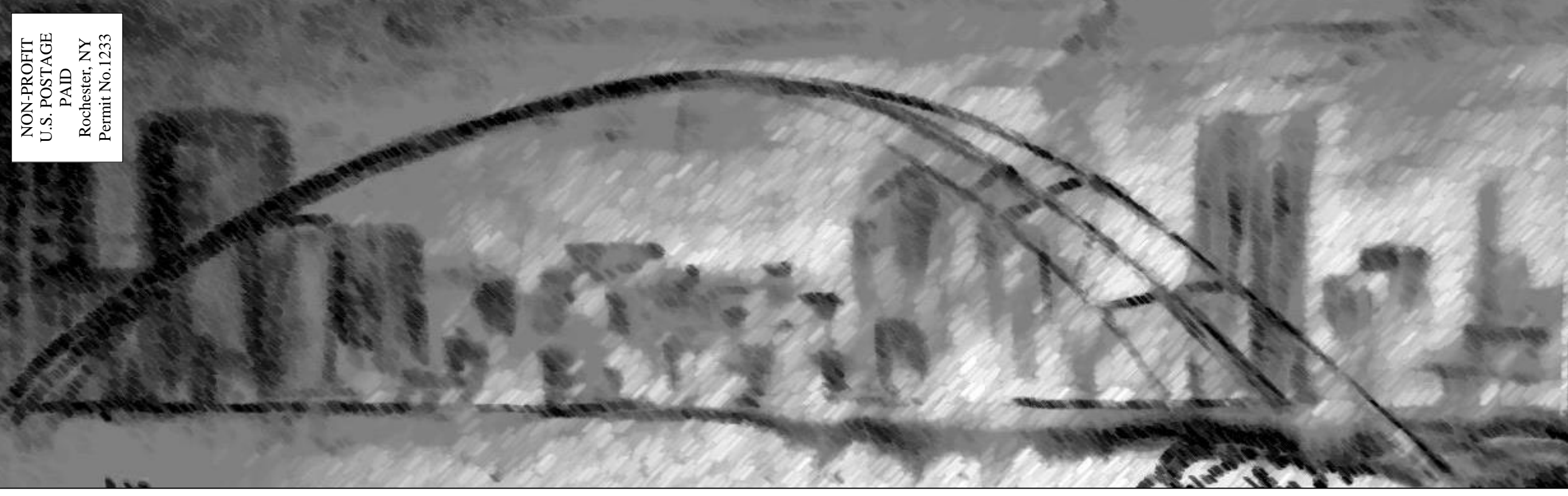


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THE ROCHESTER CATHOLIC WORKER



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THE ROCHESTER HOMELESS UNION: "Empowering the Voices of the Homeless is our Mission"



Initial meeting at St. Joe's about the forming of a Rochester Homeless Union

By Patrick Braswell

Imagine the impoverished no longer living in poverty; the homeless no longer in fear of a cold and lonely night. Pray. We all must pray.

Often in my past, I did not understand the look instilled in many eyes. I was unaware of the pain and suffering of so many because my heart was filled with a selfish disgust. I didn't know that one day I would be brought to terms with the often overlooked reality of homelessness.

There are approximately 800 people experiencing homelessness any given night in the city of Rochester. The shelters and other organizations that have been developed to assist those of us who find ourselves homeless are constantly filled beyond their capacity. They are filled with the unemployed, the disabled, the

mentally challenged, people who struggle with alcohol and drug addiction, single women and children with shattered dreams, afraid and ashamed.

It's 6:00 a.m.. We are awakened. The lights are bright inside and it's noisy all of the sudden. The homeless are trying to figure out what the day has in store for them; where to go and what they can do to occupy the coming hours. It's cold outside and after a small breakfast, maybe a hot cup of coffee, we must leave because at 7:00 a.m., the shelter closes. It won't reopen until 8:00 p.m.. The public library doesn't open until 10:00 a.m..

Some of us have started to hold meetings. We are forming a union: the Rochester Homeless Union. Our mission is empowering

Continued on page 7

RACISM & THE ROCHESTER CATHOLIC WORKER

"We confess to Almighty God and to you, Father, that we have sinned..."

By Pat Dupont, Annie Horras, James Murphy, Ryan Acuff, & Darian Gläser

An article entitled *Racism & The Catholic Worker* by Brenna Cussen Anglada was published on the front page of the 2018 January-February edition of the *Catholic Worker* newspaper. The piece outlined efforts that are being taken by Catholic Worker communities across the country to acknowledge and address ways in which the movement has silently accepted and perpetuated racist and white supremacist behaviors within its ranks. Examples of racism have been found in many aspects of the movement's work including the ways in which workers are welcomed and initiated into communities, the ways predominantly white Worker houses interact with and serve neighborhoods that are mostly home to people of color, and in the ways and situations in which Worker communities understand and promote nonviolence.

We, the white workers of the St. Joe's Catholic Worker community, must acknowledge and confess our own local struggle with eliminating racism from our house and from ourselves. We must admit that we

have been complicit in racist behaviors.

In an effort to free ourselves and our community from racism, we have begun meeting regularly to name problematic behaviors that have existed in our house and are beginning to come up with ways we can create structures that are more just, removing the room for implicit biases and racism to function.

We were prompted to start these meetings after receiving a letter from the attendees of the 2017 *Midwest Catholic Worker Faith & Resistance Retreat* that reflected on examples of racism which exist broadly within the Catholic Worker movement and encouraged Catholic Worker houses across the country to "lament, repent, and repair" specific instances of racism existing within communities. While our being encouraged by this letter to take action was a positive step in the right direction, we realize now that even in this decision, our biased tendencies played a damaging role. People of color who are valued members of our community had voiced these same concerns repeatedly in the past, yet it was not until we received a letter written by white people that we took

Continued on page 5



Tenants of Thurston Road announce the start of their rent strike.

RENT STRIKE IN ROCHESTER!

Story on page 3

COMINGS & GOINGS

EMBODYPING FAITH

By Laura Bachman

As a person of faith, and a seminary student, I have spent what some may consider an inordinate amount of time pondering what it means to live out my faith. Attending worship, joining the outreach team, reading the Bible, serving on the church session – these things are easy. But how do we respond to Jesus' call in Matthew 25 to feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit the imprisoned? How do we embody Jesus' call in Luke 4 to join him in a ministry that he describes as bringing good news to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and freedom to the oppressed? These things, well, these things are hard. They require us to truly see the plight of those around us. They require us to listen to, and help to carry, the heartbreaking stories of our brothers and sisters who wrestle with these life-denying situations every day. And they require us to look deeply at our own complicity with systems that oppress and abuse those on the margins. Sometimes, it just seems impossible. What can one person possibly do to make a difference in the face of such overwhelming injustice?

This, of course, is where faith comes in. I have learned at St. Joe's that we make a difference first by simply showing up. We attend to the acts of mercy painted so beautifully on the wall of our hospitality room. We welcome the stranger, and offer food to the hungry, clothes to the naked, shelter to those without a warm bed at night. We listen with love and interest. We laugh and tell stories together. And as we become a community, bound together by a common humanity and our identities as precious children of God, each bearing God's image and carrying the deep worth of someone carefully and wonderfully made, we begin to see the bigger picture of the concrete work to be done. We move from stories to action – we begin to gather resources and form tenant unions; we march for political change; we speak out when we see injustice. And we trust, trust that God is doing a new thing in this place, that resurrection always follows death and that if we but begin the work, take those first tentative steps, the Holy Spirit will show up and move mountains we could not have dreamed of shifting.

Perhaps this sounds like those proverbial rose colored glasses donned to block out the harsh light of need and injustice, but as one single person of faith, I know no other way than to follow Jesus' example of presence among those society would cast aside, to show up and pray and work and look for the next right thing to do. I am deeply grateful for the community of St. Joe's for their warm welcome and generous willingness to enfold me into their community. It is a first step. Faith says I must trust that it is enough for today.



UNWRITTEN RULES

By Darian Gläser

I am a person that likes, appreciates, and needs structure. Before I came to St. Joe's, my life was mostly structured by school and by my parents. I was overwhelmed when I first moved into St. Joe's. There was no training manual. There were no written rules. There wasn't even a "boss" to check in with. I was expected to figure things out myself and in the beginning, I felt lost often.

I felt that Guests didn't take me seriously due to my young age and my lack of knowledge. I would wonder about schedules and about how tasks were done while they were happening. Eventually, I learned to be independent: either ask coworkers or to just do whatever I think is right, which is mostly doing whatever is right for our guests.

While working, I would see different people doing the exact same things in different ways. At the same time however, it somehow seemed like there were certain unwritten rules.

After a period of learning the ropes, I now have a long checklist in my head of all the things that need to get done every day. So in a way, there are many unwritten rules. But all of these rules exist so we can make exceptions. We make exceptions all the time in order to best support and serve our community. Through this process, I have learned to trust my own conscience.

We all have our own unique senses of justice and equality. We all judge things in our own ways. Being a part of the St. Joe's community has forced me to continually develop and redevelop my personal approach to these principles. I review them. I change them. I challenge them by making exceptions to my own rules.

Perhaps I would be more "productive" if I was following someone else's instructions, carrying out my day to day duties according to someone else's ethic. Instead, I create my own. Instead, I have discovered just how big of a passion I have for justice and equality. I have learned to trust my own judgement and to rely on it...and this can bring about problems as well.

Because so many decisions I make and actions I take are backed only by me, I can be offended easily if someone disagrees. I can feel like this person isn't seeing what I'm seeing. I can feel like this person disagrees with my *character* instead of my *decision*. For this reason, it has been hard for me to practice accountability. I assume that people around me feel the same way. I don't want to tell them to change. I feel that I *can't* tell them to change, and this makes both offering and receiving criticism frustrating and emotionally draining.

To help this, we could implement more rules - more structure to prevent so much personal attachment and involvement. We could create guidelines that go beyond the Works of Mercy...but that would take away so much. It would take away the human aspect of our work, the personalism. It would take away our room for growth.

My time here has changed a lot in me. I feel that I have grown as a person.

It is the simplicity of St. Joe's that makes it so remarkable to me. Nowhere else is able to teach you without trying.

"...THEN I FOUND THE LEGACY HOUSE"

By Todd Butler

I was homeless - and then I found the Legacy House. I was honored to meet Ms. Wanda, the kindest, most caring person I have ever met. She helped me get back into a daily routine of sober, healthy living.

I have been sober for three months and have my own place. I have a purpose to maintain what I have achieved. I have made my son and girlfriend proud, and most importantly, myself.

I recommend Legacy House to anyone who is trying to get back on their feet and change their life.



March For Our Lives, Washington, D.C.

March 23rd: Hosted a Roundtable discussion on the Christian response to the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

March 24th: A Worker traveled to the student led and organized March for Our Lives in Washington D.C.

March 30th: St Joe's partnered with the House of Mercy and Pax Christi in leading the Urban Stations of the Cross, a walk and public series of readings and reflections centered on how Christ is crucified in Rochester and in our world today.

April 15th: Our Winter Emergency Shelter closed for the season.

April 16th: Partnered with the Central Church of Christ, the House of Mercy, R.E.A.C.H., The City-Wide Tenant Union, & The Rochester Homeless Union to host a Candlelight Vigil for an End to Systemic Injustice.

May 1st: David Finnegan-Hosey led a roundtable discussion about his book, "Christ on the Psych Ward."

Marlena Morton will be joining the St. Joe's live-in community as a summer intern from June-August. She is a Public Health major at SUNY Brockport where she also serves as treasurer for an environmental club.

Bienvenue Sulubika moved into the house. He is a Pentecostal minister from the Congo and has been leading bible study in our shelter. His 7 children and wife are currently in a refugee camp in Uganda. Pray for them!



Urban Stations of the Cross Good Friday, 2018

REVELATION ROCHESTER ARTISTS' WORK EXHIBITED AT THE HUNGERFORD

By Richmond Futch, Jr. & Debra VanWert-Sneeringer

Every Wednesday, in the "Upper Room" of Saint Joseph's House of Hospitality, beauty happens. Men and women gather at tables covered with pastels, pencils and paints.

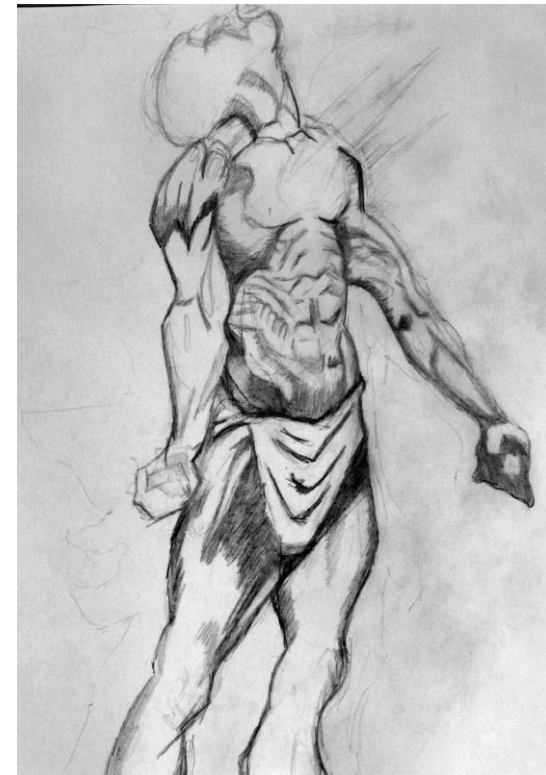
Leaving the chaos of the outside world, one at a time they select a new crisp sheet of paper filled with possibilities. Soft sounds of flutes and jazz fill the sunlit studio creating a serenity not easily found on the city streets.

Their work is imaginative, colorful and often compelling. Children, flowers, and graphics leap off each artist's page.

By providing a space to explore creatively, the artists become introspective, and while doing so, share life experiences with one another. Laughter replaces solemnity and calm replaces angst. The extraordinary artwork created is a wonderful result of this confluence of human emotion and engagement. It is for these reasons that the multi-faceted project, Revelation Arts, exists.

A few of the pieces completed during a Revelation Rochester – "Revealing the Artist Within" workshop were recently exhibited at Metro Justice at 1115 East Main Street at the Hungerford Building. Capitalizing on the long standing First Friday art scene, Metro Justice contacted Artistic Director, Richmond Futch, Jr. with a request to show some of the artists' work from the workshops on First Friday, Feb. 2. Each with their own personal favorite, visitors and staff alike commented on the life and energy the work introduced to the workspace.

By adding the vibrant color and



Artwork shown above created by two Revelation Artists during Revelation Rochester-Revealing the Artist Within workshops and exhibited at Metro Justice Offices in February.

rich concepts to their walls, Metro Justice not only provided a nod to those that created the work, but also another reason to visit their offices and learn of their mission to bring social and economic justice to the homeless and marginalized. In the end, the framed artwork added more than color to their office space, it added humanity. Thank you, Metro Justice, for inviting us to share in your story.

Workshops are held every Wednesday 9:30-12:30 in the Upper Room of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality on South Ave. Supplies are provided to the artists at no cost. St. Joseph's House is now offering transportation for the guests of the House of Mercy every Wednesday morning.

For more information about contributing art materials, easels or framing to Revelation Rochester or

arranging an exhibition of the artists' work, contact Artistic Director, Richmond Futch, Jr at 585-729-9916. For more information about the project and opportunities to purchase Revelation Artists' work for residential, corporate and institutional installations, contact Debra VanWert at RocCITYART at 585-748-8375 or email deb@rocCITYART.com

RocCITYART, in collaboration with Revelation Arts, is concentrating on identifying paying pathways for these individuals to sell their artwork, creating a "hand up, by their own hand" where they will receive a substantial commission, like any other working artist.

www.RevelationRochester.com
Please Like and Follow us on Facebook @RevelationRochester

THE HOUSING REPORT

THE ROCHESTER RENT STRIKE

Tenants Strike Back Against Absentee Slumlords

By Ryan Acuff

John Lindsey has been living at 447 Thurston Rd. for many years. Last summer, people stopped coming to pick up the trash. It piled up, higher and higher, attracting rats and squirrels. The grass in the courtyard wasn't cut through the warm months. The four entrance doors to the building were unlocked at all times. Infestation of rats, roaches, and bed bugs were spreading in the building. Then, on one January morning, John's ceiling caved into his bathtub. Water was coming down from above. John called the landlord's management company to have them make the repairs. One day passed, then two, then a week, then a month, then *months*...John was living with the pieces of his bathroom ceiling inside his shower/bathtub.

Meanwhile, Mary Brown went to use her kitchen sink, but found that the more she used it, the more raw sewage backed up in her bathtub. The smell of fecal matter in her apartment was so bad that she could no longer sleep at night. The issues of failing ceilings, mold, and backed up sewage were cascading through the building. However, a spirit of dissent was also cascading through the 48 units on Thurston Rd.

After three members of the City-Wide Tenant Union knocked on their doors during a tenant outreach day, the tenants came together to make a list of collective issues, a list of demands, and to form a tenant union in their building: the Thurston Road Tenant Union. In February, the tenants wrote a demand letter to their notorious slumlord Peter Hungerford (see *The Rebirth of Tenant Movement in Rochester* in the last issue of *The Rochester Catholic Worker*) outlining their demands, noting when the tenants wanted them fulfilled by, and expressing the need for a collective bargaining agreement between the tenant union and the absentee slumlord from Staten Island. After the tenants had exhausted all established



channels (complaints to the slumlord and the city inspectors) and they had still received no response to their demand letter, they decided to take matters into their own hands and to wield one of their most powerful weapons: the rent strike. The logic was simple: the tenants came to conclusion that the only thing their slumlord cared about was money, so they had to hit him where it hurts—in his pocket book. March 1, 2018 opened a new era in Rochester's tenant struggle as a supermajority of the tenants at 447 Thurston commenced a major rent strike.

Rent Strikes

From Feudal Europe to Upstate New York, rent strikes are as old as rent. From 1839-1845, tenants in Upstate New York launched the "Anti-Rent War" which led to a new state constitution (the 1846 Constitution of NY) which was the first to enshrine tenants' rights and

abolish most of the feudal land system in New York. Through the 20th century, major rent strikes led the cataclysmic change in policy and in the balance of power between landlords and tenants. The first rent controls were introduced in United States in New York City (the "April Laws") in order to preempt the threat of a general rent strike in the city on May 1, 1920. Then again in the 1930s and the 1960s, major rent strikes raised the profile of tenant conditions and led to national rent control during World War II and second-generation rent controls that were adopted in the late 60s/early 70s in New York, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Massachusetts, New Jersey, and California. The rent strikes in Harlem led by Jesse Gray in 1963-1964 not only touched off a national movement that included the adoption of rent controls, but also created the concept of "Warranty of Habitability." The Warranty of the Habitability is the promise that every rented apartment must be kept in habitable conditions at all times. The courts began to rule that whether it was written in a lease or not, each rented apartment must have an implied warranty of habitability. This was a legal revolution that dramatically expanded tenants' rights. After these court rulings, all 50 states passed Warranty of Habitability laws. The broken promise of habitability is the basis of the current rent strike in Rochester.

Thurston Rent Strike Spreads, Leads to City Intervention

The Thurston Road rent strike brought rapid public and media attention. Tenants' Rights has become a long neglected issue that can no longer be ignored. Quickly, more tenants came together and the gears of the political machinery started to move:

- Republican Senator Joe Robach introduced the Rochester Housing Court Act into the State Senate
- Judge Doran, the chief Judge of the 7th Judicial District

Continued on page 8

THE WORKING CATHOLIC: PUBLIC HOUSING

By Bill Droel

2011.

This article originally appeared on the Working Catholic blog found at <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/workingcatholic/>

St. Frances Cabrini, MSC (1850-1917), the first U.S. citizen to be canonized, is the patron of immigrants. William Green (1873-1952) was for 28 years president of American Federation of Labor (before the merger with CIO). A notorious public housing project in Chicago was named for these two. Ben Austen takes us inside that housing project in *High-Risers: Cabrini-Green and the Fate of American Public Housing* (Harper Collins, 2018). The project started in 1943 with several row houses in an area once called Lower North Side, and previously called Little Italy. In 1958 the high-rises appeared; first 15, then eight more, then others—three were 19 stories, and then others up to 23 stories. Eventually the project came down; demolition completed in

Originally, Cabrini-Green, like other public housing, was meant to temporarily assist working families; to provide a way station between unemployment and upward mobility. It was also an effort to address slum conditions in the area and to create jobs in construction and administration. Cabrini-Green, a case study in unintended consequences, failed all three of its original goals. Austen intersperses the chronology with the stories of select residents. He follows Dolores Wilson, a longtime resident who remains attached to her family and neighbors. There is Kelvin Cannon who, despite potential, soon affiliates with a gang and is convicted of crime. Willie J.R. Fleming likewise shows potential; moves away from Cabrini-Green; yet returns to its danger. He eventually displays organizing creativity, but neither he nor his followers have enough sustaining discipline and power. Annie Ricks comes to Cabrini-Green following a fire in her home. She

Continued on page 5

SHELTER REFLECTIONS

As Seasonal Shelters Close, Systems Continue to Fail Those in Need

By James Murphy & Pat Dupont

St. Joseph's House of Hospitality's (S.S.J.H.) Winter Emergency Men's Shelter opened its doors this season on October 8th, 2017. In past years, when we would first open for a new season, our numbers would typically start around 7 or 8 people. It has often taken about a week to get up to our maximum capacity of 19 men. We knew going into this season that demand would be high. Leading up to our opening night we received several inquiries, both in person and by phone, as to when we would be open. We also knew that the House of Mercy was eager for us to open, as they were well over their maximum capacity.

On our first night, 17 men walked through our doors. By the weeks end, we were well over capacity. Over the first month, we spiked as high as 27 people before another emergency shelter (R.E.A.C.H. Home), opened its doors in mid-November. From our opening night until our closing night on April 15th, we rarely sheltered below 19 men and our average number of men sheltered per night was 24. Two weeks before closing, 30 men stayed on one night. No matter how many people we housed, we helped to enter treatment programs, or we saw die, our numbers stayed steady. New faces quickly replaced those who had moved on. We also noticed this year that our shelter population is getting younger.

It was a long shelter season for our guests, volunteers, and Catholic Workers. The large numbers are stressful; people are sleeping in extremely close quarters and they are forced to compete for access to laundry machines, showers, and bathrooms.

St. Joseph's House has operated a shelter for over thirty



years. Over the decades, we have sheltered, on average, 10 to 12 men per night. When the City Civic Center Garage closed in 2014, our numbers began to gradually rise. We know that our building is not meant to accommodate the numbers we have taken in, but we also know that to turn people away would be a deadly decision, as the cold weather will kill.

The most frustrating part of operating our shelter is knowing that there are empty beds in other shelters. We try to be diligent about using both the Monroe County After-Hours emergency placement system and the 211 emergency hotline to find people beds in other shelters. This process is time consuming and frustratingly inefficient. In the midst of trying to operate our own shelter, it became easier to just find someone a place on the floor - to squeeze people in. Too many times we would attempt to place people and our calls to the county would go unanswered, or would be forwarded to a voicemail box which was full and couldn't accept any more messages. On some occasions, we would speak to an operator who would tell us that they would call us

Continued on page 7



Rochester City-Wide Tenant Union Meeting

THEY WILL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS BY OUR FEAR

By James Murphy

April 4th, 2018 marked the fiftieth anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination. He was gunned down as he was working to launch the Poor People's Campaign.

Later this year, Oscar Romero will be canonized and become Saint Oscar Romero. As Bishop of San Salvador, he was a loud voice and defender of the poor. For this, he was murdered while celebrating Mass in 1981.

Blessed Stanley Rother, an American Catholic priest originally from Oklahoma, was named a martyr in September, 2017. He was murdered in his church rectory in 1981 after being warned to leave Guatemala. When Fr. Stanley's brother asked him why he was returning to Guatemala he replied, "...a shepherd cannot run from his flock."

These men are highly regarded by Christians and non-Christians alike. They worked on behalf of the poor and were men of deep faith. While they come from different eras and parts of the world, all three were followers and disciples of Jesus Christ. Their faith was demonstrated in their words and their deeds.

As Catholics, we are inspired by the lives and stories of our saints; women and men who, in many cases, died for their commitment to following Jesus. Personally, I find studying the lives of the saints encouraging for my own journey towards holiness. I am most inspired by their courage and the knowledge that that courage is drawn from the well of the gospels and the risen Christ.

The Catholic Church loves its saints: we ask for their prayers during Mass, their names are sung during

ordinations, and we pray for their intercessions in our lives. Why then, with all these courageous examples in front of us, is the Catholic Church in Rochester so afraid of...well...almost everything?

I can't begin to calculate how often the word "liability" comes up when we interact with parishes, parishioners, priests, nuns, charities, and generally speaking, all things Catholic. When we asked to borrow chairs for an Easter Mass in a makeshift homeless shelter, the parish priest was hesitant to say yes for insurance reasons. The House of Mercy Gospel Choir was invited to sing at a local suburban parish and a delay occurred because the parish business office demanded an insurance rider. I once spoke with a woman who was told that she couldn't trim the bushes in front of her church due to liability concerns. Soup kitchens have separated from the diocese because mandatory background checks became a requirement for every volunteer.

Blessed Oscar Romero was shot while celebrating Mass, but the local laity can't climb a ladder to change a lightbulb in the Sanctuary. Which saint do I pray to for intercession into this tidal wave of fear?

During the 1970's and early 1980's, Rochester Catholic parishes operated shelters for people experiencing homelessness. In the late 1980's, St. Paul's church in Webster hosted a Bosnian refugee family in their basement. Today, this would either take a mountain of paperwork, or most likely, be denied. St. Joseph's House has reached out to the diocese parishes asking them to open their doors to homeless folks. We ask knowing the answer will be no, that we will be directed to Catholic Family



(Richmond Futch, Jr.)

Center (CFC), and that the process to secure a person a bed in their shelters is too cumbersome to be effective. In the end, it seems that we are afraid to open church doors to the poor for liability reasons, which is code for being worried about our money, and being afraid of losing it. The fine print of insurance policies and the assessments of diocesan risk managers now overrule the Word of the Gospel.

The closing of church doors to the poor shows that as a church, we still have much to learn from the saints. We have, in essence, become the financiers of the Works of Mercy, rather than doers. Pope Francis has said that the church should function as a field hospital for the sick and wounded. Our local field hospital requires insurance for medical help, payment from the county for shelter, and has limited opportunity for real engagement with the poor. Our field hospital seeks donations and grants rather than personal encounters. Church buildings and organizations are heavy with rules, regulations, and insurance policies. All of this

bureaucracy leaves less and less room for the Holy Spirit to show us where we need to be.

The most damaging part of closing our doors is the diminishing of opportunities to meet the other. Without meeting the other, we cannot know each other. Without knowing each other, we make assumptions or believe stereotypes. Perhaps most often, we come to fear one another, and paralyzed by fear, we have no real understanding of poverty and those affected by it. Without the understanding forged by personal encounter, our pursuits of justice become confused and misguided.

Recently, we reached out to a local college's Newman Center seeking volunteers to stay overnight, helping to run our shelter. We asked both in person and via email. We were brushed off in person with concerns about the risk involved and our follow up email went unanswered. Shortly after, an eighteen year old senior in high school asked us if he could help in shelter. He now comes in once a week and has even slept over - on a school night no less! We can see the

change in the way he views the "other." Our shelter has softened the hearts and minds of numerous volunteers. Our shelter volunteers have built friendships and as a result, have become less afraid.

"Perfect love drives out fear," says 1 John 4, "the one who fears is not been made perfect in love." "Be not afraid," says the angel Gabriel to Mary in Luke 1. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Bishop Oscar Romero, and Blessed Stanley Rother seem to have taken these verses to heart. The saints we so revere lived lives that boldly proclaimed their belief that love is more powerful than fear.

The best way to overcome fear is to take action...so take action. Volunteer in our shelter or take those hedge cutters to the church bushes in the dark of night. Be a rebel and get on that ladder and change the light bulb! Resist the absurd rigidity of our present church in word and deed. Who knows, maybe someday we will open our doors to the poor and the stranger.

St. Francis, pray for us!



(Richmond Futch, Jr.)

"AND I...?"

The Catholic Worker at 85 & St. Joe's at 77

By Trudy Scahill

As we approach the 85th anniversary of the Catholic Worker Movement, it may be instructive to reflect on the history of the early years in Rochester and St. Joseph's House of Hospitality and its arc toward the present and the future.

In the beginning Dorothy Day was invited to speak in Rochester in the Fall of 1933 by Fathers Ehmann and Vogt. Sister Teresa Marie, dean at Nazareth College, also asked Dorothy to speak there. From these visits a group began to form. Through Fr.

Ehmann and Fr. Vogt there were meetings at the Catholic Evidence Library and St. Andrew's Seminary, and due to Sr. Teresa Marie, a group at Nazareth College, in addition to meeting, became busy collecting food and clothing. The participants at the meetings soon merged to become St. Joseph's Group, and took up in earnest Catholic Worker practices.

A published *Report of Rochester C.W. Group for '36-'37* gives a lengthy list of topics and presenters for "Clarification of Thought: Discussions" including: The Christian Revolution, Fr. Vogt, Lynching and its

Causes, Geo. Johnson, Psychology and Social Change, and William Geosseffi, among others. The report goes on to outline "The Action Part of the Program": A) Propaganda: distribution of C.W., reports on meetings, furnishing speakers, reading lists of books, outline of a study program, giving out pamphlets and B) Social: distribution of clothes and furniture, conducting summer school, collecting of clothes and magazines, First Communion, converts, etc. Many of these activities and actions persist to this day.

Continued on page 7



CATHOLIC WORKER 85th ANNIVERSARY GATHERING TO BE HELD IN ROCHESTER

Catholic Workers from all over the world are invited to come and join us in Rochester for a celebration of 85 years of the Catholic Worker movement. There will be time to build relationships, to gather together in plenary sessions reflecting on the early themes of the movement, and to participate in workshops and conversation. We are also currently exploring a potential mass nonviolent direct action.

If you would like to lead a workshop or be involved in helping to plan and prepare for this event, please write to catholicworker85@gmail.com

Registration information will be made available soon!

WHEN: July 27th thru 29th, 2018

WHERE: Nazareth College, Rochester, N.Y.

WHAT: "Drawing on Our Roots, Reflecting in Our Times"
Let us explore the themes of our founders
Peter Maurin and Dorothy Day regarding Cult, Culture, Cultivation

WAR RESISTANCE UPDATE: KILLER DRONES AND THE KINGS BAY TRIDENT PLOWSHARES ACTION

By Harry Murray

For years, I have been writing in the St. Joes newsletter about the campaign against weaponized drones at Hancock Air National Guard Base just outside of Syracuse. One might wonder whether, given all that has occurred recently, drones remain an important issue. After all, the US just bombed Syria once again in response to reports of a gas attack by the Assad regime. Given Russian military involvement in Syria, such strikes pose the risk of war with Russia, still a major nuclear power. We continue abetting the criminal bombing campaign which the Saudi regime has been conducting against Yemen, which, according to the UN, has created the greatest humanitarian crisis in the world today. Despite plans for talks, we are still at risk for a nuclear confrontation with North Korea, which now appears to have missiles which might reach the continental US and can certainly reach Hawaii. President Trump, in addition to his flagrantly bellicose language, continues to dismantle environmental protections and encourage fossil fuel consumption. With the twin threats of the Mushroom Cloud and Climate Change looming, should we be shifting our attention away from militarized drones such as the MQ-9 Reapers piloted out of Hancock to more pressing issues?

Five Hancock drone resisters were among the seven Catholics arrested for the King's Bay Trident Submarine Base Plowshares action which took place on April 4, the 50th anniversary of the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.. Mark Colville, Claire Grady, Martha Hennessy, Elizabeth McAlister, and Carmen Trotta – all of whom have engaged in civil resistance at Hancock – joined Steve Kelly SJ and Patrick O'Neill for a nonviolent disarmament



action at the Georgia base, the largest submarine base in the world. To give a sense of the scale of this weapons system, the nuclear missiles on **just one** Trident submarine are capable of destroying **TWO HUNDRED CITIES**. All remain in jail as of this writing. Claire Grady, a Catholic Worker from Ithaca wrote:

"We say, 'the ultimate logic of Trident is omnicide', and yet, the explosive power of this weapon is only part of what we want to make visible. We see that nuclear weapons kill every day by their mere existence. Their production requires mining, refining, testing, and dumping of radioactive material, which poisons sacred Earth and Water, all on Indigenous land.

We see the billions of dollars it takes to build and maintain the Trident system as stolen resources, which are desperately needed for

human needs.

We see nuclear weapons as a cocked gun, the biggest gun, used 24/7 to ENFORCE the many layers of state-sponsored violence and deadly force required to maintain white supremacy, global capitalism, and global domination. We invite others who have been privileged by these systems to join us in withdrawing consent from their deadly function and purpose. We live with hope for a nuclear-free, decolonized world."

I applaud the actions of these seven and hope one day I will have the courage to join them in such plowshares demonstrations. Nuclear weapons indeed pose the threat of omnicide. Yet, I would argue that we do need to continue to resist militarized drones and to highlight the issues surrounding such drones for several reasons. First, the drone

operations at Hancock provide a local focus for resistance to militarization and war making. Second, the drone killings continue, largely unreported. Third, militarized drones continue to blur the boundaries between war and peace. It is too easy for a President to order a drone strike on a country with which we are not at war because no American lives are put at risk. In a world in which the threat of nuclear war has assumed a new relevance, such strikes pose far too great a risk of disaster. Fourth, drone strikes are illegal under both international and U.S. law, particularly when used to kill US citizens without the due process rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Most importantly, perhaps, while public concern is focused on so many other issues, the US military continues its "progress" towards completely automated drone systems in which human beings might be

totally removed from the decision to kill. On April 26, 2017, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum establishing Project Maven, formally known as the Algorithmic Warfare Cross-Functional Team (AWCFT), whose objective is "to turn the enormous volume of data available to DoD into actionable intelligence and insights at speed." It continued: "The AWCFT's first task is to field technology to augment or automate Processing, Exploitation, and Dissemination (PED) for tactical Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) [this means drones] and Mid-Altitude Full-Motion Video (FMV) in support of the Defeat-ISIS campaign." The Defense Department has contracted with Google to develop the software that will examine images from drone cameras and identify possible targets that will then be turned over to

Continued on page 8

RACISM (continued from page 1)

them seriously enough to take concrete action. In the past, we had listened to our community members, but had not effectively heard or internalized their perspective. Blinded by our privilege, we had not taken it seriously enough to pursue concrete systemic fixes. We valued the testimony of white Catholic Workers from across the country more than we valued the testimony of Catholic Workers of color we work alongside every day. We realize now how ignorant and hurtful that was. We will not pretend to understand what it feels like to be a person of color in a community full of white people who don't always want to hear or accept the painful truth of their embedded racism.

Here at St. Joe's, we have acknowledged that racism has functioned in double standards that exist within the processes that follow: the way we bring in new live-in workers, the way we make financial decisions, the way labor is divided among the worker community, the way we have represented our community in media coverage, the way we interact with guests, the assumptions we make about people's motives, and the way in which different voices and perspectives are acknowledged (or not acknowledged) in meetings and discussions. We recognize the need to reform these systems and to continue to study other aspects of our life and work as a community in which racism may play a damaging role.

Having acknowledged these sins, we are working with our broader community to fix these broken processes; to make them inclusive and just. We made a public apology in our hospitality room to our guests for the

racism that we as individuals have perpetuated, as well as the racism that has existed in the St. Joe's community for decades. In an effort to hold ourselves more accountable, we have also began holding weekly community meetings, inviting our guests to come and share any concerns, issues, or feedback regarding how our House of Hospitality operates.

We, the white workers, have also committed to working together to better educate ourselves around the history of racism within our country and within Rochester. We realize that many of us are painfully unaware of the extent to which racism has been a dominating force in our national and local history.

We encourage others to join us in this deconstructive and restorative work. White individuals and predominantly white-led institutions are highly susceptible to implicit racism and to ignorance. We must be proactive in reflecting carefully on our attitudes, actions, and behaviors in order to continue to break apart this "dirty rotten system" and create "a new society in the shell of the old;" a society which emphasizes equality, justice, and peace, and is guided by the spiritual and corporal Works of Mercy.

Racist thoughts and behaviors are learned and they can be unlearned. They can be replaced by anti-racist thoughts and behaviors which lead us, not only to treat all people with respect, but to dismantle the structures of racism within ourselves, our movement, and the larger society. We commit ourselves to unlearn our toxic baggage of white supremacy and to learn the ways of respect and justice for all.

PUBLIC HOUSING (continued from page 3)

makes a stand there for the sake of her eight children.

Austen refrains from moralizing. He is also light on analysis; certainly implying the wrongness of some decisions, but not targeting villains. Austen thus challenges readers to draw their own conclusions. His policy narrative is complex enough and his characters are complicated enough that fair-minded readers must put stereotypes aside. Yet, from the time of Martin Luther King's assassination in April 1968 and subsequent riots in Chicago, it is obvious that Austen's book and Cabrini-Green itself will not have a "happily ever after" conclusion.

Are there any heroes in Austen's book? No super-heroes. But some Cabrini-Green residents manage as best they can by participating in improvement efforts and especially by keeping their children in school and in some cases finding better opportunity for their families. *High-Risers* also mentions *friends of Cabrini-Green*, who exhibit constancy in assisting families and young adults there. For example, Brother Bill Tomes (and his handful of disciples) provide a small measure of good example to young people. Marion Stamps, who once lived in Cabrini-Green, is a savvy advocate. She is such a fixture that she can with credibility call-out gang members and politicians alike. The leaders at Holy Family Lutheran Church and at other churches never tire of providing services to residents and eventually, with LaSalle St. Church and others, develop alternative housing. Austen names two police officers who excel in dealing with young people at Cabrini-Green. Jesse White, who is still Illinois Secretary of State, assists

many Cabrini-Green residents over the years. His Tumblers group, designed for Cabrini-Green youngsters, still performs at many parades and other events.

Austen includes Ed Marciniak (1918-2004) in his bibliography. Marciniak, who founded the Chicago Catholic Worker in the 1930s, was involved in race relations and public housing for decades. As early as 1951 he warned the housing authority not to build high-rises in the Lower North Side/Cabrini-Green area. Over the years Marciniak started a tutoring program for Cabrini-Green students, raised money for scholarships there and served on numerous committees and a few federal judicial panels dealing with Cabrini-Green.

For the last 20 years of Marciniak's life, I was honored to be his assistant. We spent many hours walking the rim of Chicago's Loop, often including the area in and around Cabrini-Green. We talked with lots of people—sometimes by appointment, sometimes informally. Here, out of a list of about 20 conclusions, are three in abbreviated form:

1.) The government does a reasonably good job delivering assistance that is not means-tested, specifically Social Security and Medicare. In all other programs the delivery of social services needs to be mediated by smaller, closer institutions. Housing assistance requires partnerships of non-profit entities like churches and community development corporations along with government, plus community-minded, for-profit entrepreneurs, construction companies and management teams.

2.) There has to be a certain quantity of well-managed assisted

housing in a target area so that families are not dumped into an otherwise downward scene. At the same time there has to be a limit on assisted housing units in a target area so that the new residents do not inundate the area with poverty. Again, the target area has to have as many local institutions as possible.

3.) Poverty, we also concluded, is not simply about income. An older type of poverty assumed upwardly mobility was possible because a sufficient number of factory jobs were available. That is no longer the case, as Austen repeatedly mentions. The new poverty includes lack of social connections, a lack of proficiency in knowledge-sector skills, a loss of marriage and family life as a buffer in one's daily struggle and more. To impose the expectations of the old immigrant story onto the new urban (and more recently suburban) poverty only leads to blaming people when the supposed remedies fail. On the other hand, urban pessimists are wrong to presume that the new poverty is an unbeatable inter-generational sentence and that therefore "those people" deserve to fend for themselves without any assistance.

Marciniak's book on Cabrini-Green is *Reclaiming the Inner City* (National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$5.50). Droel edits NCL's free print newsletter on faith and work.

**ROCHESTER
IS WAGING
WAR ON**

THE POOR

WE'RE FIGHTING BACK

ST. JOSEPH'S HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY

THE HOUSE OF MERCY

R.E.A.C.H.

THE ROCHESTER CITY-WIDE TENANT UNION

THE ROCHESTER HOMELESS UNION

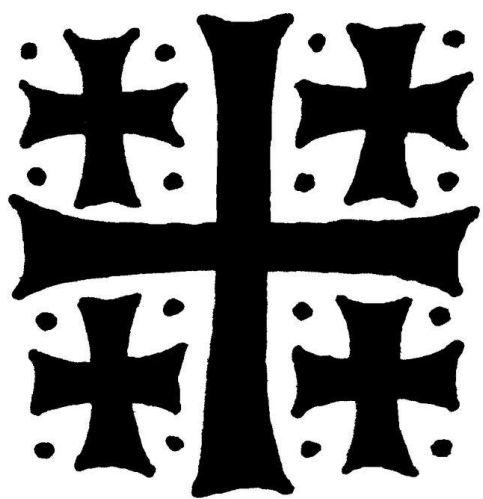
TAKE BACK THE LAND ROCHESTER

“AND I...?” (continued from page 4)

In 1936-37 St. Joseph's Group was at a storefront house on Clinton Avenue near St. Michael's Church. After Clinton Avenue, the group moved to the corner of Almira and Grant Streets which was the last location before the present one at 402 South Avenue. By any available account, St. Joseph's Group became the Rochester Worker, headquartered at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality until 1977 when it expanded to include Bethany House, which is also still operating. As time passed, the spirit and the work enjoyed continuity throughout next generations.

In 1983 upon the 50th anniversary of the Movement, St. Joseph's House hosted a 'Worker Forum' which offered a section called "Living History" considered in the following ways: "I) the When, Why and How II) Relationship to: political events, Catholic Church, U.S. Government, contemporary culture, family III) Perspective on: human person, women, racism, war, and more..." It is both reassuring and disquieting that critical topics are not ignored, yet so many of them beg for long past resolutions. In the face of changing eras and individual participants, there is ever the work of love, justice and community.

To work is to pray which is an essential element of the Catholic Worker Movement. The above cited report expounds on this: "The C.W. program is one of thought and action, these means leading to self-sanctification and the sanctification of society." Toward such "sanctification" we are given the legacy of those clergy who brought the message of the Worker to Rochester, St. Joseph's group, the many souls who have come and gone across the decades and of course Peter and Dorothy, the Teacher and the Saint. As Sr. Katie Vaeth put it, "Dorothy Day embarrasses me, for she embraces the Gospel and witnesses the Word. And I...?"



The Law of Holiness

By Peter Maurin

"No man can serve two masters, God and Mammon."

"Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect."

"If you want to be perfect sell all you have, give it to the poor and follow Me."

—New Testament.

"These are hard words," says Robert Louis Stevenson.

"but the hard words of a book were the only reason why the book was written."

In his encyclical on St. Francis of Sales the Holy Father says:

"We cannot accept the belief that this command of Christ concerns only

a select and privileged group. and that all others may consider themselves pleasing to Him if they have attained a lesser degree of holiness.

Quite the contrary is true, as appears from the generality of His words.

The law of holiness embraces all men and admits of no exception."

There is a rub between the rich who like to get richer and the poor who don't like to get poorer.

The rich, who like to get richer, turn to the Church to save them from the poor who don't like to get poorer.

But the Church can only tell the rich who like to get richer, "Woe to you rich, who like to get richer, if you don't help the poor who don't like to get poorer."

HOMELESS UNION (continued from page 1)

the voices of the Homeless. We are homeless and formerly homeless people leading each other, advocating for ourselves. God has given me a first-hand experience of the effects of being homeless and has given me the wisdom to understand the "staring into nowhere" of so many. I now have that look in *my* eyes, the very same look that before, I had no understanding of - this tearing pain often followed by tears.

The sanctioning of individuals in our society by the Department of Social Services is one of the largest reasons why many are forced to become homeless. Studying the percentage of people gathered in shelters, in abandoned buildings, or in cold tents mid-winter who have been sanctioned allows me to see that we have a humongous flaw in our support system.

I wish to remove sanctions. Our Union is beginning to take action by collecting signatures to petition the government to end this damaging policy.

Long ago there was David, filled with faith. We must also have faith and today, we must cast a stone, tearing down this Goliath, this broken system.



Press conference hosted by St. Joe's in partnership with The House of Mercy, R.E.A.C.H., The Rochester City-Wide Tenant Union, The Rochester Homeless Union, and the New York State Poor People's Campaign calling attention to the attack on poor and homeless people in Rochester (April 14, 2018).

SHELTER (continued from page 3)

back with a placement, and the return call would come hours later, often after midnight when the person in need of shelter was already fast asleep. Sometimes the return call would simply never come.

A week before our shelter closed, S.J.H.H., R.E.A.C.H. and the House of Mercy met with City officials to make them aware of how full our shelters were and to bring to their attention the ways that their systems were failing to help people access emergency shelter. We were told that the Francis Center (Catholic Family Center) had 13 empty beds available the previous night. These observations are typical. Often when we meet with city and county officials, they seem to assume that we are not working hard enough to secure people placements in these empty beds. Between the concept of 13 beds being available, and the reality of actually getting people into these beds, is where the breakdown occurs. First we must call an emergency line. Oftentimes our calls go unanswered. If the phone is answered, it takes on average 20 minutes to place just one person. If we happen to get one of the more able and willing operators, it can still take over an hour to place several. Then, we have to provide transportation from our shelter to the placement site. There are so many moving parts to placing someone in another shelter and much of the process makes it feel like success depends on how lucky you get on any given night. When we take



Andrew D. Hendricks

March 8, 2018 after a long battle with addiction. Survived by his son, Landen Wurzer; his father, Dennis Hendricks; mother, Susan Edwards; brothers, Matthew & Jake Edwards; maternal grandparents, Marjorie Monte and James (Linda) Monte; paternal grandparents, Paul & Valerie Hendricks; several aunts, uncles, & cousins.

OBITUARIES



Arnett Lorenza Monroe, Jr.

Arnett was born on June 12, 1980 to the late Arnett Lorenza Monroe, Sr. & Linda Monroe at Strong Memorial Hospital, Rochester, New York. From birth, he was a quiet spirited person who enjoyed life.

Arnett attended the Rochester City & Chili School Districts for his educational years.

His passions were music, electronics, and modern technology. He loved to play with his nieces and nephews. He enjoyed his friends and relatives. He also enjoyed good home cooked meals prepared by his mother.

Arnett a.k.a. "Wade" departed this life suddenly on Saturday, March 24, 2018 at the age of 37 years old.

To this life he leaves to mourn his mother, Linda Hill-Monroe-Thornton; step father, Ernest Thornton; one brother, Jerone (Ereka) Hill of Opp, Alabama; one sister, Ciara Hill (Mohammed Jeylani) of Rochester, New York; nephews, Jervon, Jahzir, Jaylin; nieces Jalina and Jameela Hill of Rochester, New York; special cousin, Donald White; with a host of family, friends and relatives.

Arnett is predeceased in life by his father, Arnett Lorenza Monroe, Sr., his grandparents, James & Fannie Hill (Rochester, New York), and Orin & Naomi Monroe (West Palm Beach, Florida).

we must also continue to challenge those in power to acknowledge and serve those whom they are currently content to leave behind.

Along with sheltering the homeless, it is also a Work of Mercy to bury the dead. The St. Joseph's Community, along with the communities of other shelter providers, have seen too many of our friends who had stayed in our shelters die this year. Some were due to overdose. One man went to sleep in our shelter on a Monday night, and come Tuesday morning, didn't wake up. We echo the sentiment that ran on the front page of our last issue: *Homeless is a death sentence*. People are dying in shelters, in the streets, and in abandoned buildings, while our city and county fail to provide adequate access to shelter, and refuse even to acknowledge that we are in the midst of a crisis.

Andrew.
Wade.
George.
Sheldon.

They are just some of the people we have lost this year. We pray for them. We pray for a moral revival in our city. We pray for systems that treat people like the human beings that they are. We pray for a time when everyone will have access, not only to shelter, but to housing.

We pray, and we continue to work.

THE ROCHESTER CATHOLIC WORKER

A Publication of:
 Saint Joseph's House of Hospitality
 402 South Avenue
 Rochester, NY 14620
 585-232-3262
 info@saintjoeshouse.org
 www.saintjoeshouse.org

St. Joseph's House of Hospitality Mission Statement: *We are committed to extending hospitality by feeding, clothing, and housing our brothers and sisters in need. We are a spiritually centered Catholic Worker community that personifies non-violence, compassion, and personalism.*

Community: George McVey, Tim Sigrist, Harry Murray, Chava Redonnet, Don Strickland, Diana Nielsen, James Arnold, Sarah Brownell, Tom Malthaner, Adam Uzelac, Annie Horras, Pat Dupont, Jasmin Reggler, James Murphy, Wanda Minor, Darian Glaeser, Linda Condon, Alisia Holmes, Mary Driscoll, Kawanais Smith, Richmond Futch, Sharon Brown, Marj Matzky, Todd Sellers, Phil Childs, Jose Gonzalez, Ryan Acuff, Mike Orman

Managing Editor: Pat Dupont, RCWeditor@gmail.com
Artist: Richmond Futch, Jr.

Hospitality & Meals:

Monday-Wednesday, Friday & Saturday: 9:00-12:15 a.m.

Thursday: Open at 11:00 a.m.

Lunch served at 11:15 a.m. & 12:00 p.m.

Sunday: 1:30-4:45 p.m.

Dinner served at 4:00 p.m.

Winter Emergency Shelter:

Closed for the season, to reopen October 2018

House Needs:

Food: Coffee, Butter, Sugar, Jelly/Jam

Household: Laundry Soap, Bleach, 39 gal. Trash bags, Bath Towels, Toilet Paper, Pillows, Sleeping Bags

Clothing: Men's Underwear, Boots/Sneakers, Jeans, Hoodies, Large Jackets, Gloves/Hats

5:00 p.m. Tuesday Worship Celebrants:

May 1	Stergios Skatharoudis
May 8	Fr. Michael
May 15	Minister Geno
May 22	Sr Grace Miller
May 29	Tim McGowan
June 5	Deacon Dave Palma
June 12	Minister Mark
June 19	Fr Bob Werth
June 26	Evangelists Randy & Anna
July 3	Pat Dupont
July 10	TBA
July 17	Rev. Chava Redonnet

EASTMAN COMMONS SUPPORTS DOROTHY DAY HOUSE



Dorothy Day House

By Tim Sigrist

Dorothy Day House is a "Housing First" apartment community that we started four years ago. It's reserved for thirteen chronically homeless citizens. In their hope-filled transition, services come to them. In time, Advocates walk with them toward their financial independence and progressive self-respect. We're the only one of its kind in the City.

However, as we depend on rents to survive, we're left with a constant solvency gap. Donations are essential. St. John of Rochester Parish gave us an essential financial push. Recently new support has come

from a different direction – Eastman Commons.

Eastman Commons is a permanent supportive low-income housing community on Dewey Avenue which integrates on-site services for its residents. It all began as a dream of Eastman Commons Community (ECC), INC'S founder, David Agostinelli, over 17 years ago. Through faith, persistence and resourcefulness, the project became a reality in 2012. At that time the 80-unit apartment complex was open for residence by adult, formerly homeless individuals, working-poor professionals, returning veterans, the disabled, elderly and other low-income individuals with special

needs. Along the way, ECC struggled to secure its funding, which was realized through bringing together dedicated directors, professionals with the requisite expertise to build a strong development team and a broad-based community of supporters. These supporters remained true believers through the years! Dave and his wife Ellen were steadfast drivers in building community linkages that were essential to securing the common goal of providing quality housing to a poorly served segment of the population.

Seeing the housing complex's successful construction completion, professional property management put in place and its operations reach full occupancy and stabilization, the ECC Board decided to transfer its ownership to ensure its long-term sustainability. With ECC'S vision having been realized, its Board considered investing in other local developments, but concluded the best way to continue to serve the community's neediest individuals was to share its remaining net assets with proven community organizations with like-minded purposes and missions. To that end, ECC adopted a Corporate Dissolution Plan, which identified St. Joseph's House of Hospitality as a qualified and highly worthy recipient of a portion of its net assets as a critical part of its dissolution plan. In December, Dave, Ellen and ECC's Vice-President Mike Rizzo presented "SJHOH" with a generous check and commemorative plaque which mentions the goal of giving "renewed hope" to all who live in its supportive housing. We are grateful for that gift of hope, ECC's generosity, and its belief in our mission

RENT STRIKE

(continued from page 3)

called officials together to find ways to implement tenants right to easily initiate lawsuits to win repairs without going to Albany

- The City of Rochester made an unprecedented move by putting a slumlord on notice that if certain repairs were not made, they would file a lawsuit to take 5 of his buildings into receivership--a process where rent is paid to the city or a third party to make repairs under supervision of the Court
- The Chief of Police took an unprecedented step to create a process for tenants to file an incident report that can lead to an arrest of a slumlord who forces tenants to live in unhealthy or unsafe conditions
- Tenants from four other Peter Hungerford buildings joined the rent strike on April 1st
- Tenants from Thurston Road gave National Tenant Union training to tenants in 35 cities in partnership with the national Homes for All Movement
- John finally got his ceiling repaired

As of mid-April when this paper went to print, the largest rent strike in Rochester in generations continues and will proceed until all the tenants are living in habitable conditions or they are given resident ownership of their buildings. Stay tuned and stay updated through the Facebook page of the City-Wide Tenant Union of Rochester. The struggle continues...

KILLER DRONES

(continued from page 5)

humans for analysis (since the sheer mass of video from drones is too much for human beings to look at all of it). 500 Google employees have signed a letter protesting Google's involvement. Although the Pentagon and Google assure us that the drones involved in this surveillance are not weaponized and that human beings are "in the loop" on kill decisions, this project takes the Pentagon one step closer to a fully automated killer drone system in which humans need no longer be directly involved in decisions to take life.

In the meantime, things have been happening in the Hancock campaign. On Jan 18, 2018, three court cases were resolved, at least temporarily. The Jerry Berrigan Memorial Drone Blockade (which took place in January, 2016) was dismissed in its entirety because of "speedy trial" concerns. Judge Gideon took the Good Friday Action (April, 2017) motion to dismiss under advisement because the prosecution failed to turn over video evidence after he had ordered them to do so back in August. Finally, charges on the Dollar Sign case (in which I was involved in April, 2017) were dismissed because the charging documents inaccurately charged us with trespassing on "federal property." (Hancock Air National Guard Base is not federal property). Mary Anne Grady-Flores' conviction for violating her order of protection by photographing demonstrators back in 2013 is still under appeal after the New York Court of Appeals decided that a lower court had to address a legal technicality before the Court of

Appeals could hear her case. Regular demonstrations continue outside Hancock, but there have been no actions involving civil resistance for about a year.

We would love to hear from you
 at
RCWeditor@gmail.com

- Feedback on our new format
- Letters to the editor
- Article/Artwork submissions
- Mailing list changes



Broken mailboxes and mold discovered in apartment buildings during a Rochester City-Wide tenant Union canvassing outreach.