


Summer
1993

we were just sitting there talking when...we were just sitting there talking when...we were just sitting there talking
when ...we were just sitting there talking when Peter Maurin came in....we were just sitting there talking when...we
were just sitting there talking when...we were just sitting there talking when...we were just sitting there
talking when lines of people began to form, saying, "we need bread."we were just sitting there
talking when...we were just sitting there talking when... we were just sitting there talking when ..we
were just sitting there talking when... we were just sitting there talking when...we were just
sitting there talking and people moved in on us. let those who can take it , take it some
moved outand that made room for more....we were just sitting there talking...and
somehow the walls expanded...where we were just sitting there talking
when...we were just sitting there talking when...we were just sitting there
talking when...we were just sitting there talking when...we were just sitting there
there talking when...we were just sitting there talking when...we were just sitting there



*is love
and that love comes
with community.*

WHY THIS ISSUE?

At last it has become common if not fashionable to bemoan the dearth of community in our life in the United States. From Robert Bellah to Scott Peck the need for community as felt by the ordinary citizen has become widely recognized. Ironically, even self-help mass market paperbacks proclaim our neglect of this intrinsic human quality.

This need for community cuts across the grain, in large part, of the heritage from which this nation developed. Although there are notable and persistent exceptions, individualism became the hallmark of the American personality. Today each of us must have our own car, home, career, appliances, etc., and the unfettered freedom to acquire and control them. What we are left with to share in common is little more than shopping, spectator sports, and television.

Now, however, there is a resurgent recognition of the hollowness of a life lived alone—not simply physically, but spiritually alone. There is a growing awareness of the need to live in conjunction with others with ties that bind, at some personal sacrifice, in order to achieve common goals and meet common needs.

Community is at the heart of Christian life, although this has often been lost in our cultural milieu. Fellowship, the building up of the Body of Christ, compassionate care and involvement with each other, the discovery that we are not saved alone but only in conjunction with others — all of these are intrinsic to an authentic life of discipleship.

The task of building and sustaining community is not easy nor always rewarding, as the lead article suggests. John Kavanaugh turns to a favorite passage of Dorothy Day's from The Brothers Karamazov to allow us to see the hardships and rewards of real community. This Catholic Worker perspective is underscored by a series of excerpts from Dorothy Day later in the issue. The theme is further examined as six individuals with widely varying personal histories come together to compare their experiences of community in a heartfelt discussion. Mary Dutcher reflects on the interconnections between a parish in Nicaragua and people of St. Louis, and how a sense of community has been built across the hemisphere. Sadly and ironically, it is also in this issue that the Karen House article fell to Jim and Katrina, who have chosen, with some anguish, to leave the St. Louis Catholic Worker community to become part of a rural farm community in far-off Washington. Mary Ann McGivern's thoughts from Little House and the Round Table Talk conclude the issue.

We trust that you can combine these reflections with the experiences of your own struggle with community so as to result in a more realistic but more passionate yearning for relationship with others — in community. +

- Bill Miller

Cover graphic for
The Round Table
by Genevieve Cassani, SSND

the St. Louis Catholic Worker Community

Karen House
1840 Hogan
St. Louis, MO. 63106
314-621-4052



Ella Dixon House
1540 N. 17th St.
St. Louis, MO. 63106
314-231-2039

COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY

by John Kavanaugh, S.J.

A fact often forgotten is that Dorothy Day's favorite "harsh and dreadful love" passage from Dostoevski's Brothers Karamazov has a lot to say about community.

The context, of course, is prayer and faith. Madame Hohlakov has gone to old Zossima for advice. She's afraid she is losing her faith, especially her faith in the afterlife. The monk tells her that love, not faith, is the real issue. And she immediately agrees. She has a problem with love.

Our problem is not the grand sweep of love, not the love of millions or of humanity itself, not even the love of the downtrodden who may come to our doors or accost us on the street. At our best, we can manage them with a smile, especially if the encounter is not too long, and there are not too many "follow-up" expectations.

The real problem is the person I must live and labor with. The person at hand. The person in my community, my family, my circle of friends.

Zossima remembered a humanitarian Doctor who complained:

I am incapable of living in the same room with anyone for two days. I know from experience. As soon as people get near me, their personalities disturb me and restrict my freedom. In twenty-four hours I begin to hate the best of persons; one because she's too long over her dinner, another because he has a cold and keeps blowing his nose. I become hostile to people the moment they come close to me.

Dorothy Day knew that the meaning of the "harsh and dreadful love" was the powerful relationship between our noble religious ideals, our social conscious-

ness and our daily struggles with each other. There is a spirituality of politics. There is a politics in our personal relationships. And the sins of the social order are mirrored in our own private disorders. Thus, her journals and writings are as much haunted by self-critique as they are critiques of society.

It is one thing to ask governments to lay down their arms. It is quite another (and often more difficult) to disarm ourselves before the enemy with a neighbor's face. Jean Vanier, the founder of the L'Arche communities, notes our love for the "handicapped" sometimes seems so much easier than the love we are called to give our "non-handicapped" collaborators. Mother Teresa admits that greater asceticisms are demanded of us by each other than by the most spartan of dress and the plainest of foods.

As a young Jesuit once said to me: "It's not the work. I love the work. It's just that *!@#*!@# I have to work with."

Community tests out all theories, be they social, spiritual or psychological. For community is a union of persons at greater closeness and intensity than of nation, class or convenience. It is relationship in depth "intimo", as the Latin would have it with intimacy. Thus, true friendship, close solidarity, traditional congregations, and family itself are opportunities for profound experiences of community. Community is where we are found out, where we are known and named for who we are, where our pretenses are unmasked and our vulnerability is made open.

Only in those places where we are known in depth, "intimo", can we be loved in truth. And only there can we be truly hurt.

John Kavanaugh, S.J., can usually be found teaching philosophy at St. Louis University. Last semester he was on sabbatical in New York, writing a book.

We have tremendous natural impulses to avoid community. We are tempted to hold ourselves in, to protect ourselves with impregnable defenses, to assure our personal security. We entertain the illusion that, if we do not let ourselves be known, we will never be vulnerable, unguarded and open to attack.



And we reproduce in our communities, in our families, the very patterns of defense and aggression, of injustice and denial, that rules the age and the rulers of the age.

If, however, we enter the truth of relationship, if we live in community, we must be willing to face our egoisms and fears, we must be willing to take off the armor of isolation and toughness. And we may indeed be shamed, like Madam Hohlakov, before the gate of someone who knows us.

But we shall also experience the power of our truth. We can be loved for who and what we are. We need not fake it through life. And we, though sinners, can experience what it is to be mightily graced with our own irreplaceable gift of love which we are allowed to bestow on each other.

Authentic community, to be sure, is a rare phenomenon in contemporary culture, where relationship and intimacy seem to be avoided at all costs. Most of

our energies are directed to behaviors which lead us away from relationship. Competition inhabits our work, homes and schools. Hidden and unquestioned imperatives that we must work more and more to acquire more and more are part of our cultural myths. The media rarely present any images of men and women capable of enduring commitment or of any intimacy other than random sexual encounter. Civic virtues and neighborliness seem almost utopian qualities of a distant past. We may even feel at times that community is an illusion, that commitment is an impossibility and that covenant is a dream of another world.

Thus, the lives we build together as friends, as community, as family, are something quite more than personal needs and interpersonal comforts. They are strategic choices we make as social and political beings not only to test out the reality of our commitment to justice or the genuineness of our "spiritual" lives, but as leaven in a culture desperately in need of human community.

Perhaps our communities, the willingness of Catholic Workers and their supporting friends to labor at the "harsh and dreadful love" of relationship, could be the best gifts and challenges we make to our country.

It was Lee Atwater, after all not your basic Catholic Worker type, who spoke of this need just weeks before he died of brain cancer. Here, the man who won presidential campaigns, who invented Willie Horton and "kicking butt", the man who surely "made it" in terms of our culture, was asking for a rebirth of community:

The '80's were about acquiring wealth, power, prestige. I know. I acquired more wealth, power and prestige than most. But you can acquire all you want and still feel empty. What power wouldn't I pay for a little more time with my family. What price wouldn't I pay for an evening with friends. It took a deadly illness to put me eye to eye with that truth, but it is a truth that the country, caught up in its ruthless ambitions and moral decays, can learn on my dime. I don't know who will lead us through the '90's, but they must be made to speak to this spiritual vacuum at the heart of American society, this tumor of the soul.

—Lee Atwater's Last Campaign, *LIFE*, February, 1991. +



CONVERSATIONS ON COMMUNITY

Community is important in our lives at the Worker and comes up often when people talk about problems or solutions in our society. Crime and health care, church, transportation, and family all are seen as affected by lack of community, or partly resolved by creating community. A lot of people we know are looking for community; a lot of people have a hard time knowing what they are looking for or where to find it. So we thought it would be fruitful to have a conversation with people about their thinking on and experience of community. We asked these people to come together because they represent a variety of perspectives on community. Participants were Virginia Druhe, Mary Beth Gallagher, Marty King, Jerry Kleba, Bill Miller, and Mary Louis Price, DC. Photographs by Tom Nelson, CM.

WHY COMMUNITY?

Virginia: What do any of you feel we can hope for from community? What have we found we can expect from community?

Marty: Communities are different and have unique features. Our community started out as a group of people who wanted to have in-depth conversation and education in religion — all the people in our group are Catholic — but we evolved fairly quickly into a faith

sharing community. I think that is clearly what our group was looking for; to get beyond discussion on the intellectual level to how does our faith live, how do we share it in our lives with one another?

Obviously as we've gotten older some of our needs in community have changed. A few years ago we reached a point where some of our members wanted a primary community, but we realized we were trying to



I've come to see that I've been drawn to communities that have a balance of inwardness and outwardness.

Bill Miller has been a member of several different communities. He lived in the Christian Life Community for three years and was part of the Catholic Worker for three years. He has also participated in Clergy and Laity Concerned, and prayer communities and parish communities.

be something we weren't. With help and discernment we decided that our community truly is a support community. Each one of us already had a primary community, our family unit or religious community. We decided we are a secondary community of support and affirmation and exploration. And we continue in that way.

We have also become able to really pray together. We do a day of recollection in the spring and a retreat for a weekend in the fall. We try to have Mass or some kind of liturgy when we meet monthly. I think those are the primary things we are looking for and find in our community.

We have a very structured non-structure! But it has worked. We have been very careful about sharing jobs. It is all shared leadership.

Jerry: In the five or ten minutes since we have started to talk I have begun to think of a community that didn't initially occur to me, and that is very important to me. For about 8 years and I've been in a community of a dozen priests and ministers from eight different denominations. We get together every Tuesday morning to plan our preaching for the coming week. Some of us are men and some are women, some are white and some are black. Some are from pretty institutionalized and highly liturgical faiths and some are from much more congregational, community centered religions. The things that

we have shared with one another, the range of perspectives that people have on church and Scripture, on major issues like the Trinity or good and evil, are just amazing. And the level of friendship and bonding that has taken place there is remarkable. I don't have a relationship with twelve priests with whom I could be as honest and who would be as self-revelatory as the people in this group. And of course there aren't twelve priests that I spend two hours a week with.

We really challenge each other to be much more human, because we're all very serious about our calling and we could all work too hard. Three times a year we have mandatory fun days where you must go and enjoy yourself. It's really very healthy for us.

For me the real reason why anybody should make an effort to be a part of a community is because God is community. I need to make the efforts to be in real quality relationships with some people so that I can become more God-like. It seems to me that what we can hope for in community is a world of justice and truth and peace and dignity. To me it seems the only way you can have any kind of a vision or a dream of any of the excellence of life that the Gospel calls us to is through being in community and making serious efforts to unite other people to that community, to be a welcoming community; to know that bonded together there is a way

to hope for more. You and I might not live to see it, but certainly we have to be people who hope.

Marty: I was thinking if we're looking for those things in the world one of the first steps is to find a community where we can find those things.

Virginia: To adjust that a little bit in terms of the Catholic Worker, I think that our community is based on very specific shared values and a commitment to sharing our material lives in order to live out those values more easily. So there is some shared income, housing, cars, as a way of supporting living out what we believe — since the society we live in doesn't facilitate those values. If you try on your own to live with the poor you can wear out pretty fast.

Mary Beth: I think what people look for in community maybe first of all is support and affirmation. For many people I think those needs are met in their families, but it seems to me to a greater extent now than in other generations or other periods of time those primary groups aren't in place for people — for all the reasons that TIME magazine writes about all the time. But the needs still exist just for people to relate to each other in a basically affirming way.

I think people look for a couple things besides that, too. I hear people talking about this in a lot of different ways, but one is with respect to faith. You can practice your faith and believe what you believe by yourself, but we don't like to do that. Our faith is a communal one in a lot of ways and I think people experience that. I hear people wanting to share with other people what their faith means to them, which is a very powerful experience.

Remember when the social concerns committee at St. Cronan's tried and tried to have educational programs, and every time we offered one it turned into small faith sharing groups? And everybody would write these rave evaluations: "It was great, never mind the speaker next time!" I've noticed that in other settings as well. This seems to be what people are hungry for.

I think people desire solidarity in key decision points in their lives, too. And I don't mean the "three big decisions of your life," but the kind of decisions that come up more frequently and that do really change the direction things can go for you. Maybe it's a career change, maybe it has to do with relationships, the things we struggle with every few years. All different kinds of people I talk to seem to desire very much not to make those decisions alone.

A third thing that I don't hear people talk about very much, but that I think people really do desire and need is to be in relationship with others who can challenge us. I feel I want to be in relationship with people who are willing to risk telling me, "I think you might be making a mistake," or, "The move you're

afraid to make I see as very much in line with who you are." Anyway, challenge at a basic level of who we are.

I think the world is really hungry for this kind of community. Our community is not at all a perfect one. Really, even anything more than a casual glance in our direction shows people that, and yet people ask us all the time about joining our community or starting a community. And people struggle and many times are not able to arrive at those kinds of relationships with one another.



Virginia: Mary Beth, you've brought up one of the other questions we had, which is, Did you end up finding community where you were setting out to find it? And what are obstacles to community around us or inside us?

Mary Louis: Our's is an old community. It was founded by St. Vincent de Paul in the 1600's. Our purpose in coming to community is to love our Lord and to serve Him in the poor and we have found through the years that we have to be together to do this with any consistency. Because we need each other. Working with the poor is not easy and we really get support from one another.

Years ago our communities were much more formal than they are now. One of our Reverend Mothers who was involved in Vatican II was wise. She could see that the changes had to come, they needed to come. Now our groups are smaller communities and because of that the relationships are more intense and more meaningful. But prayer is the basic of community, our commitment to the Lord; and sharing with one another. Sometimes its formal, but more than ever it is less formal. And we have opportunities for prayer experiences, retreats and so forth.

are rather than who somebody else thinks we should be.

Marty: Your community discerned to move from the large communities to the smaller?

Mary Louis: We were in large communities because we were working mostly in institutions. We had a lot more sisters and we were in orphanages and settlements and hospitals. But we did an evaluation of all our works, and asked did we need to be someplace else? We found we wanted to be where there was no other service for the poor. We chose to leave some institutions and went in small groups to areas where we had not



If we're looking for justice and dignity in the world, one of the first steps is to find a community where we can find those things.

Marty King is a member of Mark's Community, which is a community of married people and single people. They have been meeting about once a month for over 25 years. She is also a mother of six and a teacher in Clayton School District.

WHERE IS COMMUNITY?

Mary Louis: The community we find is not always in the same house. It may be between friends or in other houses. And it isn't with everybody at the same level. It couldn't be. Some is at a more intense level, the other is general. We find it is very supportive to maintain solidarity, to be able to be open to any need that we see. We have to be willing to go anyplace, but we need to be with others for support and strength. We are an apostolic community, not strictly a religious community. But living in community has always been part of it.

It has had a lot of ups and downs. In the time before Vatican II we were invited to be perfect, but now we know that's impossible. We live more like who we

been before, in the country. Our commitment is to the poor not to institutions, and that necessitated small groups, and is not as permanent. It is to meet a need, and when the need is met to go on.

Bill: I was thinking that as I look back on it I had little experiences of feeling the gospel was right and true and good, and knew I needed the help of other people in trying to find out more about it. I think there is also a certain amount of shyness so I kind of hooked up with other people. I think I was often drawn to community because I could look up to people and see how to take the next step, or how we could take the next step together. But I found different degrees of happiness or goodness in doing that.

I've come to see that the communities I've been

more drawn to have a balance of inwardness and outwardness. I've been a part of communities that are all inward or all outward and neither one worked for me. I also think my own struggles or brokenness at certain points have blocked me from moving on in community. Communities can be busy places, and you can sometimes get lost in that.

Jerry: To be healthy, a community has to be a place where people can share their brokenness, can be at home when they're at their worst; the place that when you go there they have to take you in. One of the tensions for me is that part of being a pastor is to be a leader and part of being a leader is at least pretending you know where you're going. And the other part is to build community you have to be a pretty broken, not too certain leader, who is only willing to go someplace if a whole group of people want to go the same direction together. I struggle with it a lot.

We've probably had the best community when I'm in the driver seat and turn around and say, "You know, I don't know where I'm going, and I'm scared to even think of where we're going." Then it's amazing how many people come out of nowhere to help. But unless you take the risk...

I know that more now than ever. Lot's of difficult things have happened in my life in the last six months. Between Thanksgiving and Christmas somebody shot at a parish dinner from a garden I had engineered from the vacant Pruitt-Igoe land. I know that subconsciously I felt I had turned this chaos into paradise; that we had created a haven of safety on parish property and none of the neighborhood turmoil would ever spill over into this sanctuary. So when I had to say to the police, "They're shooting at us from the garden," it was very debilitating for me. I wasn't worth anything those months around Christmas and after. At Christmas I went to help a classmate in the country because I



couldn't handle being pastor at St. Bridget's. People knew that. And it was amazing how many people came to help and were much more caring than they ever were before.

Virginia: Jerry, as a diocesan priest do you look on the parish where you're stationed as your primary community?

Jerry: Well, no, I don't. It's a very important community, but I had family and friends for decades before I even knew where St. Bridget's was. There's nothing like friends you grew up with, and being from a relatively healthy and caring family. I see these people a lot. So, people at my parish are very important to me but there is no way, nor do I have any desire to.... You don't make dear friends just because you're in a new place. There are a few people at St. Bridget's who are very important to me. It is a community to celebrate with, that goes to bat for one another. We're pretty good at that. But my primary community, no.

EXPECTATIONS AND REALITY

Mary Beth: What we can expect from community is a painful question for me because I think that inevitably we ask unreasonable things of community. As a married person I would say we also inevitably ask unreasonable things of our spouses from time to time.

The good side of that is that people asking hard things of us can draw forth some greatness. And sometimes what we are asking is just too much, and it isn't good for the other person to try to respond to it. Or it's wrong. For example, I'm not going to get from my community members what my parents should have given to me and didn't. Is that completely obvious? If it is, it doesn't keep it from happening over and over again. And





its really painful. And it can make us back off and say, "You're asking too much, so I'm not giving you anything." Then community is really damaged. I don't know if there's a good formula for setting those boundaries. It's probably not that easy and we have to bruise one another in certain ways to come to that together.

Maybe another way to say it is that sinful, limited people are going to bruise one another. In some cases they are going to be able to stay together and benefit from being sinful together, and in other cases aren't going to be able to stay together.

Virginia: I think what you're saying isn't real obvious and doesn't get said very clearly, or very often. I think one of the things that happens then, is that people make some little try at community with very amorphous and very immense expectations that don't get met and then say, "Well, I sure gave it my best and it didn't work." I think that happens a lot.

You know, Marty, when you were speaking about Mark's Community, and Jerry, when you spoke about the lectionary group the thought crossed my mind that what those two have in common is very clear limits to what can be expected, and very clear definition of what can not be expected. I think we very often don't know what the limits are and don't give each other permission to say there are limits.

Marty: Our community has gone through so many different cycles, that I was thinking I see two very distinct areas in what we ask of each other. One is that when we have had crises the community has been far

more than anybody has asked. The death of a child brought forth an enormous amount of care and support, to the point of cleaning house, taking care of children, being there if someone needed to talk, being quiet when no one wants to talk. Whenever there is a physical crisis our community immediately mobilizes into a wonderful, cohesive group.

I think what we struggle with most in our community are the non-crisis times. I think they're the times when our community goes to the lowest common denominator. In order to please everyone some challenges are not met. There is a tacit agreement that sometimes you don't even bring up challenges because you know that will mean division. You know not to ask those challenges. There are invitations in our community now, and I think we're much more comfortable in offering invitations to grow further or to grow deeper or to make a greater commitment. But it is no longer that you throw down the gauntlet and challenge that everybody must do what I feel is the right thing to do. Now its much more, you do what you must do, I will support you in your service, but I have my own.

Mary Lou: I think exhortations of each other have to be real, in as much as we are all weak people. Just as we have strengths and weaknesses so does the next person and we have to be able to be accepting of some of these things that we don't agree with, knowing this is their person and they have the responsibility to be who they are. And that we are not out to change people,



In anything important there has to be some suffering. That's part of the work we do, of who we are, and it's part of community.

Sr. Mary Louis Price, D.C. has been in the Daughters of Charity since 1950. She has been a social worker for most of that time, always in poor areas. For seventeen years she worked at Guardian Angels Settlement and lived in public housing. At present she is retired but doing volunteer work.

but to be who we are and to let people be who they are.

Bill: Another whole part of this is a tendency because of fear or of being hurt to no longer ask for what you might want or need. You kind of play along with whatever is happening.

There is an extreme of asking too much, and then of not getting that and just giving up. I think that's kind of not being who we are, too. I notice in the parish that some people come in with real high hopes and they're not met right away. Then they kind of don't have any desires at all. That's not good either.

Mary Beth: I think that points to the struggle

that community inevitably is. It is painful as well as joyful. When you put your needs forward, you are making yourself vulnerable and taking responsibility for shaping the direction of the joint body. That responsibility is challenging for people. There have been decision points in our community when I can remember thinking, "I'm not going to say anything!" Sometimes taking up the challenge, and other times really missing the opportunity to be myself and help produce an authentic corporate self. I think that's been true in my marriage, too. The struggles are very similar in community and in marriage, from what I hear people saying. And the rewards are similar too, I think.



COMMUNITY AND THE POOR

Marty: Our community really had to struggle with a decision not to be just a therapy group or a support group where we come to share, but to have an outward direction. For us there has to be a sense of extending ourselves to reach out to the larger community. In part this is in a spiritual awareness of sharing, a communion of saints that has become a very real thing in our community. I think we constantly struggle as to how that gets worked out, but that it must be there as part of our essence has become very, very clear.

Virginia: And what are some of the ways it has been expressed?

Marty: Some of the ways we have done that are working with refugees that we have helped establish in this country; or the day down at Karen House when all these middle-aged men were pushing wheelbarrows of dirt and we were saying only God's grace was saving us from heart attacks! We're talking now about trying to do some housing rehab with Habitat. Those things come in bits and pieces, but we've always felt that it's something we have to do.

We do it constantly as individuals, and sometimes feel overloaded when we say now as a community we will do something. That's a tension, but we have gone through the cycle enough to say that this has to be a part of it. It's much healthier when we do that. The more we spend time just looking inward the less complete we feel.

Song (4) for Guy Davenport

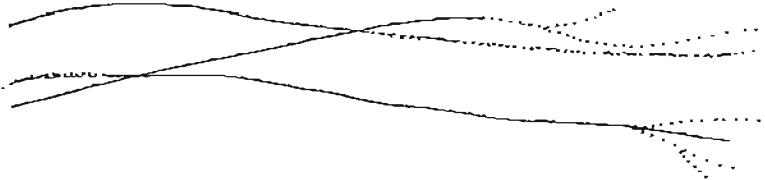
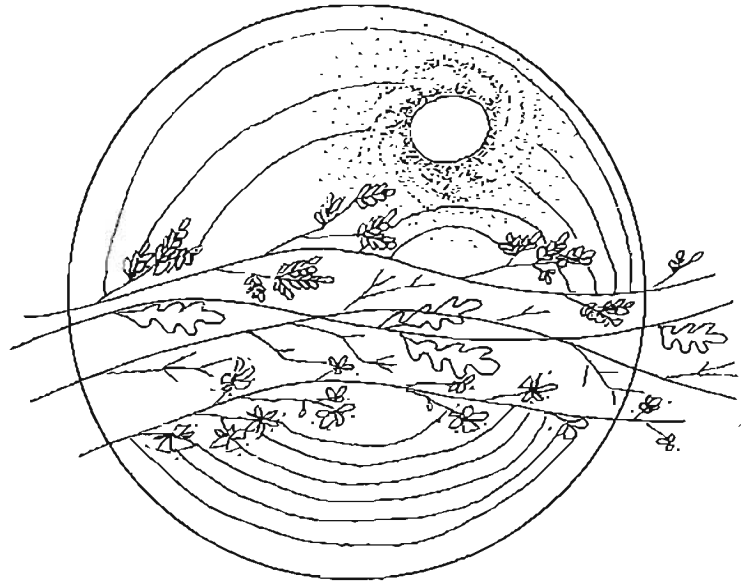
*Within the circles of our lives
we dance the circles of the years,
the circles of the seasons
within the circles of the years,
the cycles of the moon
within the circles of the seasons,
the circles of our reasons
within the cycles of the moon.*

*Again, again we come and go,
changed, changing. Hands
join, unjoin in love and fear,
grief and joy, The circles turn,
each giving into each, into all.
Only music keeps us here,*

*each by all the others held.
In the hold of hands and eyes
we turn in pairs, that joining
joining each to all again.*

*And then we turn aside, alone,
out of the sunlight gone*

into the darker circles of return.



Eberhard Arnold quoted by Thomas Merton
in THOMAS MERTON IN ALASKA

"Our common life is built from God as from the source of life, and is led ever anew to tragic struggles and ultimate victory. In a common life given in this way, there can be no seeking for idyllic human sociability or leisurely comfort. No kind of satisfaction of romantic desire or egotistical longing for personal happiness can be found here. On the contrary, this way of unconditional will to love of God's will for community, leads us straight into the reality of work and its fight for existence, into the reality of all the difficulties of human character. *It is a way of deadly danger and of hardest suffering.*"

From the Distance

*We are others and the earth,
the living of the dead.
Remembering who we are,
we live in eternity;
any solitary act
is work of community.*

*All times are one
if heart delight
in work, if hands
join the world right.*

*The wheel of eternity is turning
in time, its rhymes, austere,
at long intervals returning,
sing in the mind, not in the ear.*

*A man of faithful thought may feel
in light, among the beasts and fields,
the turning of the wheel.*

*Fall of the year:
at evening a frail mist
rose, glowing in the rain.
The dead and unborn drew near
the fire. A song, not mine,
stuttered in the flame.*

The Dance

*I would have each couple turn,
join and unjoin, be lost
in the greater turning
of other couples, woven
in the circle of the dance,
the song of long time flowing*

*over them, so they may return,
turn again in to themselves
out of the desire greater than their own,
belonging to all, to each,
to the dance, and to the song
that moves them through the night.*

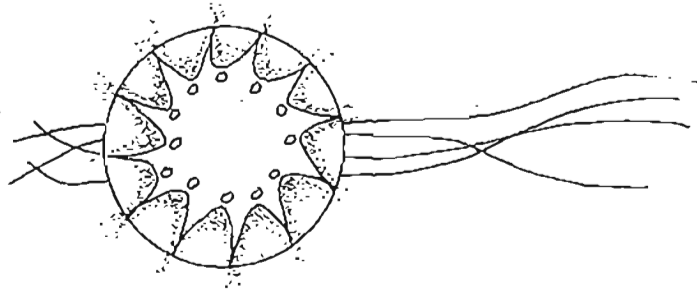
*What is fidelity? To what
does it hold? The point
of departure, or the turning road
that is departure and absence
and the way home? What we are
and what we were once*

*are far estranged. For those
who would not change, time
is infidelity. But we are married
until death, and are betrothed
to change. By silence, so,
I learn my song. I learn*

*my sunny fields by absence, once
and to come. And I love you
as I love the dance that brings you
out of the multitude
in which you come and go.
Love changes, and in change is true.*

Thomas Merton interpreting Eberhard Arnold
in THOMAS MERTON IN ALASKA

...we really do experience in ourselves at the same time as the power of Christ, the power of the cross to create community. We find in ourselves everything that goes against community, and we have to be completely aware of this fact. We are and we are not communal people. It is taken for granted that we are all really sociable. But we are and we aren't. We are also weak and selfish, and there is in us this struggle between trust and mistrust, where we all believe and don't believe. We trust other people and we distrust other people. We are, in other words, full of ambivalence, and we must take this into account. We assume that we are perfectly open and trusting and then suddenly we discover that we aren't.



Dorothy Day, THE LONG LONELINESS

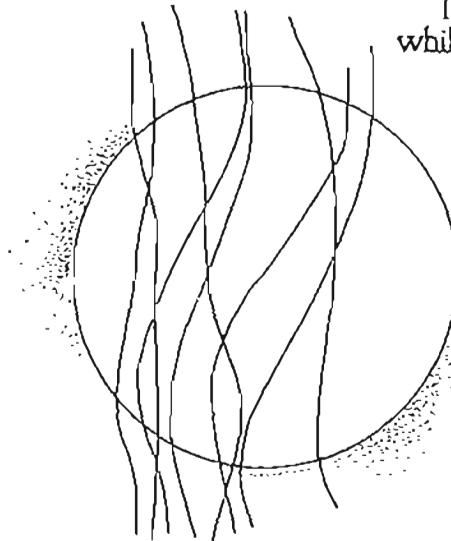
We cannot love God
unless we love each other,
and to love
we must know each other.

We know Him
in the breaking of bread,
and we know each other
in the breaking of bread,
and we are not alone anymore.

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.



When we live together with people we have strong feelings of rebellion against them, we really rise up against them. This has to be understood. What we tend to do is to deny this, repress it, we don't like to face it. But we just have to face the fact that sometimes we get darned mad at people, we get worked up about it and we do our best not to show it, but there it is. You cannot possibly live community life realistically unless you realize that this is going on all the time.

The struggles are very similar in community and in marriage, from what I here people saying. And the rewards are similar, too, I think.

Mary Beth Gallagher is a member of Kopavi Community which began about 20 years ago and now consists of 9 Catholic adults and 10 children struggling together to share faith, politics and friendship. They meet together three times a month and engage in occasional common projects. Mary Beth is also spouse to Michael Bartz and mother of Peter and Molly. She works at the Catholic Human Rights Office part-time.



COMMUNITY AND GRACE

Virginia: Mary Beth, as you were speaking I was thinking it really is true that community is a very obscure thing, or can be. At times it really does happen at a level of our lives that we don't have immediate access to. Or that we see only in retrospect, as Jerry was saying about his experience this past Christmas. Sometimes it's only as we look back that we see how much community was part of who we were able to be, or sustained us in who we are. Yet at the time we probably feel we're in a terrible wrestling match with it.

It makes me think that as much as community is the place where they have to take you in; that sometimes what makes it work is it's a place we can't get away from, that holds us to a process that we would otherwise avoid. There is a point when each of us, if we could walk away, probably would. I think sometimes we are held by a commitment to something outside ourselves that is strong enough to hold us there. But sometimes we are only held by sheer physical necessity, or the weight of our emotional history. Something less than generosity.

Mary Louis: In anything important there has to be some suffering. That's part of the work we do, of who we are, and it's part of community. It's real, it's

alive, it's a human dimension. But I think the suffering is what binds us together, the working it out and still being there.

Jerry: A notion I have about community is that it is to call people to holiness. The news is full of stories about sick priests, so it's not the greatest time to be a priest but lots of us who are sick priests have not had very good community and many of us have never allowed ourselves to be well, never allowed ourselves the luxuries of taking care of ourselves. Even though church law says you get a certain number of days for vacation and retreat, no one really monitors that. I think when Irenaeus said the glory of God is God's people fully alive it means people who in our materialistic, fast-paced world have time to develop a life of the spirit. I think real communities challenge people to do that, at least as much as they challenge people to reach out beyond themselves. In our world I would say if we were going to err, it has to be toward being more contemplative or quiet, more one with the Spirit and one with each other. I saw a lot of people, some of them good friends of mine, who started out wanting to change the world, and now they're not well. They've gotten bitter and cynical. Some are dead, some from stress. One thing communities have to do in our world is give people



I need to make the efforts to be in quality relationships with some people so that I can become more God-like.

Jerry Kleba is pastor of St. Bridget's church. He has found community in the three parishes where he has served over the last 27 years. He has also been involved in trying to develop community groups that have had success in bringing neighborhoods together and trying to rebuild areas of St. Louis that are deteriorating.

space and permission to be.

Marty: I have a question. How do your communities challenge you? Do you feel that your communities challenge you?

Virginia: I think that it goes in cycles. That there are times as a community when we are confident enough of each other that challenge is possible in a communal context. When that happens it comes out of happiness. It has happened in a full community context, far more it happens in individual conversations and relationships. But we have also had some really stunning conversations over the years where as a community we have really profoundly challenged each other. I probably can count them on one hand, and they have all come out of times of deep happiness. Some have been challenges of our commitment to each other, others of how we relate to the guests.

Mary Louis and Jerry have mentioned one of the things I've found really painful. It has to do, I think, with getting older. Our community has changed radically any number of times over the years and I think what I've come to recognize is because of that there is a sense in which the Worker cannot be my primary community. There is no knowing who will be there five years from now, or how we'll be together. After I've known other

people for decades, they inevitably in some way are more my community than someone who will move into the Worker next year. So it seems these people can be community for me in one way, but not in the very deepest way. Maybe ultimately we never choose who is going to be our community in this way, but we discover it. Or try to discover it. Still it's painful. There is a sense in which after having a primary community for 15 years, I now don't have one.

Mary Louis: I think community needs everybody to be focussed on these questions. Not particularly with answers, but with questions. I don't think we can have answers. I think it's a challenge being older to see what God is asking of me at this age now. Where is my service to the poor? Sometimes it's not out there as much as it is around us in our community.

Bill: I think community is kind of the ground around which a seed can push. To grow you need something you can push against, to find out who you are. I'm engaged to be married, which is a new community. Partly I feel that I want to be rooted with a particular person rather than with a lot of people coming and going. With one person you can grow together in a way that you can't if you're with someone different all the time. But being married doesn't guarantee that

either. Nor would being a community that was completely stable. There is some kind of mix of the gospel in this. You could have good friends for decades, but after a while that could be dead. They could no longer know how to challenge on another or love one another very well. There is something about openness or honesty, as well.

Mary Beth: And there is something about grace.

Marty: I was going to say the same thing. The grace is there, no question about it. Each time we hit a point where we think we've already gone through this so many times that when one person opens their mouth you can almost finish the sentence....

Mary Beth: You can almost start the sentence!

Marty: And you get over that, like a family, and start to love people because they are who they are. There is no question that we have grown as a group because of the ability to be open to grace, and being willing to ask for it. As I said, for us the day of

recollection and the retreat have become sacrosanct. Eight couples who have a million things to do, and yet we always make that the highest priority. At each meeting there is always a time of prayer. I leave knowing there had been some grace, that the Lord has come in and infused us with ... I don't know how to explain it.

Mary Beth: It is a simple fact that we could not be where we are as a community without it. What you said, Virginia, reminded me about losses that are so much a part of life in community. But that's true of life, not just community. In a way life is a series of losses. I don't want to sound cynical. So I see changes in our community that we experience as losses and failures and struggles, yet there is something very precious about the love that we share. And it seems very clear that we didn't construct it ourselves. I think that's what I mean by grace.



*There will be no poor among you...
If only you will obey the voice of Yahweh your God...
You shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor,
but you shall open your hand to them...*

—Deuteronomy 15

DOROTHY DAY ON COMMUNITY

Following are some selections, chosen by Ellen Rehg, from the writings of Dorothy Day on community. Although many people today may conceive of community as a place to be protected from the ills of the world or from people who think differently from us, for Dorothy the opposite was true. For her, "community" meant community with the poor, the mentally and physically ill, the ungrateful and medicated as well as with those of sound mind and body. In short, community was the experience of the mystical body of Christ. It came about as the result of seeing Christ in everyone, especially the least.

The selections begin with a description of the "collectivization of misery" in the city shelter, where the poor are merely warehoused. Other passages describe the nitty gritty day-to-day difficulties of living out the command to treat everyone as Christ.

One afternoon last month we went up to the Municipal Lodging House of the City of New York and looked at the largest bedroom in the world there. The seventeen beds in a row, the eight rows stretching way out to the very end of a pier, two-tiered beds at that, were a grim sight, the collectivization of misery.

The huge vats of stew stirred with a tremendous ladle only emphasized the ugly state which the world is in today. Every night the men stand out on Twenty-fifth Street in long lines and are hustled through, catalogued, ticketed, stamped with the seal of approval, fed in a rush, and passed on to the baths, the doctor, the beds, all with a grim efficiency which gave testimony to the length of time this need has existed for the mass care of the impoverished.

The attendant who showed us around told of how the lame, the halt, and the blind who were being housed at the "Muni" were transported in a bus to a place which the Salvation Army runs for such men where they can sit inside all day out of the wind and rain. But what about Catholic provision for such men? There is none. Oh, for parish Houses of Hospitality!

If the largest bedroom in the world was a sad sight the women's dormitory was even sadder. At one end of it there were beds with little cribs by the side of them for women with babies. But women know that if they are forced to accept the hospitality of the city, their

older children will be taken away and only infants left to them, so not many of them go there. Our escort told us of a family which had come in the night before. The family had been evicted, and the mother was so sick she had to be carted off to the hospital, and the man, the old grandmother, and the three children had to go to the city for relief. The older children were taken to the Children's Aid and the baby left with the grandmother. And what must have been the thoughts of the mother lying in the hospital, wondering where her mother, her children and her husband were spending the night? What but thoughts of hatred and despair that such cruelty and inhumanity can exist today.

-- February 1934

Actually, we here at the Catholic Worker did not start these soup lines ourselves. Years ago, John Griffin, one of the men from the Bowery who moved in with us, was giving out clothes, and when they ran out he began sitting the petitioners down to a hot cup of coffee or a bowl of soup—whatever we had. By word of mouth the news spread, and one after another they came, forming lines (during the Depression) which stretched around the block. The loaves and fishes had to be multiplied to take care of it, and everyone contributed, food, money and space.



All volunteers who come, priests and lay people, nuns and college students, have worked on that line and felt the satisfaction of manual labor, beginning to do without, themselves, to share with others, and a more intense desire to change the social order that leaves men hungry and homeless. The work is as basic as bread. To sit down several times a day together is community and growth in the knowledge of Christ. "They knew Him in the breaking of bread."

We have said these things many times in the pages of *The Catholic Worker*, but it is to reassure these dear friends that I write this again. Perhaps it is easier for a woman to understand than a man. Because no matter what catastrophe has occurred or hangs overhead, she has to go on with the business of living. She does the physical things and so keeps a balance. No longer does the man sit as a judge at the gate, as in the Old Testament where the valiant woman is portrayed. Now there is neither bond nor free, Greek nor Hebrew, male nor female--we are a little nearer to the heavenly kingdom when men, as well as women, are feeding the hungry. It is real action as well as symbolic action. It is walking in the steps of Jesus when He fed the multitude on the hills, and when He prepared the fire and the fish on the shore. He told us to do it. He did it Himself.

--December 1969

If everyone were holy and handsome, with "alter Christus" shining in neon lighting from them, it would be easy to see Christ in everyone. If Mary had appeared in Bethlehem clothed, as St. John says, with the sun, a crown of twelve stars on her head, and the moon under her feet, then people would have fought to make room for her. But that was not God's way for her, nor is it Christ's way for Himself, now when He is disguised under every type of humanity that treads the earth.

To see how far one realizes this, it is a good

thing to ask honestly what you would do, or have done, when a beggar asked at your house for food. Would you--or did you--give it on an old cracked plate, thinking that was good enough? Do you think that Martha and Mary thought that the old and chipped dish was good enough for their guest?

In Christ's human life, there were always a few who made up for the neglect of the crowd. The shepherds did it; their hurrying to the crib atoned for the people who would flee from Christ. The wise men did it; their journey across the world made up for those who refused to stir one hand's breadth from the routine of their lives to go to Christ. Even the gifts the wise men brought have in themselves an obscure recompense and atonement for what would follow later in this Child's life. For they brought gold, the king's emblem, to make up for the crown of thorns that he would wear; they offered incense, the symbol of praise, to make up for the mockery and the spitting; they gave Him myrrh, to heal and soothe, and he was wounded from head to foot and no one bathed His wounds. The women at the foot of the Cross did it too, making up for the crowd who stood by and sneered.

We can do it too, exactly as they did. We are not born too late. We do it by seeing Christ and serving Christ in friends and strangers, in everyone we come in contact with.

All this can be proved, if proof is needed, by the doctrines of the Church. We can talk about Christ's Mystical Body, about the vine and the branches, about the Communion of Saints. But Christ Himself has proved it for us, and no one has to go further than that. For He said that a glass of water given to a beggar was given to Him. He made heaven hinge on the way we act toward Him in His disguise of commonplace, frail, ordinary humanity.



FROM KAREN HOUSE



by Katrina and Jim Plato

We wanted to write this article because, as some of you already know, we have decided to leave the Catholic Worker community in St. Louis and to move to a Catholic Worker farm in Chehalis, Washington. This has been a difficult decision to make because our entire history, both as a couple and as a family, is rooted in St. Louis. We have experienced community here as single people, as a married couple and as parents.

We thank the community for making it possible for us to remain part of the Catholic Worker as a family. It has not been easy. Tensions have arisen within us as we have had to relinquish responsibilities at Karen House in order to care for our children. We have also struggled with our growing financial needs as a family and our commitment to a simple lifestyle. The community has been an extended family in accepting us for who we are and in respecting us within the ambiguity of our changing roles in community. We have been affirmed as parents and as a family.

Mark Scheu told us that we are being courageous in this move. We don't feel particularly courageous. This is a move we believe we need to make because of our desire to remain within an intentional Catholic Worker community. We hope that a rural community will be the spiritual environment in which we can continue to raise our children to acquire a critical and discerning eye toward the predominant values of our culture.

A couple of years ago, a friend of the community told us that the Tacoma Catholic Worker was attempting to start a farm. Since then we have been in contact with the community on Bethlehem Farm and this winter, after much prayer and conversation, we decided to move there. The farm offers a pace and work that are more suitable to our family, we believe, than urban Catholic Workers.

We will be joining family of six: Dean, Karen and their four children; and Mark Benjamin, who is from the Noonday Catholic Worker farm in Massachu-

setts. We make this move aware that Catholic Worker farm experiments are often unsuccessful, but we go in faith.

Bethlehem Farm offers hospitality both to homeless people and to retreatants. The farm sells milk and may sell raspberries and blackberries next season. The community sponsors monthly Fellowship of Reconciliation meetings and hopes to develop a peace and justice library for the local community. Karen is schooling their older daughter, Jessica, at home with the support of a local homeschooling network, and this is something we want to look into for our children. Dean and Karen work part time away from the farm, Karen with Headstart and Dean in outreach with a state-funded HIV program. Mark helps with the farm and is involved with local environmental concerns.

Upon our arrival, we will focus much of our energy on developing community. The exact nature of our participation in the work of the farm won't be determined until sometime later. Jim hopes to learn horse farming with Dean. Our dream is to farm organically. Katrina hopes to create an art studio where she can continue art therapy with the guests and the children. We plan to continue offering hospitality so our family remains open to others as God calls us.

Our sense of community and mission has developed through our friendships in St. Louis. We will remember the love, support and affirmation we have received.

As we move on, we welcome Mitch McGee to Karen House. Mitch was an active worker at the Cass House Catholic Worker community. We are delighted that he is returning to St. Louis after a sojourn in Fort Scott, Kansas. He will bring new strength and energy to Karen House. He has a wonderful laugh and is blessed with the added virtue of being from Minnesota.

If anyone wants to offer a one-time donation to this new Catholic Worker community, gifts can be made out to Bethlehem Farm, 508 Coal Creek Road, Chehalis, WA 98532.



Katrina and Jim Plato, Katrina, Jim and their children, Benjamin and Abraham, are just now beginning to pack for their journey. They have been good friends to many at Karen House. We wish them well, but we will miss them.

FROM LATIN AMERICA

by Mary Dutcher



"In the end it is the reality of personal relationships that saves everything." Do you remember these words from Thomas Merton's Letter to a Young Activist?

Well, they ring in the mind of this aging activist as I reflect on all the interpersonal connections that exist between folks in St. Louis and folks in the parish of Bocana de Paiwas in central Nicaragua. For me, these relationships form a pattern rich in meaning.

Jim Feltz, a North American who used to be pastor of the parish, studied at St. Louis University and once taught at the old McBride High School. Father Enrique Blandon is a native Nicaraguan who was recently appointed pastor of the parish. He travelled throughout the United States in the early 1980's, talking about the hope brought by the Sandanista revolution and the need to change United States policy toward Nicaragua. I remember how at a potluck at the old Cass Catholic Worker House he urged me to come to Nicaragua and how I explained to him that I could not travel to Nicaragua because there was too much work to do here in the United States. And then I ended up living in Nicaragua for most of that decade!

Sharon McMullen said the words that always stated best how it was I decided to go to Nicaragua. She said, "It's only one of the places in the world where the Gospel is happening most intensely right now." She herself travelled to Bocana de Paiwas with a Witness for Peace delegation that included Teka Childress late in 1985. How is it that God arranged that of all the places in Nicaragua to visit, St. Louisians kept getting sent to that parish?

When I think of the old Cass House I remember Brother Camillus Defresene, a Christian Brother Provincial living out in LaSalle, Missouri, who helped us acquire some huge cooking pots when we opened Cass House in 1979. We used those pots for years on the soup line. Camillus had already been in Nicaragua a long time when I arrived for the first time at the end of 1983, and he is still there. His present work includes looking after the Maryknoll House in Managua.

Randy Kehler—remember when the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign had its National Clearinghouse in St. Louis and he was the co-ordinator?—came twice to visit in Nicaragua and made fast (meaning both rapid and strong) friendships with people there. I remember how he and his wife, Betsy, sent half of their resisted tax money to help with reconstruction after Hurricane Joan in 1988 destroyed Mulukuku, the northernmost village of the Paiwas parish. When the United States government seized their house a couple of years ago, the people of Mulukuku said, "Tell them to move down here—we have to rebuild 205 houses, anyway. We'll just build one more for them!"

Closer in time and intensity, I remember David Belt, pastor of Marvin Park United Methodist Church, first coming in 1988 just a few months before the hurricane, with another of those Witness for Peace delegations with St. Louisians that seemed invariably to get sent to the Paiwas parish. (Remember, if you are tempted to eschew the cluster of meaning I see here, that



Mary Dutcher, will return to Boston this September to complete a Masters in Religious Studies and her second year of novitiate with the Religious of the Sacred Heart.

this is the same parish where Virginia Druhe was sent as a Witness for Peace long term team member to drive the ambulance.)

Anyway, David Belt has returned many times since the hurricane to help with reconstruction. Due in great part to his efforts, the parish is now in a covenant relationships with the Eastern Missouri Conference of the United Methodist Church. David himself "bears in his own body" testimony of his commitment, having been hospitalized last November for the malaria some mosquito was unkind enough to bite him with last August in Mulukuku.

And then there are the faithful, faithful families of the "Three Families" delegation—also known as the "Jim" delegation—composed of the Jim Brauner, Jim Herning and Jim McGinnis families. They first visited Mulukuku in Christmas 1989 and were there when Sisters Maureen Courtney and Teresa Rosales were killed in an ambush in the adjoining parish. They promised to help the organized women of Mulukuku and to make a return visit in three years. They have been faithful to both promises.

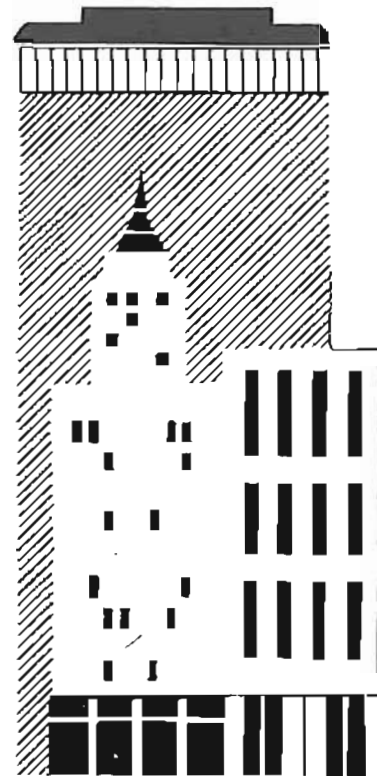
For me, all the interpersonal connections that exist between folks in St. Louis and folks in the parish of Bocana de Paiwas form a pattern rich in meaning.

In January of this year they travelled to Mulukuku to dedicate the women's center and health clinic that had been constructed with funds raised by them in the Maria Luisa Ortiz support group in St. Louis. The group also installed a swing set and jungle gym behind the school, which meant very much to the people of Mulukuku, who saw it as a symbol of hope for the future—that their children would not be "slaves to work" as they has been, but rather would have an opportunity for recreation and education. One man said, "I pray to God that when these gringos arrive to heaven God will grant them a golden chair to rest in for all the good they've done here—or better yet, a golden hammock!"

It is these kinds of incidents that make me believe that Merton was right about it ultimately being personal relationships that save everything. Certainly in the situation of Mulukuku, it has been these relationships that have offered the people the most concrete instances of enduring hope. On a systemic level, things are falling apart in Nicaragua. If you want to hear a

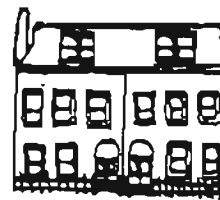
harrowing story, ask someone from the three families to tell you about the ten-hour trip from Managua to Mulukuku over and through mud holes the size of a small lake. The road repair company refuses to work there anymore after their engineer was robbed of all the workers' salaries and his own clothing on the road a few months ago. Unemployment in Nicaragua is around 65%, so banditry—aligned or not with political causes, as the case may be—has become the occupation of choice (or should I say necessity?) of many.

As the local government health center ceases to function, it is Dorothy Granada in the clinic funded by people of good will in St. Louis who offers the only available health care in the area. I think not only Thomas Merton, but also Peter Maurin, are happy with these people of St. Louis and what they have done with the principle of personalism. +



FROM LITTLE HOUSE

by Mary Ann McGivern, S.L.



This past Easter, Elijah was baptized at Holy Trinity Church. I think baptism of his daughter last year moved him to get serious about his own church membership. Joe Stortz from Boys' Hope and I were both at Elijah's baptism, rejoicing together that Elijah is a grown man.

Elijah got into a theological quagmire during the process of religious instructions. One teacher wanted the catechumens to describe their personal experience of Jesus as savior and the question stumped Elijah. He was telling me and I said, trying to be helpful, "Well, if your wife Susan were in the hospital, would you pray to God to save her?"

"I suppose so," Elijah said, "but really, I'd be trying to check out how good her doctor was."

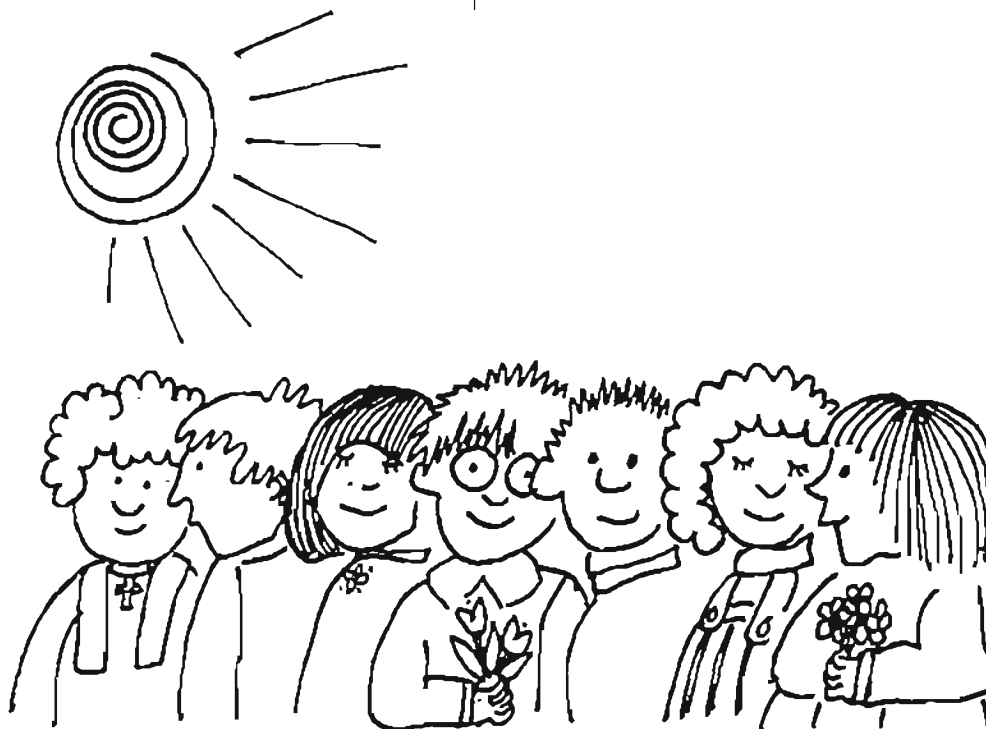
I agreed. At that point I realized that I certainly didn't want to teach Elijah to be a signs-and-wonders Catholic, and I fell to thinking about the Catholic community that has nurtured him since he was nine years old and came to Karen House with his mother and two older brothers.

We're not overtly Catholic. Boys' Hope made him go to church on Sunday, but only his bodily presence was required, not his assent. I tried to invite him to church when he was home, and he usually came on Christmas; but he was leery of the long Easter Vigil and other Sundays he slept in. He kept telling me, "If they didn't make me go to church, maybe I'd go."

But both Boys' Hope and the Catholic Worker are overtly community. Body-of-Christ community. You don't have to pass an orthodoxy test to work with us; but you must be willing to bear the other's burden, to share your riches, to seek justice, whether or not your actions promise to be effective. And you must be willing to be a fool, willing to be publicly wrong sometimes. These are some of the elements of the community Elijah has been able to take for granted for the past 15 years.

I thought about this and I said to him, "Maybe it's not the idea of God that makes you want to be a Catholic but your experience of God's community."

"Yeah," he said. "I think that's it."



Mary Ann McGivern, SL, and the St. Louis Economic Conversion Project hosted three members of the Moscow city council on a visit to St. Louis this past May.

by Kris Dennis

One of my daily tasks is to sift through the mail addressed to Karen House. Included in the mail is all of those wonderful, thoughtful Catholic publications. To be honest, before I took over the task of sorting them, I never really read them. Now I find myself studying them every Monday afternoon while taking house.

Recently I've seen many articles addressing the issue of the canonization Dorothy Day. I fear this for several reasons.

It's not that I believe Dorothy doesn't deserve sainthood. Her faith in God and the lives of the people she encountered is inspirational. The impact of the movement that she and Peter Maurin created has lasted for 60 years. The call to conversion has raised many souls. The comfort brought to thousands of people through the practical administration of the works of mercy is miraculous. These are wonderful reasons for declaring someone a saint. However, Dorothy herself denied being called a saint, saying, "don't dismiss me that easily."

I believe what Dorothy was trying to communicate in this statement is that we are all given the grace of God. It is this grace that enables us to care for one another. The miracles and visions usually attributed to saints are realized because of those persons' faith conversion. We are all called to see Christ in one another. Dorothy is one person who realized that fact, which exists in all our souls. It shouldn't require a declaration of sainthood for us to be called to conversion.

In Robert Coles book, Dorothy Day: A Radical Devotion, Dorothy states:

"I have sat downstairs for hours with friendly people who tell us how wonderful we are; and I don't tell them they are wrong; it would be rude to say so. Anyway, it's not a matter of right or wrong, of devils or saints—and we've been called both lots of times. The real issue is what we are trying to do here. Do we understand our intentions well enough to explain them to others? That is an important question for us. We are all



supposed to be teachers to each other."

By canonizing Dorothy we lose an important part of Catholic Worker philosophy, which is not to look to just one individual for inspiration, but to look to every life around us. Dorothy used the pronouns, "we and us," instead of "I and me," for a reason. To live in community with each other we must recognize Christ in each other. Christ was called Teacher, so we too, should call each other Teacher.

If we don't see Dorothy as a saint, then what do we see her as? I see her as a person of faith literally living the Gospel.

I'm not a scholar of Canon Law, so I don't know what the requirements for sainthood are. I do know, that when I was confirmed, that I was called to receive the Holy Spirit, and follow in Christ's footsteps. Dorothy was called to do the same, and did. If that is sainthood, we are all called to be saints.



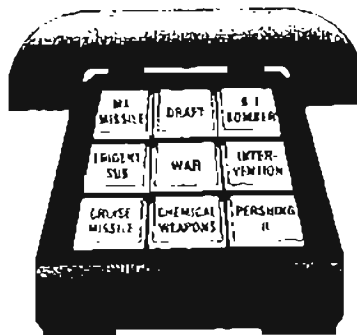
Kris Dennis, Karen House community member, begins work on a degree in secondary education this Fall at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

CAN YOU HELP US?

If you have spares, we can use:

- ❖ dressers
- ❖ beds
- ❖ frying pans
- ❖ plastic cups

Your Telephone Tax Pays for War!



For more information on telephone tax resistance or other forms of war tax resistance, contact:

**The National War
Tax Resistance
Coordinating
Committee**

a coalition of local, regional and national groups supportive of war tax resistance.

PO Box 774, Monroe, ME 04951; (207) 525-7774



The St. Louis Catholic Worker Community now celebrates Mass at 8:00pm on Tuesday evenings. Please join us in the chapel at Karen House.

The Round Table is the quarterly journal of Catholic Worker life and thought in St. Louis. Subscriptions are free. Please write to The Round Table, 1840 Hogan, St. Louis, MO. 63106. Donations are gladly accepted to help us continue our work with the poor. People working on this issue include: Joe Angert, Margaret Boyer, Kris Dennis, Beth Druhe, Virginia Druhe, Bill Miller, Tom Nelson, Katrina Plato, Barb Prosser, Ellen Rehg, and Mark Scheu. Letters to the editor are encouraged; we'll print as many as space permits.

The Round Table

Karen Catholic Worker House
1840 Hogan ■ St. Louis, MO. 63106



Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
St. Louis, MO
Permit No. 3087

Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed
Address Correction Requested



Karen House Catholic Worker 314.621.4652 www.karenhousecw.org 1840 Hogan St. Louis, MO 63106