

MANNA *in the wilderness*

September 2023

The Newsletter of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker

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Drive-by Social Analysis

by Lance Cheslock

A car drives by.
A face peers out,
a mysterious moon against the window.

Who are these people standing around
the shelter loitering?

Why aren't they working?
Why do they stare at me?

They must be strangers,
not from these parts.

Single adult male,
Dirty clothes,
Slouching posture
Shifty eyes,
Hollow laughter,
Deadbeat dads.
A bunch of alcoholic bums.

What's on their minds?
Do I have to look at them?
Why are they here?
Are they dangerous?
Well, I am quite sure of the answers,
and I'm getting out of here.

A car drives by.
A face peers out, a mysterious moon
against the window.

*Your eyes speak your judgments.
Your glare sticks to my skin.
My label: unworthy.
When anything is missing,
I'm your easy suspect.
I become immobile when I ponder
what you think of me.*

*My life is a forever-widening canyon
I cannot see across.
An economic pit,
A chasm of broken self-confidence,
Whose depths chill my hopes
to despair.
How many rocks are in my backpack?
How much must I carry?
How can I lighten my load?*

*I yearn for the reprieve of a job. . .
The luxury of a few dollars.
I crave the self-esteem of sharing a
Pepsi or a cigarette.
Am I wearing you out?
An unaffordable problem,
a social burden?
Is my story no longer interesting?
When will you run out of
tolerance for me?*

*Is your alarm set to go off
before I get a foothold
On my life?*

A car drives by,
A face peers out,
a mysterious moon against the window.
Watching the silent movie.

Someone's Epilogue

A car drives by.
A face peers out,
a mysterious moon against the window.

*Wait! You pull towards the curb,
You stretch from your car,
reaching back for some boxes.
You let me help you.
Your warm greeting washes
through me,
Relieves my pain, Comforts me.
I make you laugh!
Your "thank you" gives me some
dignity.*

*Please don't keep driving by.
Stop and ask me who I am.
I think I will surprise you.*

(Lance Cheslock is the Executive Director
of La Puente in Alamosa, Colorado)



Scenes around the Catholic Worker, Top: A volunteer from Shear Determination cuts hair. **Middle:** from left, Emily Clements and Ronnie Rafferty put 300 sandwiches donated bi-weekly by St. Joseph, Husband of Mary into boxes to refrigerate before giving out on Saturday morning. **Bottom:** from left, Edward Polk and David Laman ladle beans into steamer trays while Mary Laman and Julia Occhiogrosso supervise.

Five Bishops Call for Nuclear Disarmament



Five bishops pose with a declaration of their commitment to continue advocating for nuclear disarmament worldwide. From left to right: Archbishop Emeritus Joseph Mitsuaki Takami of Nagasaki, Archbishop Peter Michiaki Nakamura of Nagasaki, Archbishop John Wester of Santa Fe, Archbishop Paul Etienne of Seattle, and Bishop Alexis Mitsuru Shirahama of Hiroshima. (Credit: Archdiocese of Santa Fe)

The bishops' joint letter:

Dear G7 Leaders,

We, the undersigned spiritual leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, urge you to use the upcoming summit of the International Group of Seven to undertake concrete steps toward global, verifiable nuclear disarmament.

We commend Prime Minister Fumio Kishida for choosing the City of Hiroshima, the first victim of nuclear war, as the summit venue. That alone is a powerful message. We enthusiastically welcome the meeting between G7 leaders and the hibakusha - the survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki - as a step toward recognizing the long lasting horrors of nuclear warfare.

As the Roman Catholic spiritual leaders of the diocese with the most spending on nuclear weapons in the United States (Santa Fe, NM), the diocese with the most deployed strategic nuclear weapons in the United States (Seattle, WA), and the only two dioceses in the world to have suffered atomic attacks (Hiroshima and Nagasaki), we are compelled by providence to speak out.

As Prime Minister Kishida observed, the summit presents a unique opportunity "to deepen discussions so that we can release a strong message toward realizing a world free of nuclear weapons" and to "demonstrate a firm commitment to absolutely reject the threat or use of nuclear weapons."

We strongly agree. We, therefore, urge you to use the summit to center international attention on the importance of nuclear arms control and disarmament and demonstrate a global commitment to nonproliferation efforts. Rather than viewing the war in Ukraine as an overwhelming impediment toward making substantial progress, we view it instead as a clear demonstration of the absolute need to do so. Specifically, we encourage G7 leaders to:

- acknowledge the tremendous, long-lasting human suffering the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings inflicted upon the hibakusha;
- acknowledge the tremendous, long-

lasting human suffering that nuclear weapons production and testing caused to downwinders around the world;

- reiterate a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, as well as emphasize that, as the G-20 agreed to in November 2022, the use and the threat of use of nuclear weapons are "inadmissible";
- reaffirm the goal of a future world free of nuclear weapons;
- announce and commit to concrete steps to prevent a new arms race, guard against nuclear weapons use, and advance nuclear disarmament;
- reiterate that serious talks should be restored between the United States and Russia to renew full implementation of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and to negotiate a follow-on treaty; and finally,
- honor the international mandate to enter into serious multilateral negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament, pledged more than a half-century ago in the 1970 Non Proliferation Treaty.

Throughout the years, world leaders have spoken about the need to eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons, prevent a new nuclear arms race, and avoid the ultimate catastrophe, which is potentially civilization-ending nuclear war. These calls have long been echoed by many notable world leaders, such as Mikhail Gorbachev, Ronald Reagan, and Pope Francis. But it is now time to translate rhetoric into action.

We believe today's new nuclear arms race is more dangerous than the first arms race, given multiple nuclear actors and the advent of new cyber and hypersonic weapons and artificial intelligence. Former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara asserted that humanity survived the Cuban Missile Crisis only by luck. Luck is not sufficient to ensure the continuing survival of the human race.

We strongly urge world leaders at the G7 Summit to show by example how international leadership is ready, willing, and able to work with nuclear weapons and non-nuclear weapons states to ensure no country or city ever suffers the horrors of nuclear war again.

(5/17/2023, Archdiocese of Santa Fe)

We Will be Closed

Nov. 23-25

Dec. 28-30

On August 4th we celebrated
37 years in Las Vegas

Synod Results

Pope Francis invited the entire world Church to participate in a Synod, or "listening sessions" to take place from 2021 to 2024. There were about 1,000 respondents from the Archdiocese of Las Vegas. The complete Synod of our Archdiocese is available at:

dioceseoflasvegas.org/2021-2024-synod
An excerpt from page 4:

"Significant areas of concern that were viewed as disrupting/damaging the communion of the church were also voiced by respondents, in many cases with tears, heart-felt pain, and anger ... but always in a spirit of true sincerity. There was widespread consensus that communion is weakened by the exclusion of groups that they believe is evident in the Church today. Three primary examples were repeated consistently:

- exclusion from the sacramental life of the church of those who are divorced and have remarried outside of the Church;
- exclusion of members of the LBGTQ community; and
- exclusion of women from real leadership roles in the Church, including the diaconate and priesthood."

PLEASE JOIN US

Volunteer Scheduling:

(702) 647-0728

or mail@lvcw.org

Thurs.-Sat., 6:00 a.m.

Morning prayer at Catholic Worker

Thurs.-Sat., 6:15 a.m.

Over 300 "To-go" Meals served to poor & homeless people

(6:15 a.m.: meal assembly, 7:00 - 7:30 a.m.: meal distribution)

Friday, 8 a.m.-10 a.m.:

Clean the World Foundation shower trailer in our empty lot, up to 40 showers given. We provide clean clothing and hygiene supplies, Touro University students offer a monthly medical clinic, and Shear Determination offers haircuts every other week.

Wednesday, 11:30 a.m.:

50 lunches taken to the homeless

Second Sat. of the month:

Knights of Columbus Pancake

Breakfast (In December, the Pancake Breakfast will be Sat., Dec. 23rd, none in Jan. 2024)

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