you point out, nature is not interested in our imaginary national borders which change regularly throughout history anyway. In an ideal world we could imagine resources being shared equally with everyone but we certainly don't run the world like that. But then, how do you end the question of nationality that continues to divide us? Most people are heavily invested in the idea, even if they don't realise it. And which country would be the first to say, 'We give up our sovereignty for a more equal world'?

As Thoreau said, 'Man will worship the ground in which he is buried but not the spirit that animates his clay'. I think the clay is a reference to the dust from which God made us. I would suggest an alternative at the end of your article. I personally think that the biblical quote about 'Knock and it shall be opened' was maybe talking about a personal approach to knowing God and not so applicable in this migrant and refugee situation. The desperate plea out of hope.

And in many migrant and refugee situations they are desperate. Why should a refugee have to knock to get help in this terrible situation? These poor people who have lost family and suffered so terribly under the conditions of war, driven away from their homes because of the self-interests of geo-political nonsense. Given the choice, I imagine many of them would prefer to stay with their home environments, friends and cultures!

I would have preferred Jesus' quote: 'Whatever you do for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it for me' Matthew 25:40 Jesus was well known to hang out with the poor, the destitute, tax collectors and others of 'low' standing and was crucified with thieves. So in the same way, I feel it's up to those of us living in relative safety and comfort to help others in need as much as possible. The work you're doing with Catholic Worker is a great example. Anyway, I hope all goes well at the Catholic Worker. I would like to come and visit again soon. I am planning a

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nonviolent protest for our community which is being badly robbed by former volunteers who are taking us to court. I would love to hear your words of wisdom and experience of protesting.

Our motto in The Ark (L'Arche) is 'Peace, Force and Joy' and I wish it all for you and everyone working at CW pray for your continued success.

Tim Anderson

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. We also welcome drawings and poems.

Reflections on Communion

Patrick Kennedy

'We cannot love God unless we love each other, and to love we must know each other. We know him in the breaking of bread, and we are not alone any more. Heaven is a banquet and life is a banquet, too, even with a crust, where there is companionship.'

We have all known the long loneliness and we have learned that the only solution is love and that love comes with community.

It all happened while we sat there talking, and it is still going on.'

It was 12 months ago, when the Bishop came to GCH for an informal visit, that I first heard the words, 'We were just sitting there talking...'. Roland read to the Bishop and everyone present Dorothy Day's *The Final Word is Love*, her postscript to *The Long Loneliness*.

It moved me then, and moves me every time I have heard it since. I help out from time to time at Urban Table, the Sunday afternoon meal provided by two local church groups and the London Catholic Worker at the Round Chapel, Hackney

I'd like to offer up some thoughts from those experiences, in and around the idea of communion, provoked and inspired by that reading of Dorothy Day.

What is this 'breaking of bread' we witness at Mass? What is 'Communion'? For many in the Catholic faith, the reflex explanation is it's the 'Host of the

Lord', it is the 'Body of Christ'. Dorothy Day's compelling, languid prose distils the essence of eating together, love and above all to God.

Like many, I have experienced moments and longer periods when my faith fell away. In those times I just couldn't see a small piece of bread as representing less actually being the 'Body of Christ'.

Yet if I found myself at Mass, I would continue to take the Holy Communion! Why would I perform that act and declare my faith in what was before me, if my faith had gone?

Was this some child-like habit - easier and more comforting to repeat than not? Or was there some deeper impulse at play that got me on my feet to take the Host? Day's words help me see something important here. Because we know 'Communion' is twinned with a second dictionary definition, the 'act of sharing together'.

If we go way back, our ancestors hunted then gathered as one tribe or family; by way of security and organisational necessity we found food together, we cooked and ate together. Now we shop; if we didn't shop our life chances would be poorer.

Millenia on from Neanderthal Man, Dorothy Day entwines food and companionship into helical DNA that = love + community. I'm convinced that when I had lost my faith what got me on my feet each time to take the Body of Christ, was this ancient ritual of sharing the banquet of bread together, somehow embedded in our own human condition, with a sprinkling of my own family tradition.

And so to another ritual of a kind - Urban Table. All the volunteers heartily chop, dice and grate their way through

an array of veg, 'chef of the day' turning all this into something delicious. Teas and coffees are poured with a bit of chit-chat, fruit is served, the artisan bread, donated by a local bakery, is laid out.

Some of the guests live on the street, others in a hostel, a squat or a shared flat of some sort; others may have more comfortable surroundings but live alone. All ages, backgrounds, beliefs and temperaments are present, eating together. There is a hubbub, noise, occasional agitation as sixty or so men and women seat themselves and await the meal. Then there is the transformation, magic!

Noise, chair screeching and the odd hunger-fed argument - 'That's my regular seat, mate, hoppit!' - replaced by clink-clank of knife and fork on plate, calmer contented chat, a communion.

Volunteers often get the chance to eat with the guests they have served. Seconds are served, if there's enough, cake or pudding arrives, the pace slows and guests begin to leave. Cleaning up, often with a few guests pitching in, time taken by the volunteers for reflections and prayer, and off we go, happy and tired!

Many of our guests return each Sunday. Two other groups do the cooking and serving every other Sunday. We hope in between the guests have a measure of comfort and communion. We all have our own reasons for wanting to help others - a vocation, an obligation, learning about food, being in a team, meeting people and so on. Not many of us are lucky in our work life to do something so immediate, meaningful, fun, with others and for others.

Patrick Kennedy volunteers at Urban Table and Giuseppe Conlon House.

Hungering for nuclear disarmament

Kathy Kelly

In the state of Georgia's Glynn County Detention Center, four activists await trial stemming from their nonviolent action, on April 4, 2018, at the Naval Submarine Base, Kings Bay. In all, seven Catholic plowshares activists acted that day, aiming to make real the prophet Isaiah's command to "beat swords into plowshares." The Kings Bay is home port to six nuclear armed Trident ballistic missile submarines with the combined explosive power of over 9000 Hiroshima bombs.

Five people gathered for a fast and vigil, near the Naval Base, calling it "Hunger for Nuclear Disarmament."

Kindly hosts in Brunswick, GA turned over their Airbnb to us. The accommodation is a remodeled garage, - were we not fasting and we might find the kitchen a bit crowded, but for us, this week, the accommodation is ideal. Egrets, ospreys and vultures glide overhead. Huge live oaks surround us, looming and beautiful, draped in Spanish moss. Tannins released from the oak trees seep into the nearby river, historically a source of fresh water because the tannins killed the bugs. Centuries ago, colonizers would fill huge containers with "brown" water from the river, water in which the bugs couldn't survive, and use that water for their drinking needs throughout their voyages back to Europe.

When we travel along the roads, vast stretches of wetlands extend as far as the eye can see. Recent laws mandate conservation of these marshy grounds.

Our small community here longs to preserve all life, to end potential omnicide.

During vigils at the Naval Base, in front of the detention center and at the District Court House, we hold banners, one of which says "Disarm Trident, Love One Another. Steve Baggardy, one of the fasters, carries copies of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, negotiated in July 2017, by 122 nations. "Most of the world is tired of being held hostage by



Banner held outside of Nuclear Submarine Base, King's Bay, Photo credit: Beth Brockman

omnicidal weapons and wants nuclear disarmament," said Steve. "The U.S. and the eight other nuclear powers who boycotted the Treaty negotiations are the outliers." Baggardy added that, "Our true national security lies in achieving the long overdue objective of nuclear disarmament."

The Kings Bay action was the latest of 100 similar actions taken around the world since 1980 and the first Plowshares action to take place since the global treaty banning nuclear weapons was signed.

This afternoon, when we ended our vigil, we visited a small park, opposite an entrance to the base, which marks the site of a sugar factory owned by John Houstoun MacIntosh. The memorial plaque in front of the factory ruins makes it sound as though MacIntosh built the factory and mansion. Hardly the case! In 1825, slaves assuredly constructed the buildings and cultivated the sugar cane, risking their lives in the dangerous process.

Eventually, small groups of abolitionists working to end the slave trade gained momentum. Disarmament activists today draw inspiration from their struggles. "Nuclear weapons are a theft from the poor," said fast participant Beth Brockman. "People here in Georgia

and across the South are in desperate need of the resources squandered on the war economy."

Two highlights of the day were conversations with Mark Colville and later Steve Kelly, both of whom called us from the Detention Center. Each had begun the day reading the same reflection we had earlier shared, which included a passage from the Sermon on the Mount. Choosing to "go the extra mile," our friends who face trial bring to life the spirit of early abolitionists and the ancient call to choose life that you and your descendants might live.

Kathy Kelly, (kathy@vcnv.org), a participant in the Hunger for Nuclear Disarmament fast, co-coordinates Voices for Creative Nonviolence.



Stories of breaking bread in a pulverized world

Henrietta Cullinan

On Friday last week Pope Francis warned, 'There is a real danger that we will leave future generations only rubble, deserts and refuse'. While hearing from Roger Hallam of Rising Up at a Catholic Worker clarification of thought, I realised I'm not well equipped to focus on the urgency of climate change. The implication of Roger Hallam's workshop, that we will be starving and suffocating, in just a few years, is difficult to focus on. As a grandmother of a one year old, I become quickly paralysed and search for distractions. I need to stock up on other stories to protest with, to relate my own life with, to stick with.

I have absorbed many different approaches to talking about peace and nonviolence. There is a wealth of stories on the success of nonviolent campaigns on solving conflicts, peacemaking, and reconciliation. But for climate change activism, I need to gather stories that challenge our privileged exceptional human place in an inhabited world. I need stories that offer hope, and yet not denial.

The title of Donna J Haraway's book, *Staying with the Trouble* could have been written especially for activists, those who stay with the difficult topics, keep on resisting, keep on offering hospitality without question, refusing to turn their back, or to pass on by the other side. Climate activism more than any other type involves sticking with difficult, unfamiliar, uncomfortable stories. As Haraway says, paraphrasing Isabel Strathern, 'it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories.' To quote Virginia Woolf, 'Think we must.'

She writes that slogans and catch phrases, sometimes borrowed from other people, sometimes made up, are the 'lure' for her work. Chthlucene is a strangely spelled word of two parts. Khthon meaning 'of the earth' and 'kainos' meaning time. We are nearing



the end of the age of man and capital, the anthropocene, and moving into the time of the damaged earth. The next term she uses is 'terrapolis' which has many definitions, but I choose this one,

"Terrapolisforcompanionspecies,cum panis, with bread, at table together—not "posthuman" but "com- post"

Terrapolis, she explains, is the inhabited world, the home for a human who is a creature of the mud and soil. In the subsequent chapters we hear of cross species relationships, between humans and squid, spiders, the author's elderly dog, the trillions of bacteria that live inside us, covers lemurs in Madagascar, crochet coral reefs, and even Navajo sheep. The first relationships she describes, and the easiest for a nonscientist and city dweller like me to understand, is between humans and pigeons. Racing pigeons and their trainers, we learn, are put to work measuring air pollution in Los Angeles while in Australia artists build nesting towers to help bring pigeon manure to the rewilding of a piece of ancestral land. In Caudry, France, Matali Crasset, an industrial designer, is commissioned by the local authority to design a pigeonier, a kind of dovecote, as a way of controlling pigeon numbers. Tagging along after Haraway, pigeons are to be my guide too. They are nearly my bedfellows after all, building nests yards from my window, importing bird fleas, bringing manure into my garden. I watch them roosting, shuffling up and down their perch; I admire their fan tails, the variations of iridescent green, purple, grey on cream. I record their

habits. When it's hot they fly up to higher points of the building. When a car door slams, they swoop down and back up again. Just as they do in Kabul, Karachi, Florence, and all the other places.

The pigeons of London like our food waste, the lack of predators, and our useful rooftops. I'm not sure yet how to respond to the pigeons, except appreciate them as one of the species that share my neighbourhood, along with spiders, mice, snails, worms, domestic cats. I see these stories as redemptive. We must be the odd relations with the other species. Modern science, Haraway writes, is not able to tell good stories, being the individualistic, lonely, hero of the anthropocene, seeing humans distinct from animals and the rest of the world.

If we saw ourselves as without bodily borders, sharing space, bacteria, food, soil with other species, cum panis, we wouldn't be afraid.

Haraway's makes a strong impression on Christians. In an award acceptance speech she is said to have described herself as 'this Irish Catholic girl'. At the same time as celebrating, cum panis, we are to become 'com-post', entering the soil with Christ, looking for survival. We must seek out the stories that help us and save us. As Catholics we know this; what are all those Bible study sessions for, if not that. A new story, cum panis, is needed for earthly survival.

Henrietta Cullinan edits this newsletter and blogs at henriettacullinan.wordpress.com



Sandwich cake (right) is served at volunteer thank you afternoon

Recipe:

Smörgåstårta

(Sandwich cake)

This cake, from our last party for volunteers, is a classic feature of parties in Sweden, for birthdays, graduations, baptisms or even weddings. In my family we always have smörgåstårta for Easter. Traditionally the cake would be round or square, made with fluffy white bread which I haven't found anywhere in London. It would be filled and decorated with fruit, veg and also mayonnaise, ham, eggs, shrimps and roe. You could really use whichever bread and fillings you fancy. Here are some vegetarian suggestions for inspiration!

Base

Ideally on the day before serving, take a loaf of any bread you fancy - it doesn't matter if it is a bit stale. The best way to acquire a slightly stale loaf for free is to come visit Giuseppe Conlon House and look around between the pews - there are always plenty! You could even grab a few practice loaves if you feel nervous about the steadiness of your hand in the next step.

Cut off the crust (and bottom) of the loaf so that it will be easier to serve later. Then cut it horizontally lengthwise into as many layers as you wish. Try to make the layers quite thin, no more than 2cm, or you risk ending up with a dry product.

Fillings

For best appearance, it is nice to choose some different coloured fillings. They need to have a moist but not runny texture. Add salt and pepper to taste and spread each filling. If you have time leave in the fridge overnight. These are some example fillings.

Tofu or boiled eggs

Mash the tofu or eggs with a fork and mix with mayonnaise until it becomes like a paste and doesn't crumble. For a vegan option, there is vegan mayonnaise and also plenty of recipes on the internet on how to make your own base, for example, from the water from a tin of chickpeas. Don't worry if it separates a bit; it doesn't matter once it is mixed with the tofu. My favourite is to use firm smoked tofu and flavour with dill, salt and pepper.

Peas

This layer is brilliant for some colour. Mash the peas and mix with crème fraîche or a vegan alternative such as creamy oat fraîche or vegan cream cheese. Flavour with lemon rind, salt and pepper

Carrots or sweet peppers

Finely grated carrots, or sweet peppers cut into 5mm squares, mixed with mayonnaise and whipped cream is a classic in my family, but it can also be mixed with cream cheese or a combination. Add some paprika powder for extra flavour.

Apples

Apples (not too sweet) mixed with crème fraîche, dill and chives.

Vegetarian pâté with gherkins

Lay out the pickled gherkins or cucumbers on a kitchen towel to soak up excess liquid. Chop finely and mix with vegetarian pâté and a little mayonnaise to taste.

Toppings

Traditionally the smörgåstårta is decorated with a thin layer of cream, well whipped just until it almost turns buttery. But you could also use cream cheese or the tofu, egg, or pea filling.

Events

All events held at Giuseppe Conlon House, 49 Mattison Rd, London N4 1BG - unless otherwise indicated.

Regular events

Daily Prayers Mon - Sat 9:00 am

Bible Sharing Second Thursday of the month, 7:00 pm

Radical Reading Group, Fourth Thursday of the month, 7:00 pm

Vigil for Refugees

Third Tuesday of the month at the Home Office, Marsham St. 12:30pm

All welcome. Call 020 8348 8212 for more details and to let us know you are coming.

Special Events

Prayer vigil For Peace, 10th Sept 8.30am, at Roxel, DY11 7RZ. Roxel make engines for missiles exported to Saudi Arabia and used in Yemen.

More info: micha@peacehub.org.uk

Our Christmas Party Sat 8th Dec. Live music, refreshments and hopefully another ceilidh. Look out for more details to come! All Welcome!

Unfortunately, our house is not accessible for wheelchair users as there are a lot of steps throughout the building.

It just needs to be something sticky enough to hold the toppings, except for on the top of the cake, where any of the fillings will work.

Then get creative and decorate with: halved grapes or cherry tomatoes, dill, seaweed caviar, physalis, sweet pepper, rocket, or cucumber. Add finishing touch with seasonal edible flowers such as ones from rocket, chives, three cornered leek, borage, violets or calendula petals.

Smaklig måltid!

Mirjam Johansson is a member of London Catholic Worker.

Support our work

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 financially independent. There are no headquarters, nor is there a central organization. More information is available on the U.S website www.catholicworker.org.

At Giuseppe Conlon House we run a house of hospitality for around 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 sixty 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 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: / / 18 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



GIUSEPPE CONLON HOUSE

IS LOOKING FOR LIVE-IN VOLUNTEERS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS!



Giuseppe Conlon House is a house of hospitality of the London Catholic Worker and part of the international Catholic Worker movement.

We are a young Christian ecumenical community based in North London where we live together with 18 male destitute asylum seekers and forced migrants. We help run a weekly soup kitchen, organise public talks and events, and publish a newsletter. We also take non-violent action against arms-trade, militarism, nuclear weapons and in-humane migration policies.

Community members and volunteers live and work full-time at Giuseppe Conlon House. Tasks are diverse and include housekeeping, repairs, gardening, administration, support work, organising events, taking part in meetings, creative projects and simply befriending and spending time with guests.

As a Christian community, our faith is at the heart of our work. Community members and live-in volunteers pray together every day. However, our house of hospitality welcomes people of all (or no) faiths

Live-in volunteers are usually expected to make a minimum commitment of 3 months. We provide free accommodation in a shared room, meals and a weekly allowance. We ask potential volunteers to complete a questionnaire and provide us with a reference. Please email us for more information.

CONTACT: +44(0)2083488212 LONDONCATHOLICWORKER@YAHOO.CO.UK
WWW.LONDONCATHOLICWORKER.COM



Wish List for our House of Hospitality

Food

- Chopped tomatoes
- Peanut butter
- Vegetable oil
- Kidney beans
- Chickpeas
- Coconut milk
- Easy-cook rice

- Couscous
- Lentils
- Vinegar
- Mayonnaise
- Cheese
- Spreads - marmalade, jam.
- Spices
- Sugar

- Muesli
- Cereal
- Fruit juice and squash
- Herbal teabags
- Instant coffee
- Chilli sauce
- Brown rice
- Nuts and seeds

Toiletries

- Toilet paper
- Tooth brushes
- Deodorant
- Shampoo
- Liquid soap
- Tissues

Eco-friendly cleaning products, especially:

- Anti-bacterial spray
- Multi-purpose cleaner
- Toilet cleaner
- Laundry detergent
- Floor cleaner

Miscellaneous

- NEW Men's underwear M-XL
- Men's shoes in good condition
- Tealights
- Paint
- Eye masks

Find our ethical shopping tips at www.londoncatholicworker.org/ethicalwishlist.pdf
Many of our guests do not eat pork for religious reasons so please do not donate pork products. Also, please do not donate soup, tinned spaghetti, baked beans, christmas puddings and mince pies as we already have enough.