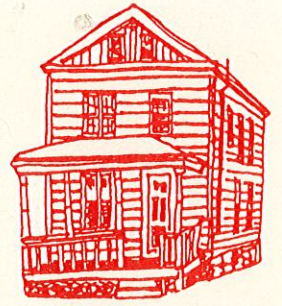


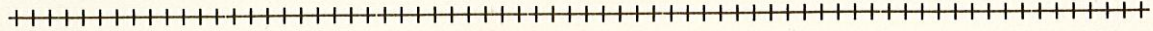
# TROUBADOUR

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



Winter 2002

Vol. 4, No. 3



## “A ONE-MAN REVOLUTION OF PEACE AND MUTUAL AID”

by Emmett Jarrett, TSSF

AT THE MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR CHUCK MATTHEI (1948-2002), Bill Wylie-Kellerman quoted a poem of Denise Levertov's that referred to Chuck as "intransigent Chuck Matthei." Every one of the hundreds of people gathered in the First Baptist Church in Providence, RI, laughed at that description, because they knew it was true. Chuck was one of the most determined men I've ever known. I thought at the time that there was a mysterious connection between Chuck's life and my own, and a few days later located my copy of Levertov's book, *Relearning the Alphabet*. The poem in question was written in 1968-69, at the height of Levertov's participation in the Resistance to the Vietnam War. That's how she met Chuck. Levertov was my first teacher of poetry (in 1964) and I had lived in her apartment on Greenwich Street in Manhattan when I came back from Greece in 1967.

Chuck is a much larger figure in the poem than the brief quotation at the memorial service might suggest. He was 20 years old when Denise first met him, traveling the US to encourage resistance to the war. Chuck carried with him a copy of a poem of Denise's, on the back of which he had added these thoughts in his own words:

*This is your only life – live it well!  
No one man can bring about a social change –  
but each man's life is a whole and necessary part of his  
society,  
a necessary step in any change,  
and a powerful example of the possibility of life  
for others.*

*Let all our words and our actions speak the possibility of  
peace and cooperation between men.*

*Too long have we used the excuse:  
'I believe in peace, but that other man does not—when  
he lays down his arms, then I will follow.'  
Which of us deserves to wait to be the last good man  
on earth; how long will we wait if all of us wait?*

*Let each man begin a one-man revolution of peace and  
mutual aid—so that there is at least that much peace . . .  
a beginning; . . .*

When I read these words written 35 years ago, I was overwhelmed by the consistency of his vision. Chuck Matthei was, quite simply, "a one-man revolution of peace and mutual aid."



*Continued from page 1*

### Chuck's life and work

Chuck Matthei was born in 1948 in Chicago. As a teenager he became involved in the Civil Rights movement and brought Martin Luther King, Jr., to his high school. Instead of going to college, he burned his draft card, waited to be arrested, and met Dorothy Day. He spent a number of formative years in the Catholic Worker and peace movements. From Gandhi he learned the philosophy of *ahimsa* and the practice of nonviolence as a way of life. His interest in the land, affordable housing, affordable farms, and community supported agriculture were part of his vision of life as it might be lived, if we gave life a chance.

From 1980-90 Chuck served as Director of the Institute for Community Economics (ICE) in Greenfield, MA. ICE pioneered the modern community land trust and community loan fund as models of economic development. With others, he guided the development of 25 regional loan funds, helped to create hundreds of permanently affordable housing units, and organized the National Association of Community Development Loan Funds. A man who lived a life of voluntary poverty, Chuck was a genius at raising money and using it for humane purposes to benefit whole communities.

In 1991 Chuck moved to Voluntown, CT, and founded Equity Trust. There he used his vision and expertise as well as his financial management skills to provide leadership and support for important US and international projects. At Equity Trust he focused especially on alternative models of land tenure and economic development. An article in *Sojourners* magazine, "Economics as if people mattered," gives a succinct statement of his principles of human economic and social development.

Chuck's friends were numerous and were drawn from the many movements for justice and peace he was part of. Although he never married, he was devoted to his family, including his sisters and niece and



nephews, who were present at his memorial service in Providence. Appropriately, the service was held in the church founded by Roger Williams when he was exiled from Massachusetts in colonial days.

Someone at the service observed that for Chuck there was "no distinction between his life and his work." Part of Chuck's wisdom was knowing the goodness in both and relishing in each what his friend Dorothy Day termed the "duty of delight."

### Personal connections

I certainly was not among Chuck's closest friends. In fact, we did *not* meet in the 1960's when our mutual friend Denise Levertov might have made a connection. But Chuck was in a very practical sense one of the "godfathers" of St. Francis House, and a very important person to both Anne Scheibner and our children and me.

Anne knew of Chuck's work when she and I were recently married and she was pregnant with Nathaniel. She traveled around New England while working for the New England Network Organizing Project, and met Chuck at ICE. She and Chuck shared a passion for the land and when we came back to New England it was a joy to find Chuck in nearby Voluntown.

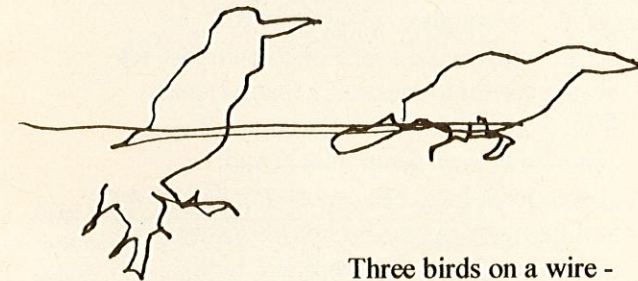
We spent the 1998-99 school year with Anne and the children in Stonington, while she worked with Chuck at Equity Trust, and me back in Atlanta, trying to discern God's call to us for the future. Chuck was a witness to us of the possibility of doing things without professional status or institutional support. It was in part his experience as a practical visionary, a man who not only dreamed dreams but was able to raise money to make the dreams real, that gave us hope. And in practical terms, Chuck and Equity Trust provided an initial loan (now repaid) to buy the first house at 30 Broad Street in New London, and a bridge loan for the purchase of 32 Broad Street so the St. Francis House community can grow.

### "A one-man revolution"

Chuck and I only got to know each other toward the end of his life. Much

happened in both of our lives since the connection in the 1960's that is chronicled in Levertov's poems. But I am encouraged, in the prophetic sense of that term, *given heart* by the witness of this friend who proclaimed himself in 1968 a "one-man revolution for peace and mutual aid." The war in Vietnam went on for many years after we began to be part of the Resistance. A new war has now begun that will go on, no doubt, much longer than any of us would like. But with witnesses like Chuck, we can have the faith, the courage, and the sheer practical determination to resist it every step of the way. We can be witnesses in our turn to the practicality of nonviolent living, in stark contrast to the life-denying, death-dealing impracticality for human life of the warfare state.

Chuck's witness gives me hope. Hope, as he knew, is not optimism, not a naïve assumption that "things will somehow be okay." Hope is a decision. It is a choice made daily in the ways we live our lives. As Gandhi said, "we may never be strong enough to be entirely nonviolent in thought, word and deed, but we must keep nonviolence as our goal and make strong progress towards it." We may not be able to do everything we want to do, but we can do what we can, and refuse to be defeated by cynicism and despair. Like Chuck, we can "choose life" day after day. And by the grace of God we may, in our turn, be faithful to the truth, and shine its light out brightly in the darkness where we live.



Three birds on a wire -  
one has already  
flown away

### AMBASSADORS OF GOD

**What we give to the poor  
for Christ's sake  
is what we carry with us  
when we die.  
We are afraid  
to pauperize the poor  
because we are afraid  
to be poor.  
Pagan Greeks used to say  
that the poor  
"are the ambassadors  
of the gods."  
To become poor  
is to become  
an Ambassador of God.**

Peter Maurin, *Easy Essays*

### SELF-ORGANIZATION

**People go to Washington,  
asking the Federal Government  
to solve their economic problems,  
while the Federal Government  
was never intended  
to solve men's economic problems.  
Thomas Jefferson says that  
the less government there is,  
the better it is.  
If the less government there is,  
the better it is,  
then the best kind of government  
is self-government.  
If the best kind of government  
is self government,  
then the best kind of organization  
is self-organization.  
When the organizers try  
to organize the unorganized,  
then the organizers  
don't organize themselves,  
nobody organizes himself,  
And when nobody organizes himself,  
nothing is organized.**

Peter Maurin, *Easy Essays*



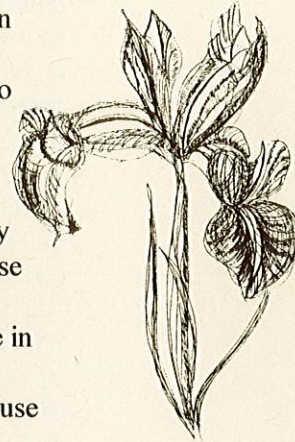
IN CONVERSATION WITH  
CHUCK MATTHEI  
February 1, 2002 Leadoff  
Clarification of Thought Series  
"LIVING IN COMMUNITY"

**Note:** This conversation is transcribed from the tape which we made that night. Including it here as part of our tribute to Chuck will give our wider readership a chance to learn about the history of the Catholic Worker movement, hear Chuck's many insights on community, farming and hospitality and enjoy his story telling which was central to his life and work.

When Anne first invited me to be here tonight she told me of the opportunity that St. Francis House has to buy the house next door and that this was providing an impetus to reflect on what it means to live in community. Everyone brings their own particular experience to such a topic because it means so many different things both in concept and in practice. So you can never really be objective about such questions. All we really can do is share our own experience and hope that it will help us to be better prepared for things that may come up unexpectedly if we embark upon that journey.

My own experience of community began when I left home at age 18 and found myself not long afterwards living first in the Catholic Worker farm in upstate New York at the beginning of a long and for me very formative association with the Catholic Worker movement. Not too much longer after that I spent a year in residence at the Committee for Non-Violent Action here in Voluntown, CT which at that time was structured as an intentional community devoted to peace action throughout the New England region.

It's been quite a few years since I was 18. I'll be 55 in a few weeks. The truth of the matter is my life has been spent on the road more than in any place, but to the extent that I've had home bases, they've always been



communities of one sort or another. In these 35 years I've never had a personal home in the traditional private sense. I've never had a personal income in the traditional private sense. But I've lived in a number of different kinds of communal settings ranging from the Catholic Worker communities to CNVA to draft resister households in the '60's and then I spent a dozen years with the Institute for Community Economics (ICE) which when I joined it was structured as a traditional non-profit with a conventionally paid staff each with a private home and lifestyle. We restructured the organization as a kind of community in which almost all the staff lived and worked together. Compensation was based on need and not on age or seniority or education or role and we lived and worked as a community together.

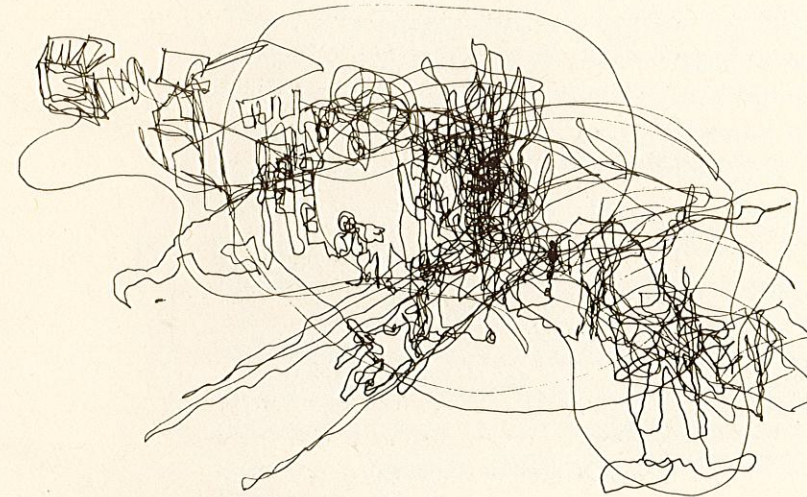
When I left the organization in 1990 and with some former colleagues and others established a new non-profit which we call the Equity Trust, we maintained the same model while ICE gradually departed from it. Equity Trust took over the old CNVA farm property in Voluntown. So my life has been spent in one kind of community or another: some more intentional than others, some more successful than others, some more lasting than others. And I've had a chance to observe and hear the experience of other people. So I thought I'd just make some observations coming from those years and identify a few of the kind of issues that persistently arose and then we can continue the conversation in whatever ways you think would be useful.

A couple of observations:  
As we approach the idea of community, it's always useful to remember that we come from a society in which the bonds of community both geographical and generational have been substantially strained and for many people broken altogether. We don't come "from communities" in that almost romantic or traditional sense any more. To some extent you could say we are all damaged goods and we come to the effort to create community or the search for

community as people who to some extent are looking for what we think we've lost or what we have lost or what we imagine someone might once have had.

We are also each of us part of many different communities and it's important to remember that. If we come together in a St. Francis House or any other chosen grouping it is only one of many circles of relationship in which each of us is a part and we have to recognize and respect the other relationships and responsibilities which people carry with them. We are part not only of a St. Francis House community but we have families, we have associations which also lay claim to us in different ways.

A third thing to remember is that with the affluence and mobility and the technology of modern society, in some respects we no longer need one another. In a simple economy in which people depend on manual labor and on their ability to produce the basic necessities of life, the mutual dependence was obvious.



Meditation drawing from Anne Scheibner's notebook. The drawing is done by concentrating either on an object or in this case, a thought, without looking at the paper while drawing. Note next to drawing says: "Meditation on Chuck Matthei's life and work - October 2, 2002" - had just received word of Chuck's death

We don't have that any more. We can afford easily to leave which is probably one reason divorce has increased as much as it has. And if marriages break up then so do communities intentional or otherwise. Do we need one another? In some respects maybe *more* than ever. But in other respects, no, we no longer need one another. We can survive given the structures and resources of modern society without one another which makes it easy to come in but just as easy to get out. And that's something we have to bear in mind.

Another thing I've found from my experience in community is that while we may all be quite sincere in our engagement with the formation of an intentional community, we may not be equally self aware. My experience is that very often the people who are the loudest and most insistent advocates are the ones who are struggling most with trying to act out for themselves what they are advocating for others. So you often find out that the person who is *most* certain that we need to do this or do that is the one who is going to have the most trouble doing it. So you need to take everything with a bit of a grain of salt and maybe the most important thing is to remember that an inveterate problematic as countercultural as creating community in the midst of this chaos is, requires a lot of patience and humility and not a small sense of humor. The contradictions are going to be inevitable and numerous.

So these are a few of the background thoughts I keep in mind when I think about my own experience or hear someone else talk about creating or recreating or expanding a community. It's worth remembering that people choose community for many different reasons. One group of people will look for community for very personal or emotional reasons; they want the warmth, they want the support, they want the fulfillment of the human relationships. Or to be a little more crass, they want to fill an emotional black hole that they feel in their lives or their psyches. Others will come to community for



Continued....

much more practical or plebian reasons.

I've often said to people that although I've spent my entire adult life in communities of one sort or another, I'm probably one of the least adaptable people (*laughter*) to that model and what that model represents of any of the people I know. There are some personal rewards which I very much enjoy and equally there are sacrifices. There are benefits, but there are surely costs. As my friend Dorothy Day used to say, "Voluntary poverty means giving up your privacy; anybody can wear old clothes." (*laughter*) I would repeat that to myself as a mantra twenty times a day in any community I've been a part of. I've long since learned to enjoy finding old clothes. Giving up one's privacy is not easy to do. So for me it's never been a *choice* motivated primarily out of emotional satisfaction although sometimes it's brought that.

For me there are two motivating factors, two opportunities that community represented and that have kept me at it even when temperamentally I would happily have gone in another direction. One is that if properly constructed, it's cost effective. That's a pretty reductionist way of looking at the wonders of human relationship. But more people can get by on less which is both a convenience and also a moral commitment if they live together and share what they need.

The other even more important issue for me is hospitality or service: how do you respond to the traveler, the stranger, the person in need, the person in transition? If you're in the conventional non-profit office and each of you leaves your personal home in the morning and go to the office so the house is empty until you come back at night, what do you do when you meet the person on the street or the person in transition who needs a kind of hospitality, a kind of welcome, a kind of care you can't provide at home when you're not there all day and you can't provide at the office either.

So for me organizing both life and work within the structure of community has created the ability to respond to kinds of needs that I don't think can be met any other way. You've got three choices: 1) You can ignore people in need. 2) You can create modern social service institutions and bureaucracies. But then you've got to be willing to fund them adequately to do the job which this society has never been willing to do -able maybe but not willing-or 3) you have to find a way to organize your life and work to get the job done and still respond to people in need. *Continued on page 7*

PRISM, OCT. 18, 2002 GET NAKED

JESUS ON THE CROSS - NAKED

THE SEED - NAKED

SI LE GAIN NE MORT....  
JESUS + GIDE - WE USED  
TO THINK AMONG THE  
SAME LINES

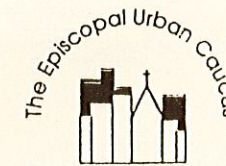
AM I ADDED TO THIS  
INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH LINE

GANDHI - NAKED

HOUSING IS ALWAYS  
NAKED AND  
BEAUTIFUL

CAN ANYTHING  
GENETICALLY  
ENGINEERED  
MAKE THAT CLAIM?

Notes next to drawing from October 18:  
I WOKE UP THIS MORNING THINKING ABOUT WHAT RESISTANCE  
WOULD LOOK LIKE FOR THIS WAR - I THINK IT WILL NOT BE  
POLITICAL BECAUSE THE POLITICAL SYSTEM THAT CONTROLS  
THE MILITARY IS CONTROLLED BY THE CORPORATIONS  
AND HAS TOO MUCH MONEY. BUT.... NO E-MAIL,  
NO NATIONAL MEETINGS, NO HOTELS.... NO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
HIGH SCHOOL OR AT LEAST NOT WITHOUT A CONVERSATION ABOUT  
THE HUMAN USES OF TECHNOLOGY WHICH IS TO TRACK AND TEST FOR POISON.



# THE URBAN NETWORKER

Winter 2002

## CHICAGO ASSEMBLY SHAPING UP

The 23<sup>rd</sup> national Assembly of the Episcopal Urban Caucus, to be held in **Chicago, February 26-March 1, 2003**, is shaping up as one of the most exciting meetings in years. Host bishop **William Persell**, who is currently serving as president of Chicago's interfaith religious leaders group, has provided leadership to the nation by standing for peace and resisting war against Iraq. Chicago is the home office of the **Episcopal Peace Fellowship**, which will provide an extended workshop in nonviolence training during the assembly called **From Violence to Wholeness**. And the **Hotel Allegra** in Chicago's Loop offers excellent service in a central location for our gathering, accessible by subway from both airports.

In addition to previously announced **keynoter Ian Douglas** on the assembly's theme: **Church Growth or Discipleship**, we're happy to report that we've had a good response from members of the 20/20 leadership to our invitation to join the dialogue. See the article by **Sarah Lawton**, "Is There Peace and Justice in 20/20?" elsewhere in this issue. We told you before that the **Honorable Byron Rushing** will be preaching at the Assembly Eucharist. We can now announce that the **banquet speaker** will be one of the Caucus's "founding fathers," **Bishop Paul Moore** of New York.

The **Episcopal Network for Economic Justice** will offer three workshops - on economic justice education from *United for a Fair Economy*, wealth creation and micro-enterprises, and worker organizing and empowerment. There will be two site visits: the previously announced visit to **St. Edmund's**, Washington Park, and an economic justice site at **Bethel/New Life** a Lutheran-based community development corporation with work in jobs and affordable housing. And the now-traditional "**ENEJ Breakfast**" will be held at the hotel for the presentation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual **Gloria Brown Economic Justice Award** on Saturday morning, with an additional charge.

EUC Board member **Butch Gamarra** will invite all to reflect on "**The New Majority**" in Church and society, and the special workshop on **Radical Discipleship** will be led by **Bill Wylie-Kellerman**, of Detroit, and **Brother John George, SSF**, of St. Elizabeth's Friary in the Bushwick area of Brooklyn, NY. **Youth involvement** will again be a highlight of the assembly, with Caucus Board member **Matthew Brunner** of Buffalo coordinating.

This being a "Convention year," national Church staff will be on hand to present their report on **Anti-Racism Hearings** that have been taking place to a plenary session of the Assembly. Caucus deputies and others will have a special workshop to prepare for Convention in Minneapolis next summer.



## "THE NEW MAJORITY"

by the Rev. Butch Gamarra as told to Anne Scheibner for the *Urban Networker*

The term "New Majority" can and is being really misunderstood. Native Americans, Latinos, Blacks and Asians are emerging nationwide as the "new majority." So are we "trying to take over"? Are we trying to exclude white people? No. And this is not about "political correctness": God is doing a new thing and we as the church need to listen, respond, build community and help educate the church.

Here in Province 8 (Western continental U.S. and Hawaii and Alaska) Members of the "New Majority" have been meeting together over the last two years to try to try to build community and reflect theologically on what is happening. This is very important. The time has come to be *theologically correct*. Justice ministry needs to emerge because of our theology. Then it becomes political - not the other way around.

The change is visible already in California. Latinos are now the largest ethnic group in California. Asians are the fastest growing group. This is not just because of the people who continue to come but because of the people who are already here. This is true of Asians, Blacks and Native Americans as well as Latinos. Because migration continues, there are first generation issues, too.

In California the change hits you in the face on the street and in the church. When I was in Massachusetts, I would walk into a meeting of 15 people at the diocese and it would basically be all white. When I walk into the lunch room in the Diocese of Los Angeles

headquarters, 3 of the 12-14 people eating there are white.

This impacts young people as well. When my then 5 year old daughter was asked to draw a picture of herself in Massachusetts, she drew a picture of herself that had no color. At age 6 in California she drew herself brown and said, "Look. I'm cinnamon just like other kids." She took pride in who she was.

The church always seem to be last to be aware of what's going on. We need the church leadership to reflect the constituency. Neighborhoods are changing. Latinos are becoming major population groups in the South and Midwest. This is an opportunity for people from around the country to prepare. The Roman Catholic Church has been majority Latino for 10 years and is just now recognizing the need for Latino priests.

We need to model a new way of doing ministry that will not be oppressive to anyone. Everyone needs to be included including members of the old majority. Class lines need to be crossed as well. God is clear that things have to change. The 20/20 initiative is already being changed by this realization. The church is not going to grow by trying to get baby boomers and suburban folk to come back. Many of them won't come back. But Asians, Latinos, Blacks and Native Americans have always been in the church. We need to join together to read the writing on the wall and join in what God is already doing.

The Rev. Butch Gamarra is Missioner for Multicultural Ministry in the Diocese of Los Angeles, chair of the Province 8 Intercultural Ministry Development Task Force and EUC board member. He will lead a workshop on "The New Majority" at the Assembly in Chicago.



## Is There Peace and Justice in 20/20?

Sarah Lawton (Chair of 20/20 Strategy Group)

To whom does the church belong? What is church even for? These are the bigger questions underlying the caution voiced by progressive Episcopal organizations as the 20/20 movement gathers steam leading to General Convention 2003. Church growth—doubling the average attendance in the Episcopal Church by 2020—for its own sake cannot be enough if the first questions are not answered. So I am delighted that the Urban Caucus will be focusing on 20/20 and questions related to mission at its national assembly early next year.

The first thing to know about 20/20 is that it is a movement in evolution. Whatever impressions formed two years ago may not be on target today as the circle of people participating has widened.

What is 20/20 today? It is the reorientation and re-engagement of the Episcopal Church on all levels for mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our prayer book says the mission of the church is "to restore all people to unity with each other and God in Christ." Another way to say that is that we the church are called to transform the world to the Reign of God, the beloved community—knowing of course, that we are not messiahs but workers, "*profetas de un futuro que no es nuestro*," as Oscar Romero tells us

What 20/20 asks of every congregation and institution in the church is—how, in this time, in this multicultural, multifield and diverse world, can we proclaim the Gospel of Christ Jesus that has set our own hearts on fire? How can we enact Christ's beloved community in our neighborhoods and cities and throughout our terribly broken and warring planet?

There is no single answer to these questions. But we are convinced that evangelism and social concern must be matched together; they are two sides of the same coin of outward-focused mission. So, to name a tiny example, we are proposing that any national matching funds raised for

new churches must support infrastructure or programs that can serve the wider community in some way as well as the new congregation. Another conviction is the sense that we should each be prepared to share our own faith story and how it connects with how we live our lives, as a key part of discipleship.

A common conviction in 20/20, shared across political lines, is that all congregations and institutions will need to address the following major shifts of the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

\* Our world is now radically multicultural.

\* We are surrounded by a large portion of two generations that has been raised outside the Church, outside any religious tradition. We are calling for greater investment in college ministry and youth programs in all provinces of the Church, and also for intercultural internship programs for youth that can help form vocation for all kinds of mission.

Finally, I assert that there is a major place at the table for peace and justice concerns in thinking about 20/20. If the point is to focus outward on all levels, how can we fail to see the inequities and alienations of the world that continue to deepen? Even those of us who carry privilege with us face the social dislocations of a transient and demanding world that bases success on things that do not ultimately matter. Part of proclaiming the Gospel is to act in our communities and the world to restore and to heal and also to advocate for that beloved community when we shall all be free at last. One of our hopes for 20/20 is that—not underestimating the degree of difference and debate in the Episcopal Church today—we might teach each other across some of the lines of division about how to bring all these pieces of mission together.

*This is a summary. The full text of Sarah Lawton's thoughtful article is available online at [www.episcopalurbancaucus.org](http://www.episcopalurbancaucus.org)*



Announcing  
The 23<sup>rd</sup> Assembly  
of  
**THE EPISCOPAL  
URBAN CAUCUS**  
February 26 – March 1, 2003  
Hotel Allegro  
Chicago, Illinois

The Episcopal Urban Caucus  
  
founded 1980

**CHURCH GROWTH  
or  
DISCIPLESHIP:**  
**Whither the Episcopal  
Church?**

"Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of wickedness,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?  
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your  
house;  
when you see the naked, to cover him,  
and not to hide yourself from your own  
flesh?" **Isaiah 58:6-7**

**REGISTER  
EARLY  
IT HELPS**

**Hotel:** Accommodations will be at the Allegro Hotel, 171 West Randolph, Chicago, IL 60601, a union hotel in Chicago's Loop (downtown) area. EUC rate is **\$89 per night** plus taxes, single or double occupancy. **You must register by February 1, 2003.** Telephone the hotel directly at **1 800 643-1500.**

**TRAVEL  
ARRANGEMENTS**

For reservations please call Marguerite Rollinson at **Klingerman Travel** of New London.  
**1 800 545-9154**  
or  
[kti@ctol.net](mailto:kti@ctol.net)

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Excellent rates available now,  
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Phone: 860 437-8890  
Email:  
[stfrancishouse@mindspring.com](mailto:stfrancishouse@mindspring.com)**

Registration Forms are available at the EUC website. Early bird rates provide significant savings for those who register and send their check to EUC national headquarters, PO Box 2247, New London, CT 06320-2247 **not later than January 10, 2003.**

Visit our website: [www.episcopalurbancaucus.org](http://www.episcopalurbancaucus.org)

Continued from page 6

When groups of people choose that structure of community for life and work, they do have the ability to keep both the necessary work going and also to respond to all the peculiar needs that human experience puts before us. So for me it's cost effective and provides the ability to respond to those needs and to offer hospitality that have kept me at it even though living in community is at best a two-sided coin with as many costs as benefits.

I've found it helpful to think about the choice as being not so much one that we *make*. It's not so much that we choose community as that we are chosen. It's the circumstances, the inescapable realities of human nature and human life that require this of us rather than our finding that this is a way to maximize our joy.

So I think of it as something more to which we are called or committed as opposed to a commitment which we choose to make. It's a community of need in a sense of that's a helpful perspective because if you go in thinking of it solely as choice and a choice that is made for all the best of reasons and all the best of hopes, that also means there's a great deal of room for disappointment. Whereas if you go into it with modest expectations and just say, this is something we will do because it's practical and necessary, we'll do it in good faith hoping for the best and we'll do it expecting the worst (*laughter*), there's a great deal of room to be pleasurably surprised.

If you think that this will fulfill your emotional black hole, you are almost certain to be disappointed. If you go in realizing that, "Well, I never chose to live with these people; they're not the people I would have chosen to live with!" (*laughter*) But here I am because it's the only way to operate and get the job done - both the daily necessities and those who pass through our lives and bring their own particular needs to us. If you come to it with that, then you can position yourself to be gratefully surprised when the relationships turn out to be better than one might have expected. So I come to it with

that jaded but I think useful perspective (*his own chuckle*).

Having said that, the issues are obvious: Who is the community? What does it mean to belong? How do we understand membership? What kind of preparation if any is required or expected or provided? Is there a commitment asked? Is so, what is it? How does this group of people relate to a larger community?

Decision-making: How are decisions made? The endless discussions about majority rule or consensus and all the different ways in which people do - or don't - make decisions! The question of authority: Is this a democratic community? Are people equal? Is there a hierarchical structure? Do we pretend as the Catholic Worker used to that there is no structure to authority although granny is clearly the mother superior?! (*laughter*) It's very different when you live with a saint. But there is always authority in one form or another.

What are the values and spirit? What brings us together? What are the signs of grace that love does not consist of looking one another in the eye but looking outward together in the same direction? Where is it that we look? What is it that not only binds us together but draws us out of ourselves and gives us a reason to stay together when looking at one another no longer is enough? There are plenty of times - this is also true in a marriage - when you look at a partner and say, "I don't want to be with him or her any more; there's not enough." What is it that keeps us together? So there's the question of what those values are and how we acknowledge them, the spiritual life together, celebration, the worship, the recreation - how do we address that dimension?

But if there's a spiritual life, there's also a very practical life of labor. What are the tasks that have to be performed? How are they divided? What are the expectations? What's fair to ask? And then, of course, there's the question of how you balance theory and practice.

The Catholic Worker has this idea that the workers will become scholars and the





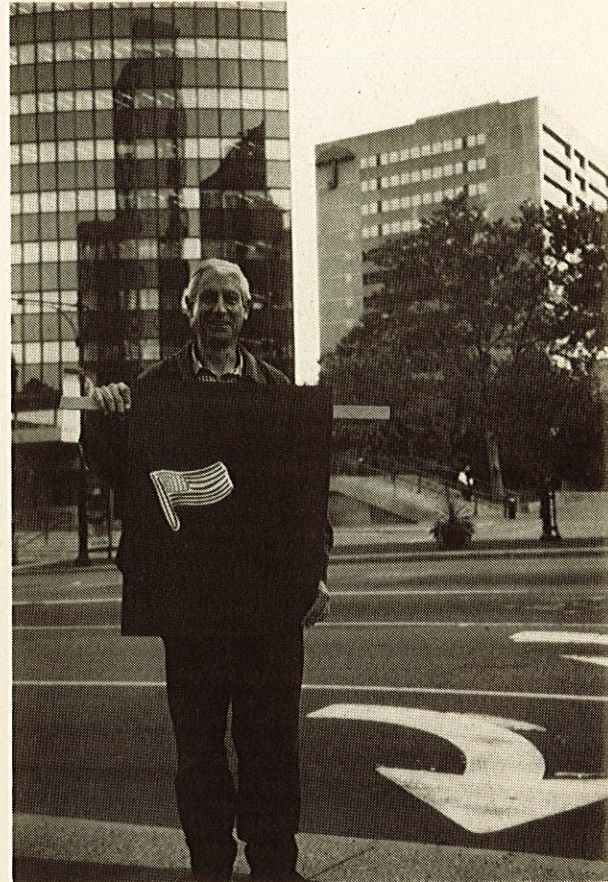
scholars will become workers and everyone will become a political activist and a theologian as well! Well, it was never quite so neatly integrated. You often had the great struggle between the workers and the scholars. So how do we not only develop a spiritual life together, but develop a practical life together and then balance the two appropriately?

The issue of economics: It's easy to talk about "from each according to his ability to each according to his need." The principle is an appealing one. But what *do* we expect of one another? How do we deal with income? What do we do with personal assets? Will people develop equity over time? These are all very practical questions.

And, of course, they ultimately point to the issue of security. What can we count on? It's easy to talk about coming to a community, giving yourself to it, drawing from it and that's easy to do when you're 20, 25, maybe even 35, maybe even 40. People get to a point though when they begin to say, "What will happen when....? What will happen if....? Can I count on them? And if I can't, what do I need to do? What will I take if I walk away?"

These are all very real issues which we surely confronted over and again in the various communities of which I was a part. We confronted them on a day to day basis when we talked about whether to provide health insurance and how to live without it. We talked about it when we talked about should everyone's compensation be equal or should there be a difference based on age or seniority or length of service? Do we provide a retirement plan?

What kind of commitment can we reasonably offer or should people reasonably expect? The goodwill may be there but is there any real assurance that when they're 65 or 70 or if a disabling illness hits that the support and resources will be present? How do we balance some means of material security and the realistic need for it with a life of faith? So these are all practical issues that arose and a thousand others as well. I just thought I'd mention a few of them.



Above: Dick Marks, resident volunteer and board member, joins in the September 30 Hartford peace witness.  
Below: Sarah Jarrett and Cal Robertson head for the van for the ride home following the rally in Hartford.

## OCTOBER 26 PEACE RALLY DRAWS CROWD BUT NO PRESS

by Marlies Parent

Growing up in Germany in the aftermath of World War II (ruins, rubble, chaos, scarce food and broken people), it always seemed to me that "War is Not the Answer" no matter what the problem. I've also come to believe that position to be at the heart of the Christian Faith. The conviction has influenced a number of decisions in my life, thought I'd never so far been "political" about it.

When my friend Marianna from Rhode Island invited me to "march on Washington" with her - we'd been e-mailing in concern over the Iraq situation- I felt a bit scared but excited. More than 30 years ago, George went to Washington protesting the Viet Nam

PRAY صلى التفلل PRAY صلى التفلل

War our children were small then, I couldn't go. I remember watching the crowds on TV and wanting to be there.

Well, I got my adventure. We left in the dead of night (Friday 1 a.m.) from a Stop&Shop parking lot in Hope Valley: 3 full buses in tandem (organized by a group called ANSWER - Act Now to Stop War End Racism) and got dropped off at the Washington Mall about 10 a.m. The buses were old, smelly and uncomfortable, but we did try to sleep some and stopped for breakfast. Upon arrival it was raining, which didn't seem to deter the multitude assembling on a muddy lawn by the Washington Memorial. There were booths set up from many different organizations, people passing out signs and sharing information, smiling encouragement. From a platform with a huge sound system, chanters and speakers took turns - among them Jessie Jackson. It seemed

Snapshots taken at the October 26  
Washington, D.C. Peace Rally

