

TROUBADOUR

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



PEACE PILGRIMAGE + + + SEPTEMBER 10 – 24, 2006
CENTER SECTION : INITIAL REPORTS AND REFLECTIONS

Francistide 2006

Vol. 8, No. 3

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MARK AUER BECOMES A PARTNER IN THE ST. FRANCIS HOUSE COMMUNITY

THERE SHOULD BE A WEIGHTIER WORD than “partner” to describe a person who enters into a relationship of equality with other members of an intentional Christian community, but there is not. The word “partner” does service for many different relationships these days, some business relationships, others more intimate. But whatever the label, Mark Auer has joined as a full member of the St. Francis House community, after a two year period of experimentation and testing on his part, and on ours. If we were a religious order, we would say Mark had been “professed.” But he is in the process of formation as a Third Order Franciscan, and will be (God willing) professed in that order in due time.

Anne and Emmett have known Mark since our time in Boston in the early 1980’s. He was an angry Vietnam veteran and served as chair of the social action committee at St. John the Evangelist Church on Bowdoin Street, where Emmett was vicar and later rector. We have stayed in touch over the years when Mark ran a cab company in Boston and Anne and Emmett served parishes in Washington and Atlanta. Our mutual friend (and St. Francis House board member) Ed Rodman sent Mark to visit the House while he was a seminarian at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass. Mark was planning to go to North Carolina after graduation in 2004 to train as a hospital chaplain when he was stricken with lung disease and lost one lung, reducing his physical capacity but not his spirit. Instead of going to a hospital setting in North Carolina, Mark came to St. Francis House.

He will speak for himself about his experience. Suffice it to say, he shares with Sarah the status of “p. k.” (preacher’s kid) and with Nate a love of sports. Anne and he are the same age, and both Giants fans. From our perspective, he has been a tremendous addition to the community, and an equal partner in prayer, decisions, writing, and the work of ministry. We are well aware that joining a community as a full member changes the community as much as the individual who joins. It is a tremendous milestone for St. Francis House – established as a community by a married couple with growing children – that someone has survived two years of our idiosyncrasies and the craziness of life in New London, one of “the places abandoned by the Empire.”

We welcome Mark as a partner in our life and work. He has already contributed enormously to our community and we look forward to many years of companionship with Jesus together with our partner, Mark Auer.

Broad Street Blues

by Mark Auer and Anne Scheibner

*The blues is an expression of anger
against shame and humiliation. B.B. King*

IT'S DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE that we concluded our "program year" only three months ago with the annual Saint Francis House Fiesta in Williams Park. Once again we had a fine turnout, even after a one day delay due to rain. **John Scott** and **Amizade** provided the music and the food was catered by the **New London Youth Organization** ("YO") for the first time. 400 burritos disappeared very quickly.

Our neighborhood is changing. The California Fruit Market at 13 Broad Street, the only supermarket in downtown New London, will close October 15th. The **Fiddleheads Food Cooperative** has signed a ten year lease for the space and expects to be open in January of 2007. We expect to be in dialogue with the management of Fiddleheads in the very near future. There is a sizeable elderly and low income population in the neighborhood, and California Fruit provided affordable groceries and services such as Food Stamp payments and bottle redemption, in addition to full and part time employment, for many of our neighbors. **California Fruit**, a/k/a "Charlie's" will be missed.

The population of **Victory House** has exploded! For the first time all of the apartments are occupied. **Nancy and Ben Parent** along with their son **Gabriel** moved into the second floor during June. Their daughter **Madeline Mackey Parent** was born at Lawrence and Memorial Hospital in New London on August 28th. On September 1st, **Sarah Barr** and **Matt Turcotte** leased the third floor apartment, and will be here through next spring.

Friends and neighbors made significant contributions to our buildings and grounds this summer. Board member **Ted Olynciw** crafted new railings for both houses and performed much needed plumbing work on the Hermitage apartment. His Board colleague **Barbara**



Barrett enhanced our street scape with geraniums and poppies in the window boxes at 32 Broad and plantings beside both houses. Our allies at the **New London Grassroots Homeless Coalition** donated many hours of labor in clearing out brush from around the meditation garden and the **Community Garden** beds on Cottage Street. After a Thursday morning Bible Study that addressed the story of Nathanael under the fig tree, no one was surprised when **Emmett** planted a fig tree in the Meditation Garden. It looks as if we will have a small crop of fresh figs soon! Last week we harvested the first crop of basil for Saint Francis House pesto and the tomatoes are ripening rapidly. Five neighbors made use of the Community Gardens beds on Cottage Street. It's been a very successful year for the gardens at Saint Francis House.

Nate Jarrett, chef extraordinaire for the Radical Discipleship Course in August, resumed his studies at Loyola University of New Orleans, where he is a junior. **Sarah Jarrett** who provided babysitting for Gabriel so that his mother Nancy could participate in the Discipleship course has begun her junior year at Norwich Free Academy. Sarah and Nate were truly the 'unsung heroes' of the August course with their behind the scenes work along with **Aunt Dorrie (Dorothy Paulsen)** who answered the phone and recreated order after lunch.

F.R.E.S.H. principal **Arthur Lerner** reports that so far 2,000 pounds of food has been harvested at the FRESH farm on the grounds of the Waterford Country School, and that they expect a total harvest of 5-6,000 pounds. The FRESH truck with former SFH resident **Laura Burfoot** makes several stops around the city on Fridays, and donates a large amount of food to the Gemma Moran Food Bank on Broad Street. SFH is proud to be the fiduciary for FRESH.

Emmett Jarrett, TSSF, along with several other members of the Third Order, attended the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Columbus, Ohio, during June. Writing in the Summer 2006 issue of the *Franciscan Times*, Emmett notes: "The Third Order has never before had a formal presence at Convention, although the First Order sisters and brothers have. . . At Convention, we passed out a

prayer card with the "instruments of your peace" prayer on one side, and an explanation of our witness on the other. This said in part:

We believe our Church is afflicted with the 'deaf and dumb demon' that the disciples were unable to cast out (Mark 9:14-29), of which Jesus said, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting." In company with Anglican Franciscans around the world, we are here to offer a model of moving forward as Church: walking in the way of Saint Francis of Assisi whose embrace of the leper and the way of nonviolent love knit together a universal family of Christians, rooted in the Gospel, growing in joy and simplicity, and extending a Reign of God marked by justice and peace.

.....It's not possible to say what the 'effect' of our prayer and fasting was on the life of the Church gathered in convention, but we didn't do it for effect.

We see our witness as part of our Franciscan charism of poverty and joy to be shared with the wider Church. We believe that God will use our work to God's own purposes, still a mystery to us."

While Emmett was in Ohio we had to work through a difficult period with our **transitional apartment**. Drug use is a difficult demon to overcome. Offering hospitality to someone still in the early stages of recovery can have serious risks as well as the hope the person in recovery—in this most recent instance a mother with two young children would emerge into a more abundant life. The temptation to revert to "the life" proved too great. We are still sorting out with the help of our local board members the implications of our experience. We were blessed in working through the immediate crisis in June with round the clock support from **Russ Carmichael** and members the **Homeless Coalition** as well as from our old friend **Officer Bill Edwards** and members of the New London Police Department.

The night that our resident moved out the Homeless Coalition brought coffee and doughnuts to the porch at 30 Broad and their two dogs, **Sasha**, a Staffordshire terrier,



Boomer, an adopted Greyhound, and our own SFH hound **Otis** wagged tails at each other during the evening vigil. Over the next several weeks the Coalition kept watch, cleaned out the transitional apartment, and did wonderful landscaping work around 30 Broad St. We now have a lovely brick-lined side garden. **Fr. Russ, Mikey, Kevin, Bob and Jennifer** all participated in this work and we are very grateful.

The **Radical Discipleship Course** in August was a serious experiment for us in how to invite other people into the life of the House through residence, study and community life. We were greatly encouraged by the responses of our six participants (see pages 4-5,8-9) and will do more reflection on our experience in a future *Troubadour*. For this course we relied on, and are most grateful to, our friends in the **Homeless Coalition, CURE, FRESH, Voluntown Peace Trust and SE CT Peace and Justice Network** for sharing their lives and experience with our guests in so many different ways.

Emmett, Mark and Ted are all involved in the effort to develop a **Homeless Hospitality Center** which would provide year round shelter as well as a day center. As winter approaches, the local economic and affordable housing situation stagnates or worsens. We have already had four people come looking for shelter and it is not yet fall.

Meanwhile Emmett has been away on a two-week **Peace Pilgrimage** (see centerfold) around the State of Connecticut. He and three others — **Nora Curioso**, an SFH regular, **Eric Swanfeldt** of the Uncasville United Methodist Community, **Glennys Ulschak**, retired chaplain at L&M Hospital, anchored this 270 mile walk. Although Mark and Anne gave assent to the initial idea of the pilgrimage, it never occurred, at least to Anne, that Emmett would really walk for two weeks. The fact that they have actually walked this area is a real witness. We already feel connected in new ways to our surrounding region as a result of the fact that they have "walked the walk."



Mark Auer and Anne Scheibner live and work at Saint Francis House.

RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP WEEK

Participants Respond

"To Live the Gospel Story in Our Lives"

The opportunity to spend several days within a base Christian community is both a challenging and a liberating experience. Recently I participated in a Radical Discipleship Course at St. Francis House in New London, Connecticut. For five days we gathered in community to explore the practical implications of living out the gospel together and to explore how others were doing so. New London provided the laboratory to listen to people tell their stories about working on the margins of our society to bring radical change. It was a walk with "Jesus" on the margins seeking to provide opportunities for people to transform their lives and become whole.

St. Francis House was the setting for us as a small Christian community who gathered regularly for daily worship, biblical study and vocational discernment. The day began with Morning Prayer and breakfast followed by morning study and reflection using the Gospel of Mark. Over the five days we read together the Gospel of Mark and delved into the practical questions where our experience and our journey of discipleship overlapped. In the afternoons and evenings we visited with people who were living their faith as they cared for the homeless, sought to reconnect to the earth, were active in the peace movement, or working to reform public education.

It was a week to recover the foundation of our journey into discipleship using Mark as our focus and sharing the stories that have shaped our lives. Personally it was a chance to go small, to return to the mustard seed in my life and see how it begins, where two or three are gathered together to live the Gospel story in our lives. I came away refreshed and restored, grounded in the truth of the Gospel and recognizing that smallness is the power



of the Gospel to transform and radicalize my own vocation to discipleship.

The Rev. Geoffrey Curtiss
All Saints Episcopal Parish, Hoboken, NJ

"My Deepest Sense of Vocation"

It was a wonderful week for me. I had lost sight of the power of Mark's Gospel as being at the heart of my deepest sense of vocation until I read the Ched Myers book [*Say to This Mountain*] in preparation for the class. The time spent together in a flow of prayer, study, rest, exploration, sharing and praying again created a wonderful rhythm for each day, a rhythm I would love to maintain in coming away from St. Francis House.

I found the experience of each community unique and enlightening. It was a grace to see the community of the homeless wake up to the fact that they are a community and that they powerfully modeled the interdependence of the corporate body.

I especially appreciated the time with the three people at the Peace Farm in their sharing of the journey, the hope and the vision they held together, and the way they chose to live their lives together.

I am deeply fond of Arthur [*Arthur Lerner, of FRESH New London*] and was blessed with the time we worked together on Victory House and was blessed with the time we had during radical discipleship week to acknowledge the radical faithfulness with which he lives his life and bears witness for all of us.

The hardest times were the piece on education which covered lots of territory but it was difficult for me to get a handle on. Perhaps it would have helped to focus on a specific aspect of education, e.g., "where is our school system failing those with the greatest need and what is our responsibility for addressing these issues?" In that

context, some back and forth dialogue with our presenter would have helped. . . .

The one suggestion I would make is that we do some additional work-related tasks together with the communities we visited. We could have worked with Arthur in the community garden. Granted, we did prepare breakfast with the Homeless Coalition community (though I slept through at the Soldiers and Sailors monument in New London. These parts are so very important to the program in giving more than lip service to these ideals, and standing in solidarity with those who do these things.

All in all, there is very little I would change about the week. I loved it and I thank you for doing it.

The Rev. Gail Keeney-Mulligan
St. John's Church, New Milford, Conn.

"Living a Cruciform Life"

I learned so much from participating in the Radical Discipleship Course. First, I realized that radical discipleship means living a cruciform life ready to die and rise again with Jesus everyday. Radical discipleship requires courage and demands humility. We are called to live a sacramental life.

Second, St. Francis House is a unique place. I felt privileged to experience your model based on Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker. While one can see the work presents challenges at times, it continually reflects Christ's love and patience in the world. Truly, one doesn't know from one day to the next what is going to happen. This characteristic represents the essence of the cruciform experience. This uncertainty prepares us for discipleship-in-action, not as followers but as servant leaders.

Personally, I loved the Bible study and Ched Myers's text. Mark will inspire all my work, wherever God takes me. The

Radical Discipleship Course provided me with tools for God's work through me. I can't thank you enough for these resources.

Seeing the multiple ministries taking place in New London was wonderful. The gardens were incredible! The formerly homeless individuals are doing amazing work for others. We packed so much into five days. I can't thank you enough!

The Rev. Deacon Clare Barry
Diocese of Western North Carolina

"A Good Beginning"

"So, what did you do on your retreat at St. Francis House?" ask family and friends. "Retreat" seemed to work better than "Radical Discipleship" – at least it conjured up an image. "Well," I say, "we began each day with Morning Prayer, and anchored the day, in addition, with Evening Prayer and Compline. The culmination of the week was a Eucharist celebrated on Friday evening. Prayer is the basis for everything that happens at St. Francis House, and it felt wonderful to be part of that cycle, that rhythm of the day.

We studied the Gospel of Mark and a commentary on the gospel written by Ched Myers and others. I soon learned that the Gospel of Mark is a political statement describing Jesus' relentless challenge of unjust religious leaders and the oppressive Roman Empire. We talked about denial, and we challenged ourselves to look at our own religious institutions and the ramifications of our own government's actions.

A couple of highlights for me were visiting other communities with whom St. Francis House is associated. One was the Grassroots Homeless Coalition. Members of the coalition told us about their work on behalf of people who are homeless and graciously invited us to join them the following morning when they served a

Continued on page 8...



TRAVELING WITH THE PILGRIMS

**In the company of
Robert Ellsberg's *All Saints***

While the pilgrims were walking, Mark and Anne upheld the daily Morning Prayer observance at St. Francis House. Following the daily Gospel reading, we read from Robert Ellsberg's *All Saints: Daily Reflections on Saints, Prophets, and Witnesses for Our Time* (The Crossroad Publishing Company, New York, 1997). We commend to you including these stories in your own daily practice of prayer and reflection. We were particularly struck by how apropos the saints for the days of the pilgrimage were. Here are some excerpts as a context within which you will read the centerfold account of the Pilgrimage.

September 10: Mother Teresa of Calcutta

....In the affluent West she had no trouble finding poverty – both the material kind and a no less destructive impoverishment of the spirit. The answer in both cases was love, a love that would begin with persons and ultimately transform the world.

September 11: Vinoba Bhawe

.... Among Gandhi's disciples, it was Vinoba who best appreciated the spiritual dimension of Gandhi's vision. He understood that Gandhi aimed at something greater than independence from Britain – nothing less than the kingdom of God.... As he traveled the country Vinoba perceived that for the majority of India's poor the achievement of formal independence had not altered their oppression. This was especially true for the vast number of the rural poor who had no access to land. In 1951 while visiting a village in Telengana, Vinoba was presented with an appeal for help by a group of landless peasants. Vinoba was suddenly inspired to address the village and ask whether there was not someone present who could help. At once a prosperous farmer stepped forward and offered to donate a hundred acres of his own land.... Vinoba went on to travel by foot from village to village asking for contribution of land for the poor. His efforts met with extraordinary success. Within seven weeks he had collected over twelve hundred acres.... By 1954 the sum had grown to 2.5 million acres, far exceeding any land reform achieved the government.

Vinoba did not believe that the donation of a few acres of land would solve all of India's

problems. It was the underlying spiritual revolution reflected in the gift, that would make the difference. "We do not aim at doing mere acts of kindness," he wrote, "but at creating a Kingdom of Kindness."

September 12: Stephen Biko (1946-1977) South African Martyr for Freedom

"The sense of defeat is what we are fighting against. People must not just give in to the hardship of life. People must develop a hope. People must develop some form of security to be together to look at their problems, and people must, in this way, build up their humanity. This is the point about Black Consciousness."

September 13: Dante Alighieri

"Midway in life's journey, I went Astray from the straight road and woke to find myself alone in a dark wood."

....It was in (the years of his exile from Florence) that Dante conceived and wrote *The Divine Comedy*, the record of an imaginative pilgrimage from the depths of Hell, up the mount of Purgatory, and finally to the ethereal rapture of Paradise....

September 14: Martyrs of Birmingham

(At the funeral of the four little girls killed in the dynamiting of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama in 1963) Martin Luther King expressed the hope that their deaths would awaken the conscience of Birmingham and the nation and so douse the flames of hatred and division. "God still has a way of wringing good from evil," he said hopefully. "History has proven over and over again that unmerited suffering is redemptive."

September 15: St. Catherine of Genoa

"All goodness is a participation in God and His love for his creatures."

September 16: James "Guadalupe" Carney

"To be a Christian is to be a revolutionary."

September 17: St. Hildegard of Bingen

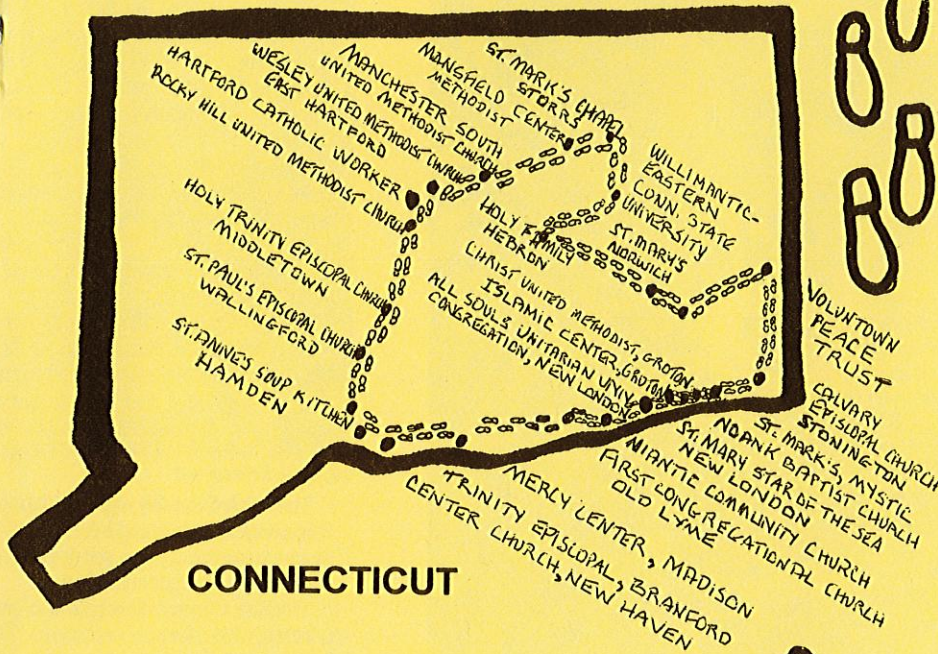
.... Human beings, (Hildegard) wrote, are the universe in microcosm, made of the same elements that constitute the world.... Through Christ -first fruits of a new creation- the cosmos and human beings find their way back to their original destiny. Constantly Hildegard refers to God as "Living Light," and she employs a remarkable word – "green-ness" (*viriditas*) – to describe the animating energy or grace of God that shines forth in all living things.



Peace Pilgrimage

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September 10 - 24



The Holy Man Walks

Out of the mundane sounds of the village
A sharp blast shakes the earth.

Here and there an arm, a leg, the dead
Sounds of agony and fear
Some hurt too badly to whimper.
Some unable to cry.

Brothers poke in the rubble with sticks
Toddlers cry for Momma
Children walk aimlessly searching for
someone, something familiar,
something to eat.
A woman rocks her dead soldier.
An old man looks without seeing,
knowing he cannot build again.

The face of war is pain.
The holy man walks
Because
War is not the answer.

Barbara Lawton, TSSF

Praying with Our Feet Emmett Jarrett, TSSF

When I first considered ordination to the priesthood, a beloved friend quoted the passage in Isaiah about "how beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace" (52:7). So the image of feet has long been important one to me for understanding Gospel discipleship. When Eric Swanfeldt proposed the Pilgrimage for Peace, that was the first thing I thought of: "the feet of those who bring good news and publish peace."

In all three of the Abrahamic faiths, the practice of pilgrimage is important. For Muslims, the *hajj*, or pilgrimage to Mecca, is one of the five pillars. For Jews, it is still important to "go up to Jerusalem," perhaps now to pray at the wailing wall of the Temple. Christians go to Rome, to Canterbury, to the Holy Land. The very act of walking is important. It suggests – and indeed creates in the pilgrims – humility. One doesn't arrive at a pilgrimage in a limousine! But there is also an urgency about the proclamation of peace. The messenger "announces good tidings" of peace to those along the route of the pilgrimage. Part of our pilgrimage focused on meeting with people in different places around Connecticut and hearing their thoughts about and yearning for peace.

So we walked. We prayed with our feet. We started our from St. Mary Star-of-the-Sea Roman Catholic Church with a blessing from our friend Fr. Bob Washabaugh and his congregation. We ended up sleeping at the Islamic Center in Groton on the first night of Ramadan. And we walked across the Thames River bridge back into New London with Jewish kids from Rabbi Aaron Rosenberg's congregation, who had visited the mosque for the first time. Our friends at All Souls Unitarian Universalist Congregation, led by the Rev. Carolyn Patierno, welcomed us home singing "We are marching in the light of God" in English and Swahili.

Our feet are tired. But our spirits are refreshed. "How beautiful upon the mountain are the feet of those who bring good tidings, who publish peace!"

Pilgrimage for Peace hopes to make strides toward more tolerant world

By **KATHLEEN EDGECOMB**
Day Staff Writer

New London — Father Emmett Jarrett is carrying a walking stick but no sign.

The Episcopal Franciscan priest, who departed from New London Sunday with a dozen others on a 270-mile Pilgrimage for Peace, is not at all concerned that passers-by won't know what he is doing.

It's more about talking than walking, he said.

"We're hoping people come to meetings in local communities and have a conversation," he said. "We want to talk about peace in the real sense ... and create an opportunity for people to voice their thoughts."

The Rev. Eric Swanfeldt of the Uncasville United Methodist Church came up with the idea, along with Jarrett, of "praying with their feet."

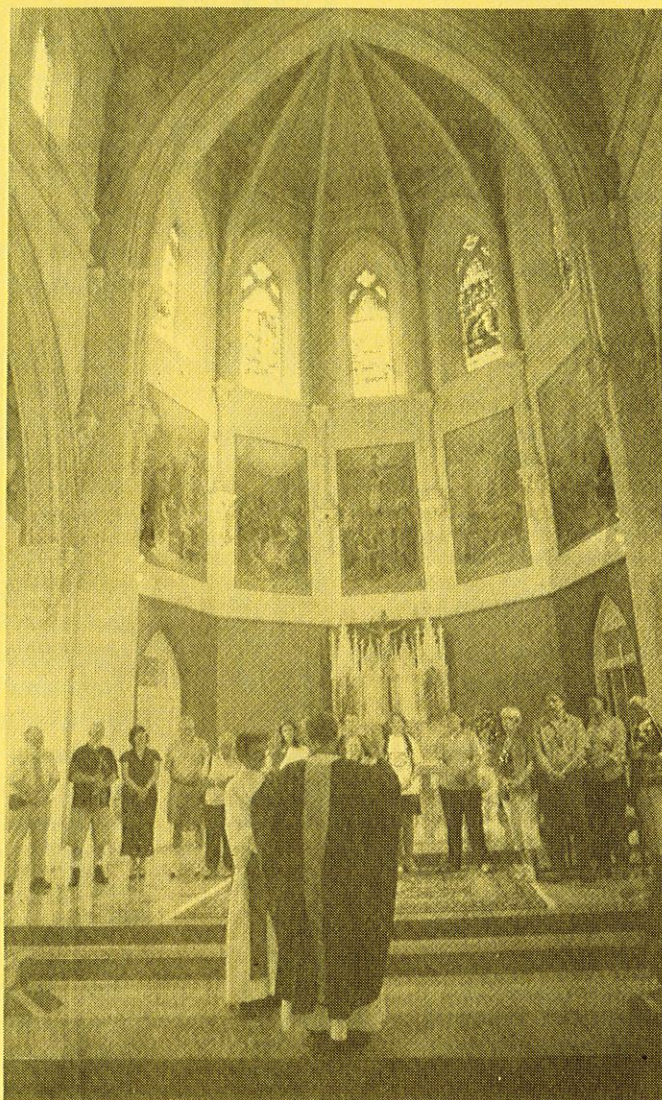
"We hope to start building a community of people who care about each other," said Swanfeldt.

The pilgrims will stay each night in a different church, synagogue or mosque, and talk about peace during interfaith gatherings at 7 p.m. The group will return to New London Sept. 24 and celebrate at an 11 a.m. service at the All Souls Unitarian Universalist Congregation with Pastor Carolyn Patierno.

Jarrett, who runs St. Francis House in New London, said the peace walk is not politically motivated and the intention is not to change policy.

"We're just asking the questions," he said.

The group began their quest Sunday following the Spanish Mass at St. Mary Star of the Sea Church in New London.



■ The Rev. Robert Washabaugh of St. Mary Star of the Sea Church in New London blesses participants in the Pilgrimage for Peace during Mass on Sunday.

See **PILGRIMS** page **B3**

TIM MARTIN / The Day

Walkers' symb



From **B1**

In a bilingual blessing after the formal Mass, the Rev. Robert Washabaugh, called the walkers up to the altar and gave them a St. Francis Assisi blessing. St. Francis, who is known as the patron saint of animals, renounced his worldly possessions and lived austere with nature.

Washabaugh, pastor of the St. Mary's, thanked the group for "willing to be witnesses for peace."

"Do well. Do well," he encouraged them from the front steps of the Huntington Street church.

The pilgrimage will take the walkers to communities along the shoreline as far south as New Haven and the north to Hartford and back to New London via Manchester, Willimantic, Hebron, Voluntown, Mystic and other towns.

They stayed Sunday night at Niantic Community Church and left early this morning to get to a 9 a.m. service at the Old Lyme Congregational Church.

The Rev. Glennys Ulschak of New London, the former chaplain at Lawrence & Memorial Hospital, intends to walk all 270 miles. She hopes the walk and the visits to various congregations will spark discussions.

"We need to discuss what we need to do to have peace," she said.

A support car is carrying sleeping bags and backpacks for the walkers and supplies to make posters at each stop.

"We going to leave a prayer poster," Ulschak said. "A simple prayer for peace."

While a core group of five intends to walk the entire route, others are stopping in and walking when they can. One is even riding his bike.

"For me this is a protest against the engagement in Iraq," said J. Vincent Burns of Hamden, who was pushing his bicycle among the group as the

The Gift of the Pilgrims

On Friday evening, September 22, my parish, St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Mystic, provided hospitality for the Pilgrims who, at that point, had walked over 200 miles on their Pilgrimage for Peace. Doug and I had returned that day from a visit to Machias, Maine, where we had spent time with his brother, a Viet Nam veteran who lives with traumatic stress disorder, addictions, and the effects of Agent Orange.

The connection between the walk for peace and the horrors of war became very personal for us. The walkers would be leaving St. Mark's at 5:30 the following morning to continue their walk, and I knew that I had to join them. There was simply no place else for me to be. I walked with them to Christ United Methodist Church in Groton and on to Noank Baptist Church. The conversations at these stops, the personal stories people shared, moved me to the core.

Parishioners with conversations and blessing in the the walkers said at St. Mark's. What a gift! The changing. What year, if I have walk with them

Public journey takes the high road at intersection of war and peace



REPRINTED FROM *NEW HAVEN REGISTER*, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2006

FIFTEEN PEOPLE SAT IN A CIRCLE in a New Haven parish house, discussing the path to peace.

Five of them were stiff and aching and blistered because they had walked down from New London over the previous two days. One of the walkers took off her shoes to help heal the bruises on her toes.

They were gathering with their New Haven area supporters Tuesday night, the day after the fifth anniversary of 9/11 and the day after the 100th anniversary of Mohandas Gandhi beginning his campaign of non-violent civil disobedience.

"The combination of 9/11 and Gandhi was too much to pass up," said the Rev. Emmett Jarrett of the St. Francis Center in New London, explaining the timing of the peace walk.

By the time they finish Sept. 24 in New London, after stops in Branford, Hartford and Madison, they will have walked 270 miles. The group started the journey in New London.

Every night they are fed and sheltered by local groups, many of

them church congregations. In New Haven, they stayed overnight at the Center Church parish house.

Is peaceful walking and talking the proper path for America, five years after 9/11 and three years after the United States

went to war in Iraq? A

majority of Americans now believe things don't seem to be working out quite as planned over there. Something has gone horribly wrong.

"In our discussions along the way, we've encountered a wrenching, agonizing attitude; people are asking, 'How did we let ourselves be so taken over? How do we change?'" noted the Rev.

Glennys Ulschak of New London. The walkers said there is so much fear felt by Americans — which the walkers attribute to the Bush administration — that paralysis has set in.

Nora Curioso of New London recalled that when they visited Branford Tuesday for an interfaith service, one of the ministers said he was reluctant to preach about peace because the last time he did so, "We lost a parishioner and it was an important family."

"The fear, it was so sad to me," Curioso said. "In Branford! This is Connecticut, a 'blue' state."

But Ulschak answered, "Because of the paralysis of the churches, we have to continue to gather and have these conversations. And we have to act."

Curioso said there have also been inspiring and hopeful moments along the road. In Niantic, the walkers met two Army soldiers who were training at Camp Rell; their homes are in Kentucky.

"When they asked us what we were doing and we said it was a peace walk, they said, 'Good! Everyone in Kentucky is praying for peace,'" Curioso recalled. "And they said, 'Pray for us, we're off to Kuwait next week.'"

There was a lot of discussion in the circle about Gandhi, and how, beginning at a meeting Sept. 11, 1906, he helped convince other Indians in South Africa to nonviolently resist a new law there requiring all Indians to register with authorities, carry a certificate at all times and display it when asked to do so. Those who refused would be imprisoned, fined or deported.

Some of them did go to jail, but eventually their campaign

that conflict, to oppose Hitler?

The walkers answered in several ways: World War II was a direct outgrowth of World War I; 70 million people died in World War II, including 6 million Jews; World War II led to the "Cold War;" and the Germans ultimately would have eliminated Hitler themselves.

But the focus of the circle was the war in Iraq. Jarrett noted that the more than \$400 billion spent so far on the war "is money that could have been used for children, that could have been used to provide health care."

How to bring about change? "It can only start with the hearts of people, with the community," Jarrett said.

Charles Pillsbury, a former Green Party candidate and one of the New Haveners is playing host to the walkers, noted how successful Jesus Christ had been in his nonviolent quest. "He walked around, talked to people, in a space about the size of Connecticut. My God — just by walking around, talking to people!"

Will the circle be unbroken? Will it grow?

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RANDALL BEACH



TIM MARTIN / The Day

The Rev. Emmett Jarrett walks along Bank Street in New London as part of a peace walk.

made their way down Bank Street Sunday afternoon toward Waterford. At age 76 and with arthritic knees, he said riding is more his speed than walking.

"Every one of us has our own reasons for walking," he said. "For me, I don't see any evidence that we are any safer since the war in Iraq."

He hopes to engage people along the way and hear their views about the war. He has also invited an 89-year-old friend from New Hampshire to walk a few miles with the group.

Rabbi Aaron Rosenberg of Temple Emanu-El in Waterford, also lent his support Sunday to Father Jarrett and the rest of the walkers.

"We are spreading a message of peace," he said, as the walk began. "We want it be known that there are people here who care very deeply about peace."

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came to participate in the out peace each received a arm of a simple song which entitled, "Stand Firm." We e been singing it ever since. experience was life the Pilgrims walk next breath of life in me, I will

Barbara Barrett
SFH Board Member



Peter Hvizdak/Register

Pilgrims walking across Connecticut for Peace, from left, front row, Janese Minella-Didier of Ledyard, the Rev. Emmett Jarrett of New London, the Rev. Glennys Ulschak of New London and Eric Swanfeldt of Montville and back row, from left, Vincent Burn of Hamden and Nora Curioso of New London, take a break at the Center Church Parish Hall in New Haven for a public discussion on peace.

ended the law. Gandhi used the same tactics to win India's independence from Great Britain.

"Nonviolence is a much more successful strategy for life than war," Jarrett said. "War is always a failure."

Jarrett, who grew up in the

South, noted the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. used Gandhian methods during the civil rights movement. "Things happen when people are willing to die rather than to kill," Jarrett said.

I asked them about World War II. Was America wrong to enter

REFLECTIONS ON PEACE & PILGRIMAGE by Janet Minella-Didier

We loaded the sleeping bags and pads, duffle bags, first aid kit, handouts, etc. into the trunk and back seat of my car. The peace pilgrims walked down the driveway of Mercy Center in Madison and I drove out. It was early morning of a lovely, sunny day.

That first day I did little reflecting on this pilgrimage. I did wonder what it would accomplish. I wondered about the lack of signs. But I concentrated on driving, making a stop every one or two miles so the pilgrims could get some water, a snack, or Vaseline their feet.

It was the following day that I began to think about this pilgrimage, this "praying with the feet". I compared this walk with the medieval pilgrimages I had read about, and even with the journey through life each of us is on. There are the daily struggles and discomforts, the stumbling, falling, and being helped up, the temptation to quit, the decision to go on, in hope and trust. I decided that journey's end is not nearly as important as the love, self-sacrifice, commitment, and pure intention that keep pilgrims moving forward.

During a discussion following lunch one day, Donna reminded those gathered that when we walk we are joining the majority of the people of the world, who walk for their water, food, medical care. I thought of all the people who are displaced by violence or natural disasters and, carrying their few possessions, walk to safety, to temporary camps, to new beginnings in unfamiliar places. I thought of the thousands of people, deprived of even the basic necessities, leaving families and friends and taking that dangerous walk across borders in a desperate search for a better life for their children.

I thought of Jesus' three years of ministry as a pilgrimage, ending in his carrying the cross to his death. I wondered if his message of love, compassion, justice, and forgiveness would have lasted 2000 years if he had stood on a platform while

proclaiming it, and then driven off in a car to his next scheduled stop. I wondered if Gandhi and Martin Luther King would have successfully, and nonviolently, challenged unjust political laws and systems if they had not talked and walked with their people. And I thought of all the nonviolent marches taking place across the country and around the world at this present time – where ordinary people are expressing their hunger for peace and justice and are demanding that their governments change.

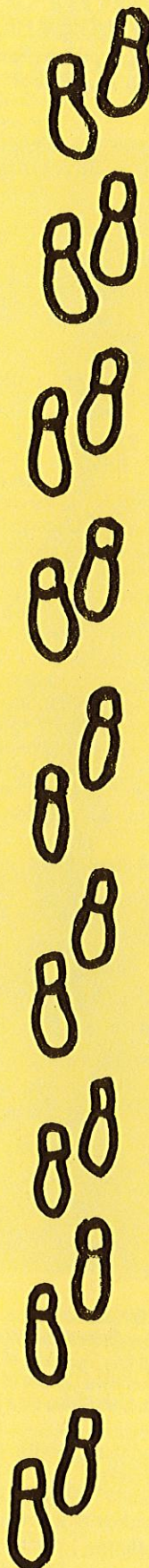
And I began to understand the power of our modern pilgrims' prayer and why posters were not needed.

I also thought of energy. As a Reiki practitioner, I have learned that the body is made up of and surrounded by energy. Robert Lax, the minimalist poet and friend of Thomas Merton, said, "We are beings charged with energy, exchanging charges throughout the day." (*The Way of the Dreamcatcher*, S.T. Georgiou, Novalis 2002, p. 30.)

Positive thoughts and pure intention lead to positive energy, to health and to a positive energy exchange. I could see the energy generated by our modern peace pilgrims expanding out into the community through which they walked, and even beyond. A pebble dropped in a pond sends out endless ripples into the surrounding waters. Positive energy, dropped into the energy of the planet, sends out ripples of energy that slowly spread, further and further from their source. Who knows how far this energy will flow or what positive changes, great or small, will take place in our world because of this seemingly minor contribution and prayer of our peace pilgrims.

When I left the peace pilgrims after my final day of driving I felt hope, for the first time in many years. I do believe that a small group of people can, indeed, bring truth, justice, and peace to this troubled world.

Janet Minella-Didier is a member of St. Mary Star of the Sea Church, New London and of the SE CT Peace and Justice Network.



September 18: Dag Hammarskjöld

"In our era, the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action."

September 19: St. Martin I, Pope & Martyr

"I am wasting away and frozen through with dysentery... At this time of bitter need I have nothing whatever to strengthen my broken and unhappy body... But God sees all things, and I trust in him, hoping that when he shall have taken me out of this world he will enlighten my persecutors, that thus they may be led to repentance and better ways."

September 20: Henri Nouwen

"Dear Lord, I will remain restless, tense, and dissatisfied until I can be totally at peace in your house... There is no certainty that my life will be any easier in the years ahead, or that my heart will be any calmer. But there is the certainty that you are waiting for me and will welcome me home when I have persevered in my long journey to your house."

September 21: St. Matthew

"As Jesus passed from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he rose and followed him." Matthew 9:9

... Matthew records the great parable about the Last Judgment, when "the Son of man comes in his glory," to separate "the sheep from the goats." To those he blesses he will say, "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." "When did we do these things?" they will ask. He will answer, "Truly, I say to you, as did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

**September 22: St. Maurice & Companions
Martyrs of the Theban Legion (c. 287)**

... Recruited from Thebes in Upper Egypt, this Roman legion refused both to sacrifice to the gods and perhaps objected to what they were being asked to do in Gaul. The following is from the statement which the Thebans' officer St. Maurice made on behalf of his men:

"We are your soldiers, but we are also servants of the true God. We owe you military service and obedience; but we cannot renounce Him who is our Creator and Master, and also yours, even though you reject Him. In all things which are not against His law we most willingly obey you, as we have done hitherto. We readily oppose all

your enemies, whoever they are; but we cannot dip our hands into the blood of innocent persons. We have taken an oath to God before we took one to you; you can place no confidence in our second oath if we violate the first. You command us to punish the Christians; behold, we are such. We confess God the Father, author of all things and His Son, Jesus Christ. We have seen our companions slain without lamenting them, and we rejoice at their honor. Neither this nor any other provocation has tempted us to revolt. We have arms in our hands, but we do not resist because we would rather die innocent than live by any sin." After first executing soldiers through decimation, eventually the entire Theban Legion – a total of 6,600 men were slaughtered without putting up resistance.

September 23: Padre Pio

... For the thousands of pilgrims who flocked to hear him say Mass, or to have him hear their confessions, or simply to rest their gaze on his bandaged hands, he was a living proof for the existence of God.

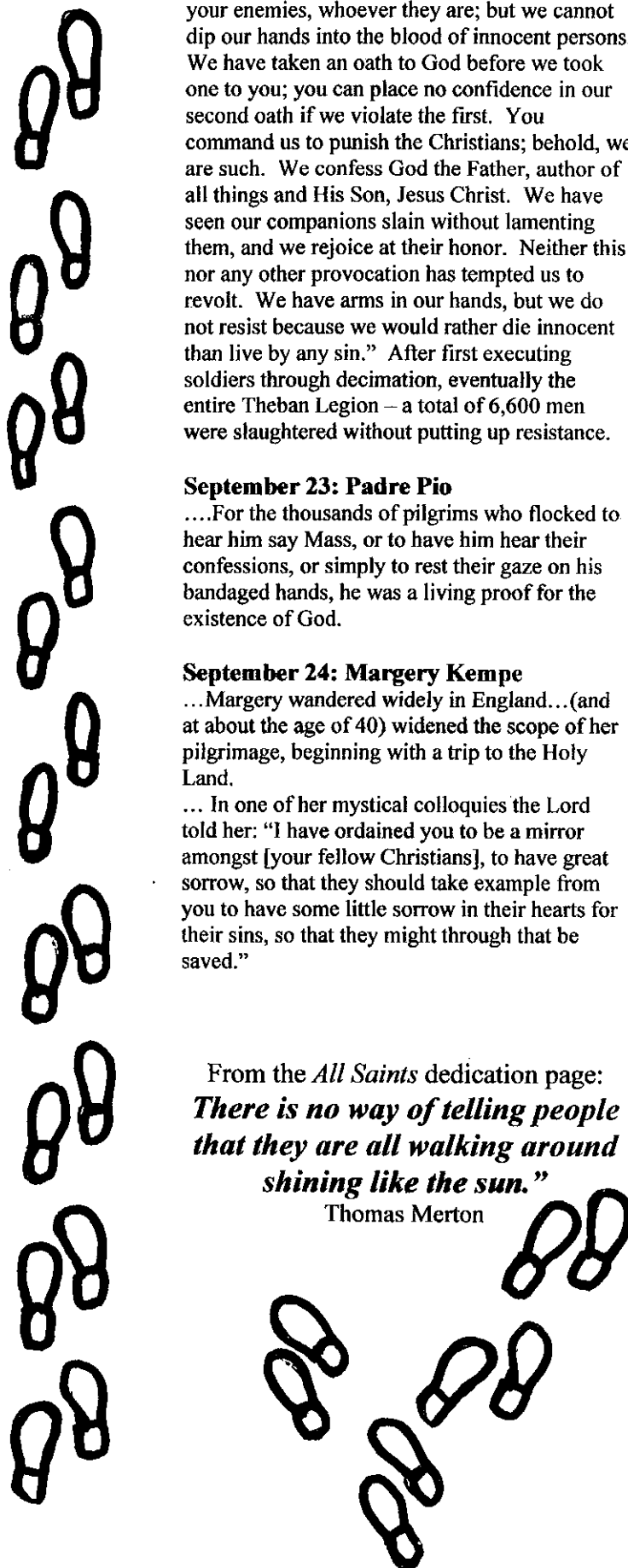
September 24: Margery Kempe

... Margery wandered widely in England... (and at about the age of 40) widened the scope of her pilgrimage, beginning with a trip to the Holy Land.

... In one of her mystical colloquies the Lord told her: "I have ordained you to be a mirror amongst [your fellow Christians], to have great sorrow, so that they should take example from you to have some little sorrow in their hearts for their sins, so that they might through that be saved."

From the *All Saints* dedication page:
***There is no way of telling people
that they are all walking around
shining like the sun."***

Thomas Merton



Continued from page 5

community breakfast. We also visited the community at the Voluntown Peace Farm, again a gracious and welcoming group who share their resources and skills as they work toward a more peace-filled and nonviolent world.

It was stimulating for me to experience the city of New London, the hospitality of the KREAM coffee shop where we watched the film *Trashed*, and of the air-conditioned public library, where I escaped in the afternoons to get out of the 100-degree heat!

Some of the most lasting memories for me will be of the members of the group. We were led by the St. Francis House community members, Anne, Emmett and Mark, and fed by Nate, assisted by his and our friend Zuli, with child-care for Nancy Parent's son Gabriel provided by Sarah. Fellow disciples discerning their continuing response to the call to radical discipleship were Geoff Curtiss, Nora Curioso, Clare Barry, Gail Keeney-Mulligan, Maria Procaccino and Nancy Parent.

So what did we do? We prayed together, we ate together, we explored the Gospel of Mark together, and we experienced the neighborhood of St. Francis House. I came away more grounded in the personal and social justice message of Jesus found in the Gospel of Mark and with the conviction that I cannot simply add radical discipleship into my life. Radical discipleship for me will require a transformation of how I use my time and energy, more prayer, and a willingness to risk failure and to be vulnerable. Will I be like the rich young man in Mark's Gospel, who went away grieving because what Jesus asked of him seemed too difficult? At least I'm asking the question. That's a good beginning.

Barbara Barrett
St. Mark's Church, Mystic, Conn.

* * * * *



"From My Eyes"

In the Book of Mark, Jesus tells us to sell everything, give what we have to the poor, and to follow him. Of course, nobody does that. Nobody could do that . . . could they? Jesus didn't mean that literally; he means to go to church on Sunday and give generously at Christmas . . . right? But what if Jesus meant what he said? What if we have a standing invitation to follow? What would it look like to accept? This is a radical notion. Jesus was a radical. Thus began the week-long St. Francis House course in Radical Discipleship.

One caveat, I would have signed on to any course given at St. Francis House. Bread baking? Count me in. (Actually, that is not a bad idea.) I met Anne, Emmett, Nate, Sarah, Mark and Otis just this past April. They are different; they live differently; there is a kindness about them.

My experience with this particular course began in June – when I was told about it and given an application (an application?), complete with an essay to write, a list of recommenders to include, and a due date to get it back by. Hmmm. The application wasn't completely normal, however. Oh, they wanted one's autobiography all right; but they didn't care so much about work feats and educational accomplishments. They wanted a Spiritual Autobiography. Now, that's a bit different to write. Next, the recommenders – I listed three homeless friends. Phone number? Well, none. Address? Two in Tent City, one in Corrigan [state prison]. Nobody at St. Francis House blinked. Oh, and the deadline? I missed it by a day, but was the first person to hand in the application. Soon I was told that the "Committee" had met, and that I was accepted. I never found out who was on that Body; but I soon found out that I already had homework. I had to read the Book of Mark, stem to stern, and a book by Ched Myers which follows and analyzes the text.

Now I'm embarrassed to write this, but I had never read any of the Gospels in

their entirety, and I had no idea what I was getting into; but I borrowed a Bible, and plunged in. (If anyone reading this is as Bible illiterate as I, FYI: The Book of Mark is short and easily read; Ched Myers book? Much longer and denser.) And so I read, and re-read; on the beach, at the gym, on the bike, on the treadmill, in front of the TV, before bed, upon waking; and I was amazed: God, at least Mark's God, is a socialist. Like Myers, I asked, "What would my concept of God be in a world not shaped by Capitalism?" I couldn't wait for classes to start.

Eventually July 30th arrived. I woke up, checked for the umpteenth time what time I was expected at St. Francis House, missed church, did laundry, complained about the heat and argued with my husband. I arrived at 30 Broad Street feeling neither holy nor scholarly. I was one of the first ones there, though, so Otis and I sat on the porch waiting and greeting. There would be ten of us, including Anne, Emmett and Mark; all but three deacons, ministers or other serious theologians, and all but two Episcopalians. I was the only one in neither of the above categories and felt a little bit like an intruder. Although most everyone knew Fr. Emmett and Anne, only two seemed to know each other, so the first night began with us meeting, praying and eating.

Day Two began the first day of serious study, so, after praying and eating (which will be themes throughout), we took our Bibles, books and notepads to 32 Broad Street. Just as Jesus went back and forth between prayer and ministry, reflection and action, we spent each day praying, studying/reflecting in the morning, and then going out into the world in the afternoon. The theme of this day was the theme of Place; we read the first part of the Gospel aloud, going around the room, each person with a different version. Then we looked at Jesus' place – his world socially, geographically, historically – and the places he chose to teach and heal; his movements from the margins of society to its center and back; and the movement of those from society's center to its margins to find God.



In the spirit of this day's theme, our group traveled around the place we found ourselves: we explored New London County; its places of power – Pfizer, Monsanto, Pequot Avenue, City Hall, and its margins – the soup kitchen, last year's emergency homeless shelter, the few houses left at Fort Trumbull.

The theme of Day Three was Solidarity and Community with those living on the margins, with the ministry of John the Baptist, in the wilderness. In Mark's upside down world, those from the center of the religious and civic universe are coming to the margins to find salvation. In the Bible, the Divine speaks in a remote place, through an obscure figure of doubtful social origins; as Myers writes, "Not everything that the poor tell us is the truth of the gospel, but we cannot know the truth of the gospel without listening to the poor." The rest of the day, and part of the next was spent listening to some of New London's marginalized. We spent the afternoon and evening with the Grassroots Homeless Coalition, hearing their stories, watching their film, and began the next morning helping to serve and eat breakfast with some of the city's homeless at the Congregational Church on State Street.

Day Four was about Discipleship – taking up the Cross, choosing to live differently; resisting systems that perpetuate injustice and what it means, what are the consequences, of being a non-violent, committed disciple of Christ, in First Century Palestine and Twenty-First Century USA. We studied the cast of characters Jesus assembled to follow him, and were reminded that none of them "got it right" at first. We were also reminded that none of them had to do it alone. We thought about the concept of "Community" and reflected about the communities we surround ourselves with, of the rights and responsibilities of living in Community, and of their formalization and institutionalization. We also thought about the rich man, the camel and the needle's eye, and what we would have to "give up" in order to fully follow, fully live. That day we



continued the conversation while exploring a community dedicated to living differently -- the Peace Farm in Voluntown.

And so we continued, thinking about peace. Then the storms hit. If this were a movie, the first, a huge, powerful, thunder and lightning storm, which knocked out power to our neighboring communities for days, served mainly to foreshadow the second, the human storm, much scarier to us than Mother Nature's display. A large, drunken, angry, mentally ill man stormed in on our last Morning Prayer service and threatened the group, and particularly one of its members. Our reaction was non-violent to a certain extent; certainly no one tried to engage him physically or verbally. But, to a person, everyone thought it was the right idea to contact the police and make use of the solution the police suggested, which involved the court system. It seemed as though, at crunch time, "Caesar's laws" and not God's, were immediately invoked, without anyone sensing any irony. This got me thinking -- could it possibly be true, that which my militaristic, law-and-order type, friends believe without question -- that the only reason we can even talk about peace and living differently is because we are surrounded by people with guns on whom we rely when we are scared? I hope not. I really, really hope not.

I am just happy to remember that apostles from 2,000 years ago struggled with these issues too.

Nora Curioso

St. Mary's Catholic Church, New London



LETTERS

From Marina Mills

My dearest Emmett and Anne,

I hope this letter reaches you like a big hug and a gentle breeze. I know visiting Ken Leech in England was spiritually awesome! I remember his visit [when I was living at St. Francis House] and doing his laundry (smile). Did your work with the Urban Theology Unit challenge or broaden what you already hold? I think Nate's class studies are great. I look forward to seeing him and meeting Zuli. I know he will do fine in life. I see him taking a leader role. I can imagine your princess Sarah being a handful. Art is fun and therapeutic. I like seeing her art in the TROUBADOUR.

I was surprised, yet welcome the spiritual turn with the February TROUBADOUR (Vol. 8, No. 1). Your article, "Our God Is a Consuming Fire" is intensely captivating. Using the TROUBADOUR as a vehicle to get the message of God's Word to your readers is phenomenal. The possibilities of this are unlimited. How is Linda Powell? I know she is more than a dear friend to Anne. I keep you and your family in my prayers daily and trust and pray the angels uphold Linda's health and all that she does.

Please give Mark my best. I do look forward to his upcoming article. The still small voice brought back, as if I was right there at the Thursday morning (round table) prayer and Bible study. Tell Anne I enjoyed the naming of Victory House. It's definitely a hit! Your friendship in writing Gov. Rell on my behalf was so inspiring of God's goodness through his written Word, through you, what comfort! Thank you.

"Our God Is a Consuming Fire" should scare the sin out of people and for the majority I hope this is true. But poor souls don't know, because the Bible is more than a lesson. It is a personal relationship that some will read but not understand or taste God's unfathomable mercy. It's a great grace from God to know what the soul

delights in when it leaves its concealment
and then to carry out his holy will. I can
delight in God's spiritual matters all day. .

Give my best wishes to all.

Love,

Marina

*Marina Mills lived at St. Francis House from
November 2001 through June 2002. She wrote
in response to the Epiphany 2006 issue.*



From Jim Coleman

Dear Emmett, Anne, and Sarah:

I am writing to thank each of you
for your good writing in the Easter
TROUBADOUR (Vol. 8, No. 2). In the
tradition of those news-singers who
wandered from castle to castle, the three of
you (and Mark Auer) have given "song" to
the news.

I know how writing goes out into
the world, and one wonders "did anyone
read my words?" So I wanted to say that
each of your voices caused some special
resonance with me. Sarah's clear-eyed view
of the humanity and perils of shelter work
came across powerfully, and the poem
rounded out the various sides of the winter's
work, coming down to the untied boat, laces
"unraveling" [with Anne Scheibner's
meditation drawing].

I also hope that the experience Sarah
described as "awful" did not leave her
feeling too defenseless. It certainly aroused
my compassion to hear about it.

Anne's piece [*But what do you do?*
Reflections on life and work at St. Francis
House] was a real inward journey, so
meticulously set forth. It was possible to
identify with her questions about identity
and purpose so readily.

Emmett's contributions – the
"blues" piece and *Why Risk Arrest?* – both
were very interesting. I was reminded that
he has a new book of poems. . . .

Why Risk Arrest? Seemed to me a
classic statement of resistance. I read
recently that Halliburton has been given a
"contingent" contract to build mass
detention centers (up to 5,000 inmates) on
abandoned military bases. The risk of arrest
may be about to go over the levees. The
words "concentration camp" did run through
my mind. Thanks for defining a position on
the question of arrest.

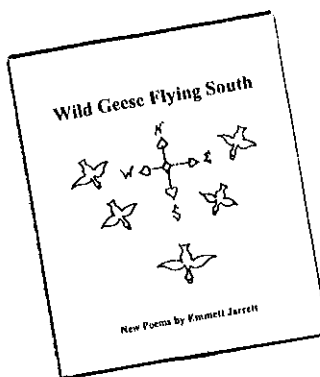
I also took heart from the detailed
article about Urban Ministry. It was good to
see how efforts here and there can come
together.

The TROUBADOUR was a great
read, this time (as always).

*Jim Coleman is a poet and teacher who lives in
Norwich, Conn. He wrote in response to the
Easter 2006 issue.*

ST. FRANCIS HOUSE WISH LIST

- + Small office copier
- + Apartment-size refrigerator
(either counter high or small full size)
- + Straw or seaweed for bedding down
garden beds; wood chips



JUBILEE PUBLICATIONS
Available for the holiday season.....
Wild Geese Flying South
New Poems by Emmett Jarrett
\$10 includes shipping and handling

Fireflies in Winter: Imagine Peace
Poem by Emmett Jarrett;
illustrated by Anne Scheibner
\$15 unframed; \$30 matted and framed
\$45 doubled matted and framed

Prints by the Iraqi artist Amal Alwan
\$60 to \$180 framed and unframed
For more information, contact St. Francis House

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St. Francis House Wish List

Offerings from Jubilee Publications

Center Section – Peace Pilgrimage

Reprints and initial reflections



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Clarification of Thought Fall Series

Non-Violence as a Way of Life

presented by Emmett Jarrett, TSSF

Friday, Oct. 6, 20; Nov. 3, 17; Dec. 1, 15

Saturday, November 4 – SFH WORK DAY

in the house, basement, grounds and garden....

9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Lunch will be served, so please RSVP

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

Friday, December 29 5:30 p.m. Evening Prayer

6 p.m. Bring food for the Feast!

7 p.m. Bring a story, a poem, a song,
a piece of art to share!

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