



EASTER 2018

URGENT EASTER APPEAL

We want to let you all know how grateful we are for the love and care you have shown our Sisters and their children. Every time someone comes to the farm or to Mary House and offers us milk, teaches English or does an odd job, it is a beautiful gift to our community. Words cannot express the depth of need, but also the depth of response that we experience on a daily basis. We cannot carry on with our work unless we receive your much needed support.

We would also like to thank our 3 Wise Men who have helped to guide us in terms of staying here at the farm, securing the property and facilitating its continued growth. These are Steve Page and Jack Beil. The other wise man slot is still open! We would also like to offer a big debt of gratitude to Denis Nolan, our benefactor. Denis is purchasing the property on which we live so that we will have the use of it for years to come. And then there are those who are helping us with the new accommodation we wish to build in order to house another 20 Asylum Seekers. Fiona Rae is a Planning Consultant and she is working on getting us planning permission from The Council. Angus McDougall is an Architect and he is doing the drawings necessary for the planning permission. There are many others who have supported us in so many ways and to whom we are grateful.

Aside from prayer financial support is an absolute necessity. To get an idea of what we are up against in terms of our financial output have a look at some of our March's expenses:

- car repair: £900
 - heating oil: £1,250
 - council tax for two houses: £3,600
 - water bill: £410
 - rent for two houses: £3,100
- > total amount: £9,260

Our funds are running low and we have more bills to pay. We kindly ask you to please support our work. Become a committed giver today through filling in a standing order form, giving a donation through Paypal on our website or making a check payable to The Catholic Worker Farm. Thank you and may God Bless all of you.

Scott, Birthe, Vicky, Jo, Dani and all the women at the Catholic Worker Farm.

Open Day: June 2nd, 3pm – Late (page 5)

Farm Fest (Music Festival): June 29th - July 1st (page 6)

European Christian Anarchist Conference: July 20th-22nd (page 12)

*Events for your
Diary!*

THE PASSION OF PRINCESS PARVANEH

I never spent too much time with Parvaneh. I had helped her with the obvious, accommodation, food, finding her a charger for her phone and small talk. Others helped her with other things. Birthe signed her up with a GP for example.

I knew though that Parvaneh was suffering from a deep depression. A depression brought on by being locked up in an Iranian prison for a month and an Austrian detention Centre wherein she was raped by a guard. Her husband was still within those prison walls while she lived here with us in a cold dark wintery Hertfordshire farmhouse. I found her depression difficult to cope with. Perhaps a reflection of my own inner potential.

Community Day was upon us as it is every Wednesday and so after my attempt at our weekly inspirational talk and our subsequent house meeting we began our cleaning chores. These are so important to us as so many people living in such tight quarters means that things can get very dirty around here. It really does require a full community effort to do that 'deep clean' as we like to call it.

Well the first altercation I had with Parvaneh was during our community day. She was out in the garden talking on her phone for quite awhile while everyone else was working and so I had opened a window and yelled to her, "you're supposed to be working". Little did I know the consequences that would have on her.

Later that afternoon I noticed her bedroom door ajar and that she was cleaning her personal area. This, she was told, was something that she could do. However, we normally expect the women to do that on their own time.

And so I asked her to come out and help another woman whom I saw struggling in the living room. Parvaneh refused and stated that she was told she could clean her room. This volleying about where she should work went back and forth a few more times until I said, "you're not a princess here" and "if you don't like it you can leave". To my shame I have said this a few times and the woman who hasn't cooperated has usually backed down. I know it's an awful thing to say, but I'm learning as I go along and this lesson is one big painful one.

Parvaneh wishing to maintain her dignity goes back to her room and I maintaining my frustration go upstairs to mine. I also forgot to say that I had a very severe flu and fever which I'm sure contributed to my impatience with her. I get word a little later that Parvaneh is packing her bags and so I go downstairs. But not before thinking things through, calming down, and feeling like \$#/€ and so I descend the stairs with a sincere intention to apologise. Our motto here at the farm is, Love in all sincerity.

Birthe comes with me and we sit with Parvaneh while she furiously packs her bags. We explain to her that it is freezing cold out there and even British homeless men and women are dying in the streets. I also apologise. I understand now that she was in the midst of a nervous breakdown. It was as

if she was possessed by Shakespeare. Every word from her mouth was filled with foreboding portents both for herself and for me. She cried, "Scott, you will see me die in those streets. In front of Parliament. I will freeze to death and my death will be on your hands, you will see and hear the story of my death forever." Parvaneh spoke like this for twenty minutes, contorting and wringing her hands. She would suddenly burst into a visual memory of her father who was

killed by the Iranian government. She would conjure her life in pictures before

us. She spoke vividly, recalling her parents calling her, "Princess". "Indeed I am a princess she cried. I am a princess and no one can take that away from me. Not even you Scott".

We begged her to stay, but she left. She took her two large suitcases and two large bags and trundled down our long snow filled drive up to the main road. There she sat like Lazarus at our gate. "There was a rich man who dressed in purple garments and fine linen and dined sumptuously each day. And lying at his door was a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who would gladly have eaten his fill of the scraps that fell from the rich man's table. Dogs even used to come and lick his sores." In fact that was the reading on the next day as myself, Birthe and our volunteers broke open the Word of God.



Woodcut by Ernst Stöhr

The portents continue.

We could only imagine that Parvaneh made her way to Rickmansworth so that she could get that train to London and perhaps to Parliament.

The next day, Thursday, I received a phone call from a man named Neil who claimed to have known Parvaneh and her husband in Austria. He said that he was from a Baptist church that had a mission there and that the mission team would visit the married couple regularly at the detention centre. He knew that she had been deported to the U.K. and that her husband was still in detention. I explained to him that Parvaneh had left and the circumstances preceding her departure. I told him how sorry I was and how we asked her to stay but she felt she had to leave. I told Neil that if he heard from Parvaneh again she should contact The Missionaries of Charity and try to find accommodation there.

The next day, on Friday, I received a second phone call from Neil. He told me that Parvaneh had died in the cold. He received a phone call from the police and they had found her body in London. I was devastated. We spent all of that day in tears and prayer. Reflecting on my unwise words and things I shouldn't and should have done.

Should never have given her an ultimatum

Should never have called her Princess

Should've called The community mental health team

Should've called the organisation that sent her to us

Evening came and I had to give a talk at a local church and so I shared the story and my failings. No one pats you on the back and says, think of all the lives you've saved. All it takes is one death to really call everything you've ever done into question. Should I continue this work? Am I qualified? But no

one else is doing it, how can I stop? I can only try to do it better.

Two days of grieving and Sunday night rolls along. I'm in bed and get the sudden urge to look Parvaneh up on Facebook. Maybe someone posted more details on her death or funeral arrangements, anything to bring closure. But who am I kidding? There is no closure on this one Scott.

And so I look on her Facebook page and fortunately it's an open account so anyone can see it. And what do I see? She is on Facebook Live filming, singing and playing music on her phone. Birthe and I are in shock. We can't believe it's true, but we sleep on it and Birthe calls her mobile first thing in the morning. Parvaneh answers and says she is in a Psychiatric Hospital in Ealing.

We feel as though she has been raised from the dead. But we are also aware that in her poor mental health she wanted to teach me a lesson. A lesson which I will cherish. A lesson from which I will learn and grow.

Only a few weeks have passed but I can feel a change inside. A desire to listen more carefully to my sisters. - Scott Albrecht

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love. (St. Francis)

FROM HELL TO HOPE

The beginning of winter in East London and Asma, a young newly married Sudanese woman, managed to escape from her violent husband who threatened to kill her.

A kind woman saw her on the street and helped her get in touch with The Gaia Women's Rescue Centre which is located in London. The centre called us and asked if we could accommodate her. And luckily we could! It was the 9th. September 2017.

I want to tell Asma's story because I like Asma as a person and as I got to know this beautiful person I came to care deeply for her. I also wish that what happened to her should never happen to another woman.

When she came here she was broken, depressed and very

scared. A tiny young woman with her head and body bowed, shaking... scared, like many of our women when they arrive at our farm.

About 3 weeks later I sat with her during her video interview at the Rickmansworth police station. It was then that I felt a trust building between us, an openness. I was on her side and she could relax and feel comfortable with me.



Asma's story

Asma is 25 years old and from South-Sudan. Her life, until she came to England, was like other women in Sudan, except that she was one of the nearly 5000 women yearly who were allowed by their families to start an education.

When Asma was 5, she was circumcised. An older female member of her tribe, "cut" her without giving her anaesthesia. She removed most of her clitoris, the inner and outer labia - and then closed the wounds with acacia thorns, so it only allowed a little urine and blood to pass through. For almost a month she lie in bed, her legs tied together, to give the wounds peace.

This form of FGM where most of the genitals are cut away is called Infibulation or Pharaonic circumcision and is very common in Sudan and Somalia.

In Sudan men have no access to the ceremony. They are usually unaware of that which the women find is a necessary part of a girl's upbringing. It's a way of controlling virginity and fertility and the girls are told that uncircumcised genitalia are ugly and dirty. But also that they will give greater pleasure to their husbands when they are circumcised.

It is only when a young husband has to conduct sexual intercourse that he experiences the irrevocable consequences of their wife's FGM. Most men are quite shocked on their wedding night.

When Asma was 11 years old, her family agreed to whom she would later marry. It was her cousin Kamal who lived in England.

Later Asma was given permission from her family to go to university, her dream was to become a doctor.

When she was almost finished at the female university (Ahfad University) in Omdurma, the family said it was time to have the marriage ceremony.

Kamal who now worked at a hospital in London as a radiographer, came to Sudan to marry Asma in a traditional wedding.

Asma and Kamal haven't seen each other, but Asma's father had promised her that, if she did not find him attractive, she had his consent to reject him.

Asma saw him as attractive and fell for his liberal attitude towards educated women. Shortly after the wedding in Sudan Kamal went back home to England. 1 month later Asma followed him on a Spouse Visa. A new country, a new language and a husband she hardly knew awaited her, but she was feeling happy inside and felt God was with her on her journey.

Unfortunately Kamal was not happy with his new wife. Not long after she arrived their problems

started. Kamal could not have intercourse with her and he accused her for not looking like or being, a real woman "down there".

He was frustrated, and gradually treated Asma worse and worse. He locked her up in their home and gave her orders to wear full niqab all the time so he didn't have to look at her.

He called her an ugly beast. The violence just became more severe. When he tried to have sex with her he penetrated her in a violent manner. Asma was frustrated, in pain and sad, but kept on obeying and pleasing him to keep him at the least from beating her, but it became more difficult.

At a time when there was a little peace between them, Asma persuaded him that they should visit a doctor and ask for a new operation for her.

But this had to be done in secret Kamal said. He knew it would bring disgrace to him and that he would be looked at as a weak and unworthy husband if their tribe or family found out she had been to the hospital to be opened up surgically. In Sudan the man is considered to be untrue and insane if he can not penetrate the woman's FGM.

So Kamal threatened her life if she should tell it to anybody. He even showed her a mobile video of a man cutting a woman's throat with a knife. He told her this could happen to her.

After the operation, Asma hoped that Kamal would change. Unfortunately he did not. The violent abuse continued. One day she feared so much for her life and ran out into the street. Soon after her phone began to ring. It was Kamal and several family members. They persuaded/threatened her to go home again. About 2 weeks later, she couldn't take it anymore. She planned her escape the next day when Kamal went to work. She filled a bag with a few items of clothing, her passport, university papers, ID, a little cash and ran again out onto the streets in Stratford where she met the kind woman who helped her to contact with the Gaia Women's Rescue Centre and later us.

When Asma came to us here at the farm, we contacted the police together. As we sat at Rickmansworth Police Station they took her statement. They also took her DNA from her mouth in the case that she would be killed and found. At least she could be identified. A specialist from the police department informed her that, as her husband had access to the NHS register, he could easily find her, if she herself registered with a GP. So for a while we were reluctant to get her a GP. Fortunately she had no serious medical needs.

Asma finally received her Indefinite Leave to Remain 6 month later. She had stayed with us for the entire 6 months.

Things seemed hopeless, like the cold barren winter with no leaves on the trees and no

vegetables in the garden, but like the newly coming Spring hope was waiting around the corner. The same hope I tried to instil in Asma's heart the many times I sat with her when she cried or wanted to give up.

Asma now lives at peace in another part of England. Her future is bright.

We are certain that she will finish her studies and perhaps even become a GP.

Please pray for us and for Asma as we walk together from Hell to Hope. - Birthe Albrecht

When you love people, you see all the good in them, all the Christ in them. God sees Christ, His Son, in us and loves us. And so we should see Christ in others, and nothing else, and love them. There can never be enough of it. There can never be enough thinking about it.

Dorothy Day

**WELCOME TO THE CATHOLIC WORKER FARM
COME MEET US AND LEARN ABOUT OUR WORK**

OPEN DAY

JUNE 2nd 3PM - LATE

SNACKS 3PM, INTERNATIONAL BUFFET 6PM

LIVE MUSIC

This is an opportunity for us to Thank You in a small way for all your support of and interest in us and our work. Meet us, chat and learn about our work with homeless women and children. Enjoy live music and food from around the world as our sisters put on a feast! We will have a Bonfire, as well as face painting, badminton and trampolines!

Snacks & Drinks from 3pm. International Buffet from 6pm



FARM FEST

Music Weekend

John Kirkpatrick • Grannys Attic

Supported by Local Folk Musicians

Millie Manders • Ooberfuse

Codename Colin • Explode the TV

Jug Addicts • Paul Eugene • Passive

John McClean & The Clan • Vernon Jones

LouD Speka • Grannys Attic

Herts Drum Circle • Flatlands

Nora Ziegler • Skaciety



THE CATHOLIC WORKER FARM
LYNSTERS FARM, OLD UXBRIDGE ROAD, WEST HYDE, HERTS. WD3 9XJ
mobile 079 834 778 19 see our website www.farmfest.info

The management politely requests that no pets, illegal drugs and substances are brought into the festival. Anyone found to be causing disruption or offence may be asked to leave the venue. Anyone who becomes a public nuisance or risk to the health, safety and enjoyment of other festival goers due to excessive alcohol intoxication may find themselves escorted from the venue.

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 overlooking Lynsters lake. Meals, shower and washing facilities are taken in the main community house.



Comfortable yet Simple Living



The Hermitage

GUEST HOUSE

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

TALKS & WORKSHOPS

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, Birthe & volunteers 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 for more details.

How to get involved?

There are many ways in which you can get involved in this important work:

- Come and visit us!
- Become a live-in volunteer/intern
- Help our ladies with transport to appointments
- Come for a retreat in our beautiful Hermitage
- Pray for us - Without this, all the rest is impossible!
- Sign up for our newsletter & event invitations by post or email

C.W. FARM NEEDS

- Sugar, Juice, Long Life Milk, Cheese, Butter, Beans, Chopped Tomatoes, ...
- Vegetables and Fruit
- Nappies (Size 4 and 5)
- Cleaning Supplies such as Washing-up Liquid, Sponges, Sprays, Gloves, Bleach, Washing Powder

Financial Donations

Becoming a Committed Giver by filling out the Standing Order form is the best way to support us regularly. And help us sustain and increase our work.

If you want to support Mary House, our mother and child house, directly, please make cheques payable to St. Simeon's Church Trust. Send your cheque to us here at The Catholic Worker Farm and we will send you a Gift Aid form.



An Appeal to Religious

We at The Catholic Worker Farm and Mary House are looking for a Religious sister or two who could be seconded or missioned to work with us within our live-in community. Our motto is "Love in All Sincerity" and our mission is to serve the 21 women and children who were formerly street homeless and now live with us in our two community houses. These women and children are disentitled to work or to receive benefits because of their legal status; which forces them into destitution. All are Asylum Seekers. Many have fled torture, human trafficking, prostitution, female genital mutilation, domestic violence, bonded servitude. All need our love and support.

We need your
HELP!

In the Garden,
Weeding,
Cutting grass,
Picking fruit,
Cleaning the house,
Moving furniture,
General DIY,
Counselling

*Give us a ring if you
have some time to
spare.*



Gap Year

The Catholic Worker Farm



"I must say that the most valuable part of my experience here has been the encounters and relationships with people"

Why not join us for a year?

CONTACT US!

Scott Albrecht: 07983477819

Homepage:
www.thecatholicworkerfarm.org

Email:
thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk

Facebook: The Catholic Worker Farm

Twitter: @CW_Farm

**Would
 you like to...**

... develop your prayer life?

... live with the poor in the UK?

... be a live-in volunteer in a Christian community?

... work in a beautiful garden?

... learn DIY?

**MONTHLY STANDING ORDER FORM
FOR A COMMITTED GIVER**

Please fill in the form in BLOCK LETTERS and send to: The Catholic Worker Farm, Lynsters Farm, Old Uxbridge Rd., West Hyde, Herts, WD3 9XJ

MONTHLY STANDING ORDER FORM FOR A COMMITTED GIVER

Your Bank Information

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

Bank Address (in full)

.....

Your Account Number..... **Your Sort Code**

Your Account Name

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

Your Personal Information:

Name.....

Address.....

.....Post Code.....

Telephone.....Email

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

The sum of £

And in words

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 – Made payable to
THE CATHOLIC WORKER FARM***

“We have all known the long loneliness, and we have found that the answer is community.”

- Dorothy Day (Saint and Troublemaker)



WHO WE ARE



Scott Albrecht is 55. A Former Chaplain and Teacher, he was in the U.S. Military and is now in Veterans for Peace UK. He is a Third Order Franciscan and has a BA and an MA in Applied Theology. Scott is a Faith Based Peace Activist and has accompanied homeless men and women at various times over the past 25 years.

Birthe Albrecht is 52 and married to Scott. Birthe brings many skills to the farm. She was self employed in the service sector and a marketing manager abroad. She has worked in Ecuador with abandoned and trafficked animals. Birthe has a heart for both people and animals who have suffered and been treated unjustly. She recently discovered St. Francis and feels strongly that her goal is to embrace Franciscan values.



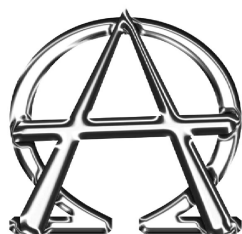
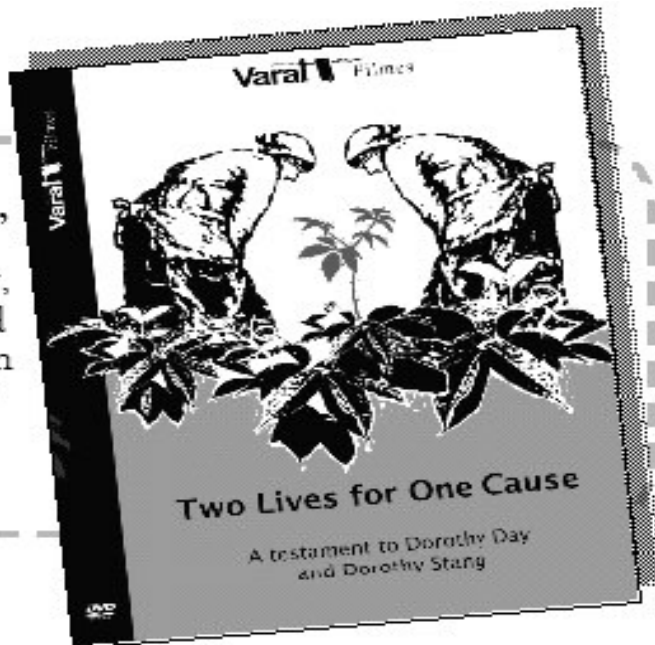
Victoria Le is 18 years old. She joined us through ICE, one of our German partner organisations. At the moment she is staying at Mary House with all the children which makes her very happy and grateful. In her free time Victoria enjoys reading, jogging and walking outside.

Johanna Braunreuther is 19 years old and from Dresden. She joined The Catholic Worker Farm in August 2017 and will help us for one year. She likes living in a community and being with the children at Mary House. In her free time Johanna enjoys reading, biking and playing the guitar.



Purchase the DVD
"Two Lives for One Cause"

A moving documentary on Dorothy Day,
co-founder of the Catholic Worker, and
Sr Dorothy Stang, activist in the Amazon
Forest. Directed by Tatiana Polastri. £7
Cost including P&P. Contact us at
thecatholicworkerfarm@yahoo.co.uk



EUROPEAN
CHRISTIAN ANARCHIST
COMMUNITY



EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN ANARCHIST CONFERENCE
JULY 20th - 22nd

Workshops, Roundtable Discussion, Bonfire, Camping

Please email, call or text to RSVP

Hosted by The Catholic Worker Farm

The theme for 2018 is "The War of Myths". There will be Workshops, Roundtable Discussions, time for reflection and socialising around the bonfire.

We can pick up people in small groups from Rickmansworth Underground Station. There is some bed space available and space to camp. Bring your own tent. We will provide the food, so be prepared to lend a hand cooking. The conference is free but donations in support of our community are welcome.

Arrivals at 12 noon on Friday the 20th, Departures 6pm on Sunday the 22nd.



The Catholic Worker Farm
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Hm:01923 777201 Mob:07983477819

www.thecatholicworkerfarm.org



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Or join our Facebook Group