

TENTH ANNUAL
NEVADA CLAY GUILD

Empty Bowl Benefit Luncheon & Auction

Helping to Feed the Hungry in Las Vegas

Saturday, March 20, 2010

11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Green Valley High Cafeteria

460 Arroyo Grande Blvd.

(just North of Warm Springs Rd.)

Henderson, NV, Adults: \$15

Children 12 & under: \$12

A lunch of soup and bread will be served in hand-made bowls. Each attendee will select their own unique ceramic bowl made by members and friends of the Nevada Clay Guild and keep it as a lasting reminder of world hunger. All proceeds from the luncheon will benefit the Las Vegas Catholic Worker and their soup line serving the poor and homeless. There will be a live auction of original ceramic art and art from the Fiber Guild from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. There will also be a silent auction.

Tickets will be sold at the door. For advance tickets or info contact Julia at (702) 647-0728, julia@lvcw.org, or Donna at (702) 799-0950 x114034. Thanks to Green Valley High School, Aardvark Clay, and all the artists who participated in making the bowls. This event is sponsored by the Nevada Clay Guild, Green Valley High School, Aardvark Clay, and the Fiber Guild.

Google: Empty Bowl Las Vegas

MANNA *in the wilderness*

The Newsletter of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker
March 2010
Volume 24, Number 3

SOCIAL TEACHINGS: Living What We Teach, TEACHING WHAT WE LIVE

by Julia Occhiogrosso

As we approach our 25th anniversary in Las Vegas, I thought it important to take a moment to reflect upon the Catholic Church's teachings that inspire and guide our witness. These are the same teachings that inspired and guided the founders of the Catholic Worker Movement, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, in lower Manhattan over seventy years ago.

It is easy to fall into the hectic habits and daily demands of our Catholic Worker "projects." So much of Catholic Worker life involves responding with care to people with great needs. The soup line, food pantry, hospitality day, hospitality houses, weekly peace vigil, monthly liturgy, and quarterly newsletter are practices designed to give life to the Works of Mercy and the Church's core social teachings. Yet, even good practices can become stale and lifeless if we lose sight of the original intentions from which they emerged.

The Corporal Works of Mercy are: To feed the hungry, To give drink to the thirsty, To clothe the naked, To visit and ransom the captives, To shelter the homeless, To visit the sick, and To bury the dead. The Spiritual Works of Mercy are: To admonish the sinner, To instruct the ignorant, To counsel the doubtful, To comfort the sorrowful, To bear wrongs patiently, To forgive injuries, To pray for the living and the dead. They are meant to describe how to embody the Gospel message and follow the example of Christ.

The social teachings provide guidance and philosophical explanations for *why* it is right and just to practice the Works of Mercy. What follows is a brief reflection on themes found in the Church's social teaching that have had particular impact on the life practices and vision of the Catholic Worker.

1) Life and Dignity of the Human Person: The Catholic

Church proclaims that human life is sacred and the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society.

"What so ever you do to the least of these..." - MT. 25: 40.

This is to believe that all life is precious and that every person regardless of their weaknesses embodies an inherent sacredness and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Christ is present in the stranger. The people who frequent our soup line and dine with us in our hospitality houses are the same people who live on the margins of our society and who daily struggle to find the respect and dignity they deserve in the form of human services that address their basic needs. Catholic Worker houses are characterized by their willingness to welcome the social outcast, the "marginalized," "the criminals," "the undeserving poor."

2) Call to Family, Community and Participation: The human person is not only sacred but social. How we organize our society—in economics and politics, in law and policy—directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community.

"[Let us bring about] a society where it is easier to be good."
- Peter Maurin

To cultivate healthful caring relationships, from the smallest circle of family to the greater circle of the larger community is to build the true infrastructure of a more just and humane society. In the context of community we find the courage to face the daunting issues of the day. The Catholic Workers' capacity to respond consistently to the human suffering of poverty and mental illness has been possible through the practice of cultivating community.

3) Rights & Responsibilities: The Catholic Tradition teaches that human dignity
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can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met.

“All are called to be saints. Not to do the extraordinary—if sanctity depended on doing the extraordinary, there would be few saints.” - Dorothy Day

This theme is built upon the expectation that human rights need to be upheld and protected. We are disturbed by social injustice. The way to uphold justice is to see ourselves as responsible agents of change through word and deed. Whether we are vigilling for peace or feeding the hungry we see it as acting out of a personal responsibility to effect personal and social transformation.

4) Option for the Poor and Vulnerable: A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by the deepening division between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgement (MT 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

“For when everyone tries to become better off, nobody is better off, but when everyone tries to become better everyone is better off.” - Peter Maurin

How we use our power in relation to the most vulnerable members of our society determines how the poor and vulnerable achieve a more humane existence and how the powerful find their humanity. Catholic Workers believe our capacity to hear and respond to the cry of the poor, and even in a small way, be a part of alleviating human suffering brings healing to *all* participants and makes the human family more whole.

5) The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers: The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living: it is a form of continuing participation in God’s creation.

“To work is to pray” - St. Augustine

This theme is particularly important in

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our day as work has become merely a means to excessive consumption. Indeed today, the Market has redefined the purpose and nature of our work. Why we work and the nature of our work often fuels degradation. We work longer hours so we can consume more. The substance of our work often relates to creating products that we do not need to consume and that exploits limited resources and human labor. In many cases workers who perform essential tasks are not able to make a living wage. In contrast the Catholic Worker vision emphasizes the Spirituality of Work. Work needs to be recognized as an expression of our innate need to create that which fosters life and health for ourselves and others. Work redefined would fill us with joy, satisfaction and meaning. It would elevate our relationship to each other and to the earth.

6) Solidarity: We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbors has global dimensions in a shrinking world.

“An injury to one is an injury to all.”

- Eugene V. Debs

We speak out for peace and justice around the world. We acknowledge the interconnectedness of all life.

7) Care for God’s Creation: Care for creation is not just an Earth Day

slogan, it is a requirement of our faith. We show respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation.

“To give and not to take is what makes humanity humane.” - Peter Maurin

To strive to live simply and in voluntary poverty has always been part of the Catholic Worker lifestyle. To consume less and to share and steward resources is a function of economic and environmental conservation.

Even this limited reflection of themes in the Church’s social teaching, highlights the best of our Catholic tradition. Dorothy and Peter from the beginning seemed to share this insight. These teachings offer a path to social and personal transformation that can be realized by anyone who chooses to practice what has been written down through the centuries on paper until it becomes inscribed for eternity upon one’s heart.

from: Themes from Catholic Social Teaching, Publication No. 5-315, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. This summary should only be a starting point for those interested in Catholic Social Teaching. Text is drawn from Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions and Faithful Citizenship: A Catholic Call to Political Responsibility. Available by calling (800) 235-8722.

**PRAY FOR
PEACE
IN OUR
WORLD!**

(FOR
TAB)

**Pray the Rosary: Tuesdays, 6:00 p.m.
Prayer Services: March 24, April 28,
May 26 (6:00 p.m., potluck following)
Call Mark at (702) 524-3714 to confirm.**

Empty Bowl Event: Blind Center collects Computers

Bring your used computers to recycle at the Empty Bowl Event. The Blind Center of Nevada will accept all working and non-working computers in the parking lot of Green Valley High from 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. on March 20. The CRT (tube) monitor recycling fee is \$10 for 15" and \$15 for 17" and above. All hard drives will be scrubbed of personal data. For an additional \$10 per drive, a drive erasure confirmation including serial number can be mailed. Donation receipts will be provided. Your donation keeps hazardous material out of landfills and helps the blind and visually impaired. If you have questions, contact the Blind Center of Nevada at (702) 642-6000.

NDE Sacred Peace Walk, March 29 through April 5

For information go to NevadaDesertExperience.org or call (702) 646-4814

PLEASE JOIN US:

Wednesday-Saturday, 6:00 a.m.:

Morning prayer at Catholic Worker.

Wednesday-Saturday, 6:30 a.m.:

Breakfast served at G & McWilliams to the poor & homeless (about 150 people).

Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. - noon:

Hospitality Day, we invite 20 homeless men home for showers, to wash clothes, and to have a great lunch.

Thursday, 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.:

Vigil for Peace in front of Federal Court-house, 333 Las Vegas Blvd. S.

Thursday, 11:30 a.m.:

50 Bag lunches delivered to homeless.

Last Saturday of month, 8:00 a.m.:

Deliver food boxes to homes in need.

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Las Vegas Catholic Worker

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