



Rochester Catholic Worker

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Winter 2008/2009

Building a New Society in the Shell of the Old: The Wall Street Debacle Through Peter Maurin's Eyes

- Chris Phillips and Harry Murray

Henry Paulson says, "We need to restore trust in the financial system."

George Bush says, "We need to restore trust in the financial system."

John McCain says, "We need to restore trust in the financial system."

Barak Obama says, "We need to restore trust in the financial system."

Peter Maurin says, "To use property to acquire more property is not the proper use of property. It is the prostitution of property."

The financial system has never deserved our trust because it uses money to acquire more money.

We have all been taken in by the delusion that Wall Street is able to abandon the simple mathematics of the household budget, where income and expenses must balance. The reason it appeared to work was that the expenses were heaped on the backs of the workers of the world, while the income went to the speculators.

Millions of Americans have seen their retirement savings crippled, while others have lost jobs in the current economic chaos, because we trusted in the delusional financial system. This situation is not unlike that of Iraq War veterans whose lives have been crippled because they trusted in our delusional political leadership.

Wall Street is Las Vegas on steroids, a global casino whose payouts have nothing to do with the production of things people need. Derivatives, credit default swaps, and so many financial instruments are simply bets on an imaginary future, and do nothing that benefits anyone except those involved in the

betting. Money was invented, in theory, to facilitate the exchange of goods and services people needed. Now, the tail is wagging the dog, the means have become the ends, our economic system is more dependent on financial speculation utterly removed from reality than it is on producing and distributing real goods.

George Bush has told us to trust Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson to save Wall Street and the economy. Henry Paulson was the CEO of Goldman-Sachs, which helped to create the current crisis. Peter Maurin says,

"Business cannot set its house in order because business men are moved by selfish motives. Business men create problems, they do not solve them."

Peter also says, "Now is the time to create order out of chaos. ... The thing to do right now is to create a new society within the shell of the old with the philosophy of the new, but a very old philosophy, a philosophy so old that it looks like new." He calls us to create a new

economy, one that is based on generosity and creed rather than on consumption and greed.

In the new economy value will not be placed on infinite growth and profit for a few, but on social and

The Money Lenders' Dole

Uncle Sam does not believe
in the unemployed dole,
But Uncle Sam does believe
in the money lenders' dole.
Uncle Sam doles out every year
more than a billion dollars
to the money lenders.

And it is the money lenders' dole
that put Uncle Sam
into a hole.

The money lenders are first citizens
on Uncle Sam's payroll.

There were no money lenders
on the payroll

in Palestine and Ireland
because the Prophets of Israel
and the Fathers of the Church
forbid lending money at interest.

But Uncle Sam does not listen
to the Prophets of Israel
and the Fathers of the Church.

*Peter Maurin, wrote this essay over
sixty years ago. If you replace "a
billion dollars" with "seven
hundred billion dollars," it could
have been written yesterday.*

Haiti Update - Sarah Ahimsa

Of course you heard about the hurricanes that hit Haiti. There were four, Fay, Gustav, Hanna and Ike that left no community untouched. The Department of the North, where we work, was hit by Hanna and Ike. Borgne was flooded. Hundreds of stick and mud houses in the mountains lost their roofs in the heavy wind.

But there were only 3 casualties, thanks to Oxfam Civil Protection brigades that evacuated low lying areas before the storm and rescued people with boats during the flooding. Shada, the slum in Cap Haitien where we focus our attention, was also flooded up to chest level. Kevin and I rode out the storm in our sturdy, cement 4th floor apartment. We couldn't leave the house because the streets were flooded, but we didn't want to leave it anyway.

The wind was terrible, and I prayed all night long for the people that don't live in cement houses. After the storms, with all the usual strength and grace of the Haitian people, our friends and collaborators turned their backs on adversity and moved forward, bailing buckets of muck out of their houses, replanting plantain trees, and trying to salvage their children's school supplies from the mud. Since the storms, the power has been out in Cap Haitien and gasoline can only be purchased by the gallon in plastic containers for twice the normal price.

We are especially grateful to all of you who sent donations both for general hurricane relief and for the food program that St. Joseph's House is supporting in Borgne. Mesi anpil! Thank you so much! We purchased the first supplies for the food program shortly after the hurricanes subsided. Kevin bought cooking utensils and very large pots. We are trying to buy only local food, so I bought a large sack of corn from Eddyson, director of the Borgne Tech Center. Tech Center volunteers have also offered their building and to volunteer their time to provide Rochester Catholic Worker

the meals, starting with 25 of Borgne's poorest residents.

They will break bread (or rather scoop corn meal) together on Mondays and Thursdays. Marceline, a long time Tech Center volunteer will coordinate the program. The first meal was supposed to be served on October 6th. Kevin and I have been in the US since late September, but as soon as we get back, we will send pictures and an update on the meal program. Despite the bad weather, we were able to accomplish some things in the last few months. We hosted an intern who set up a make-shift laboratory for testing compost to make sure that all the pathogens are removed before we use it on gardens. We linked the Gwoup Famn Deside (Decide Women's Group) with another non-profit that financed a lamp oil micro-business for them. We finished and inaugurated two dry toilets in Don Don and Bwa Pini, and finished the Looking Through Their Eyes photo project in Bwa Pini.

Finally, we held a conference for all of our employees and volunteers. Each participant

was offered the opportunity to present a session on their area of expertise. We learned from each other about: participatory educational techniques, composting, how to kill microbes, nutrient cycles in nature, planning, project management and Liberation Ecology. We also held a brainstorming session on the causes of the food crisis, so we can prepare and educate others. No matter what the weather, we continue to plant seeds and grow together in community.



Sarah working in the compost testing lab



House Comings and Goings

Sarah and Kevin are back in Haiti after spending October traveling around fund raising and talking about their projects with the poor in Haiti... it was wonderful to see them again, and we pray for their safety and the success of their work in Borgne. **Tom M** is back with us after several months touring the west... he visited his family, as well as many Catholic Worker houses, and saw the great American West, camping in Yosemite and Yellowstone and many places in between.

Mirabai has officially joined us... hooray! She brings her wisdom and experience from years of living in community elsewhere, as well as her welcome habit of cleaning up random areas of the house. We're glad to have you with us, Mirabai. **Rafael** finally had his surgery in the middle of October after many delays. He will be out at least a month, leaving the kitchen once again in the capable hands of **Ralph**. Rafael wants to thank the St Joe community and friends for their positive thoughts and prayers.

Chava is totally immersed in her chaplaincy residency at Strong Hospital, coming up for air now and then to lead morning prayers or to walk on the canal with the house community. **Joseph**, who escaped from Liberia some thirteen years ago, has been meeting with his immigration attorney and the Buffalo office of INS to resolve his status in the U.S.. **Mark**, who has been responsible for the house laundry, has now assumed the task of keeping the first floor area clean and tidy. He has been mulling where to go next... our "Traveling Man" will be on his way to Madonna House in Canada, but probably not until the new year.

George just ended a three year stint on the Foodlink Board where he represented the 500 agencies that use our Food Bank services. He orders for St Joe's each Monday and shops on Thursday each week. He estimates that St Joe's relies on Foodlink for as much as 60% of our needs. He also stops by the Pizza Hut on Monroe Avenue every Friday afternoon to pickup donated pizza that the House uses to supplement the weekend meals.

With the winter weather approaching, the shelters in Rochester are once again utilizing the **Hypothermia Alert** plan. When the forecast calls for wind chill temperatures to be below 15 degrees, no person will be denied a warm shelter or a bed. In addition, some shelters will be open 24 hours.

Last month we had the honor to host a Friday night Clarification of Thought around the visit to Rochester of Tom Cornell, Sr. He was a close associate of Dorothy Day and he and his wife are associated with the NY CW living on the farm at Tivoli on the Hudson. We had a chance to compare CW experiences; particularly enjoying his recollections of working with Dorothy. His son, Tom, was at St Joe's years ago as a community member.

Rochester Catholic Worker

St Joe's is in the final stages of acquiring a transitional housing unit within walking distance that services eight individuals who are in programs and have been clean more than a year. Eleven years ago, three Catholic Workers from our community started **Alex House** to give recovering individuals affordable and secure housing while taking care of the property under the counsel of professionals. Five years ago, Providence Housing took this housing property under its wing. Recently, Providence has found that this concept no longer fits into their current vision and is turning it over to St Joe's.

The news that Leona Helmsley died yesterday at 87 reminded me of the time I interviewed her husband, Harry, the real-estate magnate who owned a vast empire of Manhattan hotels, office towers and apartment complexes in the 1980s. He was over 70, the first billionaire I had ever met, and I asked him whether he had ever thought about devoting the final segment of his career to good works, like helping the homeless.

"What the hell would I want to do that for?" he said.

This was an instance of decades colliding. It was around 1981, but I was stuck in the idealistic and irritating '70s, when it was considered perfectly normal to ask rich people how they were planning to use their wealth to help the downtrodden. Helmsley, on the other hand, was working off one of the great philosophical underpinnings of the '80s: that the point of making money was ... you made money.

*New York Times 8/21/07
By Gail Collins*

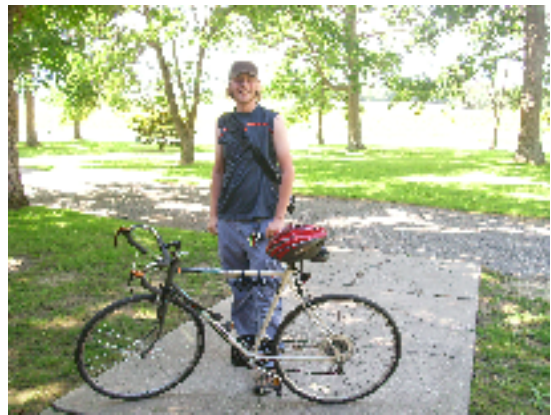
Biking is the Catholic Worker Style - Brent Waddington

Dan Lill and the guys from R Community Bikes who operate the bike clinic every Wednesday in our parking lot gave me a Huffly Technica during my first week working at St. Joe's. It was older than I was. Over the summer I must have put over a thousand miles on it. Frankenbike, the pet name that I gave it after I started rebuilding it piece by piece, gave me a whole new level of freedom. Now I could just pop over to Shoen Place at an hour's notice or ride down Park Ave at midnight to get some exercise. But while this bike gave me a well needed form of recreation, the bike clinic and bicycles in general play a much larger role for our guests.

The first thing I do every morning that can actually qualify as work for the house is to get three bus passes from the office. Soon after we open the doors at nine o'clock they will be gone. Guests line up 15 to 30 minutes before we are open trying to guarantee they will get one of these three pieces of paper - worth a dollar each. What a bus pass means for them is the ability to make an appointment with DSS or a doctor or a job interview. Sometimes when they cannot get a bus pass, they are able to secure other means of arrival, but I am convinced that a fair portion of the time they simply go without. The introduction of the bikes has changed the transportation option; suddenly our guests can be freed and able to make their own schedule.

While biking itself is rather cheap, the means which allow it are not. First one must have a bike, then there is the maintenance, but within our community these things are anything but daunting. The bike clinic offers a reconditioned bike for free; asking only that people own a helmet and a lock, and if you don't them they'll sell you one at a highly discounted rate. The chain on my bicycle snapped in two a few days ago, and it was only a matter of sending Bill D'Anza an email so we could find a time to meet up and get it fixed. The volunteers who have worked in our parking lot every Wednesday have lifted that small burden from our guests by doing the repairs, furnishing the materials or helping a guest do it themselves.

A big part of the Catholic Worker movement is the idea of building a new society in the shell of the old one, which is why I bike where I am going. When I am on my bike I do not have to worry about the changes in gas prices, my culpability in a war derived around peak oil theory, or anything along those lines. Biking is my counter-culture movement, and there are a lot of people in Rochester who are following the same path.

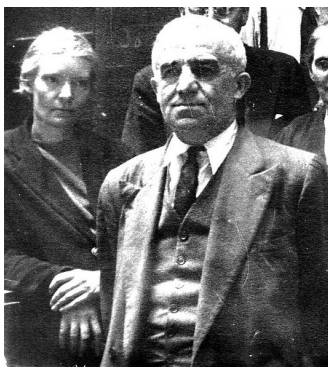


Brent with Frankenbike

Exploring Catholic Worker teachings

Chris Phillips was a part of St Joe's when he came to Rochester five years ago. He had been a farmer and talked with us about a Catholic Worker Farm where we could practice some of Peter Maurin's teachings on work, prayer and social economics. Chris stayed in the City and began exploring on his own how to do this. The result: **a Catholic Worker inspired community microfarm**

It began as a pair of personal gardens shared with two friends. In 2007 the project took the form of a cooperative between 7 households. This year it became a small-farm business - **Fiacre Gardens** - dedicated to Saint Fiacre, the patron saint of gardening. Now there are 6 gardens, 4 berry patches, and 30 orchard trees.



Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin

The "Microfarm," as it is called, is scattered across Greater Rochester. It totals far less than an acre, but supplies over 25 households. It broke even in its first year, although the budget does not cover labor which is given as a gift. It has charted new ground in the local food system, offering fresh produce every month of the year. Microfarm fruit has generated great interest with consumers, as it has been almost impossible to find organically grown apples, pears, peaches, strawberries, raspberries and so forth in our region until now.

This winter the Microfarm would like to host a Peter Maurin / Green Revolution Study Group, and some form of weekly silent prayer.

For more information, Chris can be reached at fiacregardens@yahoo.com

In Gratitude

As we enter the holiday time, our heads and hearts are filled with images and feelings of hospitality. We hope to spend time with family and friends sharing meals, warm homes, conversations, gifts, and our love.

Whether we fully accomplish this reunion seems to change with every year. Children grow up. They move away. They start families of their own. Many interests compete for their time, particularly around the holidays. Our friends have the same complicated lives. We often have to settle for every other year or the day before, or a day close by. Sometimes distances force us to be content with cards and gifts through the mail, phone calls or e-mailed pictures.

Even in the face of these imperfect substitutions, we long for the moments of real sharing. We treasure them. Holiday times bring special stirring in our hearts and spirits. We want to appreciate all those people and those moments throughout the year that have brought us the warmth of love and hospitality.

We, at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, want to pause to express our profound gratitude to all those in our large extended family: volunteers, benefactors, guests, workers. We know that each of you contributes immeasurably to our ability to create hospitality and warmth both physically and spiritually for our guests.

Jesus showed us many times what is shared miraculously multiples and ultimately returns to nourish the giver. We hope that what you share with us; your time, your treasure, your prayers, or your company, returns to you many times over. We are very grateful for you.

Keith Russell - R.I.P. -- Judy Thorslund

I attended a memorial service at St. Joe's a couple weeks back for an old friend and 'customer' of our House of Hospitality. I met Keith the first year I served as a volunteer at Joe's in 2000. He reminded me a bit of an Irish Leprechaun, with his red hair and such a twinkle in his eye one could not help but love this dear man. Keith struggled, like so very many of us in this culture, with alcoholism. During those years Keith chose to live on the streets with his brothers in arms as opposed to living in a shelter, but he came by for lunch and spread his sunshine around our home.

I understand that Keith found sobriety and happiness with his partner and wife in his final years. The thought of this always made me happy, knowing he had a home and the kind of comfort the streets lack, in spite of the fellowship of friends. The memorial service was attended by many of his brothers who loved and cared for him, including his twin Wayne. It felt very blessed to be present as friends and family paid their respects to Keith. Thank you St. Joe's for the never-ending love and hospitality you bestow upon those you are called to serve.

Let us welcome.....

As the newest member of the St. Joe's community, I have been invited to introduce myself to the newsletter readers. Mirabi is my name -- a spiritual appellation -- my root tradition is Christianity. For the past 30 plus years I have been a student of Sufism as introduced by Inayat Khan -- an East Indian musician -- who was directed to come to the West in 1910 to bring the sufi message of love, harmony and beauty.

In the tradition of following spiritual guidance, I first came to St. Joseph's the end of July, in search for a place to live and work. My background is feeding lots of people -- I have earned my livelihood as a whole foods chef since 1974, running large kitchens that fed people coming for workshops, seminars, and retreats. Also, I am working on completing a cookbook with a strong theme of cooking with "Spirit". I also do calligraphy and illustration.

It became clear to me early on that I came here not necessarily to utilize my skills as a chef but to have the opportunity and challenge to learn about and perform the works of Mercy -- may I prove worthy of the task.

“...Follow Me...” - Chava Redonnet

Someone said to me recently about my preparation for ordination, “That’s not how change happens in the Catholic church. It’ll never happen.”

So I thought about that for a while. My first thought, which I’ve had before, was that it’s idolatrous to put obedience to the church above obedience to God, or to believe so firmly in our human institutions that we forget the power of the Holy Spirit to breathe new life and growth where it’s needed. But as I mulled it over, something new came to me – new to me in this context, but old to the Catholic Worker movement.

We already know this: We’re not called to be successful, we’re called to be faithful. Jesus didn’t say, “come, follow me, and I will make you succeed...” Jesus actually was pretty clear that following Him leads to the cross, to having our worlds turned upside down.

As Jim Callan once said, “What do we think this is, a club? ... where we come together and feel good? No, we have a mission to follow Jesus, and wherever we follow, there’s going to be trouble. We need to get used to that and take that responsibility on.”

So I’ll share the glad news that I expect to be ordained to the diaconate in April in Philadelphia... “expect,” because there are still some requirements I need to meet, but I’m confident that God’s call leads me on, that God has work for me to do, and that all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well... peace and all good to all who labor to build the world God dreams of!

**A Prayer Vigil Commemorating the
Jesuit Martyrs
in Solidarity with the SOA Watch**

**Sunday November 23rd:
Sacred Heart Cathedral
2-3pm**

**Some members of St. Joe’s plan to travel to Fort
Benning for the demonstration Nov. 23-25;
others will go to the Cathedral vigil.**

Please join us.

Every November, the SOA Watch organization, founded by Maryknoll Father Roy Bourgeois, gathers at the gates of Fort Benning to commemorate the six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter, slaughtered in November 1989 by a Salvadoran military unit, some of

whom had just returned the week before from training at Fort Benning.

The US Army School of the Americas (SOA, aka Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, aka WHINSEC), based in Fort Benning Georgia, trains Latin American security personnel in combat, counter-insurgency, and counter-narcotics. SOA graduates are responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses in Latin America.

In 1996, the Pentagon was forced to release training manuals used at the school that advocated torture, extortion and execution. Among the SOA’s nearly 60,000 graduates are notorious dictators Manuel Noriega and Omar Torrijos of Panama, Leopoldo Gultieri and Roberto Viola of Argentina, Juan Velasco Alvarado of Peru, Guillermo Rodriguez of Ecuador, and Hugo Banzer Suarez of Bolivia. Lower-level SOA graduates have participated in human rights abuses that include the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero and the El Mozote Massacre of 900 civilians.

Tom’s Trip West Among CW Houses.....

On August 1st I took a trip west to principally see my daughter Elizabeth and my new granddaughter Samantha Taylor Young. Since the trip was so far I thought I’d extend my vacation somewhat and include visiting Catholic Worker Houses and National Parks throughout the West. Over a period of almost 2 months I traveled by car 9800 miles visiting 9 Catholic Worker Houses and 8 National Parks.

What a beautiful and gorgeous trip I had. God really blessed me in every way. I do want to share some experiences I had visiting the Catholic Worker Houses and to draw some impressions. My first stop was only 260 miles from Rochester at St. Herman’s House of Hospitality in Cleveland. It’s a monastery run by a Ukrainian Orthodox priest, Fr. John Henry. Father was one of the co-founders 25 years ago. St. Herman’s is modeled after the work of Dorothy and Peter Maurin and inspired by Catherine Doherty (a close friend of Dorothy’s who in 1947 established the spiritual centre in Ontario, Canada, the Madonna House Apostolate).

They welcome the homeless and can accommodate up to 40 guests who can stay as long as they need until they make other arrangements.. They have a close community with many of the guests becoming staff-volunteers helping to feed over 200 meals a day, operate a men’s clothing room and offer food bags for people in the neighborhood. I had a little adjustment with the monastery environment for the residents wake up each morning around 4AM and attend the Orthodox service at 5:30. Fr. Henry offered me to sleep in, but I got up at 5:15AM and attended the service which lasted over 1hour and 15 minutes. Fr. Henry and the staff were very hospitable to me.

While I visited with my daughter and other family members in Phoenix, I took the opportunity to visit the Phoenix CW. I was surprised at the volume of guests that they served daily. I was on the soup line for dinner when we served over 600 men, women and families

Both Los Angeles and San Francisco CW's served a mid-morning brunch to over 600 at each location. The Worker communities were very well organized and the facilities were spotlessly clean and creatively decorated. LA was the most unique with a showcase of exotic birds and a display wall of saint's pictures. The daily newspaper estimated 75,000 homeless in the city.

My menial meal tasks were serving beans, handing out fruit cups, slicing and cubing bread and washing dishes. I can remember being exhausted after 2 hours at each location and being a little sad that I didn't interact with any of the guests. Of course with serving that many people it leaves very little time to give people individual attention. I missed St Joe's on that account because in our hospitality area we work with the guests one on one. It seems much more rewarding getting to know and forming relationships with the guests than merely serving them on the food line.

In between LA and San Francisco was a visit to CW House in Fresno, CA., called St. Benedict. This is a small House run by Lisa and Bryan out of their home. Three days a week Lisa with other volunteers serve a supper on the front steps at the local county jail, serving inmate visitors, the poor and guards numbering up to 200 a night. When I arrived at their house just before Labor Day, Lisa and her husband were preparing a report to the court for distributing \$1.5 million, a settlement won from the city, to compensate the homeless men and women who had their belongings in a park thrown away and destroyed by the local police without proper warning and provocation. Their spirit for justice for the poor was heartfelt.

After San Francisco and the beautiful redwood forests I arrived in Portland, Oregon, the CW House called the Whitefeather Peace Community. This Worker community was established by Tom Hastings, a professor at Portland State University in 2005. in the spirit of nonviolence, and the spirit of resistance to war, militarism and injustice. I arrived at an inopportune time because Tom and his co-worker Rhoda were diligently preparing for a rally and conference entitled "Take Back 9.11 For Nonviolence" featuring prominent activists from around the country including Kathy Kelly, founder of Voices in the Wilderness, from Chicago.

After a nights stay, I headed to Stevensville, Montana and the Bitterroot CW Farm. This CW farm is run by Becky Bishop and her husband. They have a beautiful house surrounded by the Bitterroot Mountains. Their ministry is offering retreats to other Catholic workers like myself. I had a wonderful relaxing time spending most of it visiting and camping in Glacier and Yosemite National Parks both in close proximity.

One thing all the Worker Houses had in common was their hospitality not only to me but to those in need. The principal awareness I have from the trip is that I am so grateful to be a Catholic Worker. Surely God is blessing our movement.



Tom in Portland at Whitefeather Catholic Worker Community

Continued from page 1
ecological equilibrium. All hidden costs of doing business, all benefits for the community, and all beings will have a place on the balance sheet.

Right now Peter would urge us to seize the chance to move the new society forward. Times of turmoil and great loss reveal a window of opportunity, a sightline on a better way of doing business. The Catholic Worker must link with other groups which are endeavoring to create a new society within the shell of the old, with the homesteading movement, the organic movement, the community-supported-agriculture movement, craft cooperatives, and others to give people hope that an alternative world is possible. Our lives and communities will be seeds of the new order. In the darkness and troubles ahead, some of these seeds shall flourish, and bloom into a loving society, one in which it is easier to be good.

Calendar

Nov 21-23 SOA Watch at Fort Benning
Nov 23 Pax Christi Vigil at the Cathedral
Nov 27 Thanksgiving at St Joe's
Dec 14 Foot & Hair clinic
Dec 25 Christmas dinner at St Joe's
Jan 25 Foot & Hair clinic

St. Joseph's House of Hospitality
Rochester Catholic Worker Community

Some of us live in houses; some of us live on the street; some of us have a room of our own, or a bed and a place to keep; some of us have a cot or piece of a couch or patch of floor to return to each night; some hold special positions of power and roles with specific responsibilities, some do whatever they can. Our aim is to try each day to "build a new society in the shell of the old" as we practice the various works of mercy and labor with whatever resources, physical as well as spiritual, that we have been given at the time.

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House Needs:

Prayers	SUGAR	GLOVES	Blankets/sleeping bags	Bath Towels
Butter/Margarine	Boots/Sneakers	Hats	Hoodies	Socks
Laundry Soap Powder	Winter Coats	Jeans/Cords	39 gal trash bags	Foot powder
Baked Beans	Jelly/Jam	Mens underwear (32-44)	Sweaters/hoodies	Paper towels
Razors	Toothbrushes/paste			

Volunteer Opportunity
To Help Staff the
Night Shelter.
Will Train.
Can Sleep on the Job!
Plenty of choice hours.
Good supervision.
Call Brent at 232-3262

Celebrants for
5:00 PM Tuesday Ecumenical Service

We suggest that you call the House in case the service time or celebrant has been changed.

Nov	11	Deacon Bill Coffey
Nov	18	Fr. Bill Donnelly
Nov	25	Rev. Lawrence Hargrave
Dec	2	Fr. Bob Worth
Dec	9	Fr. Jim Callan
Dec	16	Mae Lee
Dec	23	Deacon Bill Coffey
Dec	30	Fr. Larry Tracy
Jan	6	Chava Redonnet
Jan	13	Minister Sandra Whalen
Jan	20	Fr. Dick O'Connell
Jan	27	Craig Bullock
Feb	3	Fr. Larry Tracy
Feb	10	Deacon Tom Cleary
Feb	17	Myra Brown
Feb	24	Brother Luis Jr. Diaz
Mar	3	Fr. Bob Worth