

MANNA *in the wilderness*

September 2019

The Newsletter of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker

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The Northwest Interfaith Peace Walk

by Robert Majors

Last month Robert Majors joined the Northwest Interfaith Peace Walk from Eugene, Oregon to Bainbridge, Washington. Here is his reflection:

*Walk the world
Humble
As the dove
Gentle
All you do
Justly
Like the serpent
Wisely
And always love
Mercy*

July 27th - The volunteers begin our journey at the Catholic Worker in Eugene, Oregon. We prepare our bodies for all that is involved with the Peace Walk, two weeks preceding August 6th. After spending the night recovering from a sudden stomach sickness, I awoke thankful for health and the energy to walk. It's slow and quiet when we begin to move, old friends greet and new friends meet. There are people here that have traveled from Chile, Japan, California, Canada, and several states. A man starts a conversation with me, we met last year, when I had asked several people to write in my journal. The journal was stolen months later, but luckily I remember the message he had written.

*"On these walks you meet many people and you hear their story."
-Northwest Peace Walker*

*Standing strong, his legs are bricks
Sweating tears from every inch
All his strength to pull a rope
From the well so deep below
The sun is beating on his neck
His breath is deep with every lift
Bleeding hands are gripping tight
A moment holding on for life*

July 28th - The volunteer walkers are in Corvallis, Oregon to walk through the city. This walk is uniquely social because we walk through several cities and each city has a local host who plans our schedule. The day starts at a four-foot-tall Persimmon tree, a descendant of a tree that survived the bombing of Hiroshima on August 6th, 1945. In contemplation, I think of all that still exists as a descendent from that day. People say Native American tribes would consider seven generations ahead before making an important decision. A man once

told me a generation is thirty years, that is 210 years of consideration. Next year is the 75th anniversary of the first nuclear weapon used in warfare on a civilian population. How different things would be if everyone considered just one generation?

*Two birds yell and perch up high
To motivate one
down below that cannot fly*

July 29th - It is our third day of walking. We walk fifteen miles each day and on this day the Peace Walk passes through Salem, Oregon. There is a man with us from Japan,



Northwest Peace Walkers

PHOTO BY ROBERT MAJORS

his name means Universe within a Circle. While on a break he sits in tears on the grass. There is something happening back home that he feels upset about. I am glad there are supportive people around him. We were planning on leaving and he had disappeared. I found him sitting by a river watching the water and listening to music. Tapping his shoulder, he jumped up, ready to continue the walk. I was happy to find him in a better mood and picked up a stone from the ground where he had been sitting to give him later. We are sleeping in the basement of a church this evening, someone pointed out the furniture in the church was old and they appreciated how it was built. It was profound to consider how long the things we build will last, something as common as a chair could last seven generations.

*Her strong hair braided
Cut for its strength
For months she waited*

*To add another length
A rope she created
Planning her escape*

July 30th - Portland, Oregon, A man with a flag that reads "Niños" leads the walk today. We walk through the tunnels, over bridges, past monuments built by those who walked for justice before us. The day ended with a film about an artist and janitor who fashioned a bomb out of scraps of her mother's kimono, a traditional Japanese robe. Weaving strands of her hair into the fabric of the bomb, she uses her art to tell the unheard stories of August 6th and the years that followed.

*What love is this that makes the rain
Acidic poison burning skin
Turns the earth into a bomb
To wipe part of its life clear off
Makes a people come to say
That madness makes the world safe*

July 31st - In Tacoma, Washington, we walk around the Puget Sound. The organizer of the annual peace walk is a Buddhist monk named Senji from the Nipponzan-Myohoji Temple on Bainbridge Island. The monks chant "Na Mu Myo ho ren ge kyo," which has a surprisingly profound message. I imagine it as the first words spoken which created all existence. Beating hand drums and chanting, the monks lead the peace walkers. As we walk and chant together, we contemplate their message. After arriving at the large Catholic Worker house in Tacoma, we rest amid quiet conversations and curious residents. Walkers began picking up various instruments and spontaneous music followed, revealing hidden talents from those gathered.

*The flower blooms violently
It wants to show you
What you are led to perceive*

August 1st - We are taking a ferry between Seattle and Bainbridge Island. It is a peaceful trip. I sit outside the ship watching the water rolling by. I begin talking to Senji; throughout the walk many stories are shared.

The Lucky Dragon - Nuclear abolition and peace movements in Japan became popular long after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Testing of nuclear weapons moved to the Pacific ocean, at places like the Marshall Islands and Bikini Atoll, where its inhabitants were used by the United States as guinea pigs to study
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radiation effects. The bombings irradiated many inhabitants of the Pacific, including the Japanese fishermen who provided the ingredients to Japan's most popular cuisine, sushi. The Lucky Dragon was a Tuna boat whose crew became sick from radiation poisoning. This alarmed the Japanese community, igniting their responsibility to address nuclear issues.

The Flame of Hiroshima - Weeks after the bombing of Hiroshima a group of Japanese militants came to assess the damage and begin the repairs. One soldier went to his uncle's old bookstore: it had been completely demolished and his uncle was dead. The soldier went into the basement of the store where there were still books burning. Thinking that this flame was his uncles spirit, he took a book and brought it to his mother's house to show her what he found. His mother took a candle and lit it with the flame from the book. The family kept the flame burning for years until one day a local told this story to the community and it was transferred to a secure site where it remains burning today.

*All the days to make a year
And years that make days disappear
The difference found in you and me
Intensifies across a sea
Collective thoughts of written law
Can make a right seem like a wrong*

United States Internment Camps - During World War II, from 1942-1946, close to 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry, sixty-two percent of whom were United States citizens, were removed from their homes and businesses and placed in internment camps. Justification for this trial-less incarceration was national security amidst a wartime mentality among political parties. It is important to remember our history when we continue to detain groups of people on the Mexico border.

PLEASE JOIN US:

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

Morning prayer at Catholic Worker.

Wed.-Sat., 6:30 a.m.:

Breakfast served to 175-250 poor & homeless people.

Wed., 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.:

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

Thurs., 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.:

Vigil for Peace: Thursdays in front of Federal Courthouse, 333 Las Vegas Blvd. S.

Thursday, 10:30 a.m.:

50 lunches taken to the homeless.

Second Sat. of the month:

Knights of Columbus Pancake

Breakfast for the homeless.

Third Sat. of the month:

Deliver food boxes to homes in need.

100% RECYCLED PAPER, CHLORINE FREE,
FSC CERTIFIED

August 2nd, Suquamish - Today we walk to Chief Seattle's grave. Upon arriving we circle the gravestone and a Japanese woman begins to sing a song of the Native American people. She is usually very quiet, but now I hear emotion in her voice. According to his gravestone, Chief Seattle was baptized Noah Sealath and was a "firm friend of the whites."

August 3rd - 5th, Ground Zero - Bainbridge Island is home to the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action. 'Ground Zero' is the name given to the point above, below, or at which a nuclear explosion occurs, as in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The center shares a fence with one of the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the U.S., Bangor Naval Base. The base serves as the home for the Pacific fleet of Trident submarines. Strategically located throughout the oceans, these submarines maintain readiness to launch a nuclear attack within thirty seconds.

This year marks the beginning of renewed hope for peace. Construction of a peace pagoda on the Ground Zero property was approved by the county earlier this year. Senji has undertaken the task of seeing the peace pagoda through to its completion. Thirty years ago the peace pagoda construction was halted after two marines from the base burned down the Buddhist Temple.

I gave the stone to the Universe within a circle guy, he said,

"I will keep it until I die."

-Universe within a Circle

Knights of Columbus gives \$250,000 to Asylum Seekers

At this year's annual Supreme Convention, Carl Anderson, the Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus, announced a \$250,000 commitment to aid asylum seekers at the U.S. - Mexico border.

"We are prepared to expand it, with additional resources, to help those in refugee camps in every border state. . . . Let me be clear: This is not a political statement, this is a statement of principle. This is about helping people who need our help right now. It is a natural and necessary extension of our support for refugees across the world. . . ."

Soup Line Closed:
November 28 - 30, 2019
January 1 - 4, 2020
Knights of Columbus
Christmas Breakfast
for the Homeless
Wed., Dec. 25, 6:30 a.m.

August 6th- The peace walk ended with a Toro Nagashi ceremony in Seattle. The Toro Nagashi is a lantern ceremony where thousands gather to each place a rice paper lantern into a body of water. A candle is placed in the center for those who have died, it is a moment to communicate with the spirits of our ancestors. The ceremony had speakers including a young poet and an old singer. It is organized annually by the Hiroshima to Hope coordinators. The peace walkers perform a Buddhist ceremony and lead the first lanterns to the water. The sun goes down on our final day.

Robert Majors is a community member of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker, a poet, a musician, and he is pursuing an Engineering Degree at UNLV.



July 31, 2019

Dear Senator:

I write on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Migration (COM) to express our opposition to S. 1494, the "Secure and Protect Act of 2019". . . Our approach to migration is rooted in the Gospel and in the life and teaching of Jesus, who himself was a migrant and refugee, forced to flee for his life with Mary and Joseph. While the Church recognizes the right of sovereign nations to control their borders, nations also have a strong obligation to treat all migrants humanely, to protect children at risk, and to protect those fleeing from persecution. As a nation of immigrants and refugees, we have a long history and commitment to providing welcome and protection for vulnerable immigrants and refugees. . . Thank you for considering our concerns. Sincerely,
Most Reverend Joe S. Vásquez,
Bishop of Austin, TX.
Chair, Committee on Migration, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

View the full letter, resources, and take action at:

JusticeforImmigrants.org

Fr. Greg Boyle

author of 'Tattoos on the Heart: *The Power of Boundless Compassion*' will speak in Las Vegas on Sat., Feb. 8, 2020

presented by Stillpoint Center for

Spiritual Direction

(702) 243-4040 or stillpointcsd.org

Justice for Our Desert

Sat., Oct. 12 - Mon., Oct. 14

presented by Nevada Desert Experience

(702) 646-4814

nevadadesertexperience.org