

# The Word Today

Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word

Volume 1

January • February 2006

## Delegation in Commemoration of Ita, Maura, Jean, and Dorothy

### Dorothy

Sister Jean Durel, CCVI pg. 2

### A Call of Justice

Sr. Louise Delisi, CCVI...pg. 4

### Making Global Connections

Pati Garcia Semander.....pg. 6

### To Give One's Life

Pat Kerwin .....pg. 11

### RECAST: A Journey of Choices

Sr. Deenan Hubbard, CCVI Houston .....pg. 14

### Life After Incarnate Word Missionaries

Br. Dick Reseka, OCSC...pg. 16

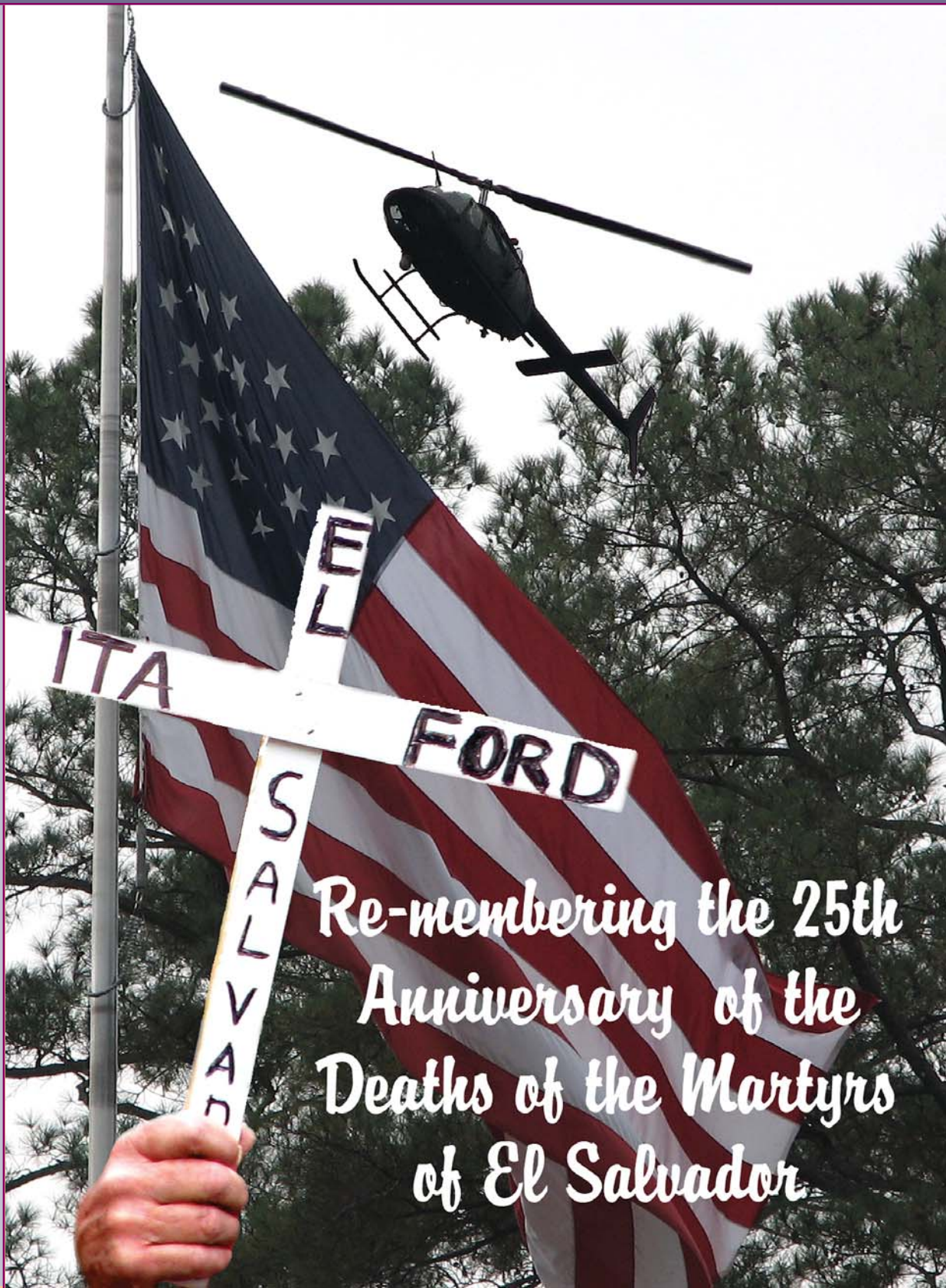
### Twenty Years of Building Better a Community

Pati Garcia Semander.....pg. 17

### A Road to a Life Uncommon

Pati Garcia Semander.....pg. 19

Cover: *The School of the Americas, Fort Benning, Georgia.* Digital Photograph by Pati Garcia Semander



Re-membering the 25th Anniversary of the Deaths of the Martyrs of El Salvador

# About Us

Sister Helena Monahan  
General Superior

Sister Feliciana Mejia  
General Councilor

Sr Maria de Lourdes Urrutia  
General Councilor

Sister Walter Maher  
General Councilor  
Editor

Esther Ng  
General Treasurer

Pati Garcia Semander  
Graphics Artist &  
Assistant Editor

Olga Rueda  
Sister María Luisa Vélez  
Translations

---

## Contact Us

4503 Broadway  
San Antonio, Texas 78209  
(210) 828-2224 (office)  
(210) 828-9741 (fax)  
[www.AmorMeus.org](http://www.AmorMeus.org)

---

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Congregation is to actualize the saving and healing love of the Incarnate Word by promoting human dignity. Moved by the Holy Spirit, the sisters examine the reality of their world and discern the needs of the church. Like Mary, they respond in faith to these needs. They follow the Incarnate Word, model of charity and obedience, and proclaim the mission of Him who assumed a human existence sharing in the life, sufferings and hopes of His people.

# Delegation in Commemoration

by Sister Jean Durel, CCVI

I recently had the privilege of participating in a delegation to El Salvador, sponsored by the SHARE Foundation, to commemorate the lives of four church women, Ita Ford, Maura Clark, Jean Donovan, and Dorothy Kazel. These four women raped and killed by members of the Salvadoran military on December 2, 1980, were the wake-up call for many of us in the U.S. to take notice of what was happening in Latin America. For me, it was the beginning of my involvement in solidarity work.

Although I have never lived in El Salvador, I did have the opportunity to visit on several occasions between 1987 and 1994 with delegations from the U.S. Over the years I heard many horrifying and heart-breaking stories. I visited a site in Salvador where bodies of people tortured and killed by death squads were thrown over the side of a cliff. And I knew that 75,000 people had been killed during the war.

But on this delegation I wasn't prepared for the impact that the memorial wall would have on me. This wall, dedicated in December, 2003, is called the "Monument to Memory and to Truth." It contains the names of 35,000 persons for whom there is documentation that they were killed or disappeared during the conflict. As the documentation for others is found, their names will be added to the wall.



Signing the banner at the site where the women's bodies were found.

A mural was added to the wall this year to tell the story of what happened to the disappeared and those assassinated. There is a native tradition, we were told, that says that you never die as long as someone remembers you. And that is the purpose of the wall — to remember each and every person killed or disappeared during the war.

I looked first for the name of Herbert Anaya from the Human Rights Office who was killed in 1987, three months after he met with our delegation. And then I looked for Ignacio Martin-Baro, S.J., whom I had also met on a delegation. And then I found each of the names of the four church women who have had such a profound effect on my life, as well as Oscar Romero and each of the Jesuits. Finally we were invited to choose at random the name of someone whom we would remember, whose story



# of Ita, Maura, Jean, and Dorothy

we would try to learn. And then we each placed a rose at the wall.

As I stood there, haunted by the names and trying to comprehend the enormity of the suffering represented by the wall. Jose Artiga, the Executive Director of SHARE, began to share his story with us. His name should have been on the wall. Along with four classmates, he had been targeted as a student leader and as one who worked with a local priest. On June 27, 1980, the death squads came for each of the five young men. Jose escaped death only because he had come into the city the night before in order to be on time the next morning for an exam at the University and was not home when the death squads arrived. The bodies of his friends were found the next day, assassinated and mutilated beyond recognition. It sent a powerful message to all.

On December 1, 1980, at a Maryknoll regional assembly, Ita Ford read a passage from one of Romero's final homilies: "The one who is committed to the poor must run the same fate as the poor, and in El Salvador we know what the fate of the poor signifies: to disappear, be tortured, to be held captive—and to be found dead." little did she know, that the next day Maura, Jean, Dorothy, and she would experience

the fate of the poor.

On December 2, 2005, the anniversary of their deaths, we visited the site where their bodies were found, where, as Bishop Rosa y Chavez expressed it, "the blood of our people has mixed with the blood of people of the U.S." We heard the testimonies of Salvadorans who knew them. We heard the testimonies of their U.S. sisters from other communities who had worked with them and who tended to their bodies in death. We heard how the Salvadoran people "applauded them out of the church," giving thanks for the lives of these women.

Dean Brackley, S.J., spoke to us at the UCA (the Jesuit University) about the importance of being in El Salvador as pilgrims, not problem solvers. He urged us to let our hearts be broken and then to go back home and continue the work for justice.

In the midst of the violence, Maura Clarke struggled with the question "Will I be faithful when the time comes?" And as I sit here in St. Louis, far from the terror and violence that she and so many others experienced. I ask myself "How can I,

in my everyday life, be faithful to the call to solidarity?" I don't have any easy answers, but as we stood at the memorial wall, Jose Artiga said to us, "Do justice until you feel a little uncomfortable. If you're still comfortable, you're not there yet." «»



Two sections of the Monument to Memory and Truth, El Salvador.

# A Call for Justice

by Sister Louise Delisi, CCVI

In October, when I read the call for volunteers to attend the nonviolent protest to close the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia, I responded with a timid email saying, "I *think* I *might* feel that I *may* be called to participate." I received a prompt reply saying, "Louise, we are so happy that you will be going to Fort Benning!" It was then that I realized there was no turning back! Having completed the experience, I am happy now to have received that little nudge to get moving.

To be present among so many people who are committed to bringing about justice and peace was a great privilege for me. Who were these people? They were the young, the very old, and all ages in between. They were boys and girls, men and women, groups of Sisters from various religious congregations, Priests, high-school students, college students, families, elderly couples, "Veterans for Non-Violence," etc. Some persons walked with canes, a few with walkers, a few were in wheel chairs and at least three were blind. I think most were Catholic but there were those of other Christian faiths as well. There were also Jews, Buddhists and Quakers. We were nineteen thousand people gathered from all parts of the United States and many parts of the world in an effort to call for an end to violence and to promote justice and human dignity for all!

The first in a series of peak experiences for me during the weekend was the Plenary Session during which there was a meaningful activity to recognize the presence of each and all who had come to take a stand for an end to violence. This activity affirmed the importance of each one's individual presence. It was also during this session that we heard very moving stories from two torture survivors and the story of one young woman who had crossed the line at Fort Benning, served time in prison and on parole.

The Saturday evening Mass (very well organized)

by the Jesuits would have been a sufficient reason to make the trip. As we waited for the three thousand to assemble, a powerpoint message was being shown. One issue presented was the dilemma: If the poor countries receive aid in the form of food from the United States, the local farmers are unable to sell their own produce to their people, i.e., they are unable to earn money for their labor and are thus unable to provide for themselves and their families; therefore, soon all become dependant on the aid. But the next day I read a poster which stated, "Humanitarian aid is never a crime." The situation is very complex! Visit [www.Oxfam.com](http://www.Oxfam.com) and [www.MakeTradeFair.com](http://www.MakeTradeFair.com) for more on this topic.



Sister Louise Delisi, CCVI at the Sunday morning funeral procession.

Just before Mass there was a roll call of the colleges and high schools which were present. Needless to say, as each School's name was called the students responded with loud cheers to acknowledge their

photos by Pati Garcia Semander

presence. All the students were wearing sweatshirts emblazoned with their school name and emblem. The energy in the tent was tangible! Mass was very solemn. The music was beautiful. The presider, Rev. John McGarry, S.J., California Province Provincial, gave a very meaningful homily calling us to live courageously, faithfully and joyfully.

The Sunday memorial service and solemn funeral procession helped us to remember and honor the lives of those who, while working for peace and justice, have suffered and died at the hands of graduates of the School of Assassins. Individual names were called out; not only familiar names such as the four U.S. church women and the six Jesuit priests, but also hundreds of others who have died in Guatemala, Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haiti, Iraq, and on and on and on.

The words to one of the songs we sang during the procession held special meaning for me:

*"No, no, it's not enough to pray.  
There's a lot of work to do  
before peace can come our way."*

By all means, continue to pray! But the work referred to in the song is the *action* each of us must take to let our leaders (President, Representatives, Senators, etc.) know that we will not tolerate injustice and violence. A big step in that direction would be to close the School of the Americas. The School has recently been renamed WHINSEC, that is, Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. The School is defined as "A combat training school for Latin American soldiers and is located in Fort Benning, GA." It is where soldiers are trained in tactics of violence and terror.

I want to express my deep appreciation to Sisters Martha Ann, Jean Durel, Michele O'Brien and all the members of our Peace and Justice Committee who work so diligently to bring about justice and peace for all. I am also grateful to Pati Semander

and all who supported me with their prayers in this meaningful experience!

"Lord, make me an instrument of your peace!" «»



Father Roy Bourgeois leads the Sunday morning funeral procession.

---

A way to bring about the closure of SOA/  
WHINSEC is to write letters to:

Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison  
961 Pickle Federal Bldg.  
300 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Austin, TX 78701

Senator John Cornyn  
600 Navarro  
Suite 210  
San Antonio, TX 78205

Congressman Lamar Smith  
2231 Rayburn House Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Charles Gonzalez  
327 Cannon House Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20515-4320

Ask them to support bill HR 1217 which calls for the close of the School of the Americas/  
WHINSEC. My letters are in the mail!

If these are not your representatives, addresses visit: <http://www.house.gov/> and <http://www.senate.gov/>.



# Making Global Connections

by Pati Garcia Semander

2004 and 2005 saw much bloodshed in the lands of my ancestors — the Texas-Mexico border. The Rio Grande Valley is the same idyllic territory of my childhood where I lived every summer in my grandmother's small house nestled between the communities of migrant workers and the produce houses. Every Wednesday, my grandmother would drive across the border to get her hair and nails done. She would give my brothers and I fifty cents each. We would canvas the mercados and cantinas exploring the places that seemed so different and yet so familiar to us. Today, the news refers to them as “drug wars” and they run from the Mexico border and snake up the Texas highways through San Antonio, Houston, and Dallas. During these past two years, Mexican police personnel of every rank have been assassinated. Even some of the Texas border towns find themselves having difficulty filling the positions of police chief. The U.S. Department of State has posted travel advisories for the border towns.

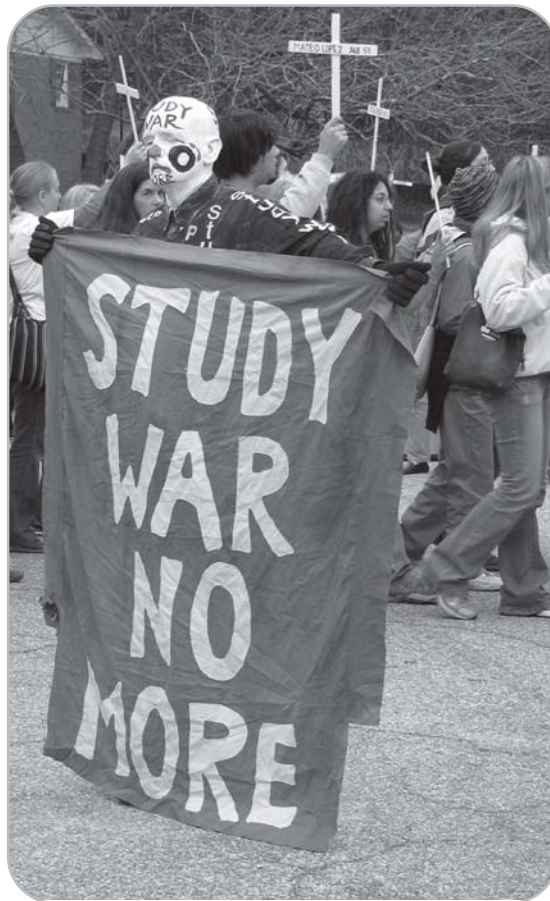
Allegedly, the two rival drug cartels have at their center of the turf war, two notorious drug Lords, Osiel Cardenas Guillen and Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman. Cardenas has been in jail since 2003 and sits at the helm of “Los Zetas,” a group composed of former elite Mexican military commandos who deserted their posts to take up arms as

mercenaries in the drug wars. Guzman's operation, referred to in the mainstream press as the “Sinaloa Cartel” is ostensibly the larger group, but there is no hard data to say whose group wields more force, or even how large each group really is.

According to [www.worldnetdaily.com](http://www.worldnetdaily.com), the Justice Department sent warnings to law enforcement agencies in May, 2005, confirming that “Los Zetas” are renegade commandos who have been trained at the School of the Americas/Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (SOA/WHINSEC).<sup>1</sup> According to World Net Daily, in an incident that took place November 20, 2005, a group of “Los Zetas,” armed with M-16 automatic rifles (provided by the United States), narrowly missed sparking an international incident by using a bulldozer to seize nearly 3,000 lbs. of captured marijuana from the clutches of stunned agents of the United States Border Patrol in Hudspeth County, Texas.<sup>2</sup> The mind easily conjures up scenarios that might have taken place had gun fire been exchanged.

Toward the end of November, on the heels of the marijuana re-seizure incident, Texas news stations carried an almost comical report citing concern about United States Border Patrol uniforms being made in Mexico pose a security threat. Their concern was that undocumented workers would attempt to use these uniforms as a way to gain illegal entrance into the United States.<sup>3</sup>

Also on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 19,000 people gathered at the gates of Fort Benning, Georgia to participate in the protest of the SOA/WHINSEC. Forty humanitarian activists also crossed the line onto federal property and were



arrested in a direct civil disobedience action. The military erected a third barrier to conceal the “Welcome to Fort Benning.” This barrier was an additional “welcome” to the nearly 20,000 people who pour money into the Columbus, Georgia economic system.

As a further welcome, the city leaders looked for ways to tow the cars of people attending the vigil and funeral procession on Sunday morning. On the same weekend, the City of Columbus, Georgia also celebrated its fourth annual alternative protest called, “God Bless Fort Benning Day.”<sup>4</sup> Although a much smaller crowd, this alternative celebration was complete with country and western entertainers and a motorcycle rally that proudly drove past the SOA protest wearing German WWII style helmets and raising their middle finger in response to the small gathering of students and women and men religious who stood showing the PEACE sign.

Okay, you ask, “So what do these three things have to do with one another?” Sister Helen Prejean during her address at St. Mary’s University said, “Living Spiritually is simply going underneath the surface and finding the connections.”<sup>5</sup> When you go underneath the surface, the common threads are the social and economic realities of SOA/WHINSEC. The practice of training Latin American soldiers in terroristic techniques has already turned around and has become a very real threat to the United States. There is little wonder why the federal government has recently become more concerned with the security of our southern border, and it has little to do with non-documented workers trying to eke out a meager existence with sub-standard wages. It is highly unlikely that undocumented workers will show up along the border wearing the uniforms of the United States Border Patrol.

The economic reality is that the SOA/WHINSEC is a business like any other business. According to Lesley Gill, an anthropologist who was allowed to study the School of the Americas, the city of Columbus has much to gain by Fort Benning hosting the school on this military post. The Latin

American soldiers who come to attend the school also bring their families. They attend the schools in Columbus, shop in their stores, and live in civilian housing off post.<sup>6</sup> Columbus is a small city; its major employers are the military, AFLAC and Georgia State University. In fact, John Amos, founder of AFLAC Insurance and his wife and brother-in-law, Elena and Sal Díaz-Versón Jr., were the single most instrumental forces behind bringing SOA/WHINSEC to Columbus, Georgia.<sup>7</sup> The first year’s operating budget of the SOA/WHINSEC was \$3.7 million.<sup>8</sup> In short, they count on the additional revenues from this school’s continued existence.

The paradoxical economic reality is the fact that the SOA protests have been taking place for fifteen years. Initially, the numbers of protestors were small, but last year’s attendance was 16,000 participants at Sunday’s event. On Saturday of this year, there was an attendance of 16,000 and Sunday’s total nearly hit the 20,000 mark. From a personal observation, Sister Louise and I stayed in a local hotel, ate in local restaurants, and shopped in local establishments during the two and half days we attended the SOAW events. The infrastructure required to host the events at the Iganation tent, the Convention Center and the Howard Johnson’s also required large expenses, so using rough calculations based on the premise that while some students spend less money, and older folks will on average spend more, I chose to use the average estimate of \$150 per day per person (see inset). Friday through Sunday translates to roughly \$6.7 million dollars brought to Columbus, Georgia, by the protestors.

Computation for Economic Gift		
	# of people	x \$150 per day
Friday	10,000.00	\$ 1,500,000.00
Saturday	16,000.00	\$ 2,400,000.00
Sunday	19,000.00	\$ 2,850,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 6,750,000.00</b>

Given the boost to their economic systems, one would think that the city of Columbus, Georgia would at least be more tolerant of the visitors. Major cities compete for conventions that typically bring only 200 to 500 people per venue. The cost to bring tourists to any city is rather high and the prize of tourist spending into the local economies is often valued above the needs and desires of local residents. Every year Columbus has the opportunity to exponentiate the number of tourists and they don't have to spend anything to market their beautiful little city.

This year a simultaneously held protest at Fort Huachuca, Arizona was an interesting parallel for me. Fort Huachuca is home to the U.S. Army Intelligence Center which is the origin of the torture manuals used in the training of Latin American soldiers.<sup>9</sup> But these are not the only two facilities that are responsible for training domestic and foreign soldiers in these tactics. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, is home to the U.S. Army command and Staff College; Fort Bragg, North Carolina is home to the U.S. Army JFK Special Warfare Center and School; and San Antonio, Texas is home to a major language school at Lackland Air Force Base and is the new home of the U.S. Army South, USARSO, that is the Major Army Command (MACOM) with Central and South America and the Caribbean as its Area of Responsibility. We should certainly entertain the idea of spreading the protests and the economic gifts out across all the military centers that are connected to any and all Latin American operations and concerns. If 19,000 people are willing to travel to Fort Benning, what support could be added by making protest sites more accessible?

The social realities are bit more complex but a lot more frightening. Since 2003, Fort Bragg and Fort Benning have documented an unusually high number of homicides and suicides perpetrated by army personnel. Fort Benning's 1-15 Battalion, which was engaged in some of Iraq's bloodiest battles, had five men arrested for separate homicides in November of 2003.<sup>10</sup> During May 2003, four wives were slain by their soldier husbands stationed

at Fort Benning. The military is trying to blame the increased violence on a malaria drug (Lariam) developed by the military stating that the drug causes increased aggression.<sup>11</sup> According to one Army publication, nine soldiers at Fort Benning committed suicide between 2001 and 2004.<sup>12</sup> In a six-week period during June and July, four soldiers at Fort Bragg allegedly killed their wives. Two of those soldiers then committed suicide and another soldier was allegedly murdered by his wife in an unprecedented string of events.<sup>13</sup> Suicide is not a product of increased aggression.

The idyllic border of my childhood in many ways no longer exists. The "drug wars" have escalated to a greater number of kidnappings and execution style murders along both sides of the entire United States Southern border. In response, some military veterans and ranchers have organized the Minuteman Project that consists of armed volunteers patrolling the border regions from California to Texas. According to the Washington Times, the presence of the Minuteman, has sparked the threat of retaliation from the Mara Salvatrucha, ("MS-13") gang who vowed to "teach a lesson to the Minutemen."<sup>14</sup> This group has rained a different kind of terror along the border. While violent, the "MS-13" is on par with the "street and prison gangs" of the United States and does not have members who were formally trained by the SOA/WHINSEC. "Los Zetas" is a threat of much greater proportions when the implications of violent renegades who were trained by the United States military at Fort Benning and are armed with U.S. military weaponry are considered.

The outpouring of additional violence that has grown from this "culture of war" is pretty clear, and it has come to our backyard. It has manifested in the very real threat of international implications between Mexico and the United States caused by SOA/WHINSEC trained drug cartels. And it has created ghastly stories of personal and domestic violence due to the apparent inability of soldiers to reconcile their training with the morals and values of a civil society.

It is clearly time to bring the protest home. We can



longer be satisfied that there are other people out there representing us. Each and everyone one of us must rally in some visible presence at every opportunity. We can begin by writing or calling our Senate and Congress to let them know how outrageous it is to think that this culture of war was ever acceptable in the first place, but that we can no longer pretend that it will not personally affect us. This year your voice can make a real difference. HR 1217, "The Latin America Military Training Review Act of 2005," had 78 bi-partisan introductory co-sponsors, but because of determined efforts during the February Lobby Day and National Call-in Day, the bill currently has 122 bi-partisan co-sponsors. There is a momentum building that we can truly capitalize on. Next, we can consider casting a wider net for vigil locations and host more simultaneous vigils across the United States. Finally, we can talk to everyone about the connections, that without a doubt proves SOA/WHINSEC is no longer a problem on foreign soil. It is in our backyard and it affects each and every one of us. «»



ABOVE: LCWR members from left to right: Sisters Kathleen McCabe, OSF, Virginia Spiegel, OSF, and Marie Lucey, OSF. BELOW: A collaborative of Dominican Sisters participates in Sunday's vigil.



**(Endnotes)**

- 1 [http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE\\_ID=44486](http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=44486), Mexican Commandos New Threat on Border: U.S. Trained Elite Force Now Works Drug Cartel, May 27, 2005, 1:00 a.m. eastern.
- 2 [http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE\\_ID=47497](http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=47497), World Net Daily, November 20, 2005, 1:a.m. Eastern.
- 3 [http://www.news8austin.com/content/your\\_news/default.asp?ArID=150595](http://www.news8austin.com/content/your_news/default.asp?ArID=150595), News 8 Austin, Officials wary of border uniforms made in Mexico, 11/27/2005 1:37 PM, By: Associated Press
- 4 <http://www.wtvm.com/Global/story.asp?S=4143384>, Thousands Gather For God Bless Fort Benning Day, WPTX FOX 54, Amanda Iler.
- 5 Journey of Hope address, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas, October 24, 2005.
- 6 Gill, Lesley, *The School of the Americas*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2004.
- 7 Gill, Lesley, *The School of the Americas*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2004.
- 8 Gill, Lesley, *The School of the Americas*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2004.
- 9 Gill, Lesley, *The School of the Americas*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2004.

- 10 <http://www.duckdaotsu.org/desertion.html>, excerpted from <http://www.ledger-enquirer/news/7257910.htm>, Ledger-Enquirer, Columbus, Georgia, S. Thorpe Harper, Staff Writer.
- 11 [http://www.aaconsult.com/lariam/lariam\\_news\\_57.html](http://www.aaconsult.com/lariam/lariam_news_57.html)
- 12 [http://www.tradoc.army.mil/pao/Web\\_specials/H\\_and\\_PWB/030204.asp](http://www.tradoc.army.mil/pao/Web_specials/H_and_PWB/030204.asp), TRADOC News Services, Spc. Nikki St. Amant, The Bayonet.
- 13 [http://www.dcmilitary.com/army/pentagram/7\\_45/national\\_news/20305-1.html](http://www.dcmilitary.com/army/pentagram/7_45/national_news/20305-1.html), November 15, 2002, Fort Bragg releases homicide study, by Spc. Kyle J. Cosner, Army News Service.
- 14 <http://www.washtimes.com/national/20050328-125306-7868r.htm>, Washington Times, Jerry Seper, March 28, 2005.

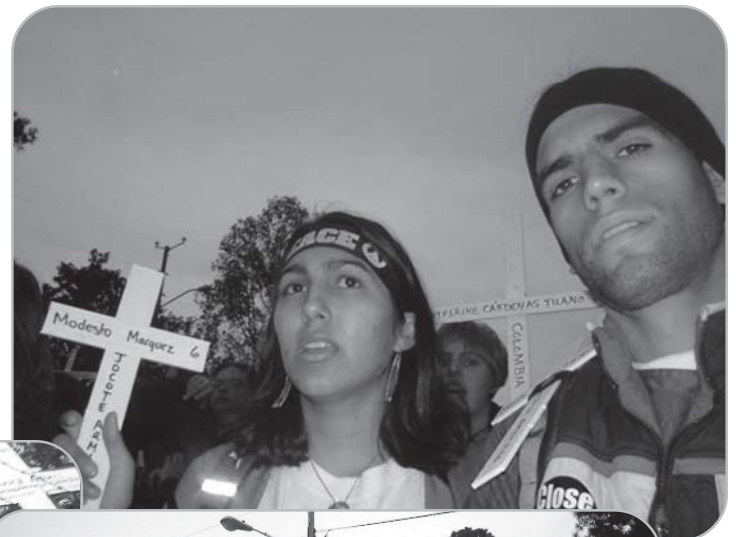


LEFT: Veterans for Peace stand in solidarity with the SOA Watch vigil. BELOW: Presente! and raised crosses in response to the litany of names called out during Sunday's vigil. Photos by Pati Garcia Semander.



RIGHT: Johanna Anthony and Balta Perral marching during Sunday's vigil. University of the Incarnate Word students and members of Amnesty International not present in photo are: Joan Braune, Roser Alvarez, Beth Buchek, Elisa Avila, Monique Mendez, and Oscar Perez. Photo provided by Joan Braune.

BELOW: Crosses and effigies left on the barricade fence at the gates of Fort Benning. Photo by Elisa Avila.



RIGHT: Puppitistas denounce torture. Photo by Elisa Avila.



# To Give One's Life

by Pat Kerwin

As she concludes *Selling All*, a work on Catholic religious life, Sr. Sandra Schneiders poses a fundamental question: "What is it all about?" Her answer, "deceptively simple but absolutely fundamental" is *love*. "Religious Life is about *whom* we are committed to and *how* we live those commitments. Without doubt, the ecclesial and cultural context, which profoundly affects our understanding of ourselves, others, our world, and God, shapes and qualifies the commitments we undertake. We can only live and love in our own time and place. But in the final analysis every human life, no matter in what age or culture it is lived, is ultimately determined by what one most deeply desires and to whom or what one gives one's life, one's very self. Withholding that self-gift, trying to save our life, is surely in the end to lose it (cf. Mk. 8:35 and Jn.12:24). The only real question is not whether to "sell all," to give ourselves in love, but for whom or for what will we choose to exchange our one and only life." (405-406)

We are now over forty years since the Second Vatican Council. In ways that no one could have imagined, that Spirit-led gathering generated new life and vigor in the Church. At the same time, it called for a reexamination and revision in some familiar ways of being Church. Certainly, religious life has both profited and been challenged in the ensuing years. Many writers have reflected on the changes that continue to unfold in the years since the Council and the work that religious congregations have undertaken in the task of refounding. Bernard Lee, S.M., was a recent presenter in the *Spirit and Life* series for the two congregations of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word; I would like to share some insights from his presentation and his popular work, *The Beating of Great Wings: A Worldly Spirituality for Active, Apostolic Communities*.

*Being broken* is an experience few of us willingly pursue, yet it is fundamental to the human

experience. Both our faith and life teach us the truth of the parable, "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains but a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it bears abundant fruit." (Jn. 12:24) The work of refounding religious congregations is surely a process of rebuilding / reinventing rooted in the deep story of the congregation's life, but called forth by a new vision based on the needs of the world today. In essence, there is only one Christian vocation: to live our baptism life—to continue the mission of Jesus which is to proclaim and enact the reign of God. Each baptized Christian has been incorporated into that mission, but we are called to live it out in various ways through different lifestyles and different roles and ministries in the Church.

Fr. Lee speaks of the essential challenge for the whole Church: to rebuild Christian Catholic life with Word and Eucharist at the absolute *center*. Religious communities, he maintains, have an important role in witnessing, leading, and mediating this renewal for the Church. While all of us are called to community life—being created in the image of God—religious communities can create models that are functional and attractive to persons who desire a unique way of modeling the reign of God through life in a *celibate-community-in-mission*.

Historically, religious congregations arise in response to a critical unmet human need. Founders and their followers seemingly know how to do something the Church should be doing, but isn't; in that way they are able to teach and model for the entire church a way of doing the work of the reign of God. In reflecting on the early foundation and the growth in religious congregations, Lee, Sandra Schneiders, and others draw on the concepts of *deep story* and *charism*—related, but not identical, elements of community life.

The *deep story* of a congregation is something that cannot easily be told or explained. One can find clues to the deep story in the documents, rules and

*continued next page*



constitutions, in the ways a community celebrates, and in its stories of persons and events that have left an indelible mark on the community's history. It is a sort of "inner heritage" embodied in each member through history, myths, symbols, events, psychology and spirituality, that shapes the collective consciousness of the group. No one can articulate the deep story satisfactorily; it simply permeates the culture of the community and calls the community to act and respond in ways consistent with the story.

When the community *acts* from its deep story, the spirit and grace of God operative in the group becomes apparent and we recognize and experience *charism*. Charism is created anew whenever a community's deep story speaks to unmet critical human need and thereby brings about transformation of human history. According to Lee, charism cannot be "recovered" from another age or period of history; it can only be *reinvented* when a group of people with powerful hopes and longings for a new world vision are able to articulate that vision, convert the deep longing into concrete goals and plans of action, and draw others into this work for the life of the world. Such reinventing of charism necessarily requires a deep dialogue between faith and world. It is this dialogue that inspires not only women and men religious, but all people of faith who take their baptism seriously, to strive to live the universal call to holiness articulated at Vatican II.

Today, perhaps more than ever, religious congregations and the laity work collaboratively to enact the reign of God through a multiplicity of ministries and institutes. Attentive to the power of the Incarnation, we recognize that God is *in the world* and we experience God's presence and action through our bodies in the world. The incarnation is manifest in the flesh of human history and we come to know the transcendent God through God's revelation in human history and experience. But coming to this knowledge and making it the very center of our Christian life call for deep reflection on the Word and living from the table of Eucharist. Fr. Lee insists that community sharing, reflection, and action rooted in the Word of God is integral for enacting the reign of God in our world.

Sacred scripture has a privileged place in revealing God's will for the world and evoking human response. The Word is both *informative* and *performative*—showing the way and precipitating human action. When the word is simply "informative" we can be caught up in faith-sharing or support groups that look toward our individual spiritual life and needs; when we enact the Word of God in our lived experience, it becomes "performative." Faith-acting, not simply faith-sharing, is central to transformation. What distinguishes a Christian community from other groups is that it is both *gathered* and *sent*; we cannot be truly Christian unless we are *sent* to be the living Word we have heard and to be the body broken and given for others.

The concept of the Body—broken and given—is the second foundational principle from which Bernard Lee develops his premise for the renewal of religious life. He encourages communities to take seriously the Council's imperative that *full, conscious, active participation* in the liturgy, especially, the Eucharist, expresses the true nature of who we are as Church. We gather for Eucharist as community—Christ's Body truly present—that we might offer ourselves with Christ and be transformed more fully into who we already are—The Body of Christ. We become what we receive. We are fed at the table of Eucharist that we might become life-giving bread and saving cup for others—that we might bear Christ's presence in our own persons to a hungry world. Understanding the true nature of this sacrificial meal of taking, blessing, breaking and giving impels us to be poured out in mission. It is not an individual, private, or pious practice that we engage in when we gather for Eucharist; it is the most central action of our life together in Christ. Fr. Lee maintains that "because communities of religious are interactive communities before, during and after [the liturgy] they have a unique opportunity to carry the transformative dimension into action in the world. (p. 75)

Prophetic witness in the world is the work of all disciples, but *Vita Consecrata* speaks of the distinctive

way it is embodied in consecrated religious:

“The consecrated life has the prophetic task of *recalling and serving the divine plan for humanity*, as it is announced in Scripture and as it emerges from an attentive reading of the signs of God’s providential action in history... To carry out this service appropriately, consecrated person must have a profound experience of God and be aware of the challenges of their time, understanding the profound theological meaning of these challenges through a discernment made with the help of the Spirit... [God] calls consecrated men and women to present new answers to the new problems of today’s world.” [VC, 73]

This challenge to prophetic witness seems even more daunting if reserved to religious congregations alone — given the diminishing numbers in many places. However, we realize that there are new and creative ways for continuing to live the deep story and reinvent charism in every age. Many institutions and ministries once maintained primarily by members of religious congregations are enjoying the blessings of religious partnering with laity as associates and in roles of sponsorship. In that way the congregations’ deep story becomes embedded in lay communities where it may be enacted by future generations.

Bernard Lee quotes the work of Patricia Wittberg in naming two significant obstacles to embracing the prophetic role in response to the “sharpest anguish” of society:

- 1) We are paralyzed by our current responsibilities; there is fear in risking the multiple good works that are being accomplished by a congregation or institution for the sake of responding to critical, unmet human needs.
- 2) We want the entire congregation to move together. Unfortunately, says Fr. Lee, this won’t happen. “Developing a new vision with sufficient strength to refund will inevitably leave someone behind.” (92) If it works, many will come along.

In the center of the emblem of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word is a heart—the heart of Jesus—with the words, *Amor Meus*—my love. Heart is a profound concept in history and anthropology:

“Heart is where what I ultimately stand for resides, and is consequentially where *who* I am is defined.... Heart is not emotion in the more ordinary sense of the word, though that is included. Heart refers to the valuational structure whence flow the loves and hates that define me. It is not the fluctuating emotions of the hour that yield my character, but the abiding sense of where preciousness lies for me.” (Lee, 174)

The heart—the love of Jesus—made visible in the Incarnation and continuously revealed in the lives of Sisters, Associates, Co-Ministers, and the communities served by CCVI is embedded in the deep story, made visible as charism, and continually calls for prophetic witness today. Let the Word of God, rich as it is, dwell in us; let the Eucharist we share transform us that we may know the great joy in selling all and giving one’s life. «»

#### Endnotes:

- Lee, Bernard J., *The Beating of Great Wings*, Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2004.  
 Schneiders, Sandra M., *Selling All*, New York: Paulist Press, 2001.




---

You can read past issues of *THE WORD TODAY* on our website by visiting: <http://www.amormeus.org/newsletters.html>

---

# RECAST: A Journey of Choices

by Sister Deenan Hubbard, CCVI, Houston

When we wake up in the morning, the choices we make for that day can be trivial— what to wear, what to eat, what route to drive; or, they can be life changing. The trick is to distinguish one from the other and make the right one at the right time.

As you start your day, ask yourself this question, “Will today be the day I make the choice to reshape my image, get people to know me for who I am, and encourage them to join me in service to God and others?”

When you’re ready to answer “Yes!” then you’re ready to start not just a new day, *but a new life and a new Journey of Choices.*

Go into all the whole world and preach the Good News to all creation. Mark. 16:15

Eight years ago, a group of 41 South Texas religious congregations of Sisters, Brothers, and Priests embarked upon their own journey of choices: a trip up the information superhighway in search of updated ways to reach out and share who they are with others. That partnership gave birth to RECAST, Religious Communities Alive in South Texas, a think-tank self-charged with the goals of enhancing the image of religious life and reaching new audiences to encourage pursuit of vocations.

“After Jesus was crucified, the disciples hid in fear in the upper room. Can you imagine if they had stayed there, nourishing their faith, but not spreading it out to others? They had to ‘get out of their comfort zone’ and get out of that room. We in religious life had to do the same thing,” said Sister Walter Maher, CCVI, co-Chair of the RECAST Executive Committee.

“It wasn’t the easiest choice we ever made. Comfort zones are familiar and safe. But, we needed to get

people thinking about their mission in life, to discern how they were being called to serve others whether it was as a member of a religious community or some other form of commitment. Our biggest milestone was when we agreed to come together as a group to form RECAST,” Sister Walter continued.



Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. Matthew, 14:19

The message they had to communicate to millions of people was big, and it didn’t seem there would be enough money to get the word out. But, through donations of time, talent, and treasure from member congregations and grants from the Kenedy Foundation, the group launched an “image” campaign to change outdated public perceptions of people in religious life.

The first step was research, and though the results were disheartening, the focus was clear. They had to *recast* public opinion:

1. The good news of the research was that almost half of the general population (over 70% of Catholics) felt that sisters, brothers and priests were extremely important to society.
2. The not so good news was that the general public did not have a “top of mind” awareness of who religious were. The most frequent responses for each of the types of congregations were: “Family” was the most frequently mentioned (22%) word for Brothers. “Church leader” (20%) for Priests. “Don’t know” (13%) for Sisters.
3. They have an image of being very serious (51%); extremely caring (60%); extremely nice (42%); and lead a lonely or somewhat lonely life (77%).

*continued on next page*





*“Not always shall the poor be ignored,  
nor the hope of the oppressed forever  
lost.” Psalms 9:18*

4. 36% of respondents (45% of Catholics) felt Religious life was exciting.
5. 51% (62% of Catholics) believed people in Religious life were very involved in community life.
6. 48% (63% of Catholics) said people in religious life had a realistic view of life today.

With the results of this survey, RECAST members had many choices facing them and they needed to get moving...out of their comfort zones and into the world of marketing.

What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs. Luke, 12:3

The first component of their plan, the website [www.ReachOutReachin.org](http://www.ReachOutReachin.org), is now more than a year old. The site features stories about individuals from different congregations and how they are living their lives in the community. These stories

help to reshape the stereotypes of people in religious life. In addition, the site seeks to help visitors redefine their own mission in life. There is also a section for community service opportunities.

A press release to various Catholic publications helped launch the site. Since then, a small but steady stream of visitors has come to the site.

In June, 2004, 500 postcards were mailed to churches in Texas and Louisiana. Again a surge of interest came with about 200 unique visitors logging on to the site. Among the visitors are people seeking sisters with whom they have lost contact and community service organizations requesting that their opportunities be included on the site.

In July 2004, RECAST sent postcards to other congregations telling them about the initiative and asking for their input.

In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power. Acts, 19:20

As RECAST continues to staff informational displays at conferences and expositions across the region, the Executive Committee is hard at work launching the next phase in its effort to spread the word. In collaboration with Special Audience Marketing of Austin, Texas, materials for billboards, and radio, and television ads have been created and the purchase of space and materials is complete. These creative billboards, bearing contemporary yet contemplative messages, will grace freeways and roadsides in several key Texas cities.

“But the very best resource we have is ourselves. We are but a small group of sisters, brothers, and priests who are working to share the news about the Website and the RECAST initiative, but it is going to take a commitment by all of us to successfully recast our image.” said Sister Walter.

If you would like more information about RECAST or would like to be included in it, please go to the website [www.ReachOutReachIn.org](http://www.ReachOutReachIn.org) and send in an e-mail. «»

# Life After Incarnate Word Missionaries

by Br. Dick Reseska, OCSC, Our Lady of Guadalupe Abbey

In May it will be ten years since I returned from my three year adventure as an Incarnate Word Missionary (CCVI-VIM then), first in Peru, then in Mexico. Two years later I found myself ending another volunteer stint of ten months at a shelter for Hispanic migrant workers run by the Benedictine sisters of Mt. Angel, Oregon. Now I'm preparing to make solemn profession of the vows of stability, fidelity to monastic life and obedience at the Cistercian (Trappist) Abbey of Our Lady of Guadalupe on the other side of the Willamette Valley. Thanks to Our Lord's compassionate mercy I will do that on the solemnity of St. Joseph, March 19 (2003), at an age of just short of 70 years, and with the probably grudging and somewhat puzzled support of my four sons and one daughter. So how is it that a father – and grandfather – winds up as a monk? As I've recounted the story many times to inquiring retreat participants at our guesthouse during my Tuesday evening duty hours, here it is in a nutshell:

After the multiple traumas of lost teaching jobs, separation from family, divorce and annulment, for twelve years I was unable to function at a level higher than common factory work. Then, after another period of unemployment, there was the healing experience of community, living and working with the mentally ill in the Berkshires of Massachusetts. Five years later I felt the call to mission, whether to satisfy a thirst for adventure or to witness to the liberating power of the Lord with the poor in Latin America, is now irrelevant. And so, Sr. Yolanda sent me to the desert coast of Peru. There my most satisfying project began with the outbreak of a cholera epidemic in Chimbote, the first such occurrence in Latin America in many decades. So I went tramping from village to village with my government posters putting them up and lecturing "campesinos" on the dangers and the preventive measures they must take. That, however, lasted no more than a month and I again found myself looking for a suitable niche, something more useful

than simply an errand boy for Sr. Annie. Finally after less than a year the Maoist terrorist group, Sendero Luminoso, killed three priests and seriously wounded a fourth in the diocese, the last one in an adjoining parish. So, fearing for my safety, the sisters thought I should leave. I was "evacuated" (I love using that term!), took a trip to the "altiplano" and into Bolivia, and back to Texas. After waiting more than a month I took up residence in the rectory of Asunción parish in Temixco, 10 kms. south of Cuernavaca, Mexico. There I accompanied bible reflection groups, put out a monthly parish bulletin and made several banners for use in social justice marches, including the raucous, jam-packed funeral Mass of the prophetic "red bishop" of Cuernavaca for 30 years, Don Sergio Méndez Arceo.

The harassing chant, "*Queremos obispos al lado de los pobres*" (we want bishops at the side of the poor), — *queremos obispos.....*, almost turned the eucharistic liturgy into a political rally. Not right, but indicative of the chasm between the comfortable, complacent and conservative rich and the cry of the poor seeking justice.

Upon returning to the States and a bout of "reverse culture shock", I went back to the Berkshires and psychiatric rehab work, but was soon feeling out of place and could think of no other option but to return to mission. I joined the Volunteer Missionary Movement in Milwaukee and while awaiting placement continued west to help the sisters in Oregon. Having made a good number of retreats at the Trappist Abbey in Spencer, MA, I knew there was a monastery over in Lafayette, and eventually made it over here for a visit, only to discover that the monks offer a month-long live-in Monastic Life Retreat experience for which I enthusiastically applied. It was during that April 1995 retreat that I got work from VMM that more waiting would be required (I suspect my age was causing difficulties with people in Central America). I presented my case to the newly-elected abbot, Fr. Peter and he

suggested that I could remain at the abbey as a “long-term resident”, work in the guesthouse (reception) – and he said, “Who knows, Dick, you might want to spend the rest of your life here” – and that was all I needed!

Now, as a contemplative, I can pray for my grown children that they seek Christ first rather than “success”, I can pray for lay missionaries during a time when it must be difficult to be an American in the third world, and since I can’t demonstrate in Washington for peace in the Middle East I can pray that we, the American people, learn to see ourselves as others see us and then perhaps we will abandon our arrogant, self-righteous determination to “rid the world of evil” and focus on the evil within ourselves, – something that comes more easily within the silence of a monastic community. And I can pray that the Church in Latin America may never abandon its “preferential option for the poor”.

“The lot marked out for me is my delight: welcome indeed the heritage that falls to me!”— Ps 15 (16)

*This article was written by a former IWM, Dick Reseska in March of 2003. Due to circumstances it was never published. «»*

---

---

## Visitation House: Twenty Years of Building a Better Community

by Pati Garcia Semander

Sitting in the dining room of the two-story Victorian mansion built in 1910, Sister Yolanda Tarango, CCVI recalled how she and Sister Neomi Hayes, CCVI originally envisioned Visitation House twenty years ago.

I asked Sister Yolanda to tell me what the beginning spark was that still fans in the passion of the service of Visitation House today. Sister Yolanda said, “The original stimulus was the call for affirming the preferential option for the poor that was a result of

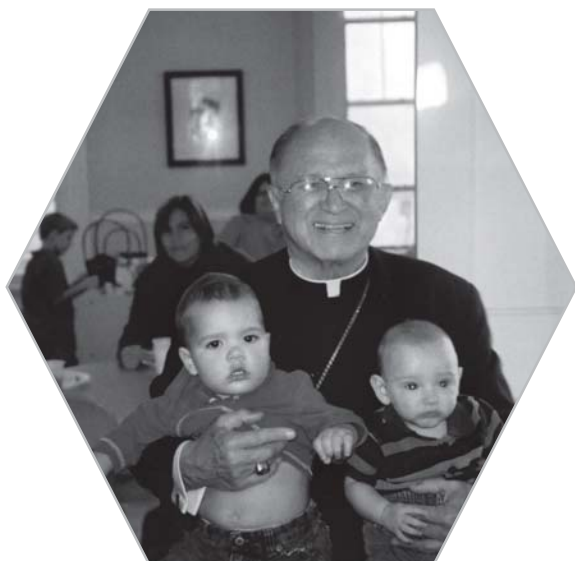
the Congregation’s Chapter in 1984. The Congregation’s challenge was to look and see the poor in our midst.” Sister Neomi was just completing her service on the General Council and Sister Yolanda had completed her service at the Mexican American Cultural Center. They began volunteering at various agencies in San Antonio in order to see what services were already being delivered and where a gap might exist that would match their desire to fulfill the challenge from the 1984 Chapter.

It did not take these two visionary Sisters long to see that there were a significant number of homeless women with children that for various reasons would not go the local shelters. This need aligned with their larger goal, which was to provide a place in San Antonio where the central concern was serving the city’s economically poor women and their children. The early mission of Visitation House was to be an organization that provides hospitality, advocacy, education and research, and ultimately breaks the cycle of poverty and homelessness. Visitation House has evolved from a facility that provided temporary shelter to a two-year transitional housing program that places a strong emphasis on education. All of the women who complete the program leave with an Associate Degree or a marketable skills certificate that will help them to find work and support their families. Still, Visitation House is much more than that. Sister Yolanda stated, “We really try not to operate as a social service agency but as a community that is built upon mutual learning that models the relationship between Mary



*continued on next page*





Archbishop Patrick Flores enjoys the festivities at Visitation House.

and Elizabeth in Luke’s gospel. The full purpose is to not simply provide services, but also to learn from the women who come into the program, and to recognize the presence of God in each other.”

When asked how success is measured in this extraordinary program, Sister Yolanda explained, “We do not only ask what have the women learned as a result of being at Visitation House, but we must ask ourselves, how are we different as a result of living with and working in community with the women and their children. We want to understand how our learning and growing in tandem has helped to strengthen the families and build a community that goes beyond the stereotypical definition of community. This community is characterized by mutuality of relationship — where both program participants and staff experience mutual learning and personal transformation.”

Sister Cindy Stacy, CCVI, a Licensed Master Social Worker, began volunteering at Visitation House in 1987. After a couple of years she decided to join the order and moved to St. Louis, Missouri for novitiate. She returned to work at with Visitation House in 1998, as a case manager. Sisters Yolanda and Cindy live in permanent residence with the families and are an integral part of the daily community at Visitation House.

The focus is not only on the mothers. From the beginning, there has been commitment and belief that the children are hope for the future and the motivation for change. The program provides a safe and stable



Sisters Yolanda Tarango and Cindy Stacy, CCVI.

environment for the children to live, play, learn, and flourish. A permanent part-time tutor was added last year to work with the school-aged children in a one-on-one environment, ensuring their educational success. This coming year heralds the addition of a *Neighborhood Women’s Education Center*, located one block from Visitation House and will provide assistance for adult education, computer skills, and English classes for neighborhood women.



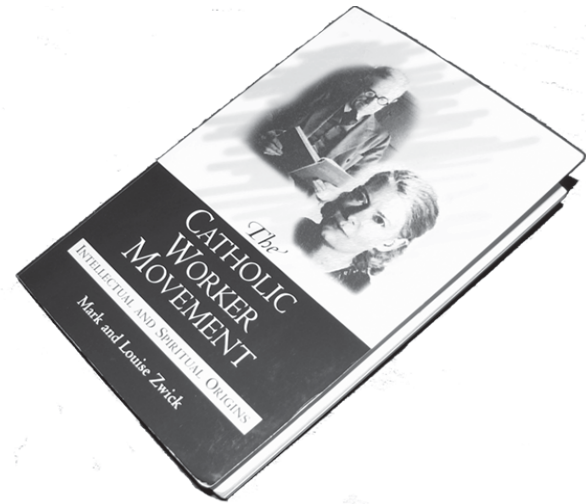
While many of the women began by completing their GED, this community has seen many of the women successfully complete Associate’s and Bachelor’s degrees. In addition, many of the children have gone forward to complete their education as well because of the stable community and positive role models their mothers have become to them.«»

# A Road to Living a Life Uncommon

by Pati Garcia Semander

My major is sociology, hopefully with a minor in anthropology. I found that in the many of my classes in sociology, anthropology, humanities, and psychology, a commonly taught item in the state-supported institutions is that a stratified, hierarchal society is natural and inevitable. In truth, stratification began with the birth of agricultural societies approximately 10,000 years ago. The oldest known Homo sapiens were found to have lived 195,000 years ago in Herto, Ethiopia.<sup>1</sup> Beginning in 6,000 BC, the nature of European culture changed dramatically. The technology of agriculture changed societies and during the fifth millennium became the norm in Europe. According to Richard Hines, Washington State University, from this point forward, the characteristics of Europe were fragmenting in diverse cultures. Before the introduction of the new farming immigrants, European culture was believed to be relatively homogenous. Starting around the fifth millennium BC, cultures became more localized.<sup>2</sup> Most all of the hunter-gatherer cultures disappeared after Colonial contact from European cultures.<sup>3</sup> While stratified, hierarchal societies appear to be the dominate world culture, I do not agree that it is a "law of nature" that cannot be changed.

One primary characteristic of hunter-gatherer societies is that they are non-hierarchal and have no permanent leadership. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and even today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there are many examples of vibrant non-hierarchal subcultures, or forms of community that do not fit the classic model of agriculturists. Some are non-faith based, such as the Bioneer movement, now called The Collective Heritage Institute, founded by Kenny Ausubel in 1990. Bioneers was conceived to conduct educational and economic development programs in the conservation of biological and cultural diversity, traditional farming practices, and environmental restoration.<sup>4</sup> A faith based example is Santuario Sisterfarm. This is a nonprofit organization founded in 2002 by Latina women



and Dominican Sisters. Located in the Hill Country of south-central Texas and rooted in the rich multicultural legacy of the Borderlands, Santuario Sisterfarm is dedicated to inspiring the work of transforming human relationships with Earth and among ourselves, from dominance to co-creative partnerships.<sup>5</sup> Organizations like these are springing up all over the United States. The common thread to the non-faith based and the faith based endeavors, like the two aforementioned, is Eco-Spirituality, and is defined as a spiritual view on, and context for, our relationship with the Universe and the Earth that is in balance with the needs of our human existence.

I have been in a working relationship with the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word and other Catholic Congregations for approximately ten years. *In that time, I have concluded that religious congregations of the Catholic faith are actually a concrete example of a true non-hierarchal model: their leadership rises up for a specific period and then flows back into the general community once the term of service is complete.* Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin provide a slightly different model that, while it does require a deep commitment to live a *life uncommon*, does not ask one to become a cloistered or vowed religious. As the role of the layperson increases in Catholic communities, acknowledging and

*continued on next page*

following this type of model becomes increasingly important. Dorothy Day's favorite quote from St. Catherine of Siena exemplifies this point, "All the way to heaven is the way because Jesus said, *I am the way.*" The communities that one creates can be more telling than the mission statement a group of individuals might choose. In the February 1940 issue of the *Catholic Worker*, Dorothy Day said, "Together with the Works of Mercy, feeding, clothing and sheltering our brothers, we must indoctrinate. We must "give reason for the faith that is in us." Otherwise we are scattered members of the Body of Christ, we are not "all members one of another." Otherwise, our religion is an opiate, for ourselves alone, for our comfort or for our individual safety or indifferent custom. We cannot live alone. We cannot go to Heaven alone. Otherwise, as Péguy said, God will say to us, "Where are the others?"<sup>6</sup>

Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin lived the model they believed was the path to the kingdom of God. They did not simply produce a statement of what they thought living in Christian community would be like, they were committed to the notion of not showing up on heaven's doorstep alone. This understanding sprang from the gospel based teachings of Dom Virgil Michel, OSB, philosopher, theologian, liturgist, publisher, and social ethicist of the Order of St. Benedict. "It was the understanding of the church as a living organism with Christ as the head and the Holy Spirit as the soul, as the vine and the branches who must bring forth the spiritual energies of Christ."<sup>7</sup> This stated that members of a community had responsibility for each other. The prayers and actions of one affect everyone else in the community. Dorothy Day believed that the liturgical movement had to be embedded in the social justice movement and that you could not fulfill the requirements of liturgy without the establishments of social justice in all aspects of life.

Dorothy and Peter argued that this central belief was not antithetical to the quest for individual freedom as sought by the industrial society of the United States. Their contention was based upon

idea that it is, in fact, "more freeing than following the masses in a blind obedience to the commands of their environment and social relations, where even the more rugged individualist believed that had to obey fashions and buy the products society insists are currently necessary."<sup>8</sup>

Although the books written about Dorothy Day and the *Catholic Worker* movement are numerous, the book, *The Catholic Worker Movement*, by Mark and Louise Zwick takes the reader much deeper into the central ideologies and philosophies that helped Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin to shape the *Catholic Worker* movement into the organization that is still functioning today as it was originally envisioned in 1932. This replicable model of a non-stratified subculture is one that can be utilized in any type of community that wishes to re-vision itself into a community that not only exemplifies the gospels of Jesus and is inclusive of everyone, but brings humankind back into its original form of community that existed before Colonialism. It is a road to living a *life uncommon*.

*The Catholic Worker Movement*, is published Paulist Press and is widely available. «»

---

#### (Endnotes)

1 Homo sapiens, Frank Brown, professor of geology and geophysics, dean of the College of Mines and Earth Sciences, University of Utah [http://www.eurekaalert.org/pub\\_releases/2005-02/uou-toh021105.php](http://www.eurekaalert.org/pub_releases/2005-02/uou-toh021105.php), 17 December 2005.

2 Richard Hines, <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/MA/PEOPLES.HTM>, 17 December 2005

3 Hunter-gatherer societies, From Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hunter-gatherer>, 17 December 2005.

4 The Collective Heritage Institute, <http://www.bioneers.org/>, 17 December 2005.

5 Santuario Sisterfarm, <http://www.sisterfarm.org/home2.html>, 17 December 2005

6 *The Catholic Worker Movement*, Day, Dorothy, February, 1940, <http://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday/daytext.cfm?TextID=182>, 19 December 2005.

7 *The Catholic Worker Movement*, Mark and Louise Zwick, Paulist Press, New Jersey, 2005, page 60.

8 *The Catholic Worker Movement*, Mark and Louise Zwick, Paulist Press, New Jersey, 2005, page 78.