



# nova notes

NOVA Catholic Community

March 2012

## Chair Notes...

We begin Lent, and we begin March at just about the same time, and both are seasons full of promise. How fitting that the Lenten planners have decided on “Living in the Promise” as a theme. Like most people, I love the changing seasons, especially at this time of the year. I look forward to the end of the grayness outside, the end of seeing skeletal trees and shriveled plants, even after this “not-bad-at-all” winter. March promises the brightness and warmth of spring, and the Lenten season leads us to Resurrection.

I wonder if *living in the promise* is the same as living *as if* the kingdom is here. If they are the same, then whatever the season, winter, spring, summer, or fall our challenge remains the same as well. To live in the present with joy and hope, even as we work for the seemingly impossible goals of peace and social justice. We just can’t get away from the *as if*. Even when we are feeling ineffective, depressed, or just-plain-tired.

What has this got to do with anything? Well, I’m thinking of the “too-many meetings” taking place at times when folks could be doing something else, discussing issues that could be left as is, trying to get things right—all in an effort to have participation in NOVA as enriching and meaningful as we hope it can be. To that end, more than 40 members stayed after Sunday liturgy in mid-February to express their concerns and their satisfaction with the current Calling Forth process.

People stayed after the liturgy again a second Sunday to contribute to a consensus discussion on how our new co-chair will be selected this spring. Particular emphasis was given to the time needed for prayer and reflection and the value of calling forth nominees in the presence of the community.

The co-chairs were asked to amend and finalize their proposal. The revised proposal is included in this newsletter. (*See p. 8.*)

Many thanks to Jerry and Mike for facilitating the discussion. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if going to meetings and being part of such an effort also helps us to deepen our understanding of how to *live in the promise*?

While the community was grappling with considerations of the consensus and calling forth processes the last few weeks, they also took time for tapping toes and clapping hands along with the rhythm of ballads, folk music and bluegrass at the Benefit Concert for South Sudan. Many thanks to the Wicked Timmies and the Hollertowns for donating their talents and making it such an enjoyable evening. We look forward to seeing The Josh Drews another time.

### Upcoming Events

- Save March 17<sup>th</sup> to celebrate St. Patrick’s evening at Meg “O’Tuccillo’s” for a General Meeting. Gathering at 5:30 for Potluck supper and overview of Peace and Social Justice projects.
- Note that April 5 is the Holy Thursday liturgy and dinner.
- April 7 is Easter Vigil at 7:00 p.m. at UUC in Oakton. (*See Holy Week details, p.6.*)
- April 22 is the famous *Men Who Cook* dinner/fundraiser for the Children of South Sudan.

In the meantime, have prayerful, reflective days,  
*Living in the Promise.*

~Teddi Ahrens, Co-chair

For NOVA photos, click on:  
<http://www.novacommunity.weebly.com>

## March Birthdays

NOVA Message Line	(703) 852-7907
Chairpersons	Teddi Ahrens Cece Michelotti
Treasurer	Joe Formoso
Coordinator, Community Life	Marlene Shade
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
Announcements Coordinator	Linda Christie
Newsletter Editor	Judy Christofferson

### “Snail Mail” to NOVA

The following information is for anyone who wants to send something to NOVA through the postal service.

Click on the link to the NOVA website:  
[www.novacommunity.info](http://www.novacommunity.info). After the website appears with the information about NOVA’s e-mail and phone, you will find the “Contact Us” page. Click on the tab on the left. On the “Contributions” page (tab also on the left), you will find the address of the Treasurer (Joe Formoso), where all official mail should be sent.

~Ken Chaison

2	Helen Gettys Michie
7	John Tarrant
8	Cece Michelotti Eric Robinson
9	Marlene Shade John Iskander Michael Kane
10	Joe Barrett
12	Jim Todaro
13	Mary Mele
14	Bill Meyer
19	Mali Kane
20	Kathy Scheimer
26	Charlie Bailey Brian Schmidt
28	Michael Iskander

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

*Remember in your prayers. . .*

**Eve Birch**, for the success of her work in assisting the needy

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

**Jody Furlong**, who also appreciates phone calls or notes

**Michael Iskander**, who is recovering from extensive injuries following a car accident

**Jean Mendez**, who appreciates a call or note

**Peggy Meyer**, for successful surgery and a speedy recovery

***For a return to health following surgery:***

**Moiria Eisele, Margaret Hayes, Linda Rosenberg, and Julie Taylor**

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

## Liturgies: Cycle B

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 School (located on Carlin Springs Rd. off Arlington Blvd.) begin at 10:15 a.m.

### March Music Liaison Tim White

#### March 4–Second Sunday of Lent

Quinn Connors, O.Carm.

Planners: Carolyn and Ted Miller

#### March 11–Third Sunday of Lent

Jim Hug, S.J.

Planners: Carol and John Reeder

#### March 18–Fourth Sunday of Lent

Joe Kenna

Planner: Rose Barrett

#### March 25–Fifth Sunday of Lent

John Haughey, S.J.

Planners: John Tarrant and Marlene Shade



2012 Lenten theme:  
Living in the Promise



February 19<sup>th</sup> Banner by Fr. Joe Kenna

### April Music Liaison Tim White

#### April 1 – Palm Sunday

Dan Madigan, S.J.

Planners: Archer and Jim Heinzen

#### April 5 – Holy Thursday

Center for Spiritual Enlightenment – 7:00 p.m.

Jim Hug, S.J.

Planners: Holy Thursday Group

#### April 6 – Good Friday

Kenmore – Black Box Theater – 8:00 p.m.

Planner: Meg Tuccillo

#### April 7 – Easter Vigil

Unitarian Church in Oakton – 7:00 p.m.

Jim Hug, S.J.

Planners: Gloria Mog and Tim White

#### April 15 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter

John Haughey, S.J.

Planner: Kate Doherty

#### April 22 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter

Quinn Connors, O.Carm.

Planners: John Tarrant and Marlene Shade

#### April 29 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Joe Nangle, OFM

Planners: Judy and Clyde Christofferson



Peace & Social Justice Group altar setting

## Gunston Volunteers

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. NOVA volunteers have been active in this project for many years. More than one volunteer is needed. There is a seasoned volunteer every Thursday, so this is your chance to try out your skills. Having someone who speaks Spanish is a real plus for each of the teams. **Please help.** If you are interested in being a volunteer, please contact Dianne Carroll.

### March Gunston Volunteer Schedule

March 1: **Tim, Cathy G. (Larry maybe); Alicia C.**  
March 8: **Eric and Gamboa family (trainees)**  
March 15: **Tim and Jerry**  
March 22: **Orlando Kane family**  
March 29: **Glen and Syd**

### **Nova's 7000-Mile Lenten Trek to Leer, South Sudan**

We want to take the theme this Lent and the promise we've made to work with the Comboni Sisters in Leer, South Sudan, and be present to the hardship and reality of the people of Leer.

One overarching action starting today is to ask you to help us to walk to our 7,000 mile destination: Leer. As we walk, bike, run, tread, wheel, we'll hold the sisters, their work, the children, and their families in our hearts. So we've approximated the mileage. Yes, we even walk on water. Each week we'll have paper for you to record your miles – plus the miles of anyone in your family/community who

would like to help us reach Leer. You'll just drop that collective number in a basket and we'll tabulate and record our progress as we journey this Lent. So dust off your pedometers and get started!

Each week leading up to the "Men Who Cook" event, we'll share a brief description of an aspect of life in Leer with a suggestion of a very specific Lenten action. This week's card provided a small window to the general situation in Leer.

~Marie Keefe

### **"Tables of Six" – Part 2**

**It's not too late to sign up for participating in NOVA's "Tables of Six."** Many NOVA members participated this past last year in informal get-togethers, generally dinners, with small groups of NOVA members that they might not have known very well beforehand. The groups usually took turns meeting at one another's homes, but sometimes met at restaurants or other venues. The aim was to get to know one another better. Anyone who wished could participate – singles, couples, lay members, priests. Informal feedback indicates that the program was fun and fruitful.

We'd like to continue with "Tables of Six – Part II," but reshuffle the groups as well as add the names of people who didn't participate this past year but are interested in joining a group. Please e-mail Kopp Michelotti expressing your interest. Kopp will put together groups whose members' paths may not cross that often. Then it's up to the table groups to organize themselves for get-togethers.

Kopp will continue taking names. He would also appreciate any feedback from participants in last year's program. Send via email any suggestions for improving the program and any ideas that seemed to help last years' groups function better. He'll pass them along to the community at large.

~Kopp Michelotti

## Benefit Concert for Educating Children in South Sudan a Foot-Stomping Success

What better way to kick off NOVA's fundraising efforts to support the Comboni Sisters' work than with a musical romp? From ballads to bluegrass with a little Irish bagpipe music thrown in, the night was alive with harmony and zest thanks to the Wicked Timmies and Hollertown. We raised \$1033 through the gracious support of the bands and sale of refreshments. Special thanks to Alicia and Phil Cackley, Tim White, Victoria Robinson, the Michelottis, the Barretts, all the bakers and our videographer/ad man Ken Chaison. Unfortunately the Josh Drews were unable to perform due to illness and the birth of a baby, but we appreciate their support. ~ **Marie Keefe on behalf of The Peace and Social Justice Team**

## Ignation Volunteer Corps

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) is a national volunteer organization of men and women 50+, who volunteer in their local community two days a week. They share their talents and life experiences with organizations that directly assist the poor or that address structural issues related to poverty.

Your talents in service to the materially poor are truly needed – for example, employment assistance, tutoring, food assistance, money management, health access, handy-man, grant writing, or administrative assistance.

Interested persons are invited to contact the IVC/Northern Virginia Regional Director Patty Holley. See [www.ivcusa.org](http://www.ivcusa.org) for more information. Information sessions will be organized at your convenience.

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE  
FOR APRIL ISSUE:  
SUNDAY, MARCH 25**

## Annual Peace and Social Justice Meeting

**Date:** March 17

**Time:** 5:30 p.m.

**Location:** Home of  
Meg Tucillo



### Potluck followed by meeting

Happy Saint Patrick's Day to you! Come celebrate and **set the course of our Peace and Social Justice projects for this year.** We'll look at all the projects we fund and the process for selecting a one-shot, one year project. Who says merriness and diligence can't combine for a great year of social action?

## UUCF Social Justice Yard Sale

Saturday, May 5, 2011 7 a.m.-1 p.m.

2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton, VA 22124

We're Welcoming Pre-Sorted Donations

Wednesday, May 2, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.

Thursday, May 3, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.

Friday, May 4, 9 a.m. to **12 noon**

**No donations on Yard Sale Day**

**Questions? Want to help?**

Contact : [lkozloff@verizon.net](mailto:lkozloff@verizon.net)

Furniture moves: [rloustaunau@cox.net](mailto:rloustaunau@cox.net)

- **Take to the Sanctuary**
  - pants, jackets, skirts on hangers, all else folded
  - housewares (dishes, flatware)
  - books, c.d.s, DVD's & cassettes
  - jewelry & accessories, shoes
  - sports & exercise equipment
  - artwork & frames
- **Take to the Program Building**
  - computers < 3 years old
  - Office equipment and desk
  - Supplies
  - Toys & children's clothes/ shoes
  - luggage
  - Decorative & holiday items
  - linens, fabric & drapes
  - small appliances & electronics
  - Household and yard tools

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

## Church Yard Sale



*Important!*

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

~Submitted by Victoria Robinson

## 2010 HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

### PALM SUNDAY, April 1

**Where:** Kenmore Middle School

**Time:** 10:15 a.m.

**Presider:** Dan Madigan, S.J.

### HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 5

**Where:** The Center for Spiritual Enlightenment  
222 N. Washington Street, Falls Church

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

**Presider:** Jim Hug, S.J.



*This is the one NOVA occasion where space is limited and an RSVP is required. Please contact Cathy Goldschmidt by **April 1** let her know how many will attend and determine what you will bring to the dinner.*

### GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 6

**Where:** Kenmore Middle School

**Time:** 8:00 p.m.

**Presider:** Meg Tuccillo

### EASTER VIGIL, SATURDAY APRIL 7

**Where:** Unitarian Universalist Congregation of  
Fairfax  
2709 Hunter Mill Rd.  
Oakton, VA 22124

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Presider:** Jim Hug, S.J.



*There will be an Agape following the Easter Vigil liturgy. Please bring finger food to share. Beverages will be provided.*

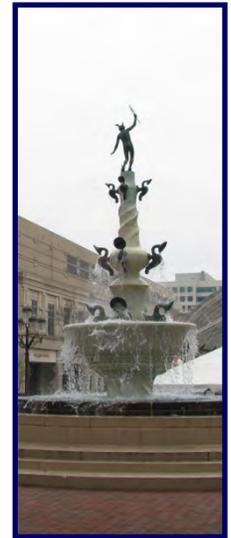
## MS Walk 2012

The DC area walk for Multiple Sclerosis will be in April again this year. The MOM Team, in support of Dianne Carroll, will be walking in Reston, VA, on Sunday, April 15. Come join us!

Walkers will gather near the Fountain at Reston Town Center. Free parking is available in nearby garages and on nearby streets. Check-in is available from 7:00 am.

Team members gather for Team Photos at 9:00 am and set off walking together. Kirsten Carroll-Teal is the MOM Team Captain and can answer any questions you may have.

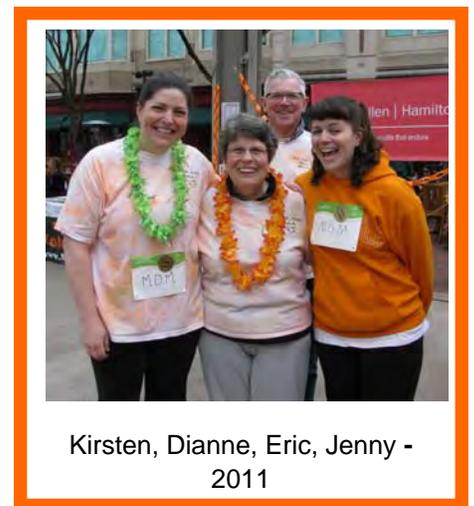
If you would like more information about participating in the walk or sponsoring a walker, you can also contact Dianne.



Directions to the MS Walk: From Dulles Toll Road (Route 267), exit Reston Parkway at Reston Town Center, go one block and turn left onto Fountain Drive. Turn right on Freedom Drive, then right into the parking garage. Look for the Reston Town Center Pavilion, 11921 Freedom Drive, Reston, VA



MOM Team 2011



Kirsten, Dianne, Eric, Jenny -  
2011

~Submitted by **Ken Chaison**

## The Calling Forth Process – 2012

*At the end of the Consensus Discussion on Sunday, February 26, the Co-Chairs were instructed to amend and finalize their original Calling Forth proposal. The revised proposal is as follows:*

The Calling Forth Process is a prayerful process that includes:

- Members reflecting on how they plan to participate in the coming year
- The calling forth or naming of nominees for co-chair at a meeting
- A period of reflection and communication in between meetings
- A second meeting in which the new co-chair is selected by consensus.

**The Chairs select the dates for the Calling Forth Meetings** (usually held in May). During the weeks before the first meeting, all members of the community are expected to reflect prayerfully on how they might individually best serve NOVA.

The first meeting will have two parts. During the **first part**, each person present will articulate how he or she might participate in NOVA during the coming year.

In the **second part**, members will be invited to put forth the name of a nominee for co-chair and the reason they recommend that person. As the discussion moves around the room, members can pass, suggest another name, or add to the reasons a named person would be a good co-chair. It is expected that all nominees will consider their call and not decline it at this meeting. The meeting will end with a prayer, and the chairs will ask nominees to reflect on their call.

**NOTE:** *Before this first meeting, names can be communicated in writing, by telephone, or e-mail to the co-chairs by members who cannot to do this in person. The chairs will announce these names at the first Calling Forth meeting.*

**During the two to three weeks that follow** the first meeting, these nominees and the whole community are encouraged to pray, reflect, and talk with one another. The nominees may speak with those who nominated them, with the co-chairs, or anyone they wish, as they consider their call.

**The final phase of the Calling Forth** is a Consensus Meeting in which the nominees respond to the call, acknowledging their willingness or their inability to serve in the coming year. Then, NOVA members, in turn, will state their preference for a potential co-chair and explain their reasoning. The meeting will continue with prayer and reflection while members consider the remaining list of nominees until a co-chair is selected and affirmed by those members present.

The investiture liturgy will follow in June.

**~Teddi Ahrens and Cece Michelotti, Co-chairs**

The following proposal was posted by John Hushon on the IEC discussion thread “ACC Project to Become Source for IECs – Existing and In Formation” under “Discussion FORUMS” at <http://acn.americancatholiccouncil.org>:

## **American Catholic Council and Intentional Eucharistic Communities**

Several years of listening assemblies and the Detroit Council itself highlighted the importance of the IEC movement. IECs represent an alternative worship and community experience for many Vatican II Catholics—either as a supplement to or a substitute for parish-based Catholic life.

IEC’s are nearly as varied as they are in number. Some attempt to be “all things” to Catholics—providing sacraments, social justice ministry, education, Sunday liturgy and opportunities for participatory community leadership. Some are blessed with canonically ordained Catholic priests. Others enjoy women priests or priests ordained in other Catholic churches. Some “elect” presiding and ministerial services from among their membership. Some are ecumenical. Many are extended prayer groups with social ministry—and extended family. Others are university based and cater to student populations and others attracted to a student-centered community.

The IEC website contains a useful definition of an IEC: [www.IntentionalEucharisticCommunities.org](http://www.IntentionalEucharisticCommunities.org)

For many years, William D’Antonio has been a “godfather” to IEC’s—assisting them in finding their theology, their sociology, their membership, and their organization. Several national conventions of IEC members have been held.

ACC has determined that it can become a resource for IEC development and communication—and that at present, while many resources are available, no one is attempting a comprehensive “service bureau” function for IECs.

ACC believes that it can be this resource by undertaking the following tasks:

**Library of Best Practices.** Working with IEC leaders, collect the experiences of IECs—how they are organized, how they are “led,” how they arrange for liturgy and or prayers, how they build community, how they advertise, how they manage finances (including not-for-profit status). These would be solicited from existing IECs, edited and catalogued and placed on a free web site for general use.

**IEC Web Sites.** Provide hot links to IEC web sites—and advice on how to create and manage web sites.

**Assist Individuals in Finding Existing IECs.** By creating a directory of IECs and publishing this directory on-line, individuals who are seeking IEC experiences would be facilitated. As part of this project, IECs electing to participate would prepare a short “self-characterization”—so that potential new members may determine whether the IEC will fill their needs, given the present state of their faith journey.

**Assist Individuals in Finding Others in Geographic Proximity to Meet and Discuss IEC Formation.** Create a discussion meet and greet forum. As funding becomes available, finance the consultancy of those experienced in IEC formation to those who wish to form an IEC.

**Create a Library of Liturgy, Prayer and Music Resources for IECs.**

**Create and Manage a Discussion “Board” for Those Interested in Forming an IEC or Discussing Common Issues.**

ACC has found an individual with ministerial experience and theological education who is prepared, on a part time basis, to manage this initiative. Others on the ACC planning team have significant experience in IEC formation, governance, and the IEC experience.

**ACC is seeking:**

- Individuals prepared to serve on an ACC Advisory Committee to finalize (at least temporarily) this draft proposal/work plan.
- Members of Existing IECs interested in assisting ACC to collect data for the IEC website.
- Members of Existing IECs and theological educators to “lend” written material on IECs to the website—or to create new material.
- Individuals skilled in web site creation and management to work with an ACC coordinator to bring the web site and its discussion components into existence.
- Funding for web site creation and management and general administration of this initiative (with existing ACC seed money, the project will require \$300-500 per month for about two years).
- Individuals who are prepared to act as mentors and consultants to those who wish to form an IEC.

Your comments and support are requested. Please feel free to comment on this site.

Thanks

~John Hushon\*  
February 22, 2012

\*Co-chair of the *American Catholic Council* and active in various local and international social justice organizations; he teaches at the Renaissance Academy of Florida Gulf Coast University.

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## Thank You Letters

Dear Carolyn & NOVA:

I arrived back in Leer yesterday, via Juba, after attending the Comboni Sisters Annual Conference in Nairobi. Thanks so much for the generosity of NOVA Catholic Community in Alexandria Virginia. Please extend my sincere thanks to everyone. Sr. Rita wrote to me yesterday and confirmed that she has received the money.

Concerning the situation in Unity State, there is much to worry about. Two weeks ago killing and violence broke out again between the Nuer and Dinka. Some people die and many are running away from their home areas towards Leer and other places. At the moment the army is trying to control the situation and bringing some security to the area which is not very far from Leer. You know Carolyn when this fighting takes place, it generally happens in remote areas where people have their animals. In a town like Leer people do not keep large numbers of cattle and sheep. However, it affects all of us because of the extended families. At the moment we are having the dry season, food is little and people become so weak; this is also a reason for such attacks. Schools are closed because it is holiday time. We are opening again in March.

The news tells us that the winter in the north of Europe is -34°c and people die. How is the winter in Virginia? For us here the hot season is starting and the worst is to come yet. Wishing you all many blessing from Jesus, Con carino,

Sr. Carmita, Comboni Missionary Sister



# Women's Ordination Conference

**A Voice for Women in the Catholic Church**

January 15, 2012

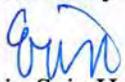
NOVA Catholic Community  
4400 Kirchner Ct  
Alexandria, VA 22304-1028

Dear NOVA Catholic Community,

Thank you for your generous contributions to the Women's Ordination Conference in 2011! Your investment makes a major difference for WOC. You are helping to further our mission of ordaining women into an inclusive and accountable Roman Catholic Church.

Thank you for making our work possible. I look forward to continuing to partner with you to bring about justice for Catholic women in 2012.

With Every Blessing,

  
Erin Saiz Hanna  
Executive Director

*Thank you NOVA!*

O. Box 15057 Washington, DC 20003 • Tel (202) 675-1006 • Fax (202) 675-1008 • [www.womensordination.org](http://www.womensordination.org) • [woc@womensordination.org](mailto:woc@womensordination.org)

Thank you to the volunteers who participated in the Overflow Hypothermia Winter Shelter at St. Clement's Episcopal Church in Alexandria this winter!

Kopp Michelotti, Marie Pinho, Ted Miller, Jerry Barrett, Clyde Christofferson, Eric Carroll, Michael Kane, Ray Tarasovic, David Mog, Jason Powell.

~Dianne Carroll

February 13, 2012

Dear Cece,

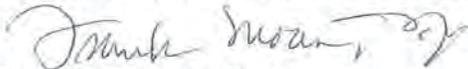
What a pleasant surprise to receive your box of Valentine chocolates! Valentine's day is a significant date to me. On Valentine's Day 67 years ago I entered the Jesuits. So what an anniversary I am having tomorrow! Thank you for thinking of me.

And if you get a chance to let the Nova community know next Sunday that I still remember it with fond affection, please ask them to pray for me especially on that day. For on Sunday, February 19, I will turn 85!

As for visitors, I am always glad to see them but don't make the trip just to see me. Stop in if you are passing by this way.

I often say Mass on Sundays at St. Joseph's Church in Odenton, Md. (near the airport). And when I do not go there, I sometimes help out in other churches. I still do some writing that gets published. And I keep myself occupied in other ways.

My regards to all at Nova. God bless you all.



Frank Moan, S. J.

Colombiere Jesuit Community

5704 Roland Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21210

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**Editor's Note: This letter was submitted as a PDF document, which cannot be edited.**

# Thank you, Nova!



**Co-partners of Campesinas** is very grateful to Nova for financial contributions over nine years, for shopping at our annual Christmas sales, and especially for an increase in donation in 2011, enabling us to expand our women's training groups to an additional community.

## What is Co-partners?

Co-partners is a charitable organization that supports the founding and maintenance of women's educational and empowerment groups in Guatemala and El Salvador. Empowerment is understood to require education, training, income generation, and community involvement. Founded in 1994, in recent years, **Co-partners** has put increasing emphasis on a three-part motto "Learn, earn, lead" and on working with youth, both male and female. **Co-partners** supports partner organizations through annual grants to cover scholarships and training classes. **Co-partners'** volunteers make annual visits, at their own expense, to each organization for planning and training on topics requested by the group.

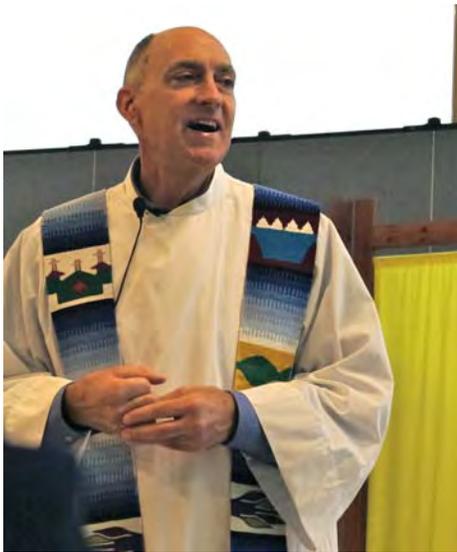
## 2011 Accomplishments

In 2011, **Co-partners** supported income generation classes in dressmaking/tailoring, word processing, and elaboration of natural medicine for over 50 women and youth in Ilobasco and 20 in Apastepeque. We provided transportation scholarships for ten rural youth to continue their education beyond the sixth grade schools available in their communities. We provided a week-long workshop on family violence for 29 youth and 10 women in Ilobasco and one in communications skills for 18 women in Apastepeque.

For 18 years, our first organization, *La Asociación La Nueva Esperanza*, has functioned in quarters borrowed from the church; however the church now wants to use this space for its own purposes and, *La Asociación La Nueva Esperanza* is seeking land and funding for a new location.

In Chichicastenago, Guatemala, in the last year, **Co-partners** funded school supplies scholarships for 90 indigenous children and grants to nursing students. As part of our volunteer program, we provided intensive English classes for 33 youth and adults, 15 of them English teachers. (English is a required high school subject, but teachers are not able to teach the oral English needed for jobs in Chichi, a tourist town), as well as strategic planning and women's leadership training with our partner organization.

~Archer Heinzen



Fr. Gerry Stockhausen giving a homily

## Recent Photos



Isabella presents Offertory gift to Fr. Joe Kenna



Eric speaks on consensus process at after-liturgy discussion



Table with Offertory gifts



The "Wicked Timmies" perform at fundraising concert for NOVA's South Sudan Project



Carmella's niece, Katie, displays world map showing location of Leer in South Sudan at February 26 liturgy

# **Food for Thought**

## **Secrets in the Bible (Noah)**

**Third in a Series by  
John Veldhuis**

Do you want to live a long life? Check out Genesis Chapter 5. Adam was 130 years old when his third son, Seth, was born. Seth then continued to live until he was 912 years of age.

A strange group of men, “the sons of heaven,” married as many of the daughters of man as they chose. These were the Nephilins. But who and what were they? We read that they were prone to do evil to the point that God regretted that he had made humans.

However, there was one good man, Noah, who was instructed to make an ark (Gen. 6:14). It was said that Noah was born circumcised, which was taken as a sacred sign from God. Noah was also the inventor of tools to till the earth. He was a “man of the soil.” (Gen 9:20). He planted vines, collected the grapes and became drunk. Some writers have suggested that the fruit Adam and Eve ate in the Garden of Eden was not an apple but grapes and Noah took grapes.

Greek culture saw the human body as the temple of the gods but Jewish culture saw the body as an evil object, an object of shame. So when Noah collapses in his tent after having tasted the fruit of the vine, Ham laughs but his brothers do the “right thing” by covering Noah’s body with a sheet.

Noah took 120 years to build the ark. God did not have to wait that long to destroy humankind. He warned the people several times but they did not listen. They could have repented but they did not and so He executed judgment against them.

Noah could have done more. He built the ark and he withstood the contempt of the onlookers, but he did not attempt to intercede with God on behalf of his fellow humans like Abraham did in his effort to save Sodom and Gomorrah or as Moses did. We do not detect a strong spiritual relationship between God and Noah. Noah simply follows instructions, does as he is told to do, but does not appear to have a personal spiritual relationship with God.

What can we learn from this? What is the ark in our lives? Do we have a faith that can withstand not only the storms of life but also the contempt of those who do not share our faith or values? Can we live a full spiritual life?

## Theology for a Small Planet

A collection of essays by Clyde Christofferson © 2009-2012

Prior Essays

### The Spirit of Lent

The Spirit of Lent is with us, and has been with us for a long time. As the Gospel reading from Mark put it last Sunday (first Sunday in Lent), “The reign of God is at hand! Change your hearts and minds and believe this Good News!” Is not this what Jesus was able to get across to his hearers, before (as Dan Madigan pointed out in his homily) there was what we now call “the Good News”? It may have taken the Resurrection to ring our bell on this point, but all along it was the Incarnation – waiting to be born in each of us and, anon, in all of us together as the People of God. Lent is a time for doing something different, as a ritual reminder to change our hearts and minds.

I read an article<sup>1</sup> a few days ago about habits, and about consumer buying habits in particular. The author, Charles Duhigg, spoke about breaking his afternoon cookie habit in order to lose weight. Habits are hard to break but it is easier if you piggyback on an existing habit. The article also described retailers who worked statistical magic on what they knew about their customers, and then gave coupons to customers likely to be open to changes in their shopping habits.

I also read a reflection<sup>2</sup> by Drew Christiansen on whether Vatican II’s confidence in the Spirit is being confirmed, or not, by what is going on in the Church today. After noting few signs in Rome of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council, Drew gave examples over these fifty years demonstrating that the Spirit has been at work.

The season of Lent is upon us. After the first article I might have titled this essay “The Habits of Lent.” But after Drew’s reflection it seems to me better to emphasize the Spirit.

What is Lent? I remember the days of giving up something, as a penance, to see whether resolve could overcome desire. Giving up a favorite dessert food is a common Lenten practice. As I read the article about habits I wondered whether the author’s effort to break his afternoon cookie habit might have been easier if it had been a Lenten resolution.

Perhaps not, as our own experience might suggest. Will power – a brute force technique – depends upon constant vigilance. If vigilance lapses, the old habits reassert themselves. Duhigg described a more thoughtful approach, treating the problem as a puzzle to be solved. To change a habit (“routine”) the trigger (“cue”) that prompts what is desired (“reward”) must be identified. It turned out that the cookie was not the reward, but simply something to keep his hands busy as he broke up the loneliness of his desk by chatting with colleagues at the water cooler. The cookie was the first step on the way to the water cooler. The solution was to go directly to conversation with his colleagues. He did not miss the cookie at all.

What do habits have to do with Vatican II? There is some tension in the Church today about the reforms of Vatican II. Old habits die hard. There are those in the pews as well as in the pulpit who were – and are – not happy with some of the directions taken by the bishops at Vatican II. They were habituated to the practices and perspectives of the Church before the Council; they were not as impressed as John XXIII and the majority of Council fathers with the need for *aggiornamento*, and they have been relieved by interpretations of the Council that emphasize continuity rather than rupture.

Where is the Spirit in all this? We still stumble because we see through a glass, darkly. Is Lent an opportunity for self discipline and sacrifice? That would fit the model of sharing in the suffering and sacrifice of Christ, leading up to Good Friday. One way of looking at the self discipline of Lent is establishing a new (if temporary) habit that involves some measure of sacrifice. That is certainly part of the Catholic tradition.

Habits are part of the human condition. Without them our minds would not be free for other pursuits. On the other hand we may become “set in our ways” because of habits that are too comfortable. The traditional “giving something up” serves to make us uncomfortable, but does it prompt us to think about how we have become “set in our ways”?

Vatican II was this kind of Lenten discipline. The Church had become too set in its ways, and was in need of an *aggiornamento* that would take old habits and make them new. This Lent – on the eve of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council – is therefore an appropriate time to consider how our ways as church may, or may not, be carrying forward the Spirit of Vatican II.

Last June in Detroit members from NOVA and PAX talked about their experiences as Intentional Eucharistic Communities (IECs). These sessions were part of a larger gathering – calling itself the American Catholic Council – self-consciously concerned with preserving and extending the Spirit of Vatican II. Elsewhere in this newsletter is a proposal (originally posted on the [ACC website](#)) that seeks to make the IEC experience more widely accessible. See whether this speaks to you about the Spirit of Lent. Is not our experience as a community (to extend Eric Robinson’s gentle but passionate reminder to each of us after Dan Madigan’s homily) our calling as a community?

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<sup>1</sup> “How Companies Learn Your Secrets” by Charles Duhigg (New York Times Magazine, February 19, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> “Of Many Things” by Drew Christiansen (America Magazine, February 20, 2012).