



nova notes

NOVA Catholic Community

April 2011

Chair Notes...

As I prepared to sit down and write these notes, I began to wonder if I was being presumptuous, wondering how I could say anything worthwhile. Aside from summarizing what's been going on in the community, who am I, what do I see or understand, what could I say to enlighten anyone else?

So I went for a walk in the woods nearby and thought about presumption.

As I looked ahead, I saw thousands of reddish splotches, clustered high up in the trees. I presumed they were new oak blossoms. Beside the path, forsythia bushes wore bright yellow flowers, and green shoots rose up out of the ground, and so I presumed, in spite of the return of downright cold temperatures this week, spring is really here.

Thus our Lenten theme, Green Shoots, comes to mind. Green Shoots, challenging us to push through the hard crust of earth and leaves. We are urged to push—even while clinging to only bits of hope, even when desperate at times—to find a way, to see a glimpse of light, to feel the warmth of the sun. Not to mention to share that hope with others. I remembered Gerry Stockhausen's recitation of the poem about being "crocus-minded"—encouraging us to be brave, resistant to compromise and detours in our quest for the light.

But how can I keep pushing upward when I've hardly got my eyes open and the morning headlines scream about the violent, unpredictable and out-of-control world around us? Even if there weren't nasty politics, the revolutions and earthquakes, tsunamis and the threat of nuclear disaster, my knees hurt, my neighbor's got cancer, I'm worried about grandkids and Richard Engle, and on and on. I'm not sure what else I can handle. Not to mention that we're hurling through space at millions of miles a minute among billions of spinning galaxies. Thanks a bunch, Dan

Madigan, for reminding us on Sunday that we are mere specks in a massive, unstable whirlpool of stars and solar systems. I think I'd rather stay in bed. It would be so much easier than pushing upward like those green shoots. It would be so much easier to presume that every cause is hopeless, and what can a speck like me do about it anyhow?

On second thought, Dan also reminded us that God speaks to us in quiet whispers, not in the great wind, and he urged us to think of God's presence not as the far-away, Great Almighty, but as the God revealed to us in Jesus – as "God Among Us," who is prepared to bear our suffering and our insignificance with us, but also help us grow.

And so we presume to have hope. We presume that if we keep pushing, like the green shoots, we will break through the crusty, dry debris, through the pain and confusion, and find the light and grow tall in the warmth of spring, even if we don't know for sure when it's here to stay. And to be transformed, as Dan said, in the warmth of God's love and care, which we know for sure is here to stay.

We know for sure that every seat will be filled at the tables on Holy Thursday evening, so reserve your seats in advance. Details about Holy Week and Easter Sunday are on page 5. In the meantime, let us continue to push like the green shoots toward renewed hope and purpose.

Calling Forth. During the next few weeks, the community will prepare for the Calling Forth meeting to be held May 14. We are all asked to spend time in prayer and thoughtful reflection about who we would like to serve as Co-Chair with Teddi Ahrens in the coming year. Please submit one or two names and why you recommend them to the current chairs by the end of April. (See page 16 for list of co-chairpersons over the past decade.)

~ Teddi Ahrens, Co-Chair

April Birthdays

NOVA Message Line	(703) 852-7907
Chairpersons	Tom Clarkson Teddi Ahrens
Treasurer	Joe Formoso
Coordinator, Community Life	Cece Michelotti
Liturgy Coordinator	Gloria Mog
Padre Cadre Coordinator	John Mooney
Music Coordinator	Victoria Robinson
Peace and Justice Coordinators	Dianne Carroll Marie Keefe
Christ House Coordinator	Kopp Michelotti
Facilities	Glen Passin
Directory & Yahoo Groups Coordinator; Webmaster	Ken Chaison
Newsletter Editor	Judy Christofferson

The NOVA Catholic Community invites you to celebrate the Eucharistic liturgy with us every Sunday in Arlington, Virginia.

Note: Our Liturgy is usually celebrated at Kenmore Middle School, Arlington Blvd. and Carlin Springs Road, Arlington, VA. Beginning Memorial Day weekend up to our Fall Retreat weekend in September, we celebrate at Lacey Woods Park, George Mason Drive near Washington Blvd., unless otherwise noted.

Liturgies at Kenmore begin at 10:15 a.m.
Gather at 10:00 a.m.
Liturgies at Lacey Woods begin at 9:30 a.m.
Gather at 9:15 am

Call the Message Line (above) or check the NOVA website for the latest information.

2	Chris Egbulum
3	John Marron
5	David Meyer Steve Michelotti
7	Archer Heinzen
10	Victoria Robinson
12	Meg Tuccillo
13	Maureen Flood Tom Hayes Timothy Showalter
18	Jim Weber
25	Kopp Michelotti
27	Jason Powell

Please send Judy Christofferson your birthday if you would like it to appear here (month/day only).

NOVA is praying for. . .

Eve Birch, who is looking for a home and items to provide temporary housing for the homeless.

Judy Christofferson, who is recovering from a broken ankle

Sonja Donahue, who appreciates a card, a call or a visit.

Jody Furlong, who would also appreciate a phone call or note.

Remember these and any other NOVA members and their friends and family who need our prayers.

**May Newsletter Deadline:
Monday, April 25**

Liturgies: Cycle A

Inclusive Readings and Music Selections are available in the new NOVA Yahoo Group Files.
Please give all music selections to the Music Liaison the Sunday before your liturgy and print 65 copies of the liturgy program. Liturgies at Kenmore begin at 10:15 a.m. and at 9:30 at Lacey Woods Park.

April Music Liaison Tim White

April 3 – 4th Sunday of Lent

Quinn Connors, O.Carm. – Barbara & Joe Formoso
1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a
Psalm 23
Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41

April 10 – 5th Sunday of Lent

Dan Madigan, SJ – Jeanne Clarkson
Ezekiel 37:12-14
Psalm 130
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45

April 17 – Palm Sunday

Joe Nangle, OFM – Helen Michie, Marie Keefe,
and others
Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm 22
Philippians 2:6-11
Matthew 26:14-27

April 21 – Holy Thursday Mass & Meal
Center for Spiritual Enlightenment - 7:00 p.m.
Gerry Stockhausen, SJ – Holy Thursday Team

April 22 – Good Friday

Kenmore Middle School – 8:00 p.m.
Meg Tuccillo

April 24 – Easter Sunday

Goodwin House Baileys Crossroads – 10 a.m.
Gerry Stockhausen, SJ – Gloria Mog & Tim White
Acts 10:34a, 37-43
Psalm 118
1 Corinthians 5:6b-8
John 20:1-9

May Music Liaison Gloria Mog

May 1 – 2nd Sunday of Easter

Jim Hug, SJ – Cece & Kopp Michelotti
Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 118
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

May 8 – 3rd Sunday of Easter

Quinn Connors, O.Carm. – Amy & Charlie Bailey
Acts 2:14, 22-33
Psalm 16
1 Peter 1:17-21
Luke 24:13-35

May 15 – 4th Sunday of Easter

Joe Nangle, OFM – Cackley Family
Acts 2:14a, 36-41
Psalm 23
1 Peter 2:20b-25
John 10:1-10

May 22 – 5th Sunday of Easter

Joe Kenna – Archer & Jim Heinzen
Acts 6:1-7
Psalm 33
1 Peter 2:4-9
John 14:1-12

May 29 – 6th Sunday of Easter

First Sunday in the Park – 9:30 a.m.
Joe Kenna – Victoria Robinson
Acts 8:5-8, 14-17
Psalm 66
1 Peter 3:15-18
John 14:15-21

Please Help: Two additional liturgy planners are needed for **July 3 and August 7**. Contact Gloria Mog if you can take either of these dates.

SOCIAL ACTION PROJECTS

Gunston Volunteers Needed

NOVA volunteers distribute bags of non-perishable food, cereal provided by the Community, and perishable items such as eggs, milk, and meat that are picked up at the Arlington Food Assistance Center warehouse on the night of distribution. Produce items are picked up every other week by Eric Carroll at the produce markets downtown (and funded by the NOVA Peace and Justice budget). The distribution takes place at the Gunston Middle School Recreation Center in Arlington. Many volunteers have been active in this project for a lot of years. Every Thursday there is a seasoned volunteer, so this is your chance to try out your skills. Having someone who speaks Spanish is a real plus for each of the teams. If you are interested in being a volunteer, email Dianne Carroll at: diacarroll@comcast.net or call her at 703-536-2616.

April Gunston Schedule:

April 7: Eric, Paul/Brandon Timpane

April 14: Tim, Jerry

April 21: NOVA Holy Thursday - Syd/Peg

April 28: Glen, Syd

Winter Emergency Overflow Shelter

From January to March the Church of Saint Clement in Alexandria operates as an emergency overflow winter shelter to support Carpenter's Shelter. Every other Monday, two NOVA volunteers were on duty: welcoming the guests, helping them get comfortable for the night, remaining in the church sanctuary with the guests for the night and bidding them a good day in the morning.

A big thank you this year to: Jerry Barrett, Eric Carroll, Michael and Joe Kane, Kopp Michelotti, Ted Miller, David Mog, Marie Pinho, Jason Powell, Anna Reich, and Ray Tarasovic.

Marilynn Wilson, coordinator of the St. Clements Shelter, wrote "You provided wonderful hosts for

our St Clement Overflow Hypothermia Shelter so that an average of 10 or 12 men a night could have a more comfortable place to sleep during the coldest part of the winter. I hope you and all your volunteers feel good about what you have accomplished. We at St. Clement certainly appreciate each of you and all your efforts in lining up volunteers and keeping the schedule filled all season. Your hosts were great and without you and them, we couldn't do what we collectively do for these men each year in the cold of winter.

Thank you. May God bless you all for your generosity of both time and spirit."

Christ House

April Showers? No, April is for Meatloaf!

On Monday, April 18, NOVA will prepare and serve meatloaf and scalloped potatoes to the hungry clients at Christ House. Please mark your calendars to **remember to bring your meatloaves and spuds to liturgy on April 17.** Alternatively, you may drop them off at the Michelotti's anytime on Sunday or up till 1:00 p.m. on Monday, the 18th. Just leave them in the coolers on the front porch at 6325 19th Street N., Arlington.

If you'd like to get involved in the kitchen, please call or e-mail Kopp Michelotti (703-241-0789, koppmich@yahoo.com) or Ken Chaison (301-571-8180, kenchaison@yahoo.com). We start food preparation around 4:00 p.m.

Before your calendars get too crowded, here are **NOVA's Christ House dates for the rest of 2011:** April 18, June 20, August 15, October 17, and December 19.

~Kopp Michelotti

Note: See list of 2011 Peace and Social Justice Committee projects on page 7 an application for a one-time 2011 project on page 8.

UPCOMING EVENTS

HOLY WEEK 2011 NOVA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY



HOLY THURSDAY, April 21

Where: The Center for Spiritual Enlightenment (formerly the Woman's Club of Falls Church) 222 N. Washington Street, Falls Church, one block north of Route 7

Time: Gather: 6:30-6:45 p.m. Liturgy: 7:00 p.m.

Presider: Gerry Stockhausen, SJ

This is the one NOVA occasion where space is limited and an RSVP is required. Please call Cathy Goldschmidt at (703) 527-7447 or email her at: cmgolds@comcast.net by April 17 to let her know how many will attend and to receive your meal assignment. Thanks!

GOOD FRIDAY, April 22

Where: Kenmore Middle School,
Black Box Theater

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Planner: Meg Tuccillo



EASTER SUNDAY, April 24

Where: Goodwin House Bailey's Crossroads
3440 S. Jefferson St. Falls Church
between Columbia Pike and Leesburg Pike

Time: 10:00 – gathering 10:15 – Liturgy

Presider: Gerry Stockhausen, SJ

Things to bring:

Easter flowers to decorate the altar (by 10:00 a.m.)

Finger food to share for the Agape after liturgy

Bells to ring for the liturgy

~ Gloria Mog, Liturgy Coordinator



ADDITIONAL UPCOMING EVENTS



GENERAL MEETING

When: Saturday, May 14 at 7:00 p.m.
Where: Rose and Jerry Barrett's social room.
 200 N, Maple Street, Falls Church
Please bring snacks to share. -See example on left.*

(*Editor: Just kidding – photo from Men Who Cook event)

UUCF Social Justice Yard Sale

Saturday, May 7, 2011 7 a.m.-1 p.m.

2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton, VA 22124

We're Welcoming Pre-Sorted Donations

Wednesday, May 4, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
 Thursday, May 5, 9 a.m.- 8 p.m.
 Friday, May 6, 9 a.m. to **12 noon**
No donations on Yard Sale Day please!

Questions? Want to help?
 Contact : lkozloff@verizon.net
 Furniture moves: rloustaunau@cox.net

- Pants, Jackets, skirts on hangers, all else folded
- Toys & children's clothes/ shoes
- housewares (dishes, flatware)
- books, c.d.s, DVD's & cassettes
- small appliances & electronics
- tools & yard equipment
- jewelry & accessories, shoes
- Decorative & holiday items

- sports & exercise equipment
- linens, fabric & drapes
- artwork & frames
- computers < 3 years old
- Office equipment and desk supplies
- luggage
- clean, solid furniture
- **No** soiled, worn-out or ripped stuff!

Sorry, we cannot accept encyclopedias, textbooks, manuals, record albums, stuffed animals, Nordic Track and treadmills, heavy weights, infant & child car seats, TV sets, sofa beds, large entertainment units, cribs, mattresses, Christmas trees, large inflatables, bunk beds, major appliances, or tires.

Church Yard Sale

Important!

All proceeds go to our social justice projects (Our Daily Bread, Partner Church Circle, Mosaic Harmony & The Shepherd Center). We don't want to lose profits to disposal of unsold merchandise. **Please, donate only gently-used and sellable items.**

~ Submitted by Victoria Robinson

2011 NOVA PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE PROJECTS

Nova Projects for 2011 and Per Month Amounts

Each project has a NOVA person as its coordinator. He/she has an active relationship with the project and serves as an objective advocate for the project including monitoring how adequately NOVA is fulfilling its commitment to the project. This NOVA Coordinator writes a brief end of year report informing the community of the current status of the project and how the money is used. All project monies come from general funds except for those with *asterisks, which are designated donations of individual Nova members with community approval. ~ Dianne Carroll

AACH (Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless)	\$200	Kopp Michelotti
ACTION AFRICA	\$250	Marie Keefe
AMANACER SALOMON KLEIN	\$175	Emma Violand-Sanchez
AFAC (Arlington Food Assistance Center)	\$100	Dianne Carroll
ASPAN (Arlington Street People's Assistance Network)	\$100	Meg Tuccillo
*BOLIVIAN FAMILY SUPPORT	\$60	Linda Rosenberg
CAMBONI SISTERS/Sister Adriana Tovar	\$100	Carolyn Miller
CENTER OF CONCERN	\$75	Jim Hug
CO-PARTNERS OF CAMPESINAS	\$75	Archer Heinzen
DREAM PROJECT	\$75	Emma Violand-Sanchez
ESCUELA BOLIVIA	\$100	Emma Violand-Sanchez
GREENWELL	\$100	John Tarrant
HANDICAPPED ENCOUNTER CHRIST	\$75	Bill Meyer
HOMELESS PREVENTION/RENTAL ASSISTANCE	\$200	Dianne Carroll (Jenny Carroll, administrator)
HOLY CROSS ABBEY	\$25	Mike Timpane/Marie Pinho
NEW COMMUNITY CHURCH	\$50	Jim Weber
UGANDA PROJECT	\$150	John Veldhuis
NOVA FOOD PROJECT	\$475	Eric Carroll
PRISON MINISTRY OF REV. VALERIE DIXON	\$75	Rosemarie Annunziata
THE JOHN XXIII INSTITUTE (formerly Quest for Peace)	\$200	John Mooney
VOICE OF THE FAITHFUL	\$25	Bernie Byrne
WOC (Women's Ordination Conference)	\$50	Nancy Veldhuis
BREAD FOR THE WORLD:	\$150/year	Peggy Meyer
ARLINGTON INTERFAITH:	\$100/year	Kopp Michelotti
COMMUNITIES OF FAITH UNITED FOR HOUSING	\$100/year	Helen Michie
CHRIST HOUSE (reimbursement for food)	\$200/year	Kopp Michelotti
V.O.I.C.E. ¹	\$600/year.	Nancy & John Veldhuis

¹based on 1% of operating budget paid for 2011 and \$330.00 additional based on 1%

Projects which were dropped during and ending in 2010 at the request of the coordinator: Nonviolent Peaceforce, Zambia Ministry of Peter Henriot, SJ, Bethany House, HOPE, Kenmore Project for a total of \$500/month

2011 PROJECT PROPOSAL APPLICATION

2011 Peace and Social Justice Project Parameters:

Who can apply?	Any member of NOVA
What?	A one-time project, funded for one year
How?	Write a proposal by answering application questions Email to mlkeefe@verizon.net
Funding?	\$5,000-10,000 range
When?	Proposals due May 15 Available for community review May 22 NOVA Decision Meeting on June 5

2011 PROJECT PROPOSAL APPLICATION

Name of Project:

One-line Description: A project to do _____

Proposed By:

PROJECT RATIONALE

What is the need this project addresses?

Who will be served by this project? (# of people and characteristics, if relevant)

How will this project make a difference? What is its impact?

Is NOVA funding critical to this project?

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Who will carry out the project?

Please describe the process for carrying out the project. (Who does what?)

What is the timeline for carrying out the project?

FUNDING

What is the cost?

What is the timetable for funding? (Will funding be needed up front? throughout the year? in a single shot?)

Who will manage the money, be accountable?

NOVA INVOLVEMENT

How can NOVA be connected or have a relationship with the project?

Submit to mlkeefe@verizon.net by May 15. A limit of 5 pages.

This form will be available on the website: www.novacommunity.info

FEBRUARY AND MARCH NOVA MEETING SUMMARIES

SUMMARY NOTES FROM THE NOVA GENERAL MEETING, FEBRUARY 26, 2011

Co-chairs Tom Clarkson and Teddi Ahrens welcomed 26 NOVA folks to the Barrett's social room on Sunday evening, and Teddi opened the meeting with a prayer.

Agenda Item 1: a review of the Calling Forth Process. Gloria Mog described the background and need for a more respectful and inspired process to select our co-chairpersons as an alternative to the "whoever is left standing" approach. Begun last spring, a committee was appointed, and a time of prayer and discernment was designated for the community to consider themselves or others to become a co-chairperson. Candidates were considered on the basis of the number of recommendations they received. Last year, the committee consulted the six candidates who received two or more recommendations, and in the end, one candidate allowed her name to be submitted to the community.

After questions about the process and the committee membership were answered, those present agreed that this approach allowed time for a thoughtful and prayerful discernment to take place. The new Calling Forth Process was unanimously endorsed and adopted to be NOVA's way of selecting co-chairs from now on.

Agenda Item 2: Strengthening Community Life - Ken Chaison reviewed points from the June general meeting which raised the question: "Should NOVA do more to attract and retain new and/or younger members?" and the progress made since then. He pointed out the challenge/goal which emerged from that discussion was Strengthening Community Life in place of the original question.

Three priorities for action to strengthen NOVA's community life were highlighted:

1. To expand our publicity and outreach to others.
2. To strengthen our community life with vibrant liturgy, deepening spiritual development, social action projects, and attentive caring for and grieving with each other.
3. To commit the community to reinvigorate programs for young people (e.g., religious education, affirmation activities, child care)

Although there is concern about "waning" energies in the community, progress has been made in some ways, but not with regard to our programs for young people. However, in terms of outreach, NOVA has its own website, Facebook and Twitter accounts, is active on the small Catholic communities' website, and continues to improve its visibility. Community life is being revitalized both through the new Tables of Six groups, the exciting new social action micro-financing project, and the Men Who Cook fundraising event.

The lack of progress in attracting young people or newcomers to NOVA stimulated thoughtful comments and discussion. Several people mentioned that young people seem less committed or focused on liturgy and ritual, but that they are yearning for a place to explore the spiritual questions and needs they have. It was suggested that NOVA should be less focused on self-preservation and more on responding to the yearning that definitely exists among young people and others. The group was urged to ask questions and to provide space and opportunities for people to explore the answers. Others added that our search for a new worship space is pertinent – that we consider searching for a worship space where we could also offer a gathering place or drop-in center, where activities such as adult education/discussion groups for teens, singles, others could take place. It was noted that many of us would appreciate a space where we could linger and socialize after the liturgy.

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Agenda Item 3: Survey sent out by the Space Explorers Committee - John Tarrant and Marlene Shade reported on the results of the survey. Fifty-one respondents answered the questions on the survey, and overall, they were divided almost in half in terms of being satisfied with Kenmore as worship space (27) or wanting a different place (23). Everyone (51) said that they go to the park for liturgies during the summer in spite of its difficulties (bugs, physical discomfort) because it is such a beautiful space. Looking at copies of the summary of the survey responses, people noted that whatever the Explorers find, a new space must be better than Kenmore and offer something that is missing at Kenmore. It was also noted that it is possible that when some NOVA members are offered a specific, concrete alternative to Kenmore—something more or better— they may change their minds and decide they prefer a different place after all.

Of the ten basic requirements suggested for any worship space, all but two items were rated 3 and 4 in importance (4 being the highest). Even those two items: custodial service and time availability were rated important by more than half of respondents.

The Space Explorers were urged to use listserv opportunities to find places/groups/congregations looking for a group to rent or share its space.

Agenda Item 4: Alternative sites for NOVA Retreat - Jeanne Clarkson asked the group if they would be interested in looking for another place to have NOVA retreats in the future. This fall, the retreat is already scheduled to take place at Shrine Mont, but if the community wants to plan a retreat elsewhere, research must begin now because reservations must be made well in advance. After some discussion about cost, accessibility, food, and suggestions for alternative places, the community agreed that they would be interested in getting information about other retreat centers. Suggestions and information about alternative places are welcome.

Agenda Item 5: Upcoming Peace and Social Justice Committee Meeting - In preparation for the discussion at the next General Meeting (March 27), Dianne Carroll and Marie Keefe handed out a summary chart of NOVA's Cash Flow, which shows how much NOVA collections have increased since 2008 and how much NOVA has increased its social action commitments during that same time period. 2008 income: \$ 89,888 and expenditures of \$ 91,051; 2010 income: \$103,435.70 and expenditures of \$ 93,090

Tom closed the meeting with a prayer at 9:45 p.m. (For more details of the meeting , please see the Minutes posted by Tom on the Yahoo listserv.)
~Teddi Ahrens, Co-Chair

2011 NOVA ANNUAL PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE MEETING SUMMARY

No report can accurately convey the roof-raising “Hip, Hip, Hooray” given for the Men Who Cook and their sung response in a fist-pumping rendition of their theme song. You had to be there!

The energy put forth kept up during a meeting covering our transition year in which we had new responsibilities for coordinators, reviewed projects, dropped 6 projects, entertained funding increases in 3, considered 3 new ongoing project proposals and tried out a large-scale project.

It is very complicated to move from a way of thinking about and funding projects that simply grew like Topsy, to one in which we are trying to look at all our resources as a whole and amplify our impact, especially in a community that uses a consensus process. NOVA's willingness to bear with the complexities and to try to be of service yielded very practical results: VOICE, Nova Food Project and Co-Partners received additional funding. Of the three new proposals, consensus was reached on funding only one on a monthly basis – The Dream Act,

(continued on next page)

which will include NOVA members working to create an event to form a relationship with project students and help raise funds. More information was requested for the Women's Global Education Project so that consensus might be reached. Eve's Homeless work was widely discussed and the final assistance was offered in the form of a collection and volunteers to help Teddi plan.

The community then enthusiastically agreed to do another large-scale project, after offering Men Who Cook some helpful feedback. Project parameters and an application form appear in this newsletter (See page 8) and on the website.

Kudos to all of NOVA for your willingness to experiment and try new ways of serving. And may we all pray as we did several times during the meeting: *God of justice, open our minds and hearts to the way in which you continue to call this community to be your voice against injustice in the world.* ~ Marie Keefe

Peace & Social Justice Committee Members: Joe Annunziata, Dianne and Eric Carroll, Marie Keefe, Kopp and Cece Michelotti, Meg Tuccillo, John Veldhuis, Tim White.

FEEDBACK ON TABLES OF SIX

Delightful, enjoyable evening, lively conversation.....these are some of the expressions used to describe NOVA's first round experience with the Tables of Six (or Four or Eight). Two Tables invited everyone to bring a photo or two: in one case, a childhood photo representing something important about who they are now and in the other case, a picture as a baby, on vacation, or with family that would help others get to know them better – which led to conversation about families, siblings and where they grew up. Other Tables found that the conversation developed naturally from the primary interest of learning more about each other. One Table compared their years in NOVA, ranging from 2-43 years. Another finished up the evening watching the President's State of the Union address together.

For their next gathering, one second-round host is creating a "flavor of community" by having everyone bring an ingredient for paella and they will prepare the dish together on an outside grill. Tips from the first round: 1) Planning is critical. NOVA members are a busy, active, traveling bunch and finding a date in common often takes a great deal of planning. Some tables decided to meet every 6-8 weeks, at the end of the evening chose a second round host who will work on polling the group for a date that works for the Table, and/or chose the next date at the end of the first evening. 2) One first round hostess recommends that the Table or host choose a theme/ice breaker/focus for the evening, which really helps deepen the experience. It seems that each Table is finding its own way of getting to know each other. If you weren't able to sign-up on a regular basis for Tables of Six but might be available to fill out a Table on occasion, please contact Nancy Veldhuis, (703) 370-5070 or n_veld_2000@yahoo.com. ~ Nancy Veldhuis



THANK YOU LETTER



Women's Ordination Conference

A Voice for Women in the Catholic Church

February 23, 2011

Nancy Veldhuis
NOVA Catholic Community
4400 Kirchner Ct
Alexandria, VA 22304-1028

Thank you for your gift to WOC!

Dear Friends at NOVA,

Your support of the Women's Ordination Conference is a valued blessing. Your financial contributions strengthen our work for women's justice in the Catholic Church.

Thank you for giving a total of \$600 in 2010!

Your generosity allows us to expand our advocacy for women's ordination into an inclusive and accountable Church. You are helping us reach our goals and make our programs a reality.

Your financial support, your activism, and your shared commitment to a more just Catholic Church keep WOC going strong. Together, we have a vital role in the future of the values and practices of our church. Thank you for all that you do.

*Thank you for your
support, Nancy! So
glad to meet you!*

Blessings for peace and justice,

Erin

Erin Saiz Hanna
Executive Director

P.S. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at (202) 675-1006 or ehanna@womensordination.org.

No goods or services have been provided by WOC in exchange for this gift. WOC is a 501(c)3 organization and all contributions are tax-deductible. Please retain this for your tax records.

P. O. Box 15057 Washington, DC 20003 • Tel (202) 675-1006 • Fax (202) 675-1008 • www.womensordination.org • woc@womensordination.org

CREATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM NOVA MEMBERS

On March 5, Archer spoke to the Grandmothers Who Stand for Peace and then to the whole community and asked: "What does this require of us?" We could not think of something effective to do other than keep them in our circle of prayer, despite our deep despair. So to you, in helpless witness:

A "Miscommunication"

Nine little boys scavenge
For the scarce wood,
Fuel for mothers' cooking fires.
Helicopters overhead split the sky
With the harsh din of vigilance.
"Take care my lovely son,
Of the main road, of explosives.
Come back to me safely."

Nine little boys scamper
Over rock and rubble
Happy to flee dark interiors,
Watchful eyes of fearful folks.
Hearts leap to the throb
Of rotating blades and engine thud.

Young faces raise with curiosity,
Excitement stirred by the guardian birds.

A scream of bullets shatter
Rock and flesh, bone and earth.

Only bits on the blood-soaked terrain
A finger, a foot, a piece of cheek.

Oh my lovely son,
My heart's delight!

An airman hears the echo,
Of his mother's parting words:
"Take care my lovely son!
Return to me safely."
And buries his face
In hands that tremble
With the living nightmare
Of his unbearable mistake:
Nine little boys shattered.

A country mourns.
A nation apologizes.
No mother's son returns home safe.

~Marie Keefe 3/6/11



NOTE: Photo collage on following page created by Dianne Carroll



Stouthearted Cooks

You who have dreams
 If you act, they'll come true
 To turn your dreams to a fact
 It's up to you
 If you have the soul and the spirit
 Never fear it, you'll see it through
 Hearts can inspire
 Other hearts with their fire
 For the strong obey
 When a strong man shows them the way



Chorus:

We are the men, yes the stouthearted men
 Who have cooked up this food we adore.
 Meat and potatoes and rice and tomatoes,
 and gumbo and salmon and more!

Our spices are placid, so no stomach acid
 We knew you'd be begging for more.
 NOW we need someone who can
 Help wash the pots and pans,
 SO stouthearted men
 Can cook together, man to man.



Piano plays first two lines of main tune again, then we sing again:



NOW we need someone who can
 Help wash the pots and pans,
 SO stouthearted men
 Can cook together, man to man



Exit to wild applause



Crocus-Minded*

by Jo Sorley

It takes courage to be crocus-minded.

God, I'd rather wait until June,
Like wise roses,
When the hazards of winter are safely behind,
and I'm expected,
and everything's ready for roses.

But crocuses?
Highly irregular.

Knifing through hard-frozen ground and snow,
and sticking their necks out,
because they believe in spring
and have something personal and emphatic to say about it.

God, I am by nature rose-minded.
Even when I have studied the situation here
and know there are wrongs that need righting,
affirmations that need stating,
and know also that my speaking out may offend...
for it rocks the boat...
Well, I'd rather wait until June.
Maybe later things will work themselves out,
and we won't have to make an issue of it.

God, forgive,
Wrongs don't work themselves out.
Injustices and inequities and hurts don't just dissolve.
Somebody has to stick her neck out,
Somebody who cares enough to think through and work through hard ground,
because she believes and has something personal and emphatic to say about it.

Me God?

Crocus-minded?

Could it be that there are things that need to be said, and you want me to say them?
I pray for courage.



*Introduced by Father Stockhausen in homily on First Sunday of Lent

~Submitted by Ken Chaison

NOVA CHAIRPERSONS SINCE 2000

Gloria Mog suggested that it might be helpful for NOVA members to keep in mind those who have served as chairpersons in past years when they considering others they would like to ask to serve as a co-chair with Teddi Ahrens in the coming year. The list below includes those who have served during the past ten years.

Year	Chairpersons
2000-2001	Anne Passin and Nicco Mele
2001-2002	Anne Passin and Sonja Donahue
2002-2003	Jeanne Clarkson and Chris Massey
2003-2004	Jeanne Clarkson and Chris Massey
2004-2005	Marceline Niemann, Marie Keefe, and Ken Chaison
2005-2006	Marceline Niemann, Marie Keefe, and John Tarrant
2006-2007	John Tarrant and John and Nancy Veldhuis
2007-2008	Eric Carroll and John and Nancy Veldhuis
2008-2009	Eric Carroll and Gloria Mog
2009-2010	Gloria Mog and Tom Clarkson
2010-2011	Tom Clarkson and Teddi Ahrens



Catherine and Clyde receive blessing as communion ministers



Some of NOVA's volunteers at Oral Rehydration Project: (clockwise from left) Jack, Linda, Ted, Victoria, Carolyn, Alicia, Ana

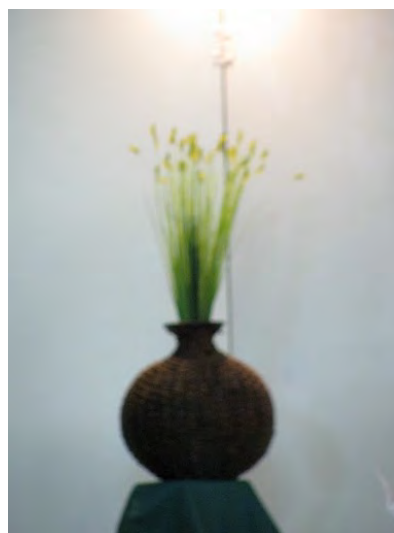
PHOTOS FROM RECENT LITURGIES



Enhancing the environment



A few of the "Novatones" - Bill, Jack and Barbara



Left to right: Larry, Emma, Catherine, Father Joe Kenna, Jim and Cathy

Theology for a Small Planet

Prior Essays

A collection of essays by Clyde Christofferson © 2009-2011

Implications of being a Small Planet – Part 3: 1, 2, 3, ...

Paul (1 Corinthians 13:8-12) *“Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. When I was a child I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”*

Einstein was asked, *“When will your theories of physics be accepted?”* He replied, *“When all those who have taught me physics have died.”*

We are slow to change. In the last essay in this series I suggested that this was because we struggle to maintain a coherent outlook. The young are more willing to examine new outlooks because they are still searching, but age takes a toll. If I have found a framework that works for me, why should I toss it over for a new idea?

So it should not surprise anyone that the Church – which has labored these past two thousand years to refine a way of looking at the world – is not inclined to change its view. Yet the book of nature – as made evident to us in the last fifty years – makes a compelling case for reexamination.

Why? Because – as the Church believes – the cosmos is God’s creation. And, if we both look closely and pray humbly, this creation may tell us something about who we are and why we are here. It is from within this framework of at least openness to a connection between the cosmos and the mystery of God’s creation that there emerges a compelling case for change in the way the Church looks at the world.

But the compelling case may well reach the institutional Church last, after it first reaches the faithful. Ken Himes once used a train metaphor to describe Vatican II: the train has left the station, and there are some shoveling coal into the boilers to make the train go faster, some are in the caboose applying the brakes, some are looking out the window at the scenery, and some are still on the station platform, shaking their fists at the departing train. Rome has a tendency to join with those in the caboose. Most charitably, the Church wants to slow change down so that those most resistant to change

will not be left behind. In any event, change will not come to the Church until it comes to the people served by the Church. Until the way you and I look at God adapts to the new teachings of the book of nature, the Church will be reluctant to rethink its current frame of reference.

Since before the time of Christ, at least as far back as Aristotle, serious minds looked to the stars for evidence of change, and found none. The evidence was there, but they couldn’t see it. Aristotle himself made a rather sophisticated judgment, based on lack of change in the relative position of stars from one season to another, that the Earth must be at the center of the universe. He was wrong, of course, but only because he had no idea how far away the stars were. As it turns out, the distances are enormous and, at the galactic level, increasing.

Change in the position of distant stars proceeds so slowly that it could not be seen by Aristotle – and can not be seen by us with the naked eye – in a lifetime or even a thousand lifetimes. The Hindu account of cyclical creation comes close to cosmic time scales by using metaphors that imaginatively extend time. For example, how long would it take to wear down a mountain if an eagle brushed its wing against the mountain once a year? But Western cosmology until the 1920s was content to suppose that the universe beyond our shining blue planet had always been and would always be essentially as it is.

Einstein inadvertently changed this outlook, as recounted in the first essay in this series. Einstein himself did not appreciate this implication of his General Theory of Relativity until he was

confronted with Hubble's evidence that distant galaxies were speeding away at a rate proportional to their distance. If this evidence is taken backward in time we come to the Big Bang, which was finally proven – again, inadvertently – by observation in 1964 of a low level of very cold (2.7 degrees above absolute zero, as measured on the Celsius scale) radiation coming from all directions. If you tune in to a blank television channel about ten percent of the white snow that you see is the cosmic background radiation. This is the evidence that Aristotle couldn't see.

A lot has happened – albeit very slowly – since the Big Bang. Is that change going anywhere? And does that change in the cosmos have any connection to what we hope for in a life to come?

Yes.

Many years ago I took a review course to prepare for an examination to practice law. One of the teachers advised us how to spend our preparation time economically. He said there are three levels of understanding of any area of law. First, there is glib understanding. Second, as you ponder the subject matter further, questions will arise and confusion will set in. Third, after further study you come to sublime understanding.

His advice? When you get to glib understanding, stop! This will be sufficient for the bar exam. It's time to husband your limited resources and move on to the next area of study.

This recollection came to mind as I reread passages from a book I first read more than forty years ago, *Insight* by Bernard Lonergan, S.J. Don't ask me now why I read this tome. I guess I was young, and looking for challenges. After all these years I recall very little, but I did remember a point Lonergan made that is relevant to understanding cosmic evolution. He said that understanding leads to insights that become a basis for another level of understanding, a new level of understanding that – because of the intervening insights – is essentially different from the earlier level.

I still have the book, and began to reread it, looking for these parts I remember. Lonergan resorts to a simple example – the transition from arithmetic to algebra – to make his point. In terms of his point (which is about scientific reductionism, which I will get to shortly) this example represents a “glib understanding” that is quite adequate for my

purposes. Lonergan constructed a simple table in order to define the positive integers:

$$1 + 1 = 2$$

$$2 + 1 = 3$$

$$3 + 1 = 4$$

etc., etc., etc. ...

And then he said the following: “*What, then, does the ‘etc., etc., etc.’ mean? It means that an insight should have occurred. If one has had the relevant insight, if one has caught on, if one sees how the defining can go on indefinitely, no more need be said. ... For in defining the positive integers there is no alternative to insight.*”¹

After a few more insights, algebra emerges. It is not necessary to go there. The above example is sufficient: there are insights between arithmetic and algebra. And you can't get to algebra from arithmetic without those insights; although you can understand the arithmetic embedded in algebra, you can't reduce algebra to arithmetic, because insights stand between them.

Stop! Hold that thought.

What do we see in the Big Bang? In the beginning all we see is physics. Chemistry – the interactions of atoms and the formation of molecules – doesn't enter reality until after stars form, burn out and collapse. Biology doesn't come into play until even later, after second and third generation star systems form under the force of gravity from the debris of supernova.

Think of physics, chemistry, and biology as something like the progression of 1, 2, 3 from Lonergan's table. Reductionist thinkers say that it's all physics: biology can be reduced to chemistry, and chemistry can be reduced to physics.

And what about consciousness? Reductionist thinkers argue that the mind is no more than the biological brain, and therefore in the end can also be reduced to physics. Lonergan explains this as follows: “*The force of this reductionism, however, is proportionate to the tendency to conceive the real as a subdivision of the ‘already out there now’.* When that tendency is rejected, reductionism vanishes.”²

Lonergan wrote before discovery of the Big Bang, yet his rejection of the notion that the “real” is merely a subdivision of the “already out there now” bears some resemblance to science's rejection of the common sense notion that the universe is expanding out into an empty space that is “already

out there now.” And yet this is what the physics of the Big Bang tells us: space itself is expanding – the cosmic background radiation has “cooled” from about three thousand degrees shortly after the Big Bang to about three degrees now, because space itself is expanding.

I will stick with the “glib understanding”: reductionists would say that the cosmos is “1, 2, 3” and nothing more – there is no “etc., etc., etc.” There is no further insight. But if a loving God is sharing existence with the likes of us, independent beings able to comprehend existence and love one another, then the progression “1, 2, 3” is pregnant with “etc., etc., etc.” The small kindnesses of everyday life are not incidental pleasantries but speak profoundly – like the cosmic background radiation – about who we are and why we are here.

There is a longer story about the philosophical struggle between reductionism and the notion of “emergence” (e.g. the emergence of algebra from arithmetic via a series of insights leading to what Lonergan calls a “higher viewpoint”³). In the 1920s there was a group of “British emergentist” philosophers who flowered for a time, and then went into eclipse until recent decades, when the idea reemerged. But that story, as well, is for another time.

The point here is that reductionists in science see the future as Lord Kelvin saw it – 1,2,3 is where we are and the future is 3,3,3, etc. all the way out. Essentially, it all comes down to physics. Even Stephen Hawking appears to be in this camp, judging from his latest book *The Grand Design*⁴. But this view of physics pushes God into a different reality. Historically, believers have joined in this dualistic view of reality.

But what if reality is one?

We now have a reason to think so. Before, the contrast between this world of pain and suffering and a just God demanded a separate heaven. If there were a God and a heaven, that is. In the tradition of Abraham this logic generated an explanatory story: Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden ate the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge, and were banished to the hardships of earth.

We can wonder what stories are being created by sentient beings elsewhere in the cosmos. They, too, were pregnant in the Big Bang. They, too, are of the same physics and chemistry. Their DNA

may take a different path, but it may well be DNA. They will have their own experience of the kindnesses of everyday life. And when they discover the Big Bang – and the evidence for the Big Bang is everywhere and “everywhen,” coursing through your body as you read this – they will have reason to know we are here, though they may never know who we are.

This gracious God of ours is awesome.

We have some taste of these other stories, because we have other stories right here on planet Earth. Other religious traditions have their own stories, and the stories are quite different.

So what about Jesus Christ? For those who follow the reductionists – it’s 3,3,3 all the way out – Christ is just another story. But if the cosmos is pregnant with further insights, then not only may Jesus be Christ but the truth may be more remarkable than the story we have received and are handing down to our children.

What does cosmic evolution – the handiwork of God – suggest to us (and to the other sentient civilizations throughout the cosmos)? Stories evolve, too. Because our understanding evolves, too. Because arithmetic evolves into algebra. Evolution is not about “mechanist determinism”⁵ (Lonergan’s expression for the assumption that the real is “already out there now”); it is about *insight*.

So, we need some better understanding of what we have come to call “revelation.” This is God’s cosmos, after all – if, indeed, that is what we believe. And if we believe this is God’s cosmos, we can look and see what the book of nature is telling us. The story is not “already out there now” – we have a pregnant cosmos.

Who is this Jesus Christ?

All right, slow down. I know this is a touchy subject. But bear with me. We come out in a good place.

TO BE CONTINUED.

¹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (Longmans: London, 1958), p. 14.

² *Ibid.*, p. 257.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-19, 233-234, 257.

⁴ Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, *The Grand Design* (Bantam Books: New York, 2010), loc. 323 of the Kindle edition.

⁵ Lonergan, *op. cit.*, p. 254.