TROUBADOUR

The Newsletter of St. Francis House, New London, Connecticut

Easter-Pentecost 2011 **Vol. 13 No. 1**

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NEXT STEPS ON THE JOURNEY

by Mike Izbicki

I'm finally out of the Navy, and officially a conscientious objector. I moved out of St. Francis House in March and visited several friends and communities on my way home to California. (I was already completely sunburned my first week back.) I'm thankful for St. Francis House, and the support of everyone else I knew while in New England. I'd like you all to know that you really made a huge difference in my life, and that I appreciate it. So here's some reflections on my journey intertwined with a personal update.

One of the most difficult aspects, emotionally, of the CO process was having to define myself by what I'm against, rather than what I'm for. In that respect, I want to clarify one thing: I have no animosity for the military. It was frustrating how often people assumed otherwise. I think war is wrong, but I continue to respect soldiers nonetheless. Many of them are my friends. For the most part, their motivations are decent, and they do good things. When I'm with them, I try to keep in mind Jesus' words:

> Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and
> pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? (Matt 7:3)

It will frequently be the case that they are right and I am wrong. Rather than trying to justify myself by finding things that are wrong about them, I need to better myself by finding the things that are right and incorporating those into my life.

So how will I define what I'm for? What, exactly, am I going to do with my life? When I joined the Navy, I wanted some big institution to unfailingly inject meaning into my life. Joining the Navy seemed like a guarantee that I'd make the world a better place. When I first became a conscientious objector, my instinct was to find a different organization that would give me the same feeling. But one thing I've learned is that an organization of men, no matter how good, will not meet that need. The only thing that will is conforming my life to Jesus'. To think that any organization is sufficient is idolatry. For me, as I look for jobs, it's tempting to think that just getting the right job will make me happy, but I realize that's simply not true. I'm not entirely sure what will make me happy, but I know it's more complicated than that.

Nonetheless, I still need a job. Most sailors are already lining up their civilian careers as they're getting out, but that wasn't really an option for me. I had no idea when I would be discharged until the last minute. I've only just begun the job search, but so far, the only places wanting to hire me are military contractors! I've no idea how they got my info but managed to overlook the conscientious objector discharge. Oh well. However things turn out for me, I know that God is good... all the time.

Mike Izbicki applied for Conscientious Objector discharge from the Navy in 2009. After two denials, his ACLU lawyers filed a habeus corpus petition in Federal Court. Mike lived at St. Francis House for the year before his application was finally accepted. He left to return to California on Ash Wednesday, 2011.

BROAD STREET BLUES

by Anne Scheibner

The last six months have been filled with much coming and going. Last July, Bienvenida Mendoza and her sons Henri and Max who had been in residence with us for two and a half years, moved back to the Dominican Republic. Bienvenida came back to visit during the first week in May. Her offer to help do whatever needed doing sparked a much needed sorting of the mail that has backed up over these last months. Cleaning out Emmett's study is a difficult task and it was wonderful to have her energy and spirit with us. News flash: Henri and Max who were faithful friends to Otis, the St. Francis House beagle who died in August, have acquired dogs of their own. We are very touched that one of them has been named Otis. See further updates on their new lives in this issue.

Other news: Marykate Glenn who was here to work as assistant production manager with FRESH for last summer's growing season left as scheduled in November. We miss her music as well as her cooking! Laura Burfoot was in residence with us 2004-2005 and has come back regularly for Bible study and tea as well as to create our meditation garden (which with ongoing care from House resident Wendy Jakoboski is blooming beautifully). In February Laura left New London for six months' Spanish immersion in El Salvador. While here she both worked at the shelter and with youth to help start FRESH. Updates: pages 10-11.

Much to our surprise Mike Izbicki who had been in residence since May of last year received word in February that his habeus corpus petition for conscientious objector status and discharge had been accepted by the Navy. Some of us thought he might not be discharged for three more years. The Westerly Friends organized a farewell luncheon party. We did a festive Shrove Tuesday pancake supper in his honor and he provided celebratory champagne. Who would have thought that champagne and pancakes by our board member Barbara Barrett complete with beads and music would be a fabulous combination, but they were! For more on Mike's discharge experience and our journey with him, see the Center Section.

One of Emmett's last pieces of work was to write in support of Mike's habeus corpus petition. On Palm Sunday we distributed this essay and my nonviolence poster as a handout to the several hundred walkers *Taking Peace to the Streets* who stopped at St. Francis House. The walk was sponsored by the New London Clergy Association in Emmett's honor and raised funds to benefit our neighbors across the street at the Drop In Learning Center and their work to develop nonviolence training with New London youth. Our friend and colleague Joanne Sheehan and members of the Norwich Free Academy Youth Peace were present on the porch of St. Francis House along with Aunt Dorrie and members of the St. Francis House extended community. It was a day to rejoice in the unity possible among faith traditions and communities in New London and to enjoy a glorious spring day in the city.

Among the trials and tribulations of the last several months has been the fall and broken hip suffered by our local board member, Eunice Waller. She is recovering remarkably. But that fall prevented her from being present at the National Council of Negro Women Founder's Day luncheon in her honor which Paul, Wendy, Alaska Bob and I attended. And she was present thanks to Shiloh Baptist Church videotaping from her hospital room her message to all of us to get involved more deeply in the life of this community. It's hard to keep a good woman down.

Or a good man either. Paul Jakoboski with his wife Wendy are resident members of St. Francis House. Paul is a Third Order Franciscan and the new president of the St. Francis House board. The last week in November Paul was scheduled to resign from his position as director of the Gemma Moran United Way/ Labor Food Center here in New London to be full time at St. Francis House. Instead he ended up on the operating table to remove a tumor in his throat with major follow-up surgery in February at Yale New Haven's Smilow Cancer Center. He is now doing well with pulmonary rehab twice a week. And we are all trying to help him remember to stick with the discipline of two work events per day instead of two per morning and afternoon! Paul and all of us have felt lifted up and supported by prayers from friends near and far during this time.

On April 9 we commemorated the six month anniversary of Emmett's death. With vigil lights blazing on the eve of that ob-

servance, it came to me in the SFH chapel that the hymn we needed to sing was *Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken.* On Saturday morning, we practiced two verses in the dining room and then two verses in the chapel before going out to the lovely cemetery grove a mile and a half away where he is buried. Afterwards I was struck by the fact that I had felt Emmett's presence much more in the dining room and the chapel than in the cemetery. And so we "smile at all our foes" (and) "see the streams of living water springing from eternal love" with "all fear of want removed." Peace and blessings to all of you this season.

SCHEDULING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

We have decided to take a sabbatical from doing the **DISCIPLESHIP COURSE this July**. To everything there is a season, and it seems that the best thing we can do this summer is retool and refresh. We will let you know how our discernment on future offerings turns out!

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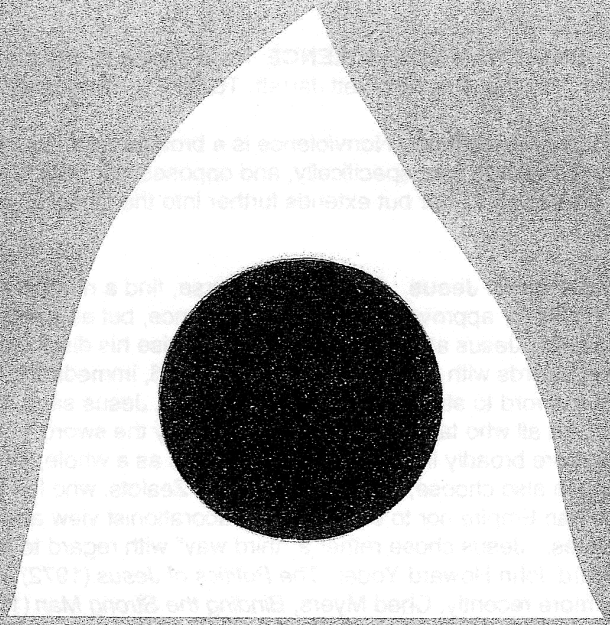
CLARIFICATION OF THOUGHT
Fall-Winter Series:
Re-Doing Economics in New London County
Save the Dates:
September 23, October 7, October 21, November 4, November 18, December 2, December 16

CHRISTMAS PARTY December 30

TAKING PEACE TO THE STREETS

On Sunday, April 17 over 300 walkers gathered around the corner from St. Francis House at St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church. The theme of the Second Annual Interfaith Community Walk was Taking Peace to the Streets. The walkers stopped on the way back at St. Francis House. Joanne Sheehan of the War Resisters League and the Cooperative for Nonviolent Action (CNVA) (seated to Anne's left) came on the walk with members of Youth Peace. Anne is on the porch holding the megaphone to welcome the walkers.

This issue of the *Troubadour* is the first to be done the new-fashioned way, i.e. electronically. For the last twelve years, Anne has done the layout of each page the old-fashioned way using a light table and paste-ups. This time SFH resident VISTA Bob Middeke-Conlin has used his desktop publishing skills to put together this issue. We appreciate his excellent help with this experiment. Needless to say, our printer is ecstatic, Anne is ambivalent (although still in charge of layout) and we await the response of our readers as to how we might best use this new process. How many of you, for example, would like to receive electronic versions of the *Troubadour* via email? Would you still want to receive hard copy? Would you still send contributions without the donation envelope and Peter Maurin's reminder that, "The future will be different if we make the present different"? Let us know what you think and we will report the results in the next issue.



NONVIOLENCE IS MORE THAN THE ABSENCE OF VIOLENCE.

As a way of life,

nonviolence means the interjection

of a transformative force

into circumstances of conflict and injustice.

Nonviolence means that we do not seek

revenge or retaliation for injustice;

our goal is transformation

of ourselves and others,

seeking truth and justice.

from Toward a Nonviolent Economics
by Chuck Matthei and Joanne Sheehan

CHRISTIAN NONVIOLENCE and MIKE IZBICKI

by The Rev. Emmett Jarrett, TSSF

August 26, 2010

Nonviolence is a broader term than pacifism. Pacifism is an attitude towards war specifically, and opposes war. Nonviolence is a way of life that includes opposition to war but extends further into the Christian way of life as a whole.

One can, of course, find a number of phrases in the New Testament writings that seem to approve some forms of violence, to the point of Jesus' advising his disciples to obtain swords, but this text (Luke 22:35-38) has a parallel text in Matthew (26:51-56). Jesus heals a man his disciples have struck and observes that "all who take the sword will perish by the sword." Reading more broadly into the ministry of Jesus as a whole, he chooses, and his disciples after him also choose, **not** to side with the Zealots, who led the violent rebellion against the Roman Empire. Neither does he endorse the collaborationist position of the Sadducees and the Pharisees.

Jesus chose a **third way** of resistance against oppression but without violence. The classic statement of this position is that of the Mennonite John Howard Yoder's **The Politics of Jesus** (1972), or the more recent and broadly based work of Ched Myers, **Binding the Strong Man** (1982). It is generally conceded that the early church -- until the age of Constantine, ca. 313 A.D. -- discouraged military service by Christians. It is not surprising that the early Christians were not supporters of the Roman *imperium*, while it was in the process of persecuting them. One can find a catena of quotations on the subject during the first three centuries. One of the more remarkable is the story of St. Martin of Tours (d. 397) who with his sword divided his military cloak one night with a freezing beggar in Amiens. This combination of nonviolence and commitment to the poor prompted St. Martin -- like Michael Izbicki -- to seek discharge from the Roman military forces with the words: "I am a soldier of Christ; it is not lawful for me to fight."

From the age of Constantine to the present, mainline Christianity has supported a "just war theory" that sought to articulate the truth that war is always an evil, but sometimes and under some circumstances a "lesser evil." It is never presented as good in itself. But there have also always been strong "minority reports" about nonviolence within Christianity. The growth of the monastic movement -- in Egypt in the fourth century and under St. Benedict in the West -- was clearly a rejection of the imperial Church's "compromise" with the state as articulated by Augustine (fifth century). The monks at first, and eventually the secular clergy as well, were forbidden to serve in the military forces. The lay "penitential movements" rejected the Church's compromise with both wealth and military power. St. Francis of Asssi and his friars were the most successful of these movements, including women (the Poor Clares) and lay people (the Third Order). All of them, including the laity were forbidden to bear arms. Most general histories of the "reformation" of the sixteenth century concentrate on the conflict between hierarchical teaching authority and the authority of the Bible as read by the individual or local community. Anabaptists and other groups arise in this period and continue to this day, with nonviolence a prominent aspect of the reform. The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) arose in England and the American colonies that became the United States. They are famous for the "Peace Testimony" in George Fox's Journal which begins: "We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons under any pretence whatever." Finally, there is a contemporary peace witness grounded explicitly in nonviolence. Leaders in this world-wide movement include Gandhi in India, Tolstoi in Russia, Christians and Jews in South Africa, and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. This movement continues to grow.

Note: The above essay was part of the work Emmett did in preparing an amicus brief in support of Mike Izbicki's application for Conscientious Objector status. We used the more general form of it as one side of the flier distributed at St. Francis House to the walkers who came as part of the "Taking Peace to the Streets" Walk in memory of Emmett. On the other side of the flier we reprinted the poster shown here to the left. The original poster is 16"x21". It was designed by Anne for a Political Poster show at the Voluntown Peace Trust. What looks like a black circle in this reproduction is actually a mirror in the poster itself so that each of us can see ourselves as a drop of water in the collective power of nonviolence.

Midshipman, Then Pacifist: Rare Victory to Leave Navy

By PAUL VITELLO

Published: February 23, 2011
www.nytimes.com/2011/02/23/nyregion/23objector.html

NEW LONDON, Conn. — The question that changed Michael Izbicki's life appeared on a psychological exam he took not long after graduating in 2008 near the top of his class at the United States Naval Academy: If given the order, would he launch a missile carrying a nuclear warhead?

Ensign Izbicki said he would not — and his reply set in motion a two-year personal journey and legal battle that ended on Tuesday, when the Navy confirmed that he had been discharged from the service as a conscientious objector.

In the process, Mr. Izbicki, 25, went from Navy midshipman in the nuclear submarine fleet here, studying kill ratios, to resident of a small peace community a few blocks from the Thames River, where he prays several times a day, studies Hebrew and helps with the organic garden.

He is one of only a few graduates of the nation's military academies to be granted conscientious objector status in recent years. And while every case is deeply personal, his long struggle for an honorable discharge offers a glimpse of a rarely viewed side of military experience in the post-draft, all-volunteer era: the steep challenge facing any service member — and especially a graduate of a service academy — who signs up as a teenager to become a warrior and then changes his mind in adulthood about his willingness to kill.

The Navy fought his request hard, in much the same way that the Army contested the conscientious objector application of Capt. Peter D. Brown, a West Point graduate and an Iraq war veteran who was discharged in 2007 after a protracted court battle.

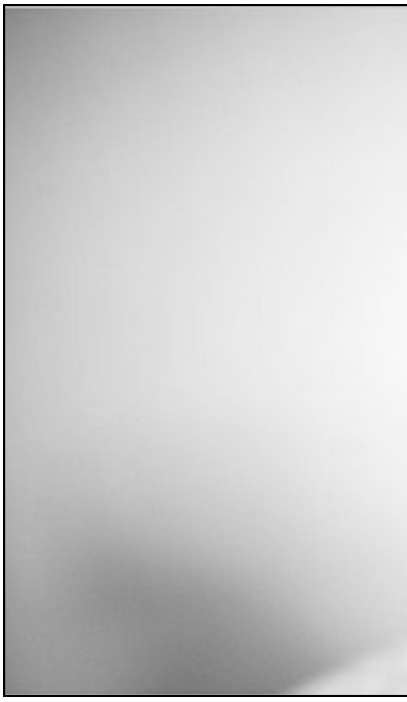
Academy graduates accounted for only a dozen of the roughly 600 applicants for the special status between 2002 and 2010, spokesmen for the service branches said. Of those requests, fewer than half were approved. And like many of the other academy applicants, according to lawyers who handle such cases, Mr. Izbicki won his discharge only by taking his petition to federal court.

The Navy rejected Mr. Izbicki's application twice, questioning the sincerity of his beliefs despite the support of several Navy chaplains and the testimony of two Yale Divinity School faculty members who said his religious convictions seemed to be mature and sincere.

One Navy commander suggested that the pacifist strain of Christianity that Mr. Izbicki embraced was inconsistent with mainstream Christian faith. The same commander likened the Quakers, who supported Mr. Izbicki, to the Rev. Jim Jones and his People's Temple, a suicide cult.

J. E. McNeil, executive director of the Center on Conscience and War, a nonprofit group in Washington that helps service members navigate the conscientious objector process, said that a case like Mr. Izbicki's posed a profound challenge to the military. "You were someone they thought was going to be a leader," Ms. McNeil said. "They spent four years training you. Now you want nothing to do with that world."

The American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut, which filed a federal lawsuit on Mr. Izbicki's behalf in November seeking a reversal of the Navy's decision, announced on Tuesday that the Navy had granted Mr. Izbicki his discharge. Mr. Izbicki, who has continued to work at a Navy desk job, may have to reimburse the service for all or part of the cost of his education, said his lawyers, Sandra Staub, legal director of the A.C.L.U. of Connecticut, and Deborah H. Karpatkin and Vera M. Scanlon, of New York.



Shortly after Michael Izbicki, now 25, graduated from the Naval Academy in 2008, he decided that his Christian beliefs would not permit him to take part in war.

Mike McLellan, a spokesman for the Navy, said Mr. Izbicki had been discharged as a conscientious objector because "the Navy Personnel Command determined there was sufficient evidence to satisfy the requirements for this designation, and determined that it was in the Navy's best interests to discharge him."

Mr. Izbicki, a National Merit Scholarship finalist in high school, chose the naval academy at Annapolis, Md., over a bevy of colleges, including the California Institute of Technology, that offered him four-year scholarships, because he felt an obligation to serve his country during wartime, he told investigators in his application for discharge.

He grew up attending nondenominational Christian services in San Clemente, Calif., and remained a regular churchgoer during his four years at the academy, where Christianity is the dominant faith. Cadets are required in their junior year to study the "just war" theory, a doctrine justifying military action, based largely on the writings of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas.

Not until his senior year did Mr. Izbicki register a sense of unease over what he would refer to in his application as "the frankness with which people talked about killing." He wrote: "The training did not live up to the ideals of the just war as I envisioned them. I saw formulas for calculating the number and types of casualties that would result from using each of our weapons systems. We calculated the extent of civilian casualties and whether these numbers were politically acceptable."

Still, Mr. Izbicki said, he remained convinced that his Christian beliefs could be reconciled with military culture, and that as an officer he would be able to effect change from within.

After graduating from the academy, he earned a master's degree in computer engineering at Johns Hopkins University in preparation for what he said he expected to be a career in nuclear submarines.

But Mr. Izbicki said he also began exploring his commitment to Christianity. He studied the Gospels, read widely about the early history of the church, took up Hebrew so he could read the Old Testament in the original, and started to measure his faith according to the evangelical touchstone "What would Jesus do?"

'I realized that I could not be responsible for killing anyone.'

It was in that light that he encountered the exam question about launching a nuclear missile in early 2009, shortly after he was assigned to submariner school at the Nuclear Power Training Command in Charleston, S.C. Seeing the question spelled out like that, he said, made it impossible to hide his emerging pacifism any longer.

"I realized that I could not be responsible for killing anyone," he later explained.

His answer flagged him for psychological testing, and a consultation with a Navy chaplain, who was the first to suggest that Mr. Izbicki consider applying for discharge as a conscientious objector.

Christopher Capozziello for The New York Time

"I had never really heard of it," Mr. Izbicki, a reserved, soft-spoken man, said in an interview last week at St. Francis House, where he resides. "It was one of those things people did in the '60s."

The transcripts of the hearings on his two applications for a discharge — which read partly like a court-martial, partly like oral exams for a doctor of divinity degree — run to more than 700 pages. They include esoteric queries about "just war" theory, the letters of St. Paul and the protocols known as the Six Capabilities of the United States Navy's Maritime Strategy.

Mr. Izbicki's beliefs are probed intensely for inconsistencies and deviations from conservative Christian belief.

One investigator, Lt. Cmdr. John A. Price, expresses surprise when Mr. Izbicki says he is not convinced that every word in the Bible is inspired by God. He questions how Mr. Izbicki can be sure, then, that the Sermon on the Mount, on which he bases his claim to know what Jesus would do, is accurate: "You realize that there's a danger when you start believing that some stuff in the Bible's not true, because then we might start believing that Jesus is not true."

At another point, Commander Price asks, "If Jesus was a pacifist, why didn't he tell all Roman soldiers to leave the army?"

Navy officers tried to persuade Mr. Izbicki to consider alternatives to discharge: Could he become a Navy medical officer or dentist? He replied that his pacifist beliefs were irreconcilable with any effort to prepare troops for battle. "I could not contribute in any way whatsoever," he said.

Mr. Izbicki said he had made no plans for the future other than a return to his parents' home in California. His discharge, he said, "has opened the whole world up to me."

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: March 23, 2011

An article on Feb. 23 about a graduate of the Naval Academy who was granted conscientious objector status described incorrectly St. Francis House, the Connecticut residence where he lives. It is a peace community modeled in part on traditions of the Franciscans and the Catholic Worker movement; it is not affiliated with the Quakers.

A version of this article appeared in print on February 23, 2011, on page A16 of the New York edition.

Navy has granted conscientious objector status to 52 since 2003

'A firm, fixed and sincere objection' must be found

By Jennifer McDermott
Day Staff Writer

Published: February 25, 2011
www.theday.com/article/20110225/NWS09/302259867

The Navy has permitted 52 people who have said they could not morally or ethically take part in war to leave the service since 2003.

An ensign on the staff at the Naval Submarine School in Groton became the latest person to be honorably discharged from the Navy as a conscientious objector last week. Based on his Christian beliefs, Michael Izbicki said during training that he could not launch a nuclear missile if ordered to do so.

Izbicki was one of few officers to seek conscientious objector status in the Navy. Seven officers have applied since 2003, and all were granted the status, according to information provided Thursday by the Navy Personnel Command. In the same period, 84 enlisted sailors applied and 45 were approved. The majority of applicants are junior personnel.

A conscientious objector must prove "a firm, fixed and sincere objection to participation in war in any form or the bearing of arms, by reason of religious training and/or belief," according to the Defense Department.

The Navy denied Izbicki's application twice, questioning the "depth and sincerity of his beliefs," according to court paperwork. The American Civil Liberties Union in Connecticut and two cooperating attorneys petitioned the federal court in Hartford on Izbicki's behalf. The judge dismissed the case after Izbicki was discharged.

A spokesman for the personnel command, Mike McLellan, said the Navy "decided to take a fresh look" at Izbicki's request, and found that "there was sufficient evidence to satisfy the requirements for this designation," and that "it was in the Navy's best interests to discharge him and seek recoupment of his Navy-funded educational expenses."

In the Navy, the personnel command recommends a figure a conscientious objector must repay based on the cost of the education, prorated based on the amount of time a person had left to serve. The Secretary of the Navy approves or adjusts the figure, which is included in the separation orders.

It costs about $159,000 to attend the U.S. Naval Academy, according to the command. Izbicki graduated from the academy and earned a master's degree in computer science at Johns Hopkins University to further his career as a submariner.

He said Tuesday he had not yet been told the amount he owes.

After the chief of Navy Personnel approves an application, conscientious objectors are not required to repay their wages or cost of living allowances. The office of the Secretary signs off on the denied applications.

The records do not track conscientious objectors by religious affiliation. They are honorably discharged, but they cannot rejoin the military as long as they are a conscientious objector, the personnel command said. They are not barred from federal service.

Izbicki described the process of seeking conscientious objector status as both draining and isolating. He lives at the St. Francis House, a Christian community in New London, but plans to return to his hometown of San Clemente, Calif., with the goal of making the world a better place "in a peaceful manner."

j.mcdermott@theday.com

This article appeared in the February 25, 2011 edition of The Day.

In February we received the following email from a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps concerning the "CO Status of Your Guest":

Good morning. I am a practicing Roman Catholic for 57 years. My experience with organizations such as yours is limited at best. I am wondering how your organization can support this young man. According to the news, this is what I know: 1. He applied to and was qualified for an appointment to the USNA; 2.He completed four years of Naval academic and leadership training in Annapolis; 3.He accepted a commission into the USN; 4.He was pre-designated a submarine officer (This is usually by request); 5. He decides he is a CO.

From my experience in this, as a former CO (Commanding Officer), I discovered that there is some event in the man's life that occurs which for whatever reason he uses his new found strength in religion to convince himself he can't go further in the military... Did he just get religion overnight? What was he thinking while keeping a seat warm at the Naval Academy? Why was he even in the Academy in the first place? Does he not believe in his responsibility to his fellow citizens who gave him his education? Did he ever read the Catholic doctrine of "The Just War"?

OK, now the Navy has spent $$$ in adjudicating this case. They now say OK, OK, you're a CO, now get out. (Easier for the Navy in the long run). But we will try and recoup your just expenses for your education. Our young man should pay for his education for sure, but I suggest he should double it as "We the People" now have to go through the expense of recruiting, selecting, screening, and training yet another ensign. ...That ensign who will perform his duty and that ensign who didn't get a seat in the academy when our man was keeping it warm... Just a suggestion!!!

Dear Sir: We are an intentional Christian community deriving inspiration from the examples of Dorothy Day, Peter Maurin and the Catholic Worker movement as well as from Gandhi and other practitioners of nonviolence as a way of life. We pray together daily, engage in weekly Bible Study as a means of community discernment and are committed to the service of our neighbors. Michael Izbicki came to us as a neighbor in need of a home during a difficult time in his Navy service. We concluded that we could offer him hospitality during his time of seeking discharge as a Conscientious Objector and we have been honored to do so.

Your comments seem to imply that you believe he wrongfully and deceitfully took a place at the Naval Academy. I think it would be fairer to assume what is in fact the case: that he came from a family and a community with deep roots in military service; that as an 18 year old, he sought in the wake of 9/11 for a way to serve his country when he sought admittance to the Academy and that he still seeks as a young adult to serve. He did study Just War Theory as well as the Sermon on the Mount. After graduating what gave him increasing doubt about his ability to function as a naval submarine officer was the question of whether he could follow the order to set the coordinates to launch a missile carrying a nuclear warhead. He had to answer "no". As a naval officer it would be his task to follow orders, not to make any moral judgment. After much more study and prayerful discernment, he reached the conclusion that he would not be able in conscience to aid or abet the killing of anyone even by conventional weapons or in ancillary service - medical, etc... to a military operation. He is willing to go into war zones to dismantle weapons so his courage should not be dismissed. In response to your concern about Just War Theory and Catholic teaching, I tried to go on line to be able to refer you to the entire text of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops Pastoral on War and Peace issued in 1983. If you did not read it when it came out, I'm afraid you may have to order it directly from the US Catholic Conference to get the complete text although excerpts are available through different Catholic publications on line. The part I think you might also find especially helpful is the discussion of whether the means of modern warfare have made the principles of traditional just war theory no longer viable; for example, proportionality is not the same thing in the era of atomic weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles as it was during the years of the Early Church when Just War Theory was developed. As Albert Einstein - deeply regretful of his own role in making atomic weapons possible - said, "Everything has changed except our way of thinking."

And indeed some members of the Christian community have always believed that Jesus represented a "Third Way" with respect to the use of violence. That is the part of the tradition that the monastic movement in general and Franciscan movement in particular, Catholic Workers, Anabaptists, and the Society of Friends represent. I attach a brief essay written by a member of our community in support of MIke's application which we hope you will find helpful.

On your final concerns, Mike has offered from the beginning (ie 2 years ago) to repay the cost of his Academy education. The Navy will be letting him know their disposition of that part of his discharge. We believe that Mike has done his duty and faced scorn, anger and rejection with courage worthy of the sacrifice of personal comfort and safety of many other baptized Christians in times both past and present. We hope that perhaps you might come to agree with us on that conclusion.

Today is the feast day of St. Maxmilian who was beheaded in 295 AD for refusing to serve in the Roman army. The transcript of his trial and Christian witness in the court of the Roman proconsul is included in Robert Ellsberg's ALL SAINTS, DAILY REFLECTIONS ON SAINTS, PROPHETS AND WITNESSES FOR OUR TIME, Crossroad Publishing, 1997.

With all best wishes. Yours in Christ, Anne Scheibner

Caleb Wipf, a 10th grader at Fox Hill Academy in Walden, New York wrote this article for the school's publication *The Bee Hive* of March, 2011.

Submarine OFFICER to CO

"Gandhi said, 'Don't try to appear non-violent if there is any violence in your heart'. So you have to begin there."

Michael Izbicki is a modern-day conscientious objector who was recently discharged from the U.S. Navy. Growing up near Pendleton Military Base in California and watching most of his peers join the military, Izbicki

never questioned war. The 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center cemented his desire to serve his country. After his enlistment, Izbicki attended the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, and became a submarine officer.

As Izbicki began working for the Navy, he started to think about the morality of war. He searched in the writings of the Early Christians and discovered that they were all pacifist. Additionally, reading extensively in the (cont. p.10)

3.

(cont. p.3.) Sermon on the Mount answered many of his questions. Later, Izbicki reflected, "I figured there is no way to have a just war ... there is always a better option than military action." Izbicki filed a C.O. application, but it was denied. After his second attempt to gain C.O. status was rejected, he took his case to the federal court, where they granted him an honorable discharge.

In the future, Izbicki hopes to find a nonviolent way to serve his country. His testimony taught me the importance of finding an alternative to war and a way to serve people by following my conscience.

E-mail from Laura Burfoot
Dateline: El Salvador

hello dear friends and family!

i hope this email finds you all very well, healthy, and happily enjoying early days of spring.

as some of you know, i traveled home last week because my grandmother, Eleanor Maine Burdick, passed on March 14. i am so thankful that i had the money and the citizenship privilege to make this trip. i made it thinking of all the people living in the US and in El Salvador who cannot travel across borders when family members pass, because to do so would risk their lives. friends- we need to change our country's immigration laws!! desperately.

here's what else is happening, some highlights:

1. i've hooked up with a feminist organization called Las Dignas (check out the website! practice your spanish!), and will start volunteering nextweek, the plan is for me to support the preparations for their Escuela De Debatas Feministas (School of Feminist Debates), which will happen every Saturday for several months. i'm very excited.

2. Doña Bertha and i successfully cut my hair last night, so i've got a cool new do. we had lots of fun, and made jokes about starting our own" peluqueria" in our apartment.

3. spanish is going well, i've just started to study the imperfect tense in the subjunctive mode. i'm not sure how this will change my life, but know it will!

4. Obama came and went. We are severely disappointed (and mad!) here, as he said nothing of substance, did not address immigration (3 million Salvadorans living in the States, many undocumented and/or with short-term work visas). He visited the tomb of Moñsenor Romero, yet did not recognize, and certainly did not ask for pardon, for the role the US played in funding the war here.

5. We get TeleSur here, which is the public TV station from Venezuela. It's awesome. Doña Bertha and I watch it constantly. Because of this, I am able to see important images from Libya, that I imagine are not being aired on mainstream U.S. TV stations. Also, there are many banners hanging all over the city that say things like, "Obama, afuera de Libia!"

Vocabulario

1. curtina de humo- curtain of smoke

2. analfabetismo- illiteracy

3. partido de futbol - soccer game (aqui en San Salvador somos Alianzistas, nuestro equipo es Alianza)

4. "el pueblo, unido, jamas sera vencido!" - On Saturday, I heard the band that wrote this song, Inti Ilimani, from Chile. Que chivo!!

5. arzobispo- archbishop Romero was assassinated on March 24, 1980. There was a huge procession through the city on the 24th, ending at the cathedral where he preached and where he is now buried.

i love hearing news, big and small, from all of you. send some when you get a chance.

lots of love, Laura

Postcard from Guatemala: Dearest Anne, Paul, Wendy, Alaska Bob, Vista Bob, Russ, Barbara, Doug and all those who happen to be on the couch or at the table when this card arrives, in short, companer@s:

Hello! from El Salvador. Here it is hot, and the rains have just begun, and a new flower blossomed this morning in our little back yard spot. All is well. I am learning – both a new language and a history, some new ways of seeing , and hearing, and always, new stories of resistance. here they say that no matter what – earthquakes and U.S. funded civil war, and hurricanes, disappeared people – Salvadorans always come out adelante. yes, there is incredible spirit down here, of course. i miss you all. Prayers of health and courage, always. love, Laura 25 de abril

p.s. Fuimos a Antigua, Guatemala por 2 dias. Que bonito este pueblo! Abrazos a tod@s!

An Update from Henri and Max

Hey Anne, These are the photos of our dogs, ottis is the smaller one with the big head and lassy is the bigger one, they are both very playful ottis was born on december and lassy on november, they are growing very fast.

This year has so far been one of the most interesting, with all the studying the changes like from country, school program because we have school on Saturdays. the good part is we're getting good grades in English class but in Spanish we still have to put a lot of effort in. but at least we are finally getting used to it. We've made a lot of friends and we already speak Spanish a lot better.

Another interesting part is that we returned to our own house it's new built exactly how my mom wanted it and in our yard we have various banana, mango, avocado, oranges, trees and some other fruits. Our backyard is perfect for running and playing with Ottis and Lassy.

On our free time we got the chance to visit places in Dominican Republic we've never seen before like castles, beaches, resorts, ruins, we got to visit museums in the colonial zone.

Finally it's been a challenge for us to readapt to our country. We miss New London especially Saint Francis House for the warm feeling of family we got there from everyone. Thank you very much.

Henri and Max

Note: Henri and Max Alphonse and their mother Bienvenida Mendoza moved back to the Dominican Republic in July, 2010 having lived at St. Francis House for two and a half years. Max is now 15 years old and Henri has just turned 17. When Emmett and Anne were away during the time the boys lived with us they took responsibility for Otis, the St. Francis House beagle, by taking him for walks and feeding him on a very regular schedule. They did an excellent job and we wish them all the best with their new puppies.

The annual STATIONS OF THE CROSS witness at the Sub Base in Groton sponsored by the Hartford Catholic Worker took place on Good Friday, April 22. Janet Minella-Didier, SFH Morning Prayer regular, helps attach one of the Stations to the Sub Base fence. Janet serves as representative to the Cooperative for Nonviolent Action from the SE CT Peace and Justice Network's Friends of the Voluntown Peace Trust. Paul Jakoboski and Anne Scheibner both read statements on Torture which continued as the focus of this year's Stations readings.

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LATE BREAKING NEWS:

ST. FRANCIS HOUSE
joyfully announces
the birth on May 26, 2011 of

ALEXANDER EMMETT JARRETT

to Nate and Zuli Jarrett
in Charlotte, NC

+ + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +