



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

Who We Are:

Scott Albrecht, 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 18 years. Maria Albrecht, 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. We currently live with another community member, Mirjam Johansson (Sweden), and other volunteers who come for shorter periods. They bring with them many gifts and skills which are greatly appreciated.

What We Do:

The Catholic Worker Farm takes its

C.W. FARM NEEDS —

- Financial donations to sustain and increase our work
- Food, especially juice, milk, cheese, butter, & cooking oil and cleaning supplies.
- Toilet paper & sanitary napkins.
- 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

inspiration from the international Catholic Worker movement founded by Dorothy Day in New York (1930's). The Catholic Worker seeks to live out Catholic social teaching through practicing the Works of Mercy. "For I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me into your house..." The CWF provides accommodation, food, English lessons, counselling and other services for 10 destitute (without access to public funds) female asylum seekers and their children, at no cost.

All of the women are street homeless and are referred to us by Refugee Services. We live with our guests full time and share common living areas. We are not salaried or stipended but rely on Maria's income and donations (see Standing Order form on page 6); supplementing our expenses from our personal savings when necessary. We work to maintain a large organic garden to help sustain our household.



Roundtable Discussions

Every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm.

Binding the Strongman

A radical study of Mark's Gospel. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm. *Before coming please call Scott on 07983477819 for more details.*

THE CATHOLIC WORKER FARM

"Love in all Sincerity"
A Community of the London Catholic Worker

EASTER 2011

"THE POOR TELL US WHO WE ARE THE PROPHETS TELL US WHO WE COULD BE SO WE HIDE THE POOR AND KILL THE PROPHETS"

This simple observation from Phil Berrigan has become the centre of my life and it terrifies me.

Recently we have been living with an African woman who has a virus which was left untreated for ten years or more. She also has toxoplasmosis, partial paralysis, ulcers and several other health concerns. We received her from St. Barts Hospital in London after she was found by the police on the streets of London, bleeding and unable to speak English. She is ineligible to receive state benefits and Bart's had no place else that

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OPEN DAY

Come and learn about our work.

Saturday 2nd July 2011

From: 4pm -late.

Exotic Food, live music, fireworks & bonfire.

Meet interesting people !!

Call Scott on 07983 477819

MARY HOUSE

We want to thank Steve and Marie Page for helping us to open a second house, Mary House, a home for destitute Mothers and babies.

Please become a Committed Giver and join us in this work; Standing Order form inside.



Mary visiting Elizabeth.

The Catholic Worker Farm
 Lynsters Farm, Old Uxbridge Road, West
 Hyde, Hertfordshire, WD3 9XJ
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 Web Site: www.thecatholicworkerfarm.org
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(Continued from page 1) **THE POOR TELL US.....**

could or would take her. They started her on the meds she needed, drove her here, and dumped her in our kitchen. There was no follow up care. Literally the only lifelines we have for her care are Project London; which we communicate with by phone, a wonderful neighbour named Joanne who offers some Physiotherapy and an Esol Teacher who tries hard to teach her our mother tongue. We have taken her to Watford General Hospital on 5 occasions and to a compassionate dentist, Sukanthi for x-rays and a filling. We have also had Met Detectives interview her about allegations of kidnapping, rape and torture and The Southall Black Sisters working on her asylum claim. As for her 15 tablets a day; which are essential to keeping her alive, those are in the capable hands of Mirjam who is a deeply valued member of our community and is very patient and loving with her. My wife Maria picks up the pieces after a hard day at work. Despite this, she is there to supplement many of my failures and offers some of the tenderness that our lady needs. Our learning curve is steep and it had become apparent that our new lady also has mental health problems, but we were told by Bart's that she had none. None of us have medical qualifications, we are untrained. What we offer in our weakness is Christ in us. To the extent that Christ is fully present to our lady, we are often successful, patient, loving and filled with hope. To the extent that it is simply me - I am largely failing. This beautiful woman, an ambassador of God is provoking

within me the very worst aspects of my deepest self. The unredeemed me. This emerges when, for example, I have struggled over 4 weeks to arrange her police interview. Negotiating with several detectives a place and time for her interview and trying to match it up with the state of our lady. Is she fit enough? Psychologically present? Settling in well here? Does she trust us when she gets into our car? And of course there is the hard work that the detectives put into her case, reviewing medical tests, conducting interviews, DNA tests, corroborating evidence and finding an interview room at another police station near us equip with hidden camera and a special recording device, getting an Amharic interpreter and a fellow detective to sync dates. Now bear in mind that our lady had been told of her appointment well in advance and I am trying to respect the Mets hard work. When she is awoken by me the morning of her testimony. I am gentle and loving - at first. Now one has to be cognisant of the fact that on a previous occasion our lady needed blood tests, and at her bequest and insistence we took her to the Watford General Hospital Emergency Room because she was unable to get a GP (She has one now). She seemed ill at the time. After waiting for 3 hours in the ER, she simply refused to have blood taken from her. At that time the Doctor suggested we wait awhile (another hour) and try again. I told her forcefully that if she did not cooperate with her own health care then we couldn't care for her. I also contacted an interpreter to convey that. She gave in and had the tests. In the case of her now looming police interview, she said she wouldn't be budged; she was going to refuse attending, she was ranting. I told her to pack her bags. I actually pulled them out of her wardrobe and put them on her bed. She called the local police.

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Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front

by Wendell Berry

Love the quick profit, the annual raise, vacation with pay. Want more of everything ready-made. Be afraid to know your neighbors and to die.

And you will have a window in your head.

Not even your future will be a mystery any more. Your mind will be punched in a card and shut away in a little drawer.

When they want you to buy something they will call you. When they want you to die for profit they will let you know. So, friends, every day do something that won't compute. Love the Lord. Love the world. Work for nothing. Take all that you have and be poor. Love someone who does not deserve it.

Denounce the government and embrace the flag. Hope to live in that free republic for which it stands. Give your approval to all you cannot understand. Praise ignorance, for what man has not encountered he has not destroyed.

Ask the questions that have no answers. Invest in the millenium. Plant sequoias. Say that your main crop is the forest that you did not plant, that you will not live to harvest.

Say that the leaves are harvested when they have rotted into the mold. Call that profit. Prophesy such returns. Put your faith in the two inches of humus that will build under the trees every thousand years.

Listen to carrion -- put your ear close, and hear the faint chattering of the songs that are to come. Expect the end of the world. Laugh. Laughter is immeasurable. Be joyful though you have considered all the facts. So long as women do not go cheap for power, please women more than men.

Ask yourself: Will this satisfy a woman satisfied to bear a child? Will this disturb the sleep of a woman near to giving birth?

Go with your love to the fields. Lie down in the shade. Rest your head in her lap. Swear allegiance to what is highest your thoughts.

As soon as the generals and the politicians can predict the motions of your mind, lose it. Leave it as a sign to mark the false trail, the way you didn't go.

Be like the fox who makes more tracks than necessary, some in the wrong direction. Practice resurrection.

The Journey of following Christ

My experience as an intern at the Catholic Worker Farm this summer has been nothing short of intense: emotionally, physically, relationally and of course spiritually. I have stepped into a community which is characterized by paradox: there is struggle and strife, yet peace and beauty; there is hopelessness in people's situations, yet hopeful people; it is a refuge for the refugee, yet a home which is held captive to the extraordinary cost of living in England. I am not surrounded by people who look like me, who think like me, or even who have been raised like me. In fact, the majority of people around me were born into what the world considers wretched and poor circumstances. I have sat with individuals and have listened to their stories, I have looked into their eyes and heard them say "there is nothing for me." I have cried with them in my arms, cried with my supervisor discussing their situations, and cried in my room alone, asking God "why?"

All of this is a part of the journey of following Christ. I haven't got nearly anything right—I cannot boast of my eagerness to step into this situation, I can only boast in Christ. As Christians we go into situations thinking we are going to be doing all the helping. At the farm, I am the one who has been helped, because God is showing me just how big his family is, how much He

loves, and how much He requires of us to give. We have been baptized into a family, a body of believers. Have we ever stopped to consider that this family includes an extraordinary large amount of hungry, hopeless, desperate people? With that in mind, we are called to love each other deeply. What does this mean for you and I today? How much are you willing to give up to follow Christ?

This community, this family, does not do everything right by any means. But the reason I love it is because the leaders of it love God so much that they took all of their wisdom and experience, evaluated, prayed, and decided to give up comfort, security, normalcy for the sake of how they discern Christ bidding them come and die. In the end of Joshua, he urges the people to "yield their hearts" to God and to thereby stop putting other things in front of God in importance. I am left wondering how long I will continue to live like everyone else in the world and if I will truly ever want to answer the question of what it means to die to yourself, take up my cross and follow Christ, because I am too afraid of the answer?

Herman van Veelen



Life Does not Wait for our Decisions!

Imagine a place where a family opens their door's house for those who need a shelter... This is true, and it happens in the Catholic Worker Farm. *Maria and Scott* are the reason for this beautiful dream comes true, a couple who have changed their lives to help other people. I am glad to have known these two special human beings, who believe the world is better when we transform our ideas into actions. One of the examples is *the Farm*, where peace is welcome!

Some time ago I was wondering about being a volunteer at the Catholic Worker Farm. I had no idea of how this experience could be, and no one in the house knew me face to face, our first contacts were by email or via skype. In

my country there are no Catholic Worker houses, I discovered the movement by my sister, who produced a documentary¹ about Dorothy Day. Then I started thinking about the possibility of becoming a volunteer in the CW. And after many hours on internet searching for a house where I would feel my heart more interested in, I found a farm in England and I loved!

The idea of being out of the stress of big cities seemed amazing for me! Brazil is famous for our agrarian fields, but I had never lived or worked at farms. As a student, and have been finishing my degree in Sociology, I was expecting to have a special holiday, and

it happened... I went to *the Farm* on Christmas, and I stayed until March. Three months of intense experiences, working with my hands, and giving my heart to learn with new discoveries.

Dorothy Day is always an inspiration for the Catholic Worker Farm. Life in community, for example, brings a spirit of sharing our lives with other people, instead of the usual preference of privacy.



What a wonderful opportunity is to live in a house with women from different countries and cultures! We may read the news and guess we understand about certain reality, but we just learn how intolerant the human being *can* be when we are in touch with real people who have been suffering injustices and prejudices.

We can *choose* to live with indifference, it's easier, but life is so

rare, it does not stop to wait for our decisions! Being a volunteer in the CW Farm have opened my mind to different realities, to learn with the diversity... I felt there is no time to waste, and we might try to do our best in this world.

This message is for the ones I knew last months in the house, and for those who might be interested in the Catholic Worker Farm/and movement. It's a little bit of an experience that absolutely has changed my life!

Patricia Polastri

¹ The movie trailer is available in: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFhE_Q673u4

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Having the local police come to our home, where we are looking after 10 homeless people, was deeply humiliating for me on two counts; one being the police coming to our home to investigate a possible crime and me being the principal suspect and two Kicking Out a vulnerable woman with a life threatening Virus. Finally she acquiesced and agreed with the local police to go to her detective interview the next day.

On the day of the interview the detectives and the interpreter had to come here, pick her up and take her to the police station. Because as you may have guessed, she refused to go.

"You were born a white man in mid-twentieth century industrial America. You came into the world armed to the teeth with an arsenal of weapons. The weapons of privilege, racial privilege, sexual privilege, economic privilege. You wanna be a pacifist, it's not just giving up guns and knives and clubs and fists and angry words, but giving up the weapons of privilege, and going into the world completely disarmed. Try that."

Ammon Hennacy

The poor tell me who I am. I try, through force of words and tone to violate another's will. She simply did not want to participate in her own wellbeing. Yes she is self-sabotaging; the same way her sister did who died 3 years ago from the same virus. As for me I am left tired and ashamed. I realize that I am a violent man and in the same way we often feel that we must save someone for their own good – we violate others all of the time.

I don't want to give up on her. This is the hardest thing. I don't feel that I have the internal strength to cope with what she presents to me – a mirror to myself. I too am dying and

uncooperative. Want to be left alone and yet in desperate need of love and salvation. Sometimes I am irrational and unredeemable. Please pray for me and my sister; we have more in common than I ever knew.

Scott Albrecht

Feeding the Poor – At a Sacrifice



In the first centuries of Christianity the hungry were fed at a personal sacrifice, the naked were clothed at a personal sacrifice, the homeless were sheltered at a personal sacrifice. And because the poor were fed, clothed and sheltered at a personal sacrifice, the pagans used to say about the Christians "See how they love each other." In our own day the poor are no longer fed, clothed, and sheltered at a personal sacrifice, but at the expense of the taxpayers. And because the poor are no longer fed, clothed and sheltered at a personal sacrifice, the pagans say about the Christians "See how they pass the buck."

Peter Maurin



applications. But space is limited. There are very few such projects in the UK and none in England that will accept women with dependent children. Maria works full time to support the project which is otherwise entirely funded by gifts of money, food and other items.

We decided to help purchase a house locally that will house refugee women and their babies and children. This will be called the Mary House. The women are not eligible for Housing Benefit so the costs of the house, food, electricity, water and clothing will come entirely from donations. We'd be extremely grateful if you felt able to help. Please email me at marie@musicademy.com for more details of how you can send money - we have a charity to manage the donations so you can use Gift Aid if you are able. If you live nearby and can offer practical support (food, clothing, bedding, furniture or time spent speaking English to the ladies)

then please get in touch. The house is in Maple Cross Hertfordshire (North West of London). And if you know of anyone that would like to volunteer at either of the projects then let me know. There is such huge need. In the last 10 days alone we've had calls relating to three different women and babies who are homeless and in need of shelter.

I know that many of you will be involved in social action projects connected with your churches. Asylum seekers are a big political issue and many righteous people do not believe that Britain should be so open in welcoming them. However, I think it is both Biblical and one of our first duties as Christians to do all we can. We can lobby politically, but re-read those passages above and see if in your heart you can respond practically as well.

Marie Page

True Worship has Very Little to do with Singing

I want to kick off this article with some scripture. You will, no doubt, be very familiar with these passages:

Is not this the kind of activity I have chosen ... to provide the poor wanderer with shelter. Isaiah 58

The disciples shared everything they had ... [so that] there was no needy person amongst them. Acts 4

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Matthew 22:36-40

"I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me."

"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Matthew 25:35, 40

Familiar passages and we know that this is what true worship is, however we so often limit worship to singing. In the job I do at Musicademy I need to be constantly reminded that true worship probably has very little to do with singing. For all our DVDs and blog posts about improving our musicianship, raising the standard of our worship services, what God desires of us as Christians is truly to love our neighbours as ourselves.

I've been increasingly challenged in recent months by the plight of asylum seekers in the UK. These are people fleeing all sorts of horrors in their own countries, looking for

sanctuary in Britain. As a country we have all sorts of colonial history that would attract people to us, believing that as a nation we would welcome them giving them access to a better life. But on arrival in our ports, asylum seekers are not well received and the current political climate is to do all it can to discharge these "neighbours" from our responsibility.

I've been involved in a local project seeking to help some of the most vulnerable people in our country - female refugees who have had their first application for asylum turned down. The way it works is that a woman flees from her own country (say The Congo) where she may have been raped, tortured and perhaps seen her family killed. In her appalling situation, she doesn't generally carry with her documentary evidence of her history. She arrives in the UK and receives some legal advice - what money she brings with her perhaps goes to a lawyer who may well be corrupt. Without documentary evidence and proper support in completing the asylum papers her initial application is rejected. At this stage she ceases to have a right to benefits and housing and is barred from working. She becomes destitute. She has nowhere to go other than the streets. She is hugely vulnerable. If she has children with her, social services will remove them as they are (rightly) considered to be in an at risk situation.

The project I have been working with (The Catholic Worker Farm) is run by a couple who have opened their home to such women. There are no government benefits. Scott and Maria feed them, clothe them and help them with their asylum



Free Bradley Manning

Bradley Manning, a 23-year-old Army intelligence analyst, is accused of leaking a video showing the killing of civilians, including two Reuters journalists,

by a US Apache helicopter crew in Iraq. He is also charged with sharing the documents known as the Afghan War Diary, the Iraq War Logs, and embarrassing US diplomatic cables, with the anti-secrecy website WikiLeaks. The video (see "Collateral Murder" on Youtube) and documents have illuminated such issues as the true number and cause of civilian casualties in Iraq, human rights abuses by U.S.-funded contractors and foreign militaries, and the role that spying and bribes play in international diplomacy.

Not a single person has been harmed by the release of this information. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates has called their affect on U.S. foreign relations "fairly modest." Yet, Bradley faces 22 charges*, including "Aiding the enemy by indirect means," for which a conviction could result in the death penalty or life in prison.

Although Bradley has not yet been tried, he was held in solitary confinement from May 2010—April 2011. He was denied meaningful exercise, social interaction, sunlight, and was occasionally kept completely naked. These conditions were unique to Bradley and are illegal even under US military law as they amount to extreme pre-trial punishment.

In March 2011, chief US State Department spokesperson PJ Crowley called Bradley's treatment at the Quantico, Virginia Marine Corps brig "ridiculous and counterproductive and stupid." He was forced to resign within hours. Bradley's treatment has sparked a probe by the United Nations chief torture

investigator Juan Mendez. According to Mr. Mendez, he has been, "frustrated by the prevarication of the US government with regard to my attempts to visit Mr. Manning." After also being rejected an official visit, Congressman Dennis Kucinich noted, "What is going on...with respect to Pfc. Manning's treatment is more consistent with Kafka than the US Constitution."

In one week in April 2011, over a half million people signed a petition calling on President Obama to end the isolation and torture of Bradley Manning, as those condition serve as "a chilling deterrent to other potential whistleblowers committed to public integrity."

Over 300 top legal scholars have declared Bradley's conditions of detention a violation of the Eighth Amendment's prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment and the Fifth Amendment's guarantee against punishment without trial. Among the signatories is Laurence Tribe, a Harvard professor who taught Barack Obama. Prof. Tribe was until recently a senior advisor to the US Justice Department.

Partially in response to public outcry, on April 21, 2011, Bradley was moved from Quantico to Fort Leavenworth, KS. We do not yet know if his confinement conditions have changed. The very day he was moved, President Obama was surprised at a breakfast fundraiser by a group of protesters. At the end of the fundraiser, a member of the Bradley Manning Support Network, Logan Price, began questioning him about Bradley's situation. The President stated that "He [Bradley Manning] broke the law," a pretrial declaration of guilt that has caused concern among many legal experts.

Now, at the start of the second decade in the second millennium, Bradley Manning has a growing list of supporters. Included among them is another famous whistleblower, Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked the Pentagon Papers in 1971. We hope that you will join us as well. See what you can do to support justice in this historic time. Go to <http://www.bradleymanning.org/> for more information.

"Love in all Sincerity"

The Catholic Worker Farm
Lynsters Farm, Old Uxbridge Road, West Hyde, Hertfordshire, WD3 9XJ
Home 01923 777201 Mobile 07983477819

MONTHLY STANDING ORDER FORM
FOR A COMMITTED GIVER

Please complete this form and return to:

The Catholic Worker Farm, Lynsters Farm, Old Uxbridge Rd., West Hyde, Herts, WD3 9XJ

Your Bank Information

To the Manager (Your Bank).....

Bank Address (in full)

.....

Your Sort Code

Your Account Number.....

Your Account Name

Your Roll Number (for Building Societies).....

Your Personal Information:

Name.....

Address.....

Town.....

County.....

Post Code.....

Telephone.....Email

Please accept this mandate as my authority to make the following monthly payment (Standing Order) of:

£5 _____ (Please Tick Here)

£10 _____ (Please Tick Here)

£20 _____ (Please Tick Here)

Other Amount _____

Total Annual payment £ _____

This is to be paid now and thereafter monthly. This replaces any previous instruction in favour of The Catholic Worker Farm until countermanded by me/us.

Beneficiary: The Catholic Worker Farm

Bank: Lloyds TSB

Address: Lloyds TSB St. Albans (309725)

Account Number: 00727903

Sort Code: 30-97-25

Signed Date.....

*Alternatively you may send a cheque to the above address –Make payable to
THE CATHOLIC WORKER FARM*

LITTLE PORTION HERMITAGE

At the heart of our community we recognise the need for prayer.

To this end we have built our Little Portion Hermitage (4x3 metre log cabin).

Hermitage comes from the Greek *eremos* which is the Desert. As we go into the Hermitage we go into the desert of our own hearts. There we battle for what is God's, the old self dies and the new self grows.

We are offering this hermitage for any who would like to come on a retreat. The log cabin has heat, electrics, bed, dresser, desk and chair, it sits 40 metres from the main house in a secluded wooded area over-looking Lynsters lake. Meals, shower and washing facilities are taken in the main community house.



Comfortable yet Simple Living



The Hermitage

GUEST HOUSE 7

A great place for you and three or four friends to spend a weekend alone or having a guided retreat. A newly built 4x5m log cabin (sleeps 4-6).

- **Social Justice: A Contextual Theology for the First World** – A modest proposal for a way in which Christians could be living in the first world.
- **We Did Not Invent Community** – Community as ontologically rooted in the Trinity and expressed in a continuum of possibilities within human experience.
- **Jesus' Last Week** – A radical day by day exploration of Jesus' last week.
- **Jesus; Priest, Prophet and King** – Exploring questions such as – What was Jesus' response to the 'Poor of God' in his culture? How do we live out of our baptism in our culture?
- **The Catholic Worker** – Catholic Social Teaching – putting "love in action" through the Works of Mercy.
- **Faith Based Non-Violent Direct Action** – Scott has had multiple arrests & 4 criminal records for love of neighbour. Here he shares his theological reflections on such actions.
- **Radical Discipleship** – Following Jesus in 'The Way' of discipleship.
- **Living with the Poor** – Scott, Maria & family live with those who have been denied asylum, bonded, abused and trafficked.
- **Christian Anarchism** – Exploring Christianarchy; looking afresh at scripture with the possibility that God's ideal is human communities 'without rulers'.
- **Christians in Empire** – An examination of the claims of Empire and claims of The Kingdom of God upon its citizens.
- **Should Christians Fight in Wars?** – An exploration of The Early Church Fathers on participation in war-making.
- Other Topics include; Franciscan Spirituality, Repentance and Resistance, The Domination System of First Century Palestine and Jesus the Rebel.
- Contact Scott on 07983477819.