

Who We Are:

Scott Albrecht (46) Former Chaplain, U.S. Military and Third Order Franciscan, BA, MA in Applied Theology, Faith Based Peace Activist. Scott and his wife Maria have accompanied homeless men and women at various times over the past 17 years. Maria Albrecht (47) IT Manager, Third Order Franciscan; PGCE and a Diploma in Compassionate Ministry from the Diocese of Chicago in the USA. The Albrecht family consists of Scott and Maria and their children, Shoshanah, Christian, Justin and Francis.



The Albrecht Family: Scott (holding Bertie), Justin, Maria and Francis.

VOLUNTEERS

Our greatest need is either for an Intern or a core community member(s) to join us. The Catholic Worker Farm would like to extend an invitation to young people interested in living in community. This internship is open to anyone over the age of 20 who would like to experience living and working within a rural, faith-based community. The responsibilities of volunteers might involve daily chores, taking care of our guests, general maintenance of grounds, round table discussions, prayer vigils and involvement in protests.

We would greatly appreciate any donations or help with our work. Please do not hesitate to contact us via the above details, our door is always open! We feel we have the potential to do much more! Please continue to pray for us. Contact us!!

Roundtable Discussions

Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm. Call 07983477819 for more details.

Binding the Strongman

A radical study of Mark's Gospel. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm. Call 07983477819 for more details.

C.W. FARM NEEDS —

- Financial donations to sustain and increase our work
- Food, especially juice, milk, cheese, butter, cooking oil
- Toilet paper, nappies, baby wipes & food
- Help in the garden, cleaning, cooking or DIY
- People to engage in Vigils, participate in "Round Table Discussions"
- Prayer—Without this, all the rest is useless



Pixy in the kitchen!! Beware lest you be entertaining angels unaware.

FEBRUARY 2009



"Love in all Sincerity"

The Catholic Worker Farm

A Community of the London Catholic Worker

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E-mail: thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk

WHEREVER YOU ENTER

None of us have a pure and undefiled religion. But we try in a modest way, to partake in the joys and sorrows of the 7 women we share life with here at the farm. They have visited us, bearing Christ and we leap with a kind of joy; I think that is what keeps us going. No doubt, life is hard here, but it is good. And that Good is located in people. Recently, the morning reading referred to Jesus sending the twelve out in twos.

1 World Day @ CWFarm

Sunday 22nd
February 2009
1pm—6pm?

**Folk Music
Ethnic Food**

Have fun, meet
likeminded people
and support The
Catholic Worker
Farm!!!

He went around the villages teaching. He called to himself the twelve, and began to send them out two by two; and he gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He charged them that they should take nothing for their journey, except a staff only: no bread, no wallet, no money in their purse, but to wear sandals, and not put on two tunics. He said to them, "Wherever you enter into a house, stay there until you depart from there. Whoever will not receive you nor hear you, as you depart from there, shake off the dust that is under your feet for a testimony against them. Assuredly, I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!" They went out and preached that people should repent. They cast out many demons, and anointed many with oil who were sick, and healed them. Mark 6:7-13

Our normal hermeneutic for this type of reading is to consider the subject to be either the twelve apostles or sometimes, for the more egocentric—like myself, ourselves. That maybe Jesus is asking us to go *two by two* into our areas- the city centre, the neighbourhood, etc. And we do empty ourselves don't we. We think of the times when we have had to confront others with the truth - as we see it. How we empty our pockets, make sure our bellies aren't too full and enter peacefully into another's domicile. Sometimes to confront, sometimes to comfort.

In what is most probably the false self, I have religious imaginations of walking house to house with a good Christian friend, going barefooted hoping for the hospitality of

Cont...

another and begging for the poor. Praying with and for the sick, while trying to alleviate my own illness, testing myself to see just how peacefully my peace can rest. As if to challenge God - Does this Gospel Work??? Is it true???

But there is another hermeneutic, and it is this. The women we live with, have come to *our* door. Often with no bread, no wallet, no money and have sought peace here. They are the ones who have been *sent Apostolos*. Do we *receive* them and *hear* them. Do we allow the peace of Christ (whom they represent), which is beyond all understanding to rest upon this house?

In Catholic Worker pedagogy it is not the poor that need healing, it is the rich. Dorothy Day often quoted Dostoyevsky "Love in action is a harsh and dreadful thing compared to love in dreams. And we learn to love in community." We are learning to love!

As gatekeepers and householders we have tremendous power and structural advantage over the poor. It is said that our greatest hypocrisy lies in the fact that we ask God to do for others what we refuse to do for them ourselves. When we



deny to others what is rightfully theirs—we sin. We have learned that we, at the farm, have not offered the ladies here anything that we have not already robbed them of. And restorative justice (which is Jesus' paradigm for healing) demands that we open our doors to those who are sent to us. That we must let their peace rest in our homes and hearts otherwise they too, will *shake the dust* from their feet as testimony against us.

At the same time we are aware of the Works of Mercy which are being done by ordinary people; we feed our babies (the hungry), nurse them (the thirsty), clothe them (school uniforms) and visit them when they are sick and maybe even imprisoned. This is all Good! But we also need to step out from behind the privatised familial structure to embrace the beloved community. And if we cannot, we need to support those who do. There are an estimated 235,500 destitute asylum seekers in the U.K; the need

is great and the labourers are few. So it is with gratitude of heart that we thanks all of those who have shared what they can with our 7 apostles.

Scott Albrecht

today through the dynamics of power and knowledge has been analysed by Michel Foucault. 'Heroes' are those who have stood up against the violence in structures of power in other countries, under different regimes and in past times far removed from the present context. The dominant discourse of a society prefers to justify current failings and the structural abuses of others; those struggling for change are firstly ignored or denied voice by the dominant media, then dismissed as irrational troublemakers and finally labelled as terrorists, persecuted or exiled (Dooley; Amnesty International).

Restorative justice is an extension of justice beyond revenge and retribution to the fulfilment, in a relational sense, of rights and needs. Structural violence today exists on a global scale in the form of structural adjustment programs or terms set down by trade agreement such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). Boundaries and territory allow space for racial superiority and alienation from the 'other'. State violence shocks people into becoming politically conscious; such as incidents in Oaxaca, Mexico in 2006 when a teachers strike threatened the legitimacy of the government. The benefits of international support have been recognised, after 14 were shot dead in Oaxaca and hundreds arrested, it is believed by members of APO (People's Assembly of Oaxaca) that over 200 demonstrations at Mexican embassies around the world helped to minimise the casualties.

Global capital uses coercion to maintain beneficial trade agreements and the threat or the act of war to maintain dominance of the 'privileged' over the 'poor'. The contradictions are becoming more obvious in the justifications used to use war for economic growth. Transformation can occur based on consensus and mutual aid.

Tanya O'Sullivan

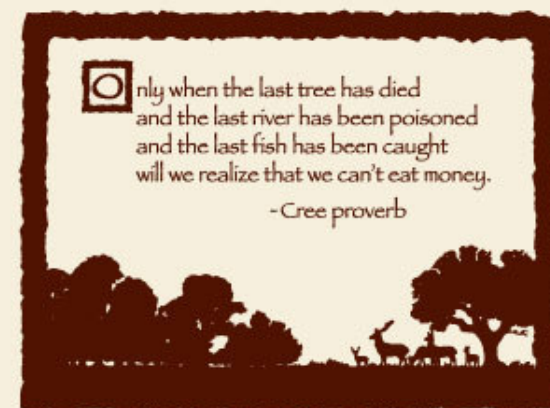
"The poor tell us who we are, The prophets tell us who we could be, So we hide the poor, And jail the prophets."

Phil Berrigan

The tears of the state
Are fast hard bullets
The arms of the state
Are cold iron bars

Do not try to comfort me

Tania O'Sullivan



A Theory of Restorative Justice

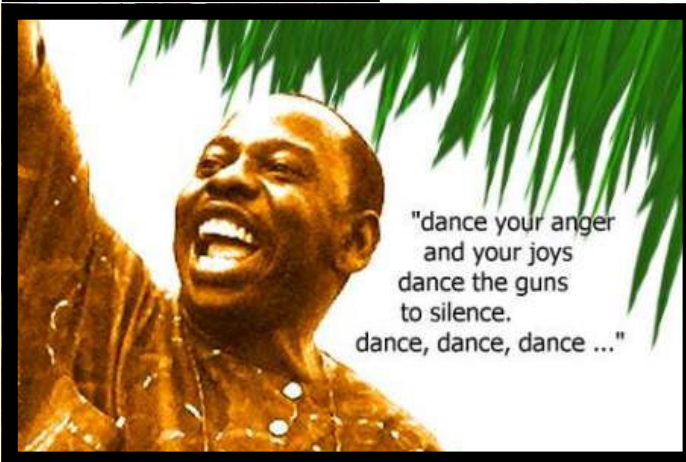
“To accept law means that an abused child, a starving population, a victim of street violence, and a victim of state violence are not our direct concern or responsibility” (Tift and Sullivan; 76).

Nils Christie has described the *professionalization* of conflict and how it excludes the discourse and the participation of laymen from their own affairs. Professionals are doing a job and cannot invest as much into the resolution of a conflict as a person directly affected by that conflict, this manifests in a void of responsibility. Thus there results a void of participation, a void of personal accountability, and a void of agency in the everyday lives of most people. Those directly involved in whatever violation has occurred are not agents in resolving or restoring the relationships and although they are the ones with most to invest are illegitimate actors. At the same time; they should be particularly legitimate actors, the ones with most to gain or to lose, the ones capable of understanding their own subjective experience, and therefore the only ones capable of looking into the mirror of judgement.

With less and less agency in our every day lives, natural experimentation is stagnated by a feeling of helplessness, ineffectiveness and growing uncertainty and fear. The professionalization and segmentation of work reinforce those tendencies. Chaos is never permitted but does exist and effect every design, violence continues in the name of restoring order, but often a synthetic order that does not allow space for imagination or experimentation. This impedes the possibility of experiencing human authenticity and independence. The acceptance of structural violence continues in the name of *peace*. The means is not only equal in importance as the ends, in fact the means *is* the ends, and here lies the challenge of creating true participatory democracy that allows for a deliberative process in which all voices are heard.

While murder is a *crime*, soldiers gain medals for killing in the name of the state and others are jailed for refusing to kill for the same cause. The illusion of order that exists by coercion rather than by consensus has failed us miserably. Accountability is too easily shirked by the State because they purported to have acted on the behalf of all citizens. Similar to when a group mentality overrides personal accountability.

Ken Sarowiwa



Ultimately the futility of formal accountability, the intrusion of state care, of surveillance and the hypocrisy of the state has led many to search for another way to organise. Restorative Justice is a way to rekindle accountability to one another, the care of one another and the responsibility for conflict with one another on a human level.

The rationalisation of the cycle of violence in society

Tipping, Skipping, Dumpster Diving... I'd rather call it Gleaning

At the Catholic Worker Farm we have a weekly ritual; this is a story of my first time participating in it:

Last night was a very nice night. After we ate a delicious lasagna dinner I made myself a cup of tea and settled in with Scott, Maria and Tanya to watch *Into the Wild* on the projection screen. We laughed, we cried, and when it was over Scott told us it was time. Tanya made a tea flask and I grabbed a granola bar, because, as you know, you should never go to the grocery store on an empty stomach.

We proceeded into a near town's posh supermarket that Scott and Maria have previously had great luck at. Favorably, the gates were open. Quickly and quietly we jumped out of the car and opened the dumpsters (bins if you will) and were amazed. We found loads of fresh fruit and veggies, along with other random necessities. As the night went on, we stopped at two other shops finding potatoes, breads, fresh cut flowers, and cheeses, yogurts and other dairy products (the weather is cold enough for it not to spoil).

When we returned [this is the best part of the trip] the ladies were ready for us. Everything was put on the kitchen table to be sorted and inspected. Here we “oohed” and “awwwed” at our treasure. The regiment began with looking for holes—which required us to re-bin those goods. Anything passing the test was then put through bleach water, rinsed in fresh water, dried and put away. I kept a tally how much the goods were worth: over 140 pounds. This did not include the fresh fruits, veggies and (my favorite) three beers which were with out price tags.

Around 1am we set out for bed with visions of bleached plums, bananas, potatoes, and kiwis dancing in our heads.

The spirituality behind our work:

This ritual, which many might simply dismiss as mere tipping, is for us, a very spiritual occasion. When Scott, Tanya and I partake in this act we know full well that we have the capability of working hard to provide enough food for ourselves and our immediate families to survive. We each value the honesty in hard work. The work we do in the bins is not for the rush of finding our favorite foods still in good condition for free. We also do not do it for the joy of wading through leaked muscle relaxer and years old bin slime. The reason we engage in this sometimes elating sometimes degrading work to is feed those who cannot work to feed themselves.

The Hebrew Bible's story of Ruth and Naomi provides much inspiration to us. Like Ruth, the seven guests at the farm are foreigners in this country. Boaz allows Ruth to glean from his fields according to the laws established and recorded in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. This tradition demands that when you harvest a field you do not harvest the edges or anything that falls when harvesting from a vineyard for that is to be for the poor and



the alien; this is called gleaning. It is Boaz's kindness and adherence to the law that saves Ruth and her mother in law Naomi from starvation.

Here at the farm we feel that when we go to the bins we participate in this millennia old tradition of gleaning. While we first ask shops to donate their outdated food and help us in our God given responsibility to feed the poor, many choose not to. It is only at this time that we dig through the edges of their fields and under their vineyard branches to sustain those who do not have the ability or opportunity to do so for themselves.

Leviticus 23:22

"When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God."

Shannon Hope Fisher

THE MIRACLE OF HEALING

I have heard a lot of different opinions on the way God provides healing, but understanding the concept and then experiencing it first hand is a bit like hearing about love and then being in love.

Counselling is available to all our guests, although sometimes we struggle to resource quickly the specialists needed for survivors of major trauma, but what I refer to is the healing which comes out of community living and a house founded on Christian teaching.

I rejoice in the subtle way healing takes place here at the CW Farm, it originates from deep within our fragile community as each of us participate in as well as find ourselves the instrument of God's love. All who give, then receive; our guests support each other as we support them and as they support us. Time and again the casual conversations turn into profound truth sessions and evening chats develop into deep supportive friendships.

It is amazing how readily these women who have survived terrible suffering put aside their own grief to support and listen to each other. How they quickly develop techniques to give care and space when it is needed as well as take every opportunity to laugh and share in all manifestations of joy. How our friendships develop and how easily our own pain is easily shared, where we find ourselves the recipients of the healing we seek to give.

This miracle of human contact, of shared pain and mutual support, is beautiful to witness and it is clear to see God's love for us is manifested in the care our guests take with each other and with us as we work together to rebuild and replenish our broken lives. It is not perfect love; there are many flaws, but I deeply value being part of such a healing process.

Living here at the Catholic Worker farm is difficult – sharing personal space, putting up with noise and a sometime overwhelming experience of too much personal interaction – but overall I consider it a privilege and am so grateful to God that he has put me in a place which not only adds integrity to my existence but gives me the grace to grow in his love.

Maria Albrecht

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The Catholic Worker Farm Originator's Identification Number: 6 7 9 8 4 8
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