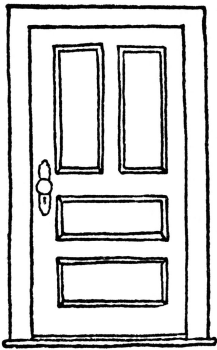


SAN JOSE CATHOLIC WORKER

Lent 2018

Dear Friends,



Every afternoon around 4 or 5 p.m., our friend Alberto knocks on our front door - could we please make him a grilled-cheese sandwich? (Lisa's sandwiches were his favorite, but with her and Julian gone, I suppose he'll have to settle for the best efforts of Andrew and I.) He'd also like to use our phone, and oh, do we also have a sweater he can have?

This is our **“Door Ministry,”** the daily work of trying to meet the basic needs of those who have nowhere else to turn. Sometimes the request is for food; sometimes it is for a blanket or sleeping bag; still other times, it is for a sympathetic ear and the comfort of human interaction. When Alberto is particularly “bummed out” he will ask for a hug, and as I lean in, he kisses me on the cheek. This, too, is the poverty of our friends on the street - a poverty of touch, of human contact, of affection.

Our Door Ministry interrupts our day, and is not a very efficient way of providing services. We could feed many more people in less time if we made 50 grilled cheese sandwiches at once, then passed them out at 2 p.m. every afternoon. But then, not everybody wants to eat at 2, and not everybody likes grilled-cheese sandwiches.

The way we see it, *efficiency* is part of the problem. Of course we want to be helpful. And, the more people we help, the better - in a way. Still, efficiency is a trap. We remember that it is the efficiency of automation that has displaced countless artisans and reduced laborers to cogs in a machine. It is the efficiency of grain subsidies and chemical fertilizers that has created Big Ag and the loss of farmers that truly care for the land. It is the efficiency of big box stores that forces our guests to work inhumane hours at Target for \$12/hour.

And what of the inefficient among us? They are the ones who end up at our doorstep, discarded by an economic system that has no use for the inefficient, the unproductive, the unprofitable.

What would the prophets of efficiency think of our Lenten practice of prayer, fasting, and alms-giving? Perhaps they would call for more action and less prayer - the creation, say, of a 200-bed shelter with a stream-lined intake process. Or, in place of fasting, a more efficient distribution system for vital nutrients. Instead of alms-giving, a county-wide homeless database to track individuals and their needs. Perhaps these are necessary. Perhaps they are the wave of the future. And perhaps we are old-fashioned for insisting on such inefficient, personal care.

And yet, we feel that true change cannot emerge from the same mindset that produced the problem to begin with. Love, after all, is terribly inefficient. It insists on caring for Alberto's needs, which are different from Jesse's needs, which are different from Debbie's needs. There is no factory-made solution that fits all.

Our friend Sr. Fidelma tells of growing up in Ireland: “We took care of others. There was always space at the table for a poor relative or even a stranger who knocked on our door. Everybody ate a little less, and there was enough. We had no need of shelters and soup kitchens.”

Won't you join us this Lent in our revolution of love and inefficiency? Come hang out with us for an afternoon, and participate in our Door Ministry. Who knows? Maybe you'll help one person in three hours! Come back the following week, and the week after that, and you'll soon find yourself participating in a whole new world of friendships - the Reign of God among us. If other commitments keep you from joining us in person, please consider sending us sleeping bags, blankets, and tents for the cold nights. In the spirit of inefficiency, you might even consider knitting something warm to give away.

With Gratitude and Love,

Fumi Tosu
on behalf of the Catholic Worker community

Thank You
to all who
joined us
for Julian
and Lisa's
farewell
mass!



Lent 2018

Electronic Service Requested

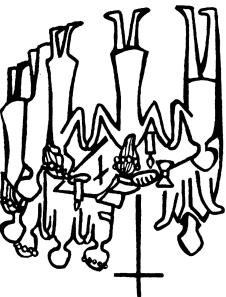
Casa de Clara
CATHOLIC WORKER
318 N 6th street, San Jose, CA 95112
www.sjcw.org | 408.297.8330
casadeclara@sjcw.org

- Volunteer Needs:
- Door Ministry
 - Cleaning
 - Yard work
 - Foot Care
 - Dentists



- **Masses:** March 3, April 7, May 5 @ 11 a.m.
- **Sacred Circle** (prayer group): Fridays @ 7:30 p.m.
- **Peace Vigil:** Lenten Fridays @ noon in front of Lockheed-Martin

Pray with Us!



- used cars
- toilet paper
- tissue paper
- tee-shirts & underwear
- your love and prayers

We also need:

Donate to the Catholic Worker:
online at www.sjcw.org
OR
make checks out to Casa de Clara

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
SAN JOSE, CA
PERMIT NO 1498

SHOWERS TO THE PEOPLE!

Our mobile shower program travels to three different locations by homeless encampments and in our community. We provide hot showers, a home-cooked meal, and clean clothes to over 150 people a week.

To support our work, go to www.sjcw.org and click on the “Donate Here” button.

Current needs:

T-shirts (new or used)
Men’s underwear (M-XL)
Women’s underwear (M-XL)
Razors
White Vinegar
(for cleaning)



Ngoc Nguyen was born in a country torn apart by war. His parents owned a shop in a small town in South Vietnam, peddling in books, clothes, cosmetics and other items. In 1975, when Ngoc was 18, his mother found a way to pay for a spot for him on a boat leaving Vietnam, and, separated from his family, he began what would become a five-year solo journey to the United States.

Once here, he found a job as an airplane mechanic, working for a private company that contracted with the U.S. Navy. In his spare time, he liked to play ping-pong - still his favorite sport.

He became homeless in August of 2017, when the owner of the mobile home he was renting decided to sell the home. Since then, he has been sleeping in his van, spending time at the library during the day, and sleeping in the parking lot of a social service agency at night.

Ngoc is a regular at our *Showers to the People!* ministry. He shows up early, and whenever we arrive he is always on hand to help us set up the tables and chairs, unload the towel bins, and get the showers prepped for service.

“Thank you for coming,” he says. “You always treat people nicely. After a whole week, it feels so good to be able to take a hot shower! If I miss the chance to shower, I always feel so tired that week.”

I asked him what his dream in life was. He looked at me with the same smile he always has in his eyes, and said, “In my life, I never dream. I try not to dream. I just want to live normally like other people. And maybe one day, after I have a normal life, maybe I can get a girlfriend.”

-Fumi Tosu

Justice or Charity?



At the Catholic Worker, we do both. Below are two pieces written by Catholic Worker co-founder Dorothy Day on the importance of both justice and charity.

Why do we give so much attention in *The Catholic Worker* to such matters as the condition of workers, unions, boycotts? This month I have had several letters, written undoubtedly by sincere and pious people who want to think only of contributing to breadlines and the immediate needs of the poor. “Please spend this money for bread,” they will write, “not on propaganda.”

Let me say here that the sight of a line of men, waiting for food, ragged, dirty, obviously “sleeping out” in empty buildings, is something that I will never get used to. It is a deep hurt and suffering that this is often all we have to give...

There are so many empty buildings belonging to the Church, so many Sisters and Brothers who want to serve the poor, surely there should be more guest houses, hostels, than there are.

But I repeat: **Breadlines are not enough**, hospices are not enough. I know we will always have men on the road. But we need communities of work, land for the landless, true farming communes, cooperatives and credit unions. There is much that is wild, prophetic, and holy about our work - it is that which attracts the young who come to help us. But **the heart hungers for that new social order wherein justice dwelleth.** - “Of Justice and Breadlines,” January 1972

“This past year has been difficult,” one of our friends writes, “particularly in dealing with the problems of relevancy. To many in the peace-resistance movement, feeding and sheltering the poor is looked upon as non-revolutionary and a mere Band-Aid applied to a cancerous world. To many, only when the American giant is confronted at its jugular vein is it worthwhile. So our involvement and work has really been put into question... But it seems clearer (now), and it can never be completely clear: we must continue with our work and look upon it as a practical response to a revolutionary gospel. The fact remains that while we slay the giant, the wounded have to be cared for. Perhaps those who come by can see the necessity of caring for one another and recognizing the importance of community.”

...All volunteers who come, priests and lay people, nuns and college students, have worked on that line and felt the satisfaction of manual labor, beginning to do without, themselves, to share with others, and a more intense desire to change the social order that leaves men hungry and homeless. The work is as basic as bread. To sit down several times a day together is community and growth in the knowledge of Christ. “They knew Him in the breaking of bread.” - “The Business of Living,” December 1969

Lenten Peace Vigil:

Prayer for Peace outside of
Lockheed-Martin:

Every Friday in Lent
@ noon.

OR meet at Casa de Clara
@ 11:30 to carpool.