

THE LONDON CATHOLIC WORKER



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Coyolxauhqui returns disguised as La Virgen de Guadalupe to defend the rights of Las Chicanas by Alma Lopez, 'chicana' artist and academic <http://www.almalopez.com>

Icons of Mary for our time

Nora Ziegler

Depictions of Mary, mother of Jesus, as insurgent, as lesbian or as transgender are considered liberational by some and blasphemous by others. What are the right and wrong ways to engage with Our Lady and who gets to decide? Liberation and blasphemy can both be considered a kind of transgression. Liberation is the subversion, overcoming or smashing up of oppressive systems. Blasphemy is an offence to the sacred. So what is sacred and what is oppressive? Can it really be that what is sacred to some is oppressive to others?

In 'Is Critique Secular?' (2009), Talal Asad describes two approaches to the concept of blasphemy. In a 'secular liberal' world view, individual self-ownership is sacred. A person's ownership of their thoughts and their right to freely express these through speech is sacred as long as they do not harm others. To restrict this freedom is a blasphemous transgression and act of oppression. Opposing another person's beliefs is not only allowed but desirable because it ensures that beliefs are in fact freely held and not the result of social conformity. Following this argument, controversial images of Mary might be considered liberational because they encourage freedom of thought and expression among people of faith.

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Multiple arrests as climate change protests continue

Christian Climate Action

While thousands gathered on five London bridges on Saturday 17th November for a mass day of action urging the government to act on climate change, Ruth Jarman, 55 was at Westminster Magistrates Court, as the first individual to attend court as part of the Extinction Rebellion protest.

Ruth Jarman, was one of several members of Christian Climate Action (CCA) who took part in the protest as part of the Extinction Rebellion, a fortnight of direct action in the capital.

Ruth went to the Brazilian Embassy with a crowbar and tree intending to use the crowbar to remove a paving slab and to plant the tree as a symbol of the creation that is at stake if we don't tackle climate change. She also decorated the Brazilian Embassy red, to represent the blood of individuals around the world suffering the effects of climate change. This was the third time Ruth had been arrested since the Extinction Rebellion began last Monday. Previous arrests were for actions targeting UK government locations of Downing Street and DEFRA. Ruth was released on unconditional bail, with her trial due to take place on the 2nd January 2019.

Just before the Rebellion began Ruth made the following statement:

'I still have hope - but my hope is no longer in governments doing the right thing because they are asked politely. We need a step change. If God has a plan to prevent breakdown of what makes life on earth possible, I think it might include His spirit in all of us being moved to civil disobedience. Look at civil rights in America, the Suffragettes here. People went to prison.'

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Above: *Hippie Mary*, woodcut by Sarah Fuller, former volunteer at Giuseppe Conlon House

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Henrietta Cullinan,
Our warmest thanks to all
who contributed articles,
photographs and drawings.

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A second approach described by Asad is the view that religious symbols and codes create and sustain religious belonging. The relationship of the individual to God is sacred. To mock or question this relationship is a blasphemous transgression and act of oppression. It can be seen as an attempt to seduce a person away from faithfulness to God. It is therefore allowed and desirable to restrict speech which damages this relationship. From this perspective, liberation is not found in individual freedom but in closeness to God. Religious images and discourses have both the power to strengthen and sustain a person's relationship to God or to alienate this relationship. My introductory question can then be put in this way: What brings us closer or further away from God and who gets to decide?

Feminist liberation theologian Marcella Althaus-Reid, in 'Indecent Theology' (2000), critiques traditional images of Mary that mystify and perpetuate patriarchal and colonial oppression. According to Althaus-Reid, the figure of the Virgin Mary theologically justifies the patriarchal ideal of passive femininity while denying the brutal reality of sexual and gendered violence. Similarly, the Virgin Mary has been and is used as a means and a justification of colonial power while also mystifying the reality of colonial and racist violence.

Althaus-Reid argues that the Virgin Mary is alienating for women, LGBT and poor people of Latin America because in contrast to her, their experience of being penetrated by the word of God, via the Catholic Church, the State and masculine authorities, is often a painful and scarring experience. This does not mean we need to get rid of Mary and it has little to do with whether the historical Mary was a virgin or not. The issue is what her virginity symbolises: her complicity with oppression and complete irrelevance to the real lives of ordinary people.

Portraying Mary as queer or as insurgent subverts this complicity and makes her relevant to people's struggles against power. Such depictions offend patriarchal and colonial power structures and those invested in them. But how invested is God in these structures?

We have certain structures including organisations, images and practices to help keep us faithful to God. We need these because our love and faithfulness is not perfect and we are invested in them as far as we need them. But God, whose love and faithfulness is perfect, does not need these structures and is not invested in them. God is always ready to meet us in the chaos and ambiguity of life.

Religious structures should serve to sustain people's relationship with God. When these structures become too rigid, fixed and fetishised they become irrelevant to people's needs. They become self-serving and self-perpetuating, developing into oppressive institutions which smother rather than serve the way of God's love in the world.

Allowing room to explore and break boundaries with religious images concedes more agency in their own faith life to the individual, and especially to those with little worldly power. However, individual freedom itself is not the goal here. The goal is closeness to God. Every person is created with the ability to engage in relationship with God and we each do it in different ways, depending on our personal gifts and circumstances. To deny or suppress this ability is blasphemy against the dignity of the person and against the holy spirit. I do believe religious structures are useful and important. But why do we trust religious authorities to define these structures more than we trust the poor and the powerless – those who according to Christ will inherit his kingdom?

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

Below: *Mary Magdalene and Virgen de Guadalupe*, from *My Cathedral* 1997, Alex Donis, www.alexdonis.com



No faith in war: workshops at Taizé

Henrietta Cullinan

This summer arms trade activists, Henrietta Cullinan and Nora Ziegler from the London Catholic Worker and Nicholas Cooper of Put Down the Sword, supported by Pax Christi, visited the Taizé community in south east France, to give two workshops entitled *No Faith in War: Christians challenge the arms trade*. The week at Taizé was for a gathering of over 2,000 young adults from all over Europe.

After introducing ourselves, we explained briefly why it was important for us to resist the arms trade; that we were pacifist, that peacemakers working in conflict zones repeatedly tell us,

‘We are tired of war’
‘Stop the flow of weapons’.

After a brainstorm of what the arms trade sells and who is involved, there followed a game that matched common myths with facts, drawn from CAAT papers on arms trade jobs and Paul Holden’s book *Indefensible*. For instance, far from providing valuable employment in the UK, the arms trade actually provides a very small number of jobs, 0.2% of the total workforce, which in time could be replaced with jobs in renewable energy production for instance.

The activity stimulated a lot of discussion. Some participants flatly disagreed, some doubted the veracity of our myth busting facts, despite the

Below: Henrietta Cullinan, Nora Ziegler and Nicholas Cooper lead a workshop on Christians challenging the arms trade at Taizé **photo: Nicholas Cooper**



statements, while others said they would like to be able to use the facts in arguments with their friends. Others puzzled over why governments, the UK government in particular are so attached to the arms trade.

Nora Ziegler and Nick Cooper then gave an account of the No Faith in War day of action in September 2017, during the set up of the DSEI arms fair, during which 17 were arrested. This was followed by a presentation of other direct action protests such as barricades, vigils, the court case brought by CAAT against the government for selling arms to Saudi Arabia, disruption of shareholders dinners, even a citizen’s arrest. Participants discussed amongst themselves whether they saw themselves taking part in any of these kind of actions.

Eavesdropping on the discussions, a few individuals were very interested and wanted to know more, but quite a few couldn’t imagine themselves joining in with direct action. Some said we were wasting tax payers money, police time and the courts’ time. They asked why we didn’t just sign a petition, and how effective our actions really were. Many people were interested in the idea of ethical banking, and moving money out of banks like HSBC as a protest.

Some people we spoke to found it hard to imagine a world without weapons. It seemed to me that we needed a further workshop on gospel nonviolence, a workshop on nonviolent direct action. The idea that people might take action themselves at grass roots level was unfamiliar to most of the participants that we met, in the three different workshops.



The Catholic Worker in the UK and just across the Channel

London Catholic Worker

Giuseppe Conlon House
49 Mattison Road, London N4 1BG
Tel: +44 (0) 20 8348 8212
londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk
www.londoncatholicworker.org
Twitter: @LndnCathWorker
Facebook: London Catholic Worker

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

Lynsters Farm, Old Uxbridge Road
West Hyde, Herts, WD3 9XJ
Tel: +44 (0) 1923 777 201
thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk
www.thecatholicworkerfarm.org

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

Email: glw@catholicworker.org.uk
Website: www.catholicworker.org.uk

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. We keep a regular vigil at Faslane Nuclear Base and hold monthly meetings and prayers.

Maria Skobstova House

Tel: +33 (0) 6680 433 28
johanmaertens@hotmail.com
Website: https://mariaskobstova.org

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.

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People died. Stopping the extinction of all the best bits of creation, including possibly us, has got to be worth more than the human equality that direct action has fought for in the past.'

After she was arrested for the first time on Monday, Ruth read a statement to the police which included the following:

'I visited the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy today as a Christian and as a mother because God's creation and the human race faces an existential crisis beyond anything in our history.[...] I hold our government criminally negligent for the coming extinction of most of God's creation including possibly humanity itself.'

Following her attendance at court, Ruth was reunited with members of Christian Climate Action and many other protestors on Blackfriars Bridge. She addressed the crowds about her experience in court. 'They say it was criminal damage,' she explained, 'but I have lawful excuse, because they are causing criminal damage to [...]Gods creation.'

At Blackfriars Bridge members of Christian Climate Action 'locked-on', using chains and circular tubing, forming a human blockade across the road. Four members of the group, Phil Kingston, 82, Fr Martin Newell, 51, Richard Barnard, 45 and Nicholas Cooper, 36, took part in blocking the road, despite attendance in the area being a breach of the bail conditions they received from previous Extinction Rebellion arrests.

The Christians prayed as police sawed their tubing and removed them from the road. While this was happening, other attendees of the protest gathered around the group singing hymns. The police arrested the 8 Christians forming the blockade, including Ruth herself, for some of whom this was the second or third time they had been arrested for the climate protest. Many more individuals were arrested for the cause across the capital – the estimated total being over 85 arrestees.

Write in

We warmly invite you to comment on what is written here. We will include interesting letters in our next issue. .

Phil Kingston, an 82-year-old retired Bristol University lecturer explained his motivation for being in the blockade 'I love my grandchildren,' he said. 'They mean the world to me and the thought of leaving them a broken world breaks my heart. I have to do my bit before it's too late. Us more elderly folk have a lot less to lose than younger people by getting arrested'.

Fr. Martin Newell said, 'I follow a Christ who cares passionately about the poor, and it is the poorest people of the world who are suffering the effects of climate change. I am called to love my neighbour and today that means pushing the government to take action on climate change. All other avenues of achieving this have failed and so I'm getting involved in non-violent direct action, just as Jesus did when he turned over the tables in the temple.'

Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, has pledged his support, signing a letter that reads:

'When a government wilfully abrogates its responsibility to protect its citizens from harm and to secure the future for generations to come, it has failed in its most essential duty of stewardship. The 'social contract' has been broken, and it is therefore not only our right, but our moral duty to bypass the government's inaction and flagrant dereliction of duty, and to rebel to defend life itself.'

christianclimateaction.wordpress.com

<https://rebellion.earth>

Below: Fr. Martin Newell cp, Phil Kingston, Caroline Harmon, Nicholas Cooper, Richard Barnard, Margriet Bos and Bramble O'Brien on Blackfriars Bridge during Extinction Rebellion, November 2018 **photo: Christian Climate Action**



Editorial

Welcome to the winter issue of the London Catholic Worker.

The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is celebrated on the 12th December. In honour of the tradition of subversive imagery that surrounds her, we hear from Nora her reflections on radical depictions of Mary.

We hear from Maria Skobtsova House, home of the Catholic Worker community in Calais. Many of us have personal experience of this unique place where faith, resistance and hospitality coincide.

Catholic Workers joined our friends from Christian Climate Action in the Extinction Rebellion, during two weeks of protest. Catholic Workers from Oxford, Kent, Birmingham and Amsterdam have all been represented.

Contributions welcome! To contribute an article or images, please contact: londoncatholicworker@yahoo.co.uk

Maria Skobtsova House



Br. Johannes Maertens keeps in touch with refugees in London **photo: with permission**

A community of hospitality

Br Johannes Maertens

Maria Skobtsova House tries to be a community. We try to be in community *with* refugees and *amongst* refugees.

We try to bring volunteers, people who come to spend anything from a few days to months with us, closer to the refugees, to live together with them, to share in their daily life.

The mission of the house is to be 'prayerfully present' amongst refugees. In our experience, being 'prayerfully present' often also works the other way round; many of the refugees are very spiritual, religious people. They are the ones who bring their prayers into our lives and, while it's our mission to be prayerfully *with* them, they are the ones who are within *our* lives with their prayers. This is a very good experience for the volunteers.

Many of the young refugees, and sometimes even the older ones, have no sense of time anymore. They have

been traveling for months. The longer they have been sleeping rough and surviving in transit, the more their sense of time becomes lost. Night extends into day. Morning, afternoon and evening get all mixed up. For this reason we found it important that the house has specific times for morning, for afternoon, for an evening meal and night prayer, to bring structure back into the young men's lives. That does not mean that we force our timetable on them. If they don't get out of bed in the morning, that doesn't worry us. But we are there, following our own rhythm and they know that we are there because they hear us pray. They can hear us, moving about in the kitchen, cleaning, praying and singing in the chapel.

We have a small group of refugees who you could say form community with us and who are here quite regularly. Then next to that, we take in refugees from the hospital; some have been injured, some are sick, others have psychological problems or are a bit vulnerable. This is where the role of the other refugees in the house comes in; their role is to support people from their own community. They help to create links between us and them, not just because the language is a problem but also because they have experiences in common, something we, as westerners, could never have.

We have many visitors during the day. People come simply for a cup of tea, a cup of coffee and to eat a bit. They come to take a shower, to have their clothes washed; this is actually the only place where they can do their laundry. They stay with us for half a day, or a bit longer and in the evening often they want to go back out. It's their choice not to stay with us in the evening.

Well, it's a very big household. We have to load up the washing machine many times a day and then somehow get the clothes dry. We serve up to 30 people and at the weekends we can serve 20 to 30 people a meal. On weekdays it's a bit less. So we have a lot of costs. Everyday we ferry people back and forth to the hospital, to the doctor and we visit our previous guests who are still in the region.

For the underage refugees, we put credit on their phones so they can stay in contact with each other, with us and with their families back home because it's very important to protect them from, well, the evil or bad things that might happen to them. Staying in contact with their families and with people here is very important for the underage refugees.

The future of this house would be that we become unnecessary. Unfortunately we don't see a change in politics on the English nor on the French side. That means young refugees will keep coming. Because it's the shortest way to the UK, they will always come to Calais, so we want to be here for them, to be present amongst them so that we can help them the best we can. If you live with them, if you feel for them, you know how you can help them. The biggest need I think in a way is humanity. By that I mean to recognise them as people. You do that by drinking tea with them. You do that by sharing a meal with them. You do that by praying with them when they invite you. Although, admittedly in Calais there is a lot of physical need, I think sometimes the biggest need is simply to be recognised as a human person.

Transcribed from a video made by the Anglican Diocese of Europe for their Bishop's Lent Appeal.

<https://youtu.be/bFH-H821H70>

- **Donate!**
- **To find out how to get involved visit our english language website:**
- **mariaskobtsova.org**
- **To donate, email mariaskobtsova@gmail.com for bank details**
- **or**
- **cheques payable to Association Maria Skobtsova can be sent to: Simon Jones, 10 Somerton Road, London, SE15 3UG**



Fatta, a dish of torn up bread and spicy tomato sauce, for communal breakfast in the garden **photo: Henrietta Cullinan**

Entertaining Angels

Alex Holmes

'Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.' Hebrews 13 v2

Hospitality: *'the act and practice of being hospitable; the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors or strangers; liberality and goodwill'* (Oxford English Dictionary). The etymological root of the word *hospitality* is the Latin *hospes*, meaning guest, host and stranger.

Day time, Maria Skobtsova House
The front door bell rings, an unsettling sound, always, like the clock that chimes thirteen.

'In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit', quickening towards the door with those thirteen quietening syllables, tracing the sign of the cross.

'Welcome back, Robbel, I am so happy you are safe.' An embrace. Such cold small ears. Winter's chill is still in the air.

Or a request; 'I'm so tired. Can I sleep the night?' Of course, welcome.

Or one hand clutching a head wound, the other a discharge paper from the hospital. Yes come in.

Or four people asking for a shower; 'I'm sorry, we cannot offer showers today, the house is too full.' The pain of saying, 'No'; it feels like an act of violence.

Adonay, Josef and Haile are at the door. They've come to spend the night after their friend Samuel, just a month in Calais, was hit by a car as he jumped from a lorry.

Tomorrow, to the mortuary in Lille to pay respects to Samuel's body.

Prayer time. Once more the doorbell. Could we take an underage boy, Yonas. The two who have brought him to the door apologise, saying they have tried to find him other accommodation, that he feels very frightened and they can find no place for him.

We welcome him. As an Eritrean, we tell him, he will be at home here: we only have Eritreans in the house at the moment. He comes to night prayer and speaks afterwards in good English of how he was the only Christian amongst Muslims in the underage centre where he had been placed. They bullied him relentlessly.

'I don't mind,' he says, 'if people are Christian or Muslim or whatever; it is no problem for me. For them, a big, big problem that I am Christian'.

He is grazed the length of his nose and across his chin. The silver stud in his left ear glints.

Boundaries: *'A boundary is a line drawn that defines and establishes identity. All within the circumscription of that line makes up a whole, an entity. Neither good nor bad in its own right, a boundary determines something that can be pointed to and named: a person, a family, a geographical region, a city, a town, a nation, a parish church, a denomination, a faith. A boundary provides essential limits, for what is not limited, bounded, merges with its context and ceases to exist in its own particular way'* (Canon Caroline A. Westerhoff).

But who do we allow to cross these boundaries, to enter our countries, enter our homes, enter our personal space?

Night time, probing the darkness under the pine trees. The moon has yet to rise. Emerging from the trees, the path towards the bridge, under which ninety or so Eritrean refugees spend the night, becomes clearer, foot-flattened earth through black grasses.

The thunder-drum of lorries powering along the artery road from the port creates a pervasive sound wall

'Salaam, welcome'. Issac beckons. 'It's *draar*, dinner time, eat with us'. We gather, ten of us, cross-legged in a circle in the low space just beneath the underside of the road bridge. A container with rice and beans is placed in the middle, spoons are passed around. First we pray and then we eat. Issac smiles. 'Yes life is hard, but it can be good, like now, and everyone smiles. We can smile because we know everything passes'.

'Bruq leyti, goodnight'; there are many hands to shake. The way back is clear. Yarrow, the last of summer's flowers, is caught in the moonlight.

Alex Holmes is a regular volunteer at Maria Skobtsova House, Calais



Above: Towels for those who come for showers hanging in the garden **Photo: Henrietta Cullinan**

Below: Boundaries; the borderlands of Calais. **Photo: Alex Holmes**



Mending life

Anne M. Jones

I have just returned from a week's stint in the Calais warehouse, *Auberge des Migrants*, in the 'rat corner', now renamed 'Sew Ho' by others. My mind is awry with images of zippers and coats and sleeping bags and tents lying in heaps on the dusty floor, and I attempt to calm my body which has been rushing from one sewing task to another, interrupted only by supplications from eager, fresh-faced volunteers. 'Can you sew this, please?' they ask in tones equally hopeful whether it's a minute hole in a huge blanket, or a gash in a tent - the latter most likely inflicted by the police in keeping with their policy of relentlessly moving refugees on by slashing tents and removing any possessions.

Our daily tally amounts to almost twenty coats, fitted with new zips, fifteen sleeping bags (ditto), many blankets de-holed and numerous warm tops, brand new rejects from a posh brand where an entire batch had small holes in a seam.

These will help keep migrants warm for maybe two or three days, then, with no laundry, they will later be discarded in hedgerows, ending up in nearby rivers, blocking waterways, and contributing to the growing eco crisis in the countryside around, a hidden by product of policies that prevent free movement to the UK.

Sitting in our corner we get to hear stories of what is happening in the Pas de Calais, up to Dunkirk where most of the migrants, now numbered at 2,000, have found temporary areas to camp.

Tales of a 'mafia' of 'people traffickers' suggest that many traffickers are encouraged to come here because it is potentially profitable even though there is no assured outcome for the once hopeful migrants arriving from Greece or Italy. 'L'île du Pas de Calais' or an isle of lost dreams?

Hostility towards refugees and volunteers is increasing, portended for me the day I left the UK with reports of President Macron threatening to impose visa requirements upon all British visitors and residents there after Brexit.

One evening after food distribution a woman with a small baby whom she was breast feeding began getting severe pain from a recurrent problem - the ambulance was called and when the operator heard the venue the call was refused. Eventually the volunteers were able to take her to a small clinic, where they had to leave her. The day I left, another group of migrants was being evicted from their encampment near Dunkirk. The Refugee Community Kitchen was making 2,000 boxes of food for them, instead of the usual dishing out in the field.

The battle to build some form of overnight shelter for refugees continues, with the Mayor of Calais deeply opposed while the sympathetic Mayor of Dunkirk threatens to make a temporary shelter on the former Jungle site.

Is it true that ultimately a person learns to live with pain? Here, the privations, the constant moving on, the broken promises and exploitation take their toll on young lives. They will be felt most of all by children, growing up in such an atmosphere of instability and uncertainty.

Meanwhile this work of sewing and supporting brings rewards that generate hope which we can pass on. We find comradeship and new friendships. I watch the young volunteers working in an easy co-operative way, respectful of one another which transmits to refugees who are increasingly angry, even hostile sometimes, or showing signs of deep mental health disturbances.

Though we in the sewing corner sit getting colder and colder, we can stave it off with supplies of chocolate from Lidl next door, whose increased profits, like those of some other businesses around here, are an unforeseen consequence of the presence of the migrants. Lidl is one of the not unsympathetic shops and sometimes gives us 'out of date' food.

Now I am home again to the quiet of my pretty garden where already my robin is hopping towards the back door anticipating crumbs, welcoming my return.

Anne M. Jones is a peace and human rights activist, with a background in social work and psychotherapy. A Quaker for several decades, she volunteers at Giuseppe Conlon House

Our great failure

Dorothy Day

The Catholic Worker, January 1954

Our great failure, the one that Peter would probably emphasize if he were here to talk of these things, is that we always plunge into action without sufficient indoctrination. It is almost that we act without due deliberation and full consent of the will. Our vision is not keen enough nor large enough for us to see the whole; our very hearts lead us to see what is directly before our physical senses. We are activists. We try to do too much. We bite off more than we can chew. [...] If we didn't try over and over again to put ideas into effect at once, we would never learn, because we are products of our time, we are Americans, we live in a world of modern music, modern art, modern chaos and not only have to live now but also keep aiming and talking about how we would like to live, about how God meant we should live.

Who are we to know what God meant? [...] Practically speaking, should none get married, none have children, until we prepare, save, perfect ourselves to fit ourselves for our vocation. What nonsense!

Most of the time *The Catholic Worker* seems to be engaged in picking up the pieces, as Ammon says, instead of building a fence at the top of the cliff to keep men from falling off. If we had a better social order we would not have so many destitute to care for. If we had better indoctrinated Catholics, we would not have so big a job to do, it would be spread out throughout the families and parishes.

Our great comfort

But in this happy season, and even while writing of failure, I am filled with a sense of great joy that God has entrusted to us a mission, that we have been given a work to do. In twenty years we seem to have accomplished little. The same long breadlines continue at our houses. Throughout the land many a Catholic Worker family struggles and seems to get nowhere. But meanwhile the children are born, and are fed and launched into life with a more vital sense [...] of God and their place in the body of Christ.

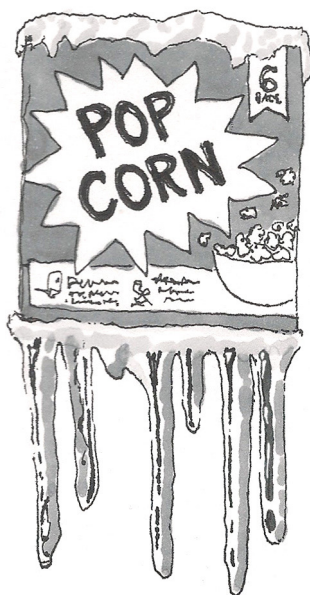
20 household tips and tricks

from Giuseppe Conlon House

Mirjam Johansson

One of the things about living in community is the privilege of meeting so many different people. I mean, really very different. At times I think I'm the only normal person around, sceptical about ways unfamiliar to me! But at other times I am humbled and amazed, or simply amused. So, in honour of all the people who have visited or lived in our community and in honour of all our different ways of being and doing, I would like to share with you a compilation of tips and tricks I've come across over the years in Giuseppe Conlon House. Try them at your own risk!

1. **Keep your popcorn in the freezer!** - The sudden temperature change from frozen to hot makes them pop better.
2. For calming an unsettled stomach - Drink some thyme infusion or eat lots of salad.
3. Crush the garlic between the knife and chopping board before peeling it and the peel will come right off.
4. Add a few teaspoons of baking powder to the water when boiling pulses. They will go softer and require less time to boil.
5. Flavour your tea with marmalade.

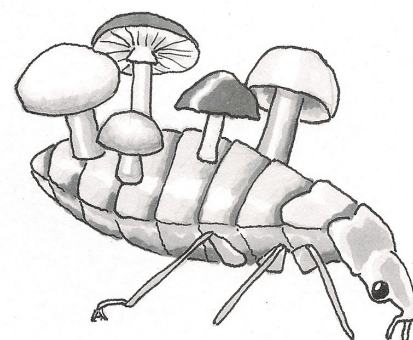


6. If you need to catch a squirrel with your hands - wear gloves.
7. To save time (and energy!) add your oats to your morning coffee and they will soften and turn into porridge on the bottom of the cup by the time you've finished your drink.

8. **If you have confidential documents to destroy, less tedious than shredding them is to soak them in a bucket of water until they disintegrate.** (We are testing this suggestion out, but don't come looking for our bucket, it is kept in a very secret location. It's not good to leave the paper in the bucket for too long. It goes very smelly!)



9. Love croissants, but not the ham and cheese ones? Establish a symbiotic relationship with someone who likes ham and cheese but not croissants. Remove the ham and cheese, give it to your friend, add your own chocolate spread - and you've got a chocolate croissant with a nice and fashionable salty flavour from the residue of the original filling.
10. When boiling grains like rice, quinoa etc. only use about 2/3 of the recommended amount of water, bring to boil and then cook on very low heat for a longer time.
11. For any non-resolvable issue: You can only accept it.
12. Make your own leg-waxing gloop from boiled lemon juice and sugar. It tastes yummy too - before you've used it! (from the Catholic Worker Farm - more leg-waxing going on there no doubt.)



13. **To get rid of bedbugs without chemicals** - buy some Beauveria Bassiana fungi that infects any bedbugs with a disease that kills them. Allow for a bedbug lifecycle of 8-10 days before they are all gone. The fungi can be bought online.
14. Has your remote control gone missing? Why not use an umbrella instead?
15. Ever forgotten which side the fuel cap on your car is? There is a little arrow on the dashboard by the fuel level indicator.
16. If you accidentally make a curry too spicy, add mashed potato powder to make it mild and creamy. 'And it actually works!' says surprised volunteer cook.
17. If your vegetable stew is too thin, add some rice pudding to make it nice and creamy. (from a Franciscan community in Bradford)
18. When putting on a duvet cover, turn it inside out and stick your arms all the way in to grasp the duvet by the top corners. Then stand somewhere high up (we have a balcony you could use) and shake vigorously until it's in. For an even easier experience make a hole in each corner of the cover big enough to fit your hand through.
19. Mayonaise is a great ingredient for improvised cake making! The vinegar in it helps the baking powder to raise the cake.
20. If you are going on holiday, put your plants on a wet towel in the bathtub. Remember to take the plug out! Otherwise you could return back to a smelly brown pool with floating slimy plants.

Mirjam Johansson is a long term member of the London Catholic Worker

Giuseppe Conlon House

Latest news from the Catholic Worker community in London

Roland, Mirjam and Nora have now lived and worked together at Giuseppe Conlon House for over three years. We are always learning and growing as a community. Over the past year we have experimented with some changes to make our community more sustainable for everyone who lives or is involved here. For example, we have made changes that delegate more responsibility to external and short-term volunteers and make it easier for core group members to take time off.



Above: Birthday at Giuseppe Conlon House **photo: Mirjam Johansson**

Over the summer we had the help of some wonderful people, including new volunteers, old friends and local people. We were able to make use of the dry weather to clean and re-paint some mouldy rooms in the church basement, refurbish one of our bathrooms, and paint window and door frames. Roland, Mirjam and Nora were all able to take holidays and attend the wedding of Anna and Herman from the Amsterdam Catholic Worker.

In August, Nora and Henrietta of London Catholic Worker and Nick from Put Down the Sword were invited to a special week for young adults in Taizé, France, to speak about 'Christians challenging the global arms trade'. Each workshop was attended by about 70 young adults engaging in deep and lively discussions around peace, direct action and the role of faith.

Nora, Nick and Henrietta are among eight activists whose trial in February, for action at the DSEI arms fair in 2017, resulted in acquittal. The prosecution's appeal of the judges decision is on 29th November.

Members of our community took part in an action with Campaign Against Arms Trade at the Farnborough Air Show in July. In September we joined Put Down the Sword and Midlands Christian Action (MiChA) in a vigil at the arms company Roxel, which manufactures rocket engines for missiles that are used by Saudi Arabia in Yemen.

We also joined Feminist Fightback in an action in October calling for equal and free access to reproductive healthcare for all irrespective of immigration status.

In November we hosted a group of climate change activists from the group Rising Up and took part in some of their actions.

In September we were honoured to host a fundraiser and social for the End Deportations campaign in our church space. Members of End Deportations and Lesbians and Gays Support the Migrants took action in February 2017 to stop a chartered deportation flight to Nigeria and Ghana by locking themselves to the charter plane at Stansted Airport. The Stansted 15 are currently on trial in Chelmsford. On 1st October we joined a demonstration at the court in support of their action and campaign.

Below: Day of solidarity in Dover for French and British partners supporting refugees **photo: Mirjam Johansson**



Above: Nora joined Feminist Fightback under the statue of Millicent Fawcett **photo: Feminist Fightback**

In September we were also able to take part in the first ever British Catholic Worker gathering. Around twenty of us met in Darlington for a weekend of round-table discussions, socialising, games and prayer. We hope to continue these meetings every two years.

On 20th October, we participated in a meeting in Dover with groups including Westminster and Southwark Justice and Peace commissions, Maria Skobtsova House, and Secours Catholique. The aim was to build solidarity between groups across the Channel and to discuss, reflect and exchange experience of working to improve our welcome for exiles on their journeys near our borders.



An evening with Jim Forest

*Reflecting on Thomas Merton,
Dorothy Day and Daniel Berrigan*

Thursday 13 December 2018

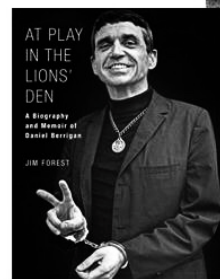
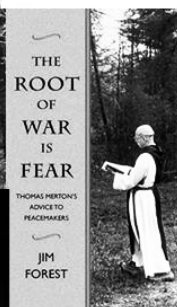
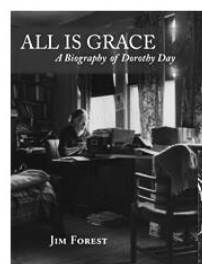
St Pancras Church

Parish Hall

Lancing Street

off Eversholt Street, London NW1
east side of Euston Station.

6.45 for 7.00pm—9.00pm



Some of Jim's
writings

A writer, activist, co-founder of the Catholic Peace Fellowship in the United States, Jim knew, worked with and has written on *Thomas Merton*, *Dorothy Day* and *Daniel Berrigan*. Come and hear about these stimulating partnerships and how they have shaped Christian thinking on peace. *All welcome!*

Hosted by *Pax Christi* with the *Thomas Merton Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, the *Faith and Resistance Network* and the *London Catholic Worker* www.paxchristi.org.uk 0208 203 4884

Cafe Art 2019

*A member of our community
has won a photography
competition*

The Cafe Art 2019 MyLondon calendar is a social enterprise initiative by London people affected by homelessness. Participants are given a disposable camera and have five days to take photographs and return it to the same place. A member of our community who took part has won the Cafe Art photography competition. His work is included in the MyLondon Calendar 2019. If you are interested in buying this calendar, featuring pictures taken by people affected by homelessness, please get in touch.

To read more about the project and buy copies of the calendar visit: www.cafeart.org.uk

Diary

All events at Giuseppe Conlon House, 49 Mattison Road, N4 1BG -unless otherwise stated

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, Home Office, Marsham St. 12:30pm

All welcome. Call 020 8348 8212 for more details

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

Special Events

Christmas Party Giuseppe Conlon House

Saturday 8th December, 3-6pm. There will be live music, comedy, food, refreshments and raffle. All welcome.

An Evening with Jim Forest
Thursday 13th December
6:45-9PM at St Pancras Church Hall, Lancing St, London NW1, hosted by **Pax Christi**, **Thomas Merton Society of Great Britain**, **Faith and Resistance Network** and **London Catholic Worker**, see above for details

Open Day, Catholic Worker Farm, June 1st 2019

Farmfest, August 23 - 26, 2019
Catholic Worker Farm,
www.farmfest.info

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.com.

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 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 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 also help run a weekly soup kitchen, organise public talks and events, publish a newsletter, and take non-violent action against arms-trade, militarism, nuclear weapons, and in solidarity with refugees and migrants.

Community members and volunteers live and work full-time at Giuseppe Conlon House, sometimes sharing rooms. 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.

Wish List for our House of Hospitality

Food

easy-cook rice
peanut butter
chickpeas
coconut milk
lentils
kidney beans
tinned tomatoes
cooking oil
basmati rice
mayonnaise
cheese
low fat spread
tahini
spices & herbs

honey
muesli
cereal
fruit juice and squash
herbal teabags
chilli sauce
nuts & seeds

Toiletries

toilet paper
toothpaste
toothbrushes
deodorant
shampoo
liquid soap

tissues

Eco-friendly cleaning products, :

anti-bacterial spray
multi-purpose cleaner
toilet cleaner
laundry detergent
floor cleaner

Miscellaneous

NEW Men's underwear size M-XL
sturdy men's shoes in good condition
tealights
paint

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.