



NOVA notes

NOVA Catholic Community

May 2011

Chair Notes...

NOVA Catholic vs. Rome Catholic

NOVA and Catholic progressives worldwide should take back the institutional Catholic Church. The second largest denomination in the United States is former Catholics and it is the institutional Church that drove them away. They represent a harvest ripe for the picking by Intentional Eucharistic Communities like NOVA and we have what they want, a community that recalls Jesus' presence weekly and that cares more about increasing peace and justice in our world than about bedroom issues and keeping priests celibate and male.

We should care about taking back the institutional Church because practically speaking, it is the only institution that can form Catholic priests. IECs like NOVA want and need Catholic priests. Remember last year that the main reason we decided not to introduce women priests into NOVA liturgies was that we would have lost at least half of the priests who have joined us in our Sunday Masses and we wanted to keep those priests. Not only do we want Catholic priests, we need them because there is no substitute for a professional priesthood. Well-prepared priests speak with an authority that comes from closeness to God and years of formal religious study. And when it comes to forming Catholic priests there is no substitute for all of the seminaries, schools, novitiates, and formational institutions that are run by the Catholic Church.

Priests are becoming increasingly scarce. The only way to reverse this trend is for the institutional Church to allow married and women priests. I don't know what will make that happen. But my hunch is that this summer's conference in Detroit will help us get closer to an answer. (For more information,

visit the American Catholic Council website at [http://americancatholiccouncil.org/.](http://americancatholiccouncil.org/))

My other hunch is that making NOVA and all the other IECs bigger would, all by itself, put pressure on the institutional Church to change. If we got NOVA up to 500 or 1,000 members we might turn some heads in the institutional Church in northern Virginia. One thing that would help make this happen would be to start a religious education program for elementary school-aged children. Whatever we do, our focus should not be on NOVA's desire to survive, but on the people who need what NOVA can give.

What we offer is the example of our own lives; we who make Jesus' love present in meat loaves at Christ House, bags of food at Gunston School, funding for 74 micro-enterprise loans in Nicaragua, standing in the cold street for peace, speaking out for housing, money for orphanages in Bolivia, Universities in Uganda and missionaries in Yemen and many other good works and projects. We work hard, we pray hard and we reject injustice within our Church and in our world. Who can resist a Church like that? ~Tom Clarkson, Co-Chair

Calling Forth of New NOVA Co-Chair

Remember to give your suggestions for the new Co-Chair to Tom Clarkson, tclarkson2@cox.net, or Teddi Ahrens, ritaahrens@aol.com, by May 4, 2011. **The Calling Forth Meeting will be on Sunday May 22, 2011**, at Meg Tucillo's house at 5:00 p.m. **Pizza will be provided.**

Please bring beverages, salads, or desserts.

May 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

3	Cathy Goldschmidt
4	Jean Mendez
8	Ann Passin
10	Dianne Carroll Jim Hug
11	Elena Bailey
17	Katie Chaison
20	Ella Carroll Teal
24	Anna Reich Genevieve Schmidt
27	Alicia Cackley
30	John Mooney

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.

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

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

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.

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

**June Newsletter Deadline:
Monday, May 23**

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.

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 Conners, O.Carm. – Cackley Family
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 – Amy & Charlie Bailey
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*

Joe Kenna – Victoria Robinson
Acts 8:5-8, 14-17
Psalm 66
1 Peter 3:15-18
John 14:15-21

*May 29th is the beginning of our liturgies in Lacey Woods Park Pavilion (located on George Mason Dr. near the intersection with Washington Blvd., Arlington). **The liturgy starts at 9:30 a.m.**

June Music Liaison Tom Clarkson

June 5 – 7th Sunday of Easter

John Haughey, SJ – Peace & Social Justice Group
Acts 1:12-14
Psalm 27
1 Peter 4:13-16
John 17:1-11a

June 12 – Pentecost

Dan Madigan, SJ – Linda Rosenberg & Kathy Scheimer
Acts 2:1-11
Psalm 104
1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13
John 20:19-23

June 19 – Trinity Sunday

Abbot Aidan Shea, OSB – Archer & Jim Heinzen
Exodus 34:4b-6, 8-9
Psalm Dn 3
2 Corinthians 13:11-13
John 3:16-18

June 26 – Solemnity of the Eucharist

Gerry Stockhausen, SJ – Annunziatas
Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a
Psalm 147
1 Corinthians 10:16-17
John 6:51-58

**Please Help! Two more Liturgy Planners
Needed: 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

During May and June we will have some help from the Arlington Emerging Leaders Program Coordinator, Gerson Paniagua. He will be bringing students, emerging leaders, to help with the distribution. In the schedule there is a need for a knowledgeable Gunston volunteer from NOVA to help. Please let Dianne Carroll know if you can help on any of those dates below! The students speak Spanish, which is a big help.

Also AFAC will be doing a client survey on May 19 before the distribution. If you speak Spanish and could help that evening from about 6-7:00 p.m., please contact Dianne: diacarroll@comcast.net or call her at 703-536-2616.

May Gunston Schedule:

May 5: Eric/Mike T
May 12: Gerson Paniagua & students plus a NOVA member
May 19: Tim/Jerry
May 26: Glen/Syd

Second Collection for Homeless

At the annual Peace and Social Justice meeting, the community decided to hold a second collection on May 1 to assist Eve Birch in her efforts for the homeless through the "Butterfly Project" rather than supporting the project on a monthly basis. Eve plans to create a formal non-profit structure and we are seeking knowledgeable Nova members to assist her. Contact Teddi Ahrens if you can help smooth the way. Your generous support is very welcome.

~Peace & Social Justice Committee

Upcoming VOICE Meetings

**Mark Your Calendars:
V.O.I.C.E. New Leaders' Campaign**

Regional Leadership Caucuses & Training
Arlington/Alexandria/Falls Church
congregations

Tuesday, May 3, 2011
7-9PM, Beth El Hebrew Congregation
3830 Seminary Road, Alexandria VA

Reston-Herndon Cluster
Wednesday, May 4, 2011
6-7:30 p.m.
(7:30-9:00 p.m. second session by request)
Northern VA Hebrew Congregation
1441 Weihle Avenue, Reston , VA

Central Fairfax Cluster
Wednesday, May 4, 2011
7:30 – 9:00 PM
St. Stephens UMC
9203 Braddock Road, Burke, VA

Route 1 / Southern Fairfax Cluster
Thursday, May 5, 2011
Time and place to be confirmed

Prince William session will be held in
conjunction with the next
Foreclosure Leadership Team meeting.

Who Should Attend: 3-5 leaders from each
congregation

- **leaders who are interested in broadening engagement in local action and congregational priorities**
- **leaders of key institutional constituencies**
- **anyone who attended 2/28 training**

NOTE: You will see the word "leaders" used often in VOICE communications. That means *you.....we* are all leaders in the sometimes hard work of making social justice gains a reality.

Please let Peggy Becker know if you will be attending so that we will have a NOVA count. **(Read more about VOICE on pages 7 and 8.)**



Volunteers Needed for Short-term work in El Salvador and Guatemala in 2011

Ilobasco, El Salvador: Co-lead a workshop for women and adolescents on family and gender violence July 29-August 7. Participants in this program will be low-income, rural women and youth associated with *La Nueva Esperanza*, a women's community development association in Ilobasco, El Salvador. Volunteers should have good Spanish. Facilitation experience. Volunteers will travel to El Salvador for two days of country orientation and then teach for a week.

Chichicastenango, Guatemala: Teach English to high school students and teachers for a week between November 2 and 23.

This program is in collaboration with the Asociación de Desarrollo Comunitario (ASDECO). Volunteers will stay in a guesthouse in Chichicastenango and teach there or in rural communities located approximately a 30 minute drive from Chichi. An orientation and materials for teaching English will be provided in Alexandria, VA or in Guatemala.

Why teach English in Central America?

English is required for high school graduation, but instruction is very weak, especially in rural schools, so classes help students academically. Tourism is an important part of Central American countries' GNP. Chichicastenango, in particular, is a major tourist destination and for youth to enter the field of tourism they need to be able to speak English. In addition, goods produced in the US and goods produced in Guatemala for sale in the US are marked in English and workers need to be able to understand these markings.

Volunteers pay their own expenses

Volunteers pay their own expenses except for receiving lunches when they are provided to program participants. Daily expenses are approximately \$50 per day (\$30 for simple lodging, double occupancy, and \$20 for food). Local transportation ranges from \$60 to \$200, depending upon whether volunteers are able to coordinate their arrival. Airline tickets this year are in the range of \$600-700.

You'd like to volunteer, but you don't speak Spanish or your Spanish is rusty?

Guatemala has many wonderful language schools. We have used APPE—Academia de Profesores Privados de Español located in Antigua, Guatemala, www.appeschool.com which provides 30 hours of individual instruction for \$150/week. Our experience is that for an individual with rusty high school Spanish, a week-long refresher course is sufficient for participation in our English instruction programs. Participants without any previous Spanish need two weeks of classes.

Please contact: Archer Heinzen, heinzen@verizon.net or 703-548-6713 or (cell) 703-447-4281

Co-partners of Campesinas is a US based, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization that supports *La Nueva Esperanza* (*New Hope*) and other associations working for women's education, earnings, and empowerment in developing countries in Central America. *New Hope* is an organization of sixty rural girls and women from four impoverished communities near Ilobasco, El Salvador, who meet weekly to learn income-producing skills and advance the education of members and their children. *Co-partners* also supports the *Asociación para el Desarrollo Indígena de El K'iche* (*ADIK*) and the *Asociación de Desarrollo Comunitario* (*ASDECO*), indigenous organizations located outside of Chichicastenango, Guatemala with goals similar to those of *New Hope*.

See more social action-related articles on the following pages.

NOTE: *The following information is reprinted from April newsletter issue at the request of NOVA's Peace and Social Justice Committee.*

Nova's Peace and Social Justice Committee encourages all who are interested to submit a proposal. If you have questions before submitting your proposal, please contact Marie Keefe.

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 is also available on the website: www.novacommunity.info

Nancy and John Veldhuis are Nova's coordinators for this project, V.O.I.C.E. and are sharing this report with the community. Nancy states:



"This has been a very big year for VOICE accomplishments. Founded only in the Fall of 2008, VOICE is becoming a force to be reckoned with by local, state and national elected officials on behalf of low and middle income residents of Virginia."

V.O.I.C.E. 2010 Organizing Victories **Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement**

Access to Affordable Dental Care

- Organized 300+ leader action in Richmond with 18 VA Senate and House leaders including 3 budget conferees, that helped preserve \$9 million+ for the VA dental safety net in the FY 2011 budget, insuring that thousands of low-income children and adults in the Commonwealth have access to critical dental care services.
- Worked with VA Senate and House leaders to press the State of VA to secure \$79 million in federal TANF Emergency Funds, including \$5 million to provide emergency dental care to 7,000 low-income VA adults through VA Health Care Foundation (VHCF). While the Federal government approved the VHCF Emergency Dental Pilot on June 16th, the requirement that all funds be expended before September 30th led VHCF officials not to proceed with the program.
- Organized 150 person public action in Prince William County at a key FY 2011 County Board of Supervisors budget hearing that led to the board restoring the proposed 15% cuts to non-profit health and human services providers and the allocation of \$20,000 in new funding for the Prince William Free Health Clinic to provide expanded health services to low-income adults.

Immigration Justice

- Secured commitment from Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Assistant Secretary Esther Olavarria to address 200 backlogged immigration applications from VOICE members at Dar Al Hijrah Islamic Center in Falls Church. Ms. Olavarria promised a full accounting on 200 backlog cases and a meeting for VOICE leaders with new US Customs Immigration Services (USCIS) Director Alejandro N. Mayorkas.
- Began organizing VOICE members and other allies to press for just and realistic comprehensive immigration reform. Started by building relationships in VOICE institutions with leaders across the divides of culture, religion, ethnicity, race, etc. that can so easily polarize the immigration issue. Held 25+ listening sessions between non-citizen immigrants and American citizens at 10 VOICE congregations to build solidarity for Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Examples: 1) St. Charles held bilingual "stations of the cross" every Wednesday during Lent and held listening sessions after each service. 2) 15 members of Old Presbyterian Meeting House went to Dar Al Hijrah and engaged in dialogue with 15 leaders from the mosque.
- Turned out 1,150 leaders from 14 VOICE congregations to March for America (March 21st)—the national comprehensive immigration reform rally. Held solidarity action on April 25 for 4 undocumented immigrant youth walking from Florida to DC to bring attention to the plight of undocumented students. 125 leaders from 12 VOICE congregations attended.
- Leaders from 10 VOICE congregations met over the fall to discuss the impact of VA Gov. McDonnell's directive dated September 7, 2010, which suspended acceptance of the federally-issued Employment Authorization Document (I-766) as proof of legal presence in the United States, a condition of obtaining a driver's license or identification card in VA. Held 10 listening sessions to identify people directly affected by the directive and formulate potential 2011 action plan.

Affordable Housing & Preserving Homes

- Held 125+ person action challenging Alexandria Redevelopment & Housing Authority (ARHA) Commissioners and Alexandria City Council to meet VOICE and tenant demands on relocation and redevelopment issues that shortchanged residents financially and treated them with disrespect. 5 leaders' testimony to VA Housing and Development Authority (VHDA) in Richmond led to investigation of ARHA relocation policies & actions. ARHA committed to VOICE's 10 demands including reimbursing all relocated tenants \$500 per family. These agreements won recognition from mayor and city council members and the media for VOICE and Bland residents.
- Organized 50 residents in Georgetown South, a 850 unit townhome community hit hard by the foreclosure crisis, and secured agreement with Manassas City Police Chief to (1) have officers walk beats in Georgetown South, (2) provide incentives (results-based overtime) for officers to spend additional time in Georgetown South, (3) create and promote an anonymous tip line in Spanish for residents to report crimes without fear of being identified by police or criminals.
- Organized residents in Williamstown, a townhome community in Dumfries, VA to secure an agreement from the Dumfries Chief of Police to increase police presence and accountability. In a meeting with the town manager for Dumfries, the manager committed to involve residents and other organizations throughout the decision-making process for a youth park near the community and to work with residents to increase opportunities for youth.
- Arlington congregations have organized 8 house meetings to build a constituency among tenants in Columbia Pike/South Arlington; have begun working with residents on lack of bus service for residents of Western Columbia Pike to new Arlington Department of Human Services offices.
- 7 VOICE institutions in Eastern Prince William County organized a foreclosure workshop at Holy Family Catholic Church in Dale City, VA, attended by 70 people and including representatives from 6 non-profits, VHDA, and Freddie Mac. Leaders Identified preliminary foreclosure action agenda to target financial institutions for accountability in 2011: loan modification processing delays, reinvestment in communities devastated by foreclosure blight, lost equity, etc.
- V.O.I.C.E. and Lafayette Apartment resident leaders held dozens of listening sessions and knocked on over 100 doors, finding numerous housing code violations in the 300-unit South Fairfax County apartment complex (e.g. mold, exposed electrical wires, broken plumbing, etc.). The leaders brought their concerns to the President of Eagle Point Management, the Property Manager, VHDA, and Fairfax County Supervisor Jeff McKay for action. At a 30-person action in a laundry room at Lafayette, Supervisor McKay committed to have Fairfax County Department of Code Compliance investigate, and to return to Lafayette with Code Compliance to deliver a detailed written report and action plan for the owner to correct the violations.

Recruitment & Leadership Development

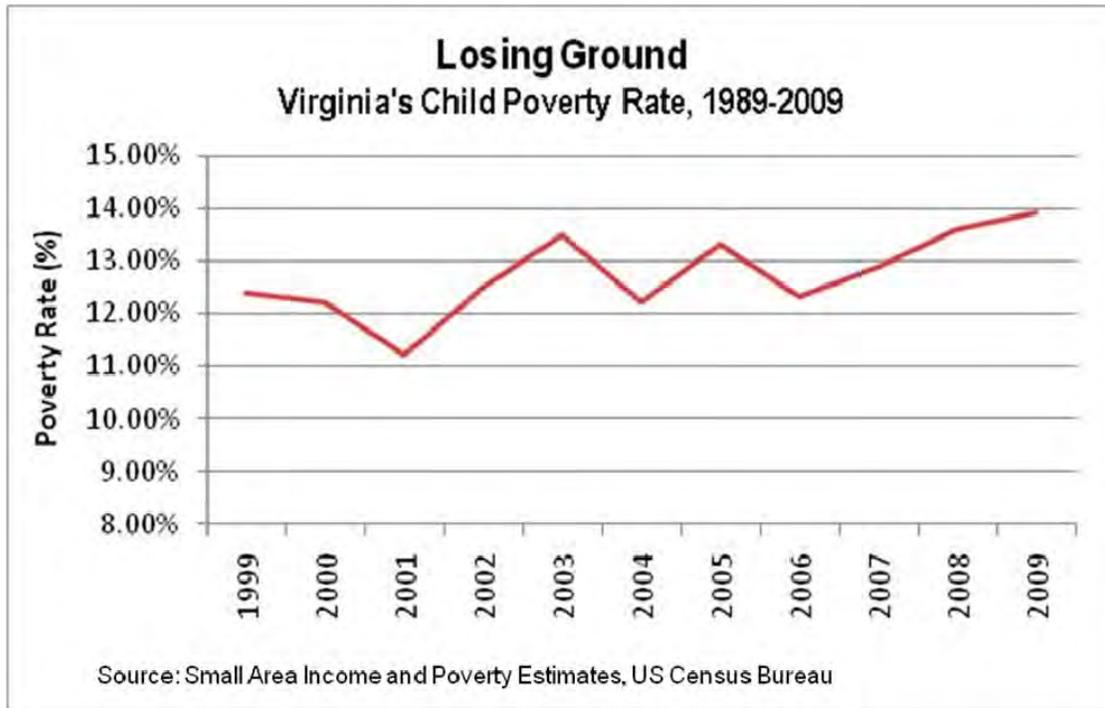
- Recruited 3 new member institutions: Temple Rodef Shalom, Accotink Unitarian Universalist, and Georgetown South Community Council.
- Sent 60+ VOICE leaders to Metro IAF national, regional, and local organizing/leadership training.
- Temple Rodef Shalom's VOICE team organized an internal action with 130 synagogue members -- the culmination of a house meeting campaign. They identified 3 potential issues -- services and support for families with aging parents; youth engagement (both middle school aged synagogue youth and at-risk youth in the community) and actionable environmental issues.

Learn more at www.voice-iaf.org



SOCIAL JUSTICE REFLECTION: CHILDREN IN POVERTY IN VIRGINIA

FACTS - Despite the prosperity most of us experienced over the last decade—average income in Virginia grew in real terms from about \$44,000 to slightly less than \$50,000 between 2000 and 2009, according to the state government—the rate of Virginia’s children living in poverty grew from about 12 percent to 14 percent, according to statistics from the US Census Bureau.



REFLECTION - Not all of us are sharing in our society’s growing prosperity over the past decade. In fact, a larger percentage of Virginians are not participating in our state’s economic growth. Should we try to find out why this is happening? Should our elected leaders devote more attention to the problems of growing poverty?

- The American bishops, in urging Catholics to practice “faithful citizenship,” tell us, “*responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. This obligation is rooted in our baptismal commitment to follow Jesus Christ and to bear Christian witness in all we do.*”
- The bishops also remind us of Pope Benedict’s teaching that, “*love for widows and orphans, prisoners, and the sick and needy of every kind, is as essential to the Church as the ministry of the sacraments and preaching of the Gospel.*”

~Submitted by Teddi Ahrens



UPCOMING EVENTS

OUT FROM UNDER THE RADAR?

The American Catholic Council is meeting in Detroit June 10-12, 2011. At one of the breakout sessions (see summary below), members from NOVA and PAX will explain their liturgical and community life experience since Vatican II. The ACC meeting may generate some publicity and controversy within the larger Catholic community. Planners of the breakout session thought it would be prudent to have their respective communities consider the implications of the additional exposure that the breakout session may provide. **The NOVA members of the ACC breakout session planning team** (Rosemarie Annunziata, Joe Annunziata, Clyde Christofferson and Mike Timpane from NOVA) **are interested in hearing your comments and will answer questions about the ACC breakout session after liturgy on May 22.**

“Two Intentional Eucharistic Communities – Vatican II-Centered Worship During the Last 43 Years”

Presenters: Members of the PAX Community and NOVA Community

Issues for dialogue:

- History, Evolution, and Current Attributes
- Liturgical and Theological Development
- Community-building and Governance
- Social Action; Political Participation
- Current Issues, including an aging membership, the status of our priests, undertaking larger social action projects.
- The Coming Years and Beyond

CALLING FORTH MEETING

DATE: Sunday, May 22

TIME: 5:00 p.m.

WHERE: Meg Tucillo's House

Pizza will be provided but beverages, salads or finger foods would be appreciated.

PREPARATION: Please submit the name(s) of NOVA members you think would make a good co-chair for the coming two years. Include one or more reasons why anyone you suggest would make a good leader.

Email Teddi Ahrens or Tom Clarkson by May 4. (See page 1 for their email addresses.) You may also complete and give either of them the card passed out at the Easter liturgy.

PRISON MINISTRY PROJECT SUPPORTED BY NOVA

This article was in the Episcopal News Service and below is an excerpt from the article which is about Rev. Valerie Dixon's prison ministry along with photos of the art work created by the women prisoners. You can read the entire article at:

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/79425_128114_ENG_HTML.htm

Holy Week stories resonate with prisoners and those who minister to them



Photo/NOVA Catholic Community

Women inmates at the York Correctional Institute in Niantic, Connecticut, make the stations of the cross during Holy Week as part of an interfaith program called Chrysalis, which provides spiritual "tools for transformation." The top photo shows the first station: Jesus condemned to death. The second photo shows the 15th station: Jesus is raised from the dead. Members of the NOVA Catholic Community in Arlington, Virginia, borrowed one of the previously created sets of stations for use during Holy Week in 2010.

From the Episcopal News Service:

Rev. Valerie Dixon, "It's the story of falling and rising and having courage to get back up and feeling the Spirit lead you in those directions. Holy Week is very powerful."

Dixon, an associate at St. John's Episcopal Church in Niantic, Connecticut, teaches an interfaith program called Chrysalis at York Correctional Institution, the state women's prison in Niantic. The program provides spiritual "tools for transformation," such as prayer and meditation.

During Holy Week, participants are invited to create collages based on the stations of the cross. Each woman chooses a station and reflects on it: "How does this station speak to me in my own spiritual journey, in my own journey from brokenness through transformation to new life?"

The women create the collages using black construction paper and colored tissue paper, which looks like stained glass, and write reflections about what the stations mean to them. One woman wrote about Jesus being stripped, Dixon said. "Of course, that's a regular part of prison life."

Others write about Jesus' falls and the experience of falling and being lifted up again. "And then the dying, that there's got to be dying to old ideas and old patterns of behaviors as well as thoughts, but that Jesus' death was not the end," she said. "That was just the gateway to the Resurrection, to the complete transformation."

The collages are hung in a gymnasium, where inmates have an opportunity to meditate on them and to walk a labyrinth. Over the years, prisoners have completed six sets of collages, which outside churches borrow to use as stations of the cross during Holy Week, Dixon said.

~Submitted by Dianne Carroll



Creating a Beautiful Holy Thursday Environment



2011 MS WALK PHOTOS

On April 19, 2011 the MOM Team had 40 Team walkers and three stroller riders. The team total is very close to \$9000.00. Thanks to all the NOVA folks who walked, donated and prayed.
~Dianne Carroll



The "MOM" Team



(Left to right) Phyllis, Dianne, Ken, Bernice



Beautiful trees in bloom for Reston MS walkers to enjoy

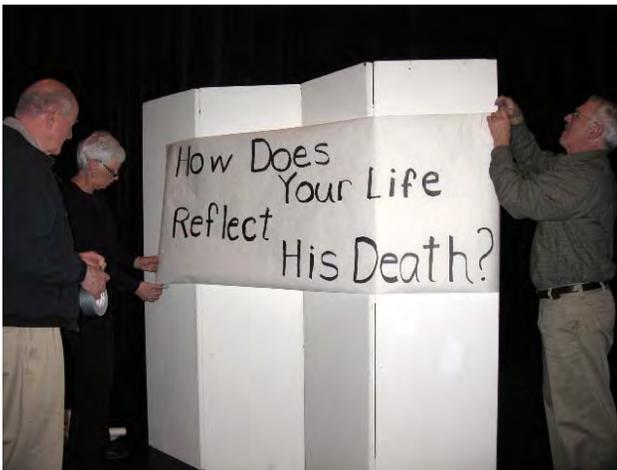
2011 HOLY WEEK AND EASTER



Palm Sunday Procession (Bob, Father Joe, Ana)



Kate –helping set up for Holy Thursday



Jim, Meg and Eric setting up environment for Good Friday



Flags waving for Easter Sunday procession



Ted & Fr. Stockhausen prepare for Easter procession



Easter chanters: Phil, Tom, John and Tim

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

SIGNIFICANT SACRIFICE

April 18, 2011

Dear NOVA Community Members,

Perhaps this letter would seem more appropriate if I had sent it at the beginning of Lent. I'm writing it now because it was inspired by Joe Nangle's talk on "Sacrifice and Suffering" last Friday evening. It was part of the Lenten series at Our Lady Queen of Peace.

Joe said that, for Catholic Christians especially, the appreciation of sacrifice is "part of our DNA." He spoke of Lenten self-denial, Jesus' forty days of fasting in the desert and His ultimate sacrifice on the cross, which redeems the world. Many others have sacrificed greatly standing firm against evil and injustice. By such sacrifices, one is able to participate in the saving work of Jesus: completing God's "kin-dom" throughout the world.

During and after the discussion that followed, it occurred to me that another kind of sacrifice is required in our times. All of the world's people are facing unprecedented environmental and economic crises: pollution, global warming, shortages, wars, and widespread poverty, hunger and disease. We belong to the 20% of the world's population using 80% of the natural resources. The primary answer to most of the problems is that we need to be willing to use much less of nature's gifts. Yet we have been spoiled by our wealth and modern conveniences. Since we tend to avoid anything that is hard, unpleasant, inconvenient or uncomfortable, we are ill-equipped to do what must be done. Unless many more are persuaded to live more simply, the world is headed for a disaster and agony too terrible to imagine. Whole nations must join together, agreeing to make sacrifices for the common good.

As Christians, we try to follow a RADICAL Jesus with a RADICAL message. He and His disciples left their homes and families and owned only their sandals and the clothes on their backs. He told the rich young ruler to give up everything he possessed. He taught us to pray for no more for ourselves than "our daily bread." He asks us to seek the "kin-dom" above all else. If everyone was willing to take only what they needed, there would be enough for all. That is the way of the "kin-dom." It would be a life of peace and joy for everyone.

Jesus chose to fast for forty days in the desert. He thought it was that important to practice saying "No" to himself in order to be able to say "Yes" to God and people in need. When it comes to saying "No" to myself, I am among the weakest. I have always been spoiled. My New Year's resolutions, diets and Lenten disciplines never last long. Though I know Jesus said the most serious problems require prayer and fasting, I have avoided opportunities to fast for good causes simply because I dreaded the minor discomfort. (I am deciding at this moment to fast often in the future in solidarity with the billions who ache with hunger every day.)

I have been furious and very judgmental toward the billionaires unwilling to give up a few million from their surplus for the common good. I criticize the many who claim to be Christians but say they deserve to keep their money for themselves and shouldn't have to give some to the undeserving poor. I realize now that I am a hypocrite. I haven't given up a single thing that I wanted for myself in order to contribute more to NOVA. I am blessed to have everything I need and want, yet I am sacrificing nothing for the sake of people in need. The only things I give away are things I don't want. When I send monetary contributions, I am careful to save enough for the things I really want for myself. If Jesus needed to fast in the desert in preparation for his ministry on earth, how much more do I need that experience and training to be able to follow Him? Learning to deny myself is too important to continue to avoid that aspect of Christian spirituality.

Our wounded earth cries out to us, begging us and warning us to stop ravaging and squandering her generous gifts. The major portion of humanity wallows in poverty, pleading with the rest of us to let them have their share.

We members of the NOVA Community are Catholics with a long tradition of sacrifice. We want to follow that radical Jesus who asks us to take only what we need. We aim to seek the "kin-dom" above all else. We care about the earth and the people of the world. If WE are not willing to set an example by making significant changes in our comfortable ways of life, who on earth will?

~Peggy Myer

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 limited human beings. I become ever more painfully aware of these limitations as I get older. Years ago I loved to run, and now – because of a torn meniscus – I cannot. My eyesight is still good – if I wear glasses; but the prescriptions are getting stronger, and now I have a separate set of glasses for reading and for using the computer.

These limitations come with age. Wistfully, I wish I had the body of my youth and the better sense that comes with age. But the reality is that even such an optimal combination would be saddled with more fundamental limitations. *Homo sapiens* is a step – albeit the most recent and the most promising – in a longer evolutionary journey of life on planet Earth. And Earth is a small planet in a vast cosmos. There are tens of billions of other galaxies with essentially the same “stuff”: stars that serve as gravitational furnaces for forging hydrogen and helium into the other chemical elements, which are then incorporated into planets around next generation stars. And the progression over time from physics to chemistry to biology does not suggest that this progression is at an end. It is a pregnant cosmos, still unfolding.

It defies basic principles of symmetry to suppose that our living Earth is alone. There is no need to violate the known laws of physics: the cosmos is expanding and cooling, trading heat for complexity. In retrospect, life in ever more complex forms seems an inexorable development. If the reason for being of this universe is that a loving God is sharing existence with the likes of us, then the fruits of this sharing are throughout the starry heavens. And among the many other sentient civilizations elsewhere in the cosmos it is reasonable to suppose that at least some others are more capable than *homo sapiens* on planet Earth. This is an implication of being a small planet.

But so what? One would think by now that we would have gotten the point. Our ancestors thought they were the chosen people and – fittingly – that the Earth was the center of the universe. Then we found

out that the Earth revolved around the Sun, and the Sun is a nobody in the Milky Way galaxy, which in turn is a nobody among tens of billions of galaxies, most of which are racing away from us so rapidly that we shall never know the sentient life that is within them. It is humbling being on a planet that spins about a nobody star in a nobody galaxy.

Voltaire had a point: it is enough that we tend to our own garden. The Earth is a vibrant exemplar in a still pregnant cosmos. We would do well to take another look at where we have been to see this ongoing pregnancy at work. It should not be surprising that we told many stories in our youth before there was any notion of an unfolding cosmos, and these stories – in particular the stories that knit us together in religious communities – reflect the biases of youth.

How do we make a transition? Paul’s letter to the Corinthians puts this kind of transition in familiar terms – from childhood to adulthood – and then suggests that it is love but not knowledge that will help us: *“Love never fails. But ... where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know 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 through a glass, darkly; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”*

What story did Paul (and the other followers of Jesus) tell about Christ? The reason this is a concern is that they didn’t know what they didn’t know. They knew God’s love – “love never fails” – and they did their best to understand who Jesus of Nazareth was. They lived with Jesus, and lived through the tumultuous last days in Jerusalem and the Crucifixion. They experienced the Resurrection, some in the Upper Room, some on the Road to Emmaus, some on the sea of Tiberius, and in Galilee as the Gospels recount. And later, on the road to Damascus, even Paul had an experience of a similar kind. Paul had been persecuting the followers of Jesus, so his experience of the Risen

Christ is perhaps the most remarkable testimony we have.

We share this experience at liturgy, and have just recently celebrated and relived the Last Supper, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. The story is central to our community life.

But what did Paul and the others do with this experience? We know what this experience is, because we share it and celebrate it at Eucharist. But what did Paul and the others do? They tried to make sense of what had happened, as best they could. And their story has been handed down to us, and we have made it our own. But they didn't know what they didn't know.

Does that mean the story – the one we have come to know and love – needs to be changed? Perhaps, but perhaps not. Is it loving to reflect upon the story in light of what we are coming to know about the cosmos? Or better, how can we lovingly reflect upon the story handed down to us?

Before doing that, take a fresh look at this pregnant cosmos, this “book of nature.” In the first essay in this collection I spoke about the small kindnesses of everyday life. These are part of our experience, and we know them. Our ancestors knew them as well, or so we may reasonably presume. But did our ancestors pay any attention? They would not have thought to see these small kindnesses as a reflection of a cosmos pregnant by a loving God and unfolding in our presence. Had they known what we are now coming to know, they might more readily have said “eureka!” when Jesus said, “the reign of God is at hand.”

This is an insight of the kind that Bernard Lonergan talks about as the unfolding of that which is emergent¹. For the followers of Jesus our participation in the reign of God was through a bodily resurrection, as stated in the Creed. But what does that mean? They had no way of understanding it, except as mystery. Our ancestors acquired the notion that we have an immortal soul, provided we safeguard that soul during the life of the body. Mystics had a more integral conception of a continuing and bodily reality, but the faithful could be forgiven for seeing the soul as somehow separate from the body. The notion that God implants a soul into us seems clumsy by comparison to a human consciousness that unfolds out of a pregnant cosmos. You may recall Dan Madigan's homily last November² in which he gently critiqued an unfortunate consequence of the “ensoulment” concept, namely, that the soul is viewed as if it were something to be placed on a shelf instead of lived out now.

The novelty that is Jesus Christ is all quite real. The followers of Jesus experienced the reality, but understood it through a glass, darkly. The faithful

believe it, but understand it through a glass, darkly. Perhaps the reality will always be a mystery. Yet Paul's metaphor – the understanding of the child matures to the understanding of the adult – suggests our understanding can be viewed as a work in progress, and not simply as a set of doctrines to be believed.

And the unfolding cosmos is confirming the “work in progress” approach to understanding the experienced reality of the Risen Christ. The subtitle for this essay is “: ... 4, 5, 6”, following the prior essay's subtitle “1, 2, 3 ...”. The “1, 2, 3 ...” refers explicitly to the Lonergan example of the creative insight required to get from “1, 2, 3, etc.” to the set of positive integers. Lonergan's example can be generalized, as Lonergan himself contemplated. The sequence “physics, chemistry, biology, ...” can be viewed as successive descriptions of an increasingly complex reality, unfolding over time since the Big Bang. Each of these descriptions is separated from its predecessor by a set of “insights” that make the successor description “essentially different” from its predecessor.

Lonergan makes the key point that a new reality is unfolding. The “real” is not simply a subdivision of the “already out there now.”³ If reality were “already out there now” then all that is real could be reduced to physics. If that were the case, then physics presents a dreary picture of a universe that is running down under the inexorable law of entropy. But if reality is not “already out there now” then the cooling since the Big Bang leads to life in its fullness, not death.

History in the fourteen billion years since the Big Bang tells a story of life, not death. And it is a life that continues to unfold. Thermodynamic cooling can be viewed as a creative incubator, rather than as a slow death. In an earlier essay I told the story of the gold atoms in my wedding band: every proton, neutron and electron in each of these gold atoms was created in the first fraction of a second after the Big Bang, but it was not until billions of years later – in a supernova explosion – that heat fused lower elements into gold and then cooling set in so that the fused protons and neutrons would not fly apart again.

Since the Big Bang there have been a succession of such heatings and coolings, separated by relatively stable incubators that I have called thermoentropic pockets of space and windows of time. The terminology overemphasizes the role of physics. And I apologize for that, because I do not believe that “what is real” is “already out there now” and therefore reducible to physics. I compensate by using another term – “thermoentropic novelty” – to refer to the new realities that unfold. Our understanding of these new realities

take the form of *insights* (Lonergan's term) that are our "eureka!" moments.

Back to "... 4, 5, 6." These are merely placeholders, just as "1, 2, and 3" may be understood as placeholders for "physics, chemistry and biology" as descriptions of reality separated by insights. Similarly, consciousness – that very personal self that is taking the time to read these words – is not reducible to biology. Those who think about such topics have not yet formulated an understanding of the *insights* that separate biology ("3") from consciousness ("4"), but my guess is that an appreciation of the small kindnesses of everyday life figures prominently in this understanding. That which is good and beautiful *resonates* in our hearts, and this also is a part of what separates consciousness from biology. That consciousness is itself a thermoentropic novelty, a further unfolding of the cosmos, another new part of a still unfolding reality.

Jesus the Christ is a further unfolding. The experience of the Risen Christ – in the Upper Room, on the road to Emmaus, on the road to Damascus, and at the breaking of the bread that we share every Sunday – testifies to the newness of this reality. Call this unfolding "5". Those who think about such topics have said much about Jesus, and over the centuries this understanding has been formulated into a story and set of beliefs that characterize Christianity. Jesus proclaimed that "the reign of God is at hand" and Christians now have upstaged the proclamation by proclaiming the proclaimer.

The Church strives to be universal. That is what "Catholic" means. But in the context of being a small planet, what does that mean? Does the Church understand itself as being universal in the sense of a worldwide Catholic Church? It is certainly that. "Catholic" could also refer to *homo sapiens* across the globe, including all of humanity. But even that ambitious perspective is dwarfed by a cosmos having billions upon billions of sentient civilizations, none of whom know the name of Jesus or the history of the Crucifixion. And so how are we to understand the Christ? Those outside the Christian tradition – even here on planet Earth, and certainly elsewhere in the cosmos – are not likely to make a connection between experience of the reign of God and the Crucified One known to Paul and the Apostles.

There are those who have a simple answer to this conundrum: God chose us. History has been unkind to that answer, beginning with Jesus himself in the telling of the Good Samaritan Story to Jews who believed they knew that the Samaritans were not chosen. The idea that the Earth was the center of creation did not survive

Galileo and Newton. According to Einstein, there is no such thing as a center to the universe, any more than there could be a central point on the surface of a sphere.

The handwriting would appear to be on the wall: experience of the reign of God is as universal as God. That would be the humble adult judgment, notwithstanding recollection by that same adult of a child who had been at the center of a mother's love and affection.

To return to Paul's metaphor, the transition from childhood to adulthood can be generalized. There are old adults and even older adults. Wisdom comes with age; we become wiser as we get older. Is there an end to it? We die an unfinished creation. So it should be no disrespect to suggest that the Church faces a major *metanoia* in coming to grips with the implications of being on a small planet. Vatican II may be viewed as part of that *metanoia*, because it moved the Church out into the world.

For those who think Vatican II is not the end, the understanding we now have of the cosmos suggests that an evolution of surprises is God's idea, not ours. We still need *metanoia*. In particular, we need some better understanding of what we have come to call "revelation." It is one thing to believe that the truth is fixed and absolute, and that the human task is to conform to the laws of an unchanging God. It is another thing to cope with a dynamic cosmos, and contemplate the likelihood that this remarkable and awesome God can work miracles without miracles, all so that the likes of us can enjoy freedom and love and – yes – even comprehension.

What is next? Vatican II opened up windows and let fresh air in, as John XXIII hoped. Is there a sleeping giant in the *sensus fidelium* that *Lumen Gentium* recognized⁴? Are the People of God waking to their own consciousness, and to their own role in the genesis of the very structures that are now being reexamined? Might this be another "thermoentropic novelty", requiring new *insights* to understand it?

Surely such surprises from a living God are in the offing, though we may not know the time or the place.

TO BE CONTINUED.

¹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (Longmans: London, 1958), p. 262.

² Dan Madigan homily at NOVA, November 7, 2010, 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time. Audio of homily: [audio-link](#).

³ Lonergan, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

⁴ Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* #12.