

MISSION STATEMENT
OF
"THE CATHOLIC WORKER FARM"

The Catholic Worker Farm is located at Lynsters Farm, Old Uxbridge Road, West Hyde, Hertfordshire, WD3 9XJ. Tel. 01923 777201. It is situated on a working farm in a rural setting with 2 acres of land and lake frontage. At present members who comprise the community are Scott, Maria, Christian, Justin and Francis Albrecht, Nik and Isla Marten, Simone and Roo Kenney (Scott, Maria, Nik and Simone being the core members).

We are a Christian community within the Catholic Worker tradition. Which, "began simply enough on May 1, 1933, when a journalist named Dorothy Day and a philosopher named Peter Maurin teamed up to publish and distribute a newspaper called "The Catholic Worker." This radical paper promoted the biblical promise of justice and mercy.

Grounded in a firm belief in the God-given dignity of every human person, their movement was committed to non-violence, voluntary poverty, and the Works of Mercy as a way of life. It wasn't long before Dorothy and Peter were putting their beliefs into action, opening a "house of hospitality" where the homeless, the hungry, and the forsaken would always be welcome.

Over many decades the movement has protested injustice, war, and violence of all forms. Today there are some 185 Catholic Worker communities throughout the world.

We are committed to the Aims and Means of The Catholic Worker. "The aim of the Catholic Worker movement is to live in accordance with the justice and charity of Jesus Christ. Our sources are the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures as handed down in the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, with our inspiration coming from the lives of the saints, "men and women outstanding in holiness, living witnesses to "Your (Gods) unchanging love" (Aims and Means).

We are a community of the London Catholic Worker. It is through the fellowship, dialogue, commitment and love of all those past and presently involved in LCW that we are strengthened. And we in turn commit ourselves, the space and time that we have available to us at The Catholic Worker Farm to strengthen others in Faith and Resistance.

We are committed to Prayer, Personalism, A Decentralised Society, A Green Revolution, Non-violence, The Works of Mercy, Manual Labour and Voluntary Poverty.

C.W. FARM NEEDS —

- **Financial donations to sustain and increase our work**
- **Food, especially juice, rice, lentils, porridge oats, dairy products, cooking oil**
- **Nappies, baby wipes**
- **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**



"Love in all Sincerity"

The Catholic Worker Farm

Lynsters Farm, Old Uxbridge Road, West Hyde, Hertfordshire, WD3 9XJ

Home 01923 777201 Mobile 07983477819

Web Site: www.londoncatholicworker.org

The Catholic Worker Farm Community began in August of 2006, although it began in our hearts years earlier. Each of us having yearned for community as far back as we could remember, each with a willingness to build the "Peaceable Kingdom". We are slowly learning not to love community but to love each other. We see our community as your community and an expression of God's community; the Trinity.

Peter Maurin spoke often about a synthesis of Cult, Culture and Cultivation. A faith based community farm within the Catholic Worker tradition is something entirely new in Europe. As far as "Cult" we have a Chapel in which we pray through the Gospels, have hosted a faith and resistance retreat and attend St. Paul's R.C. Church in Harefield. We engage in our "Culture" by continuing and supporting resistance to the domination system i.e.; militarism and the arms trade. We have also offered hospitality on a small basis to those who need help. Soon we will be receiving 3 marginalised people to live with us more long term. These women will need advocacy, accompaniment and emotional support. Living on a farm has given us the opportunity to become as self sufficient as possible, having chickens and growing organic fruit and vegetables in the permaculture style (Cultivation).

We are deeply grateful to God and to His Mother for the blessings we have received. However we need you help. We still have 2 rooms that need extensive renovations and our heating costs and rent are very high. We have spent a great deal of our own money, time and selves in doing this work and need your support.



WORKING WITH THE WORKERS



In mid August yet another Catholic Worker House of Hospitality had emerged from the humus of intense prayer, much community building and the sacrifice of the Pitstop Ploughshares people; “The Blood of the Martyrs is the Seed of the Church”. We at the Catholic Worker Farm are trying our best to nurture this seed. Trust in each other, self discipline and sacrifice will ensure we produce a good yield; our poverty, God’s providence.

On with the story! As for the title of this article; Working with the Workers. For six weeks I (Scott Albrecht) worked along side three beautiful men from the Urban Table soup kitchen we run in Hackney (factually, the most deprived area of Britain). These three men were migrant workers from Poland, Latvia and the Ukraine. Our building skills complimented each others greatly; I’ve never worked so hard – shoe sales, furniture delivery, former U.S. military (70 hour work weeks on alert in Gas Masks included). Often I enquired about their reasons for coming to England, trying to get at the core motives for leaving their wives and children, their homelands and cultures. There always seemed to be an essential mystery at the centre and it wasn’t cash. Despite the fact of living here for several years they made little money and at times could’ve returned to their respective countries. Like Abraham and Sarah they are... “Strangers and Pilgrims”.

They worked harder still; sweat dripping down the face, carrying twice as much as me. As much as I tried to change the relationship I could not. They kept calling me “Boss”. I asked them dozens of times to call me Scott, finally they did, and then called me “Boss”. Still there were arguments on the best way to tile a floor or whether the plumbing bits needed a gasket or not. The greatest dilemma for me was that although I was paying them each £50 a day (it was all we could afford), giving them three meals a day and a place to sleep in a room next to ours back at our old house each night, there was still a great deal of injustice in our relationship with one another. They taught me some things about love; it’s not what you do, it’s who you are, for example. These men were unloved, even by me. Paying them more would not have resolved this, nor would cooking better meals or deferring to their sometime building errors. An example; I told one of them that they had connected the cold water pipe under the kitchen sink incorrectly; as per usual the response was that it was either a problem with the tools or materials. Upon an eyeball inspection by me the water pipe separated from another and I was drenched in water from face to foot, my head within the cabinet. It was like something out of Laurel and Hardy.

I remember the Great Mutiny as well. I couldn’t understand why they needed coffee and a cigarette after just having been driven from my old house to the Farm. 45 minutes earlier they had coffee and a cigarette and my self having neither was ready to start work. When I said “what’s going on, let’s get to work”

It terrified me and put me in my place when they said they were going back to London and not finishing”. I had to get my head round where they were coming from and humbly apologise. I guess that for a labourer smoking is oxygen and coffee water. Without them you just can’t work!

Upon my completion of working with the workers and giving them their cash I knew these wonderful men were going back to their squats, bed sits and park benches. What they yearned for was community, a place to be loved and accepted quite apart from what they could physically do, just for being who they are. I was frequently enlightened by their desire to plan, to work, to labour. Several times I was told that they would’ve liked to continue the jobs they started into the evening. It got me thinking about the dignity of labour, but also about the balance between labour, prayer and recreation. I miss these men dearly, and our household is indebted to them for their knowledge, persistence, skill,

WHO WE ARE

Scott Albrecht (44)—Former Chaplain and U.S. Military and Third Order Franciscan, BA,MA Applied Theology, Faith Based Peace Activist. Scott and his wife Maria have accompanied homeless men and women

Maria Albrecht(45) —IT Lecturer, 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.

Simone Kenney(37)—Christian Anarchist and long term activist. Simone has worked consistently to support human and animal rights. She has been involved in prison support, women’s refuge and counselling, organising community action, environmental issues and work place struggles in London. Nik and Simone have a two year old daughter Isla.

Nik Marten—33), Christian Anarchist. Nik is employed as a drugs worker in Watford. He has worked as a Drum’n Bass DJ. He is passionate about God’s creation, exploring this through

The Works of Mercy are an abiding norm for the Catholic Worker Movement. Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin lived lives of "active love" built on these precepts.

In the Christian Tradition these are:

The Corporal Works of Mercy:
feeding the hungry
giving drink to the thirsty
clothing the naked
offering hospitality to the homeless
caring for the sick
visiting the imprisoned
burying the dead

The Spiritual Works of Mercy:
admonishing the sinner
instructing the ignorant
counselling the doubtful
comforting the sorrowful
bearing wrongs patiently
forgiving all injuries
praying for the living and the dead