

Chair Notes.....

Good old fashion hand fans came in handy during the latter July liturgies as what had been an unusually pleasant June gave way to seasonable heat and humidity. We were graced with the reflective, challenging wisdom of Joe Nangle at many of the July liturgies. In his July 7th homily, on the heels of the July 4th holiday, Joe asked us to reflect on the interplay between the demands of our Christian faith and our responsibilities as citizens of the United States. He posed this question, "Do we think of ourselves as Americans who are Christians, or Christians who happen to be American?"

Joe referred to our government's role in ensuring economic justice, the effects that our foreign policy has on people in other nations, and the immigration debate here at home. During the dialogue that followed, Mike Timpane held up Martin Luther King, Jr, as one role model for an American who put the demands of his Christian faith at the forefront of his activist life.

NOVA is an active community, doing at least its fair share of putting our Christian imprint on those around us in need -- locally and far beyond (who amongst us in not awed by the good work Mary Grace is doing in the Sudan, to name just one far away place that NOVA is at work in?). On July 14th, the community was asked to sign on to a statement opposing the use of military drones. We were unable to reach consensus on the question and in the coming months it has been decided that we'll embark on a thoughtful conversation about the use of military force and broader issues of war and peace. It's my hope that this conversation will be an opportunity for all of us to learn and grow.

This is my first submission to the newsletter since being "called forth" as co-chair and I thought I would use it to share a bit of my

own background. I was born and raised in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. My father is a retired professor of physics from John Carroll University, and I attended Cleveland Saint Ignatius High School and then Boston College -- all three being Jesuit institutions. After college, I joined the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, through which I moved to Washington, DC in 1985 and worked for three years at the Father McKenna Center, a homeless service organization based at Saint Aloysius Church, formerly a Jesuit parish in DC. At the start of my career, I worked closely with and was strongly influenced by the members of the Community for Creative Non-Violence and the Dorothy Day Catholic Worker House. I originally thought that the JVC was a one or two year diversion from graduate school and a career as a professor of Irish history. But I quickly learned that working with and amongst persons who are homeless offered me an amazingly fulfilling and faith-enriching opportunity to put my beliefs about social justice to the test. It was along this journey that I was introduced to NOVA by Mike Timpane in 2007.

It's a humbling privilege to serve in the role of co-chair. I hope over the next two years and beyond that I can come to know the community and its members better. Toward that end, if anyone is willing to make time to sit with me over coffee to share your own NOVA and life journey, that we might get to know each other better, please reach out at liturgy or by email.

~Brian Carome

September Newsletter Deadline
Wednesday, August 28

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NOVA Catholic Community

www.novacommunity.info

NOVA Photos:

<http://www.novacommunity.weebly.com>

NOVA Message Line.....	(703) 852-7907
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Treasurer	Joe Formoso
Community Life Coordinator	Marlene Shade
Liturgy Coordinator	Gloria Mog
Padre Cadre Coordinator	John Mooney
Music Coordinator	Victoria Robinson
Peace & Justice Coordinators	Dianne Carroll Marie Keefe
Christ House Coordinator	Kopp Michelotti
Facilities	John Tarrant
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NOVA RETREAT

A Weekend Full of Mountains & Reflections

NOVA's 2013 retreat will be held Sept 13-15 at Shrine Mont in Orkney Springs VA. The retreat will center around the ideas in the books *Quest for the Living God* by Elizabeth Johnson and *Engaged Spirituality* by Joe Nangle, OFM. Joe Nangle and Dolores Leckey will serve as facilitators for the retreat. The cost for the retreat weekend, including lodging (rustic) and meals (down home cookin') is \$190, payable by check made out to NOVA.

Participants must make reservations with Kopp Michelotti. Please give the names of all persons for whom you are making a reservation. If reserving space for any children age 12 or younger, contact Kopp about reduced rates for kids. Also, we don't want anyone to miss retreat because of cost; scholarships are always available. Talk to Kopp.

~Kopp Michelotti

THE NOVA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATE THE EUCHARISTIC LITURGY WITH US ON SUNDAYS IN ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA.

KENMORE... Winter Months...

Liturgy begins at 10:15 am—Gather at 10:00 am

During the winter months, our Liturgy is usually celebrated at Kenmore Middle School, Arlington Blvd. and Carlin Springs Rd, Arlington, VA.

LACEY WOODS...Summer Months...

Liturgies begin at 9:30 am—Gather at 9:15 am

Beginning Memorial Day Weekend up to our Fall Retreat weekend, we celebrate at Lacey Woods Park, George Mason Drive near Washington Blvd.

The schedule changes for Holidays and special occasions. Please call the Message Line, or check the NOVA website, both mentioned above, for the latest information.

We Remember In Prayer....

Please keep our shut-ins in your prayers; Sonia Donahue, Jody Furlong.

Please pray for the Christofferson family as they mourn the death of Clyde's mother.

Please pray for our priest friends from the Woodstock Center as they disperse to their new lives. They will always be close to us.

Please pray for the Handicapped Encounter in Christ community and the family of Julie Wessel as we mourn her death.

Please pray for the continued recovery of Fr. Joe Nangle

Please pray for the continued safety and wonderment of Mary Grace while in South Sudan and everywhere else her heart takes her.

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

~Marlene Shade

August Birthdays.....

- 2 Marcelline Niemann
- 4 Lisa Coll
- 11 Joe Annunziata
Anne Houck
- 12 Eric Carroll
Bob O'Toole
- 20 Rose Barrett
Marie Keefe
- 26 Tom Clarkson
- 29 Peggy Meyer
Margaret Kurtz-Randall



Please send your birth date (month & day only) to the Newsletter Editor, news4nova@gmail.com, if you would like it to appear here.

CHRIST HOUSE

The Dog Days of Summer Are Worse When You're Hungry!

When there is no one to prepare a home-cooked meal for the clients at Christ House, the staff boils hot dogs, gives each hungry person two dogs in two buns and sends them on their way. Don't let this happen in August! Folks at Christ House love our meatloaf!!!

On Monday, August 19, NOVA will prepare and serve meatloaf and scalloped potatoes to nearly 70 clients at Christ House. **Please mark your calendars to remember to bring your meatloaves and spuds to liturgy on August 18.** Alternatively, you may drop them off at the Michelotti's anytime on Sunday or up till 1 PM on Monday the 19th. Just leave them in the coolers on the front porch at 6325 19th Street N., Arlington.



If you want to find out firsthand whether it's hotter in the kitchen or on the street, call or e-mail Kopp Michelotti or Ken Chaison about working in the kitchen and serving dinner. We start food prep around 4 PM.

Before your calendars get too crowded--here are NOVA's Christ House dates for the rest of 2013:
August 19 October 21 December 16

~Kopp Michelotti

LITURGY SCHEDULE

New!

Planners can find Inclusive Readings (Year C) and Music Selections in the NOVA Yahoo Group Files, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/novacomunity/files/>. Sign on with the Yahoo ID you used to enroll. Please give all music selections to the Music Liaison the Sunday before your liturgy and print **80 copies** of the liturgy program.

AUGUST MUSIC LIAISON Victoria Robinson	SEPTEMBER MUSIC LIAISON Tim White
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August 4 – 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Community Led Liturgy
 Planner: Victoria Robinson

August 11 – 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Priest: Joe Nangle, OFM
 Planners: David & Gloria Mog

August 18 – 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Priest: Gerry Stockhausen, SJ
 Planners: John & Carol Reeder, Gen & Mike Timpane

August 25 – 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

Priest: John Haughey, SJ
 Planners: Linda & Jack Christie

September 1 – 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Priest: Dan Madigan, SJ
 Planners: Meg Tuccillo & Margaret Kirk

September 8 – 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Priest: Quinn Conners, O.Carm.
 Planner: Emma Violand

**September 15 – 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time
 Liturgy at Shrinemont, Orkney Springs, VA**

Priest: Joe Nangle, OFM
 Planner: Retreat Team

September 22 – 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

RETURN TO KENMORE – Gather at 10,
 Liturgy at 10:15

Priest: John Haughey, SJ
 Planner: Gloria Mog

September 29 – 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Priest: Gerry Stockhausen, SJ
 Planners: Cackley Family



Altar - July 14



Music - June 30

GUNSTON VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

NOVA volunteers distribute bags of non-perishable food, cereal provided by NOVA, perishable (eggs, milk, meat, etc) items picked up at the Arlington Food Assistance Center warehouse on the night of



distribution and produce items every other week picked up by Eric Carroll at the produce markets downtown (funded by the NOVA Peace & 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 dozen years and others are more recent. All love their work and would love to teach new NOVA folks how it's done. So if you would like to volunteer: send email to Dianne Carroll diacarroll@comcast.net or call 703-536-2616

~Dianne

A big thanks to all the Gunston faithful volunteers!!

August 1: Eric, Marie Pinho, Marie Keefe

August 8: James Hainer, Marie P,
(eric or tim if needed)

August 15: Tim White and Jerry Barrett

August 22: Glen Passin and Syd Boyne

August 29: Raquel Pastor, Tim, Cathy Goldschmidt

Routine: (usually)

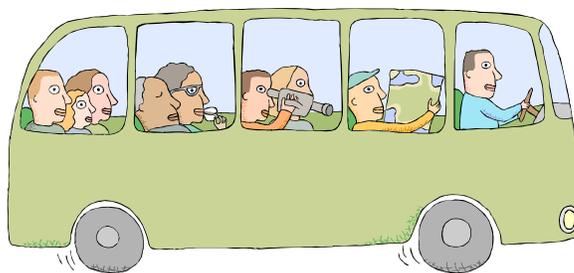
Perishable pickup at AFAC warehouse at 6:00 p.m.

Distribution at Gunston 6:30-7:30

Clean up and return list to AFAC

Note: An activity where the more hands, the merrier.

AN INSIDER'S TOUR OF D.C.



To Benefit Educate The Girls

Sunday, September 29th, 12:30 p.m.

Tour Bus **Departs** from...

Kenmore Junior High School
200 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington, VA 22204
Returns to Kenmore at 6:00 p.m.

Your Professional Tour Guide:
Award-winning – Marie Pinho

Come help us raise money for Educate the Girls, A non-profit organization providing the opportunity for an elementary and secondary education for girls in Uganda who would otherwise be unable to attend school.

Hold onto your seat belts. Marie will take us on a tour of some new and interesting places. You'll have a great time, learn some new things about DC, and make a difference for Ugandan children – what could be better?

Tickets are going fast, only 19 left (7/28).
– See Nancy Veldhuis

\$60 – transportation, guided tour & delicious lunch served at Noon before departure (\$50 if you don't want lunch)

~Nancy Veldhuis

Did you know that your on-line purchases can help send a girl to school? If you sign up with iGive.com at no cost to you and select Educate The Girls as your chosen cause, each of your favorite participating "stores" automatically will make a donation, a small portion of the normal purchase price, to Educate the Girls each time you make an on-line purchase. Over 1,200 stores are participating and have made over \$6 million in donations to numerous causes. Hope you will use iGive.com to help keep our current 33 girls in elementary and secondary school in rural Uganda. For more information, contact Nancy Veldhuis. To find out more about Educate The Girls, please visit our website: educatethegirls.org.

Educate a girl and you educate a nation.
Can you help Educate The Girls? (www.educatethegirls.org)

V.O.I.C.E.

On June 23rd members of VOICE (Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement) filled Mt Olive Church in Arlington to support the need for more affordable housing in Arlington. Seventeen NOVA members attended this meeting where our own Emma Violand-Sanchez spoke to the several hundred members from 40 + churches, synagogues, and temples in Northern Virginia.

To demonstrate strength in numbers to the County board, people took home petitions with commitments to secure a total of 10,000 signatures from people who lived or want to live in Arlington County and who want the Board to use county owned land to build 1,000-5,000 new units of rental housing in the next 3-5 years, aimed at families making under \$50,000. The money that will be used is new dedicated revenues of \$50-75 million using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) & other non-property tax revenue.

Fourteen NOVA members have already taken petitions to get signatures and we look forward to more NOVA members asking for the petitions in the next week or two. As you fill the petitions with names, addresses, and e-mails/phone #s, please return them to Nancy or John Veldhuis.

After October 1st the petitions will be presented to the County Board to demonstrate "strength in numbers" and to demonstrate that this is as much an issue to Arlington constituents as it is

to those who cannot yet afford to live in Arlington. We are hoping that ¾ of the signatures are from Arlington residents or workers (as noted on the petition).

Please keep in mind as you gather signatures:

- Arlington has lost 10,000 market rate affordable rental units in the last decade,
- The average rent for a 1 bedroom apartment at \$1,615 requires an hourly wage of \$33.63,
- We want Arlington to continue to be an economically and culturally diverse county.

~Cece Michelotti

To: NOVA Catholic Community
From: Little Friends For Peace

Dear NOVA Catholic Community,

Thank you so much for your generous donation to Little Friends for Peace.

Your generosity is moving the Peace Academy project along, helping print our new book: Teach Peace : Live Peace; Best Practices, as we help build a culture of Peace through education, experiencing and practice using the non violent tools of peace building.

Thank you for being incredible Peace Partners!

You are the Beloved Community - Body of Christ.

Peace

M.J. & Jerry Park
Co-directors of L.E.F.P.

~Peggy Meyer

JULIE WESSEL

Julie peacefully left this life on Thursday afternoon [7/25] and has begun to live another life. There are many in NOVA and amongst HEC who could share far more than I can but many years ago, my husband, John Tarrant was invited to Lourdes by the Knights of Malta. John met Julie there. She was another cosseted 'Malade.' For those of you, unfamiliar with this "culture," it is very protective and a very un-empowering view of disability. John returned...still disabled but miracles did happen. One such miracle was Julie. Those assisting her thought the water too cold for her disability-she would have none of it. She was going to get into that water and she did. Then on to the Stations of the Cross.....but Julie, that path is too steep for someone so disabled. Julie would have none of that either. She did the Stations of the Cross. She was a powerful woman. She will be missed by the many whose lives were touched by knowing her.

~ Marlene Shade

NOVA WITH VOICE AT JP MORGAN CHASE

On Thursday, June 20, Cece & Kopp Michelotti and Pat Sodo joined more than 60 VOICE members, for the action at J. P. Morgan Chase's (JPMC's) Washington offices. [VOICE - Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement, <http://voice-iaf.org/>].

We first met at St. John's Episcopal Church on H Street to prepare, and then walked/chanted the couple of blocks to JPMC. The action was a press conference to denounce JPMC's refusal (per the phone meeting with VOICE on 6/18) to support at the levels requested in VOICE's proposal of reinvestment in the Prince William Community. JPMC has said that they "could" do the \$10M requested, but they're just not comfortable with it. [This VOICE action was covered by a reporter from WAMU and a stringer photographer.]

Additionally, it was hoped that VOICE would be able to talk live with someone from JPMC, but no one from VOICE was allowed into the building. In fact, the doors were locked. We were told that someone would come out to talk with us, but no one did come out except a bldg. manager to tell us this is private property

We were assembled outside their building entrance with banners, signs, and photos of foreclosed properties. Rev. Savage (Manassas Baptist) made the opening statement and the call to action; Mike Wilson (St. Paul's United Methodist in Woodbridge) talked about the new/continuing JPMC predatory practices of robo-signing credit card debt collection documents in Northern Virginia (600 in PWC, 1200 in Fairfax, 200 each in Arlington & Alexandria); Meg Carroll (Georgetown South/GTS) delivered "artwork" for JPMC's offices showing vacant and blighted properties in GTS courtesy of JPMC; and Fr. Seamus Finn (Interfaith Center for Corporate

Responsibility) talked about religious shareholders support.

Two police cars pulled up and stopped for several minutes, but then drove on. We were gathered at JPMC for 20-30 minutes and left behind our posters/photos propped against the locked front doors.

While we were at JPMC, a smaller group of VOICE leaders went to the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) to request a meeting with the director within 30 days. As Federal Regulators, OCC is already involved in investigating JPMC's predatory lending practices and robo-signings (to include credit cards). The group was met with interest and assured of a face-to-face meeting very soon.

The action concluded at St. John's with a debrief of reactions. Feelings ranged from disappointed to empowered. JPMC's decision not to reinvest at the levels requested could have been seen as a downer for VOICE; but at their offices, we demonstrated that we won't give up. VOICE has moved from seeming defeat with grit and character. We went to JPMC and they locked us out. They took pictures of us from the upper floors of the building. Martin Trimble summed up our action by quoting Frederick Douglass: "*Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.*"

The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members, a heart of grace, and a soul generated by love.
Coretta Scott King

~Pat Sodo

TURKEY...WARM AND HUMID, HOT AND DRY



Generosity, Hospitality, Friendliness, Honesty: We spent 8 days in the company of the Rumi Forum in Turkey - Istanbul, Izmer, Ankora, Gaziantep and Istanbul. It was an unique window into the culture, politics, character of an interesting Country.

Not a trip for the faint hearted as two of our in-Country flights left the airport after 11:00 PM. Ten (10) persons from a wide background were invited to go to Turkey with the Rumi Forum on June 21st through the 31st. Four were NOVA members [Marlene Shade, John Tarrant, Rosemarie & Joe Annunziata]. The following are some of our observations:

There is a certain texture to Turkey that I just loved, layers upon layers of history, in the streets we walked on, the

alleyways, the bazaars and the abundant food. It was an architects' delight. Summer in Turkey means being outdoors and we had many opportunities to eat meals al fresco. Evenings in Istanbul every corner of open space is taken up with families enjoying the

cooler evenings. This need to be outdoors and connect with others in this crowded city is a story my US Turkish friends repeat with nostalgia.

Istanbul is really the passage from Europe to Asia and Turkey is both. The Rumi Forum gave us access to newspapers, think tanks, educators, social workers, embassy officials, a member of parliament and many others involved in the business world. Many were members of the Gulan Movement-a movement to promote love and peace between the majority Muslim population and the numerous minorities in this Country in a spirit of interfaith dialogue.



Turkey does not have freedom of the press, it has 2% unemployment. Most of the women we met deferred to the men with them and women in full covering with eyes netted or covered with dark Sunglasses was disconcerting to this feminist at least. A trip to the ladies room revealed the secret of those impossible buns that are under a head covering. A boatload of young single women on the Bosphorus were yelling and fist pumping to raucous music in the next boat over, much to our delight. Modern and ancient in the same breath. I loved Turkey and it left me unsettled.



~Marlene Shade
Photos by Marlene

PERSPECTIVES ON THE TRIP TO TURKEY

Joe's Perspective

What I remember best about the Turkey trip was:

- 1) The thorough yet casual manner in which it was prepared, implemented and followed up by the Rumi Forum group. The President, Emre Celik, personally accompanied our group of ten throughout the entire trip. In addition to assisting individuals with passports, hotels, restaurants, buses, etc., he was excellent in supplementing our visits by personally knowing many of the people we visited, translating, and providing important economic, political and cultural insights. Upon our return to the U.S., he has organized several visits with Turkish nationals here.
- 2) The warm hospitality that greeted us over meals in peoples' homes, at newspaper offices, universities, think tanks, foreign affairs offices, among legal scholars, with Parliamentarians, and

at the U.S. Embassy. Although there were sometimes questions asked on delicate issues such as Muslim pressures on the press, political party differences, public protests that were going on, and Turkey's difficulty in being accepted into the European Union, the responses seemed to be quite candid.

- 3) Perhaps most surprising was the extent to which a Muslim educational reform movement, translated as "Service," is growing in Turkey. Based upon the ideas of a Turkish exile living in the U.S., it is also apparently growing in about 140 Muslim and non-Muslim countries, including the U.S. It is expected to have a growing influence not only on Turkish education, but also on business, the press, and politics. The Rumi Forum is a part of that growing movement.

~ *Joe Annunziata*

Rosemarie's perspective

After six flights in nine ever-sun-filled (and at times very hot) days, traveling more than 10,000 miles by air on Turkish airlines, the international flights beginning, appropriately (and promisingly!) , with a piece of Turkish delight for each passenger, countless more miles on land and the sea (the Bosphorus), countless cups of tea served in the Muslim tradition of welcoming visitors at every meeting and encounter, days punctuated by delicious lunches and dinners of various combinations of charcoal-grilled lamb and chicken, perfectly-cooked rice, a Turkish specialty known as kofte (grilled meatballs), Turkish ravioli, Turkish pide (pizza), deep fried fish sandwiches, mezze (appetizers such as hummus and Turkish grape leaves) hazel nuts and pistachios, an unusual yoghurt drink known as ayran, baklava and other special pastries (sometimes served with luscious, creamy ice cream), we returned from a unique and amazing visit to Turkey, having met many of its leaders in academia, business, media, politics and government, law, and social research. We traveled to four geographic areas of the country, beginning with the vibrant, exotic European/Asian city, Istanbul, (and yes, we passed through Taksim Square, the center of the protests you may have read about. In Istanbul, we met with two constitutional lawyers working on a new constitution for Turkey and the staff at the American Embassy, notwithstanding the previous State Department announcement of the continued and increasing risk of terrorist attacks on U.S. diplomatic facilities in Turkey.

We also traveled east to Gaziantep, among the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. It is located 30 miles from the Syrian border and the Syrian refugee encampments, approximately 60 miles north of Aleppo. There we met with the staff of a successful and prominent Kurdish television station and with Kurdish businessmen. Gaziantep has a mixed population of Turks and Kurds.

In between Istanbul and Gaziantep, we traveled to Izmir and Ephesus, and then to Ankara, the capital, where we met with one of Turkey's young elected leaders in the Turkish parliament, a 32 year old member of the opposition (to Erdogan's RK party), an impressive example of Turkey's young leadership, not only in politics but also in business and educational institutions. Women were well

represented in this circuit around Turkey (It was reported to us that women comprise 30% of the lawyers, 35% of Turkey's educators, 15 to 20% of the judges, and 12% of corporate CEOs.)

We visited some of Turkey's most important sites, including Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque, but, clearly, for me and undoubtedly for others, the most important and enlightening aspects of the trip centered on our meetings with representatives from those segments of Turkish society that are mentioned above as well as from the people who generously invited us into their home and family life. From them we learned of the continuing efforts to democratize the country and strengthen the values of civil society—freedom, tolerance, human rights, and education. From them, we learned about a global social movement, (known as the Hizmet (Service) or Gulen Movement, a pro democracy civil society which is playing a powerful role in disseminating those values as well as establishing interfaith and intercultural dialogue throughout Turkey and other parts of the world. I found the Gulen Movement quite amazing on many levels.

It was founded by a highly regarded educator by the name of Fethullah Gulen who has been residing in Pennsylvania for a number of years, (for both political and health reasons it appears), but his influence is widely known and appreciated by both Turks and non-Turks. Two of his best known American admirers are members of our own community, Father John Haughey and Father Tom Michel who has written several articles about the Movement and Gulen's educational philosophy and the schools his philosophy has inspired.

It is a social movement that reportedly has millions of adherents in Turkey. According to one report, the average age in the Movement is 25-30 (not surprising in light of the fact that 30 is the median age in Turkey) and the majority of participants are university students and graduates. They are mostly from the middle class and well educated. There is no formal membership in the movement, no dues, and no defined tenure of membership. One becomes a participant by adopting the Movement's values as one's own. By nature a "bottom up" movement, it functions by virtue of grass roots associations of men and women who come together for the express purpose of achieving an identified goal, such as to build a school, a hospital, a mosque or run a newspaper. These "bottom-up" ad hoc associations raise the needed funds and organize the participation of volunteers to build the project. There appears to be no hierarchical or central organizational control or management whatsoever. Notwithstanding this loose confederation of like-minded people, the goals, particularly those relating to education, have been realized in the several hundred educational organizations established around the world including Turkey, Central Asia, several countries in Africa, the Far East, Eastern Europe and the U.S.

The Muslim faith inspires the values of the Movement and its adherents, but it is not faith specific and it is described as strictly secular. Generally speaking, the goals of the Movement are education, interfaith dialogue and non-political, non-conflictual and nonviolent community service, improving oneself and developing social and cultural potential. In addition to education, which is its primary area of achievement, the Movement operates (although not necessarily equally as well developed) in the areas of health, media, publishing, business and finance, humanitarian aid and relief serving the needs of the poor and disadvantaged.

The associations work within the legal parameters of the community in which they are located, whether the community is authoritarian or democratic by nature. In other words, they do not "break the laws" of the community in which they operate, but try to find some space to help human beings foster intellectual and human dialogue, dialogue being one of the hallmarks of the Movement. Political, personal, and violent goals are inconsistent with the Movement's values as is action without dialogue, collective reasoning, and consensus. The Movement's predominating values are most often identified as tolerance and love and the action the values generate has been described as collaborative social altruism.

~ *Rosemarie Annunziata*

PERSPECTIVES ON THE TRIP TO TURKEY



Photo Collage by Rosemarie

THE VISIT OF JOHN XXIII'S DIRECTOR TO NOVA AUGUST 11, 2013

SUMMARY. On Sunday, August 11, Edwin Novoa, the director of the John XXIII Institute in Nicaragua will be visiting NOVA as part of his and John Mooney's 3-week "friend-raising" trip across the US (from LA, to Omaha, other Midwest cities, DC, and Miami) on behalf of "Housing First," the Institute's housing construction program for low-income Nicaraguans. Edwin's purpose in visiting us is to thank NOVA for its support of the Institute, both in annual funding and through the first Men Who Cook for women's cooperatives established by Institute. Other stops in DC include Georgetown University and the Quixote Center.

The anchor of their trip is the Institute's presentation about "Housing First" to the US Jesuit Universities' Justice Conference in Omaha, NE, August 1-4. The following excerpt from Edwin's speech there details Nicaragua's immense housing crisis, the Institute's response thus far to that crisis, and the expanded response it hopes to make with the help of the Alliance for Affordable Housing in Nicaragua (AVSEN), a network of local teams in the US, Canada, and Germany to support Housing First.

EXCERPTS FROM EDWIN'S SPEECH:

Here's Nicaragua's housing crisis in a nutshell.

According to the World Bank, Nicaragua still has the second-lowest per capita income in the American hemisphere (after Haiti), a fact that underlies our housing crisis.

We have a housing deficit of a million homes, about half because of dilapidation, half from simple shortage. This deficit grows by about 20,000 a year. One measure of this deficit is overcrowding. Twenty-seven percent of Nicaraguans live in homes where four or more people sleep in the same bedroom, usually smaller than 100 square feet.

In the face of this need, the national government, commercial builders, and the non-governmental agencies (NGOs) combined build fewer than 12,400 new homes a year.

Even those low numbers are deceptively high.

Because of budget short-falls, the government's production is far lower than 7000. But there is a more fundamental problem. The legal definition of "low-income" housing is a home under \$20,000. Yet the national association of commercial builders says they cannot afford to build homes under \$30,000. Worst of all, four out of five Nicaraguans cannot afford a home costing \$10,000 or more.

Home financing is another vast problem. Ninety-four percent of Nicaraguans, including all the working poor, cannot qualify for a commercial home-mortgage loan.

Forty-five percent of "non-poor" homeowners lack clear legal title to their property. That number exceeds 60% among the "very poor."





Though more problems could be mentioned, I will finish by noting that one out of four families lacks safe water and sanitation in cities, more than four out of ten in rural areas. This is a major cause of widespread diarrheal disease in Nicaragua.

Here's how we have responded to this national crisis up till now. In all, we have built more than 3,600 homes to date, benefiting 18,000 people. Our median housing production has been about 150 per year. We have built them mostly with contributions from our foreign NGO partners but also with contributions from our own housing revolving loan fund.



Each home has clear legal title, plus a toilet or latrine, depending on the availability of public services. The people help build their own homes. In the early years, we gave people homes. But since 2001, we have required them to pay back 50 to 70 percent of the variable costs through mortgage payments into our housing revolving loan fund. Incredible as it may seem, because of our up-front community organizing, we have not had one non-payment in the entire housing portfolio, though there have been late payments. We now have a housing revolving-loan-fund balance of \$470,000 and repayments of an additional \$670,000 due over the next 18 years. To put those numbers into perspective, in 2012 dollars, it would cost \$2.4 million in variable and

fixed costs to build three hundred homes.

But we have always built more than houses. By 2011, we had built 250 community water systems. And, with our Jesuit focus on “whole persons in their communities,” by the end of 2010 we had an integrated human development program with projects in a third of Nicaragua’s *municipios*. Those programs included teacher education, preventive community-health, community pharmacies, cooperatives, and disaster preparedness. All of it is based on a community organizing program that increased the leadership capacity of individuals and their community.

Here's our updated housing strategy. In our new strategic plan, we proposed to increase our production to at least 300 homes a year, to make a bigger dent in the national housing deficit for low-income people. But the downward trends in international funding left us wondering how to just keep the program alive, much less expand it. How could we both increase production and become financially sustainable?

The answer we arrived at startled us: precisely by turning the challenge into the solution. We could move closer to financial sustainability precisely by increasing production, if we did it the right way. We have come to call our new approach “hope with market efficiencies.”

Simplifying greatly, we can more sustainably build housing for our target clients, the very poor, by using four principles of the market:

- Clear identification of our market segments
- Lowering production costs
- Using economies of scale
- And using other people's money

Let me explain each one in greater detail.

About the market, we realized:

- We first built housing just in *rural areas*, later also in *urban fringes*. As very poor people have moved into cities, urban housing needs have increased dramatically, especially in and around Managua, the capital. Thus, without abandoning rural housing construction, we decided to build also in and around Managua.
- We realized it was not only the “very poor” but also the “working poor” who have no access to housing, due to high prices and non-existent financing. We then calculated that we could build housing for the working poor that recouped all of our costs and provided a profit of between eight and twelve percent. And we could still sell them for 60% of comparable commercial home prices. Those profits could then subsidize homes for the very poor, who can afford to pay for only the variable costs. In fact, we have recently begun discussions with a Canadian non-profit builder about constructing middle-class homes, which would greatly increase our profit income.
- After interviews with many developers and potential clients, we developed *ten housing models* to fit a spectrum of needs and budgets. We also developed a *home repair and renovation program* for the working poor.

About costs, with the help of the UCA’s school of architecture, we completely redesigned our models for faster and less expensive construction. They also have earthquake resistance and quality lacking in many commercial models.

About economy of scale, we have run dozens of spreadsheets that show how reasonable higher production of the proper mix of homes can reduce fixed costs per unit and move us closer to financial self-sufficiency. Only continued calculations and actual experience will show how close.

About building with other people’s money. No, we have not started robbing banks! But we have come to realize that the *single biggest obstacle* to both increased production and also financial self-sustainability was not the *homes* we build but the home mortgage loans we make. Because the interest rate we can charge our low-income clients is always lower than our inflation rate (about 8% per year), we lose money on our loans. The slide shows you the array of “other people” we are working with. I’ll talk about just three of the newest and most exciting.

First, because we firmly believe that ultimately only Nicaragua can solve its housing problem, we have put a great emphasis on getting investments from Nicaraguans. Three current ones are the *housing purchasers themselves* who repay their loans into our housing revolving loan fund, *employers* who contribute money for their workers’ home improvement or construction, and *local governments* which donate land and money for housing construction. We are constantly working to involve more Nicaraguan players.

Second, we are going to *banks and micro-finance organizations* because that’s where the money is. We recently signed a contract with one micro-finance organization to finance home-improvement loans. We are consulting with a former World Bank microfinance expert on how to partner with commercial banks on home-construction loans—a much harder sell.

Finally, with this conference and the three week trip John and I are taking to key US cities, we are accelerating AVSEN, the “Alliance for Affordable Housing in Nicaragua.” AVSEN is a network of local partnership teams willing to share their human and financial capital to support the expansion of our housing program. Starting in the US and Canada, we hope also to expand to Germany—again, where the money is. Because John XXIII is itself part of the Jesuit network, we are focusing on cities with either Jesuit universities or parishes. Additionally, in the US, we are focusing on cities with high populations of Nicaraguan Americans.



Theology for a Small Planet

Prior Essays

A collection of essays by Clyde Christofferson © 2009-2013

The New Evangelization: 'Rebuild Our Prodigal Church' – Interlude

The late Pope John XXIII (1959-63) is quoted as giving the following advice: *“Consult not your fears but your hopes and dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what is still possible for you to do”*

In the last essay I asked whether it was too harsh to suggest that the hierarchy has taken its inheritance from God's house and is now finding itself in a sort of wilderness, with the rest of us along for the ride since we are all bound together in this People of God we call Church.

In the parable, the Prodigal Son tires of the wilderness and comes home. What would it mean to come home?

This past week I had a different experience of coming home. My mother died, and the family met at my mother's farm in Arkansas. That in itself was a homecoming, but we were there to celebrate an eternal homecoming for my mother. At the end of the funeral mass I talked about my mother.

Eulogy for Mom

“We all have memories of our mother.

“I remember one in particular, when I was a teenager. Mom is at the dining room table with a half full cup of coffee, reading War and Peace for the umpteenth time. I pull up a chair, and want to talk. She listens, and we go back and forth. And I feel much better.

“There is a story about St. Francis that describes what Mom was doing. A young friar accompanied St. Francis as he preached the good news around the town. Francis would stop now and then, exchange pleasantries with the people of the town, and continue on. After some time the young friar asked his mentor, “when are we going to preach?” Francis replied, “That is what we have been doing.”

“What was St. Francis doing? Stories that are memorable have different levels of meaning, a richness that leads to retelling. At one level St. Francis is preaching through the ordinary greetings and small talk with people as he walks through the town. Indeed, it is this aspect of the story that brings the young friar up short, and gives him – and us – a different understanding of what preaching is all about. This is what makes the story memorable.

“How does this very ordinary way of relating to people constitute ‘preaching’? One can imagine a gracious smile by St. Francis that might cheer a weary heart, or an attentive ear that might soothe what gnaws at a

troubled soul. Small things do make a difference. The young friar probably saw this, and expected that St. Francis, seeing the weary heart or the troubled soul, would take that opportunity to say something.

“But that's not what happened. Words are not always necessary. As St. Francis said, ‘preach the good news always; when necessary use words.’ But listening without such words is a step toward the other, a step toward being Christ to one another.

“Looking back on my memories at the dining room table, Mom understood this. But it was a different kind of hospitality that brings out the best. It was more than listening; it was somehow allowing the fires within me to burn bright.

“St. Francis was a person of experience and wisdom, and had much to say. So the young friar thought. I imagine Jesus also having much to say, and Mary the sister of Lazarus in last week's Gospel thought so, too. She chose to listen to Jesus as her sister Martha toiled to be hospitable to Jesus.

“Did Jesus have something to learn from Mary, and from Martha? Martha certainly thought so, but Jesus thought something else was going on with Mary, whose hunger put her at the feet of Jesus, leaving Martha to toil in the kitchen. The story is perhaps a metaphor. I have in me both Martha and Mary, not as often as I should, but sometimes. Once a year I serve in a homeless shelter, trying to be the hands and feet of Christ. But how often do I make time to listen for Christ in these homeless people?

“St. Francis had wisdom and experience, enough to know that even the weary heart and the troubled soul are graced with the presence of Christ. So at another level St. Francis listened for what that presence was saying. The gracious smile and the attentive ear provide encouragement for hands and feet of Christ that are sometimes timid. And not just for Martha's doing, but for Mary's contemplation.

“Maybe that was Jesus' point, that these two aspects of living a good life need to be in balance. We do good works all the time, in the small kindnesses of everyday life, like Martha. But how often do we listen to the other, like Mary, to hear the Christ within them? I'm thinking of these homeless people at the shelter.

I was serving them in Martha's sense, but how often did I listen for the Christ within them in Mary's sense, so that it shines forth?

"Mom knew how to do both.

"So I remember mother, at the dining room table, not just listening but attentive, not just smiling but encouraging. I'll leave out the gentle -- and sometimes not so gentle -- prodding. She was a saint; she is a saint. As we all should be. We have been blessed, and graced, by her presence. She is still with us, in ways we cannot now comprehend."

Death can be viewed – wrongly, I think – as a chasm that separates ‘this world’ from a ‘next world.’ The ancients who thought in terms of ‘this world’ and a ‘next world’ had no better language for the hope that was within them. Yet the terminology is a prison. Death as a chasm between the two follows logically.

But Jesus preached a different vision. The ‘next world’ is now: “The reign of God is at hand.” There is a wholeness to reality that the ‘this world/next world’ language didn’t contemplate and kept hidden from us. The reasonable conclusion, confirmed by Christ’s rising, is that ‘heaven’ can be lived now and that death is no chasm to such a lived life. Christ

preached a reality that built a bridge across that chasm, as an example for us.

We take certain things for granted. I wake up in the morning and see myself as the same person I was the day before. There is a continuity across the night of sleep. That continuity provides a metaphor for another kind of sleep. The wholeness of the kingdom of God is not divided by death.

In this view of reality, human consciousness is not separate from the soul, but encompasses the soul. Under the old ‘this world/next world’ model it was reasonable to conclude that a soul existed separate from the body, to be released at death for those who have lived a faithful life.

Christ said that “the reign of God is at hand! Turn your perspective around (*metanoia*) and rejoice in this good news.” The ‘next world’ has broken through, and we experience it by loving God and one another. This kind of living is the reign of God.

The new view provided by “reign of God” terminology gives death a different interpretation: the continuity of consciousness is not broken by death any more than by a good night’s sleep.

This is how I have been looking at my mother’s recent death.

THANK YOU NOTE

Thank you for your thoughtful e-mails and prayers for the Clyde’s mother (Barbara) and her family. We are saddened by our loss. The funeral was on Saturday, July 27. All of her seven children and most of their spouses, as well as many of her grandchildren and several great-grandchildren attended the mass and burial service. It’s difficult to get to Jasper, Arkansas, which is located in a rustic area in the Ozarks. Most of us had to scramble to make travel arrangements. We all live in different states and it was remarkable that so many family members were able to be there. It was an opportunity to pay tribute to and express our love for Barbara: mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, artist, enthusiastic and intelligent conversationalist, delightful letter writer, and a true Christian in her unconditional acceptance of each one of her family members and neighbors.

I appreciate as well your prayers for my sister, Patricia. I am still hopeful that her illness might be cured but the prognosis is not good at this point.

~ Judy Christofferson

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 11 Visit & Presentation of Edwin Novoa (John XXIII)
August 19 Christ House (also Oct 21 & Dec 16)
September 13, 14, 15 NOVA Retreat, Shrine Mont
September 29 at 12 p.m. NOVA-On-The-Bus

RAMADAN BASKETS PROJECT 2013

True charity remembers not only those in need who ask, but also those who are prevented by some reason from asking.

Holy Quran Verse 51:19

Many thanks to the whole community for contributing to our partnership efforts with the Muslim Women Coalition (MWC) during Ramadan. For over a decade the Muslim Women's Coalition has been assisting women and families during the blessed month of Ramadan by donating hundreds of large sized laundry baskets filled with need items to area shelters. On July 28 we assembled 8 laundry baskets of personal care products and food. All items were brought to church that Sunday by NOVA families: tea, rice, soap, lotion, crackers, tuna, toothbrushes, snacks, mirrors, sewing kits, etc.



They were delivered to AACH.

In the words of the Muslim Women Coalition, "we are helping to alleviate some of the burden in this blessed month of Ramadan for women and their families by providing a small package of self worth, dignity and love."

*~ Marie Keefe and Dianne Carroll
Photos by Dianne*

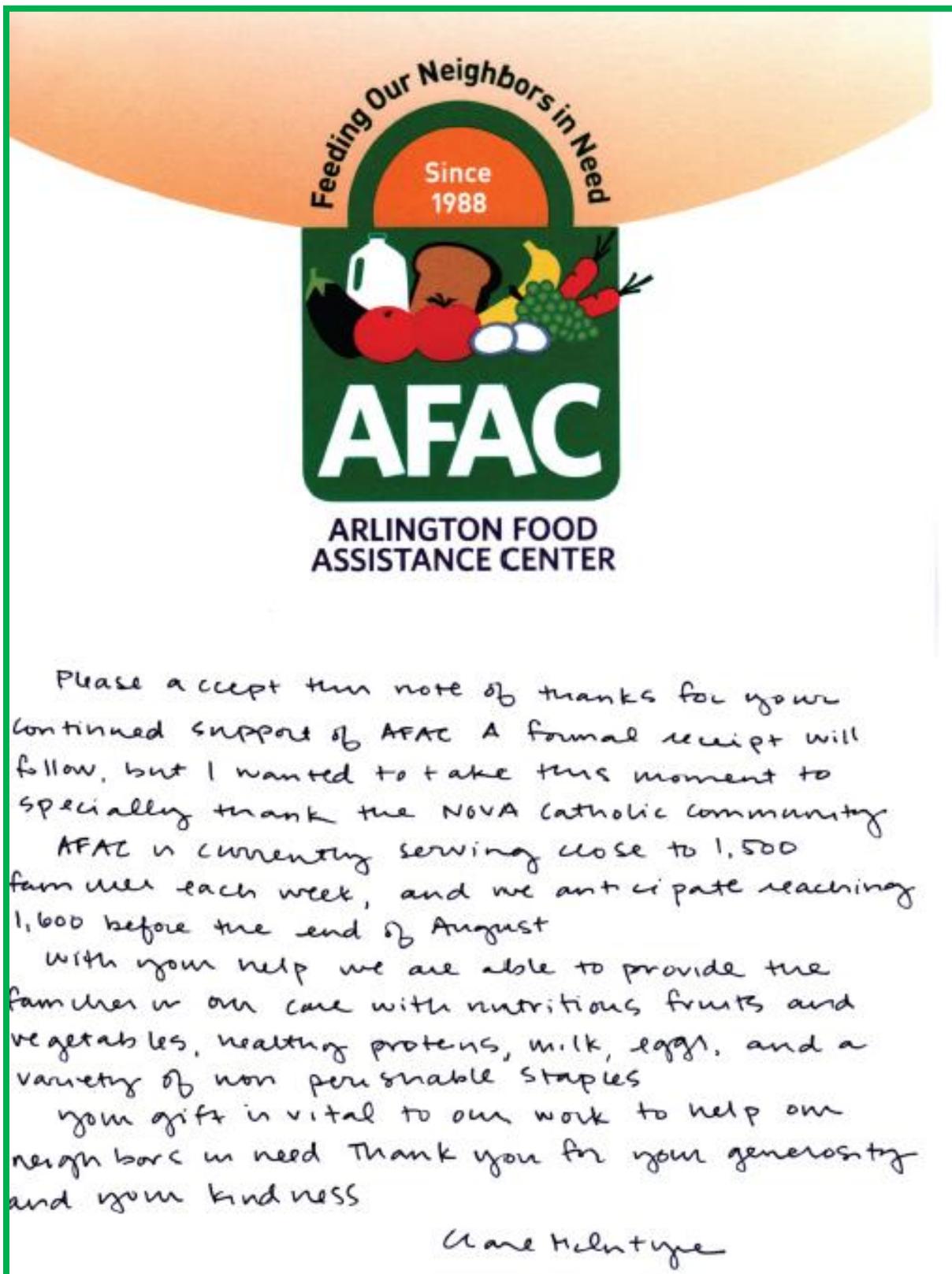


PEACE AND JUSTICE UPDATE

At the March Peace and Social Justice general meeting, NOVA chose the Dream Project as our annual big project and major fundraising focus for the year. At that same meeting, the community also decided to raise some funds for the Peace Academy and asked the Peace and Social Justice Committee to develop a recommendation for raising funds for that project. The committee brought a recommendation to hold a special collection back to the community and that recommendation was agreed to by the community at an after-liturgical meeting. The special collection began June 23rd and additional donations were accepted through July. We are pleased to let the community know we were able to raise a total of \$3,993 for the work of the Peace Academy. Thank you all for your generosity!

~ Meg Tuccillo

THANK YOU FROM AFAC



DREAM PROJECT & NOVA



Emma Violand-Sanchez, Founder of Dream Project with VA Dreamers



**Karen
2013 Dream Scholar**



Angela Guzman Helped to Start Dream Project-VA



**Lizzette Arias – Dream Scholar
College Graduate**



Hareth Andrade – Dream Project Scholar

Photos by Dianne Carroll