

MANNA *in The wilderness*

Winter 1989

The Newsletter of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker

Vol. 3, No. 3



A Moment of Grace

Dear Friends,

My cold, numb hands were warmed by the steam that rose from the pot of hot soup I was serving. It was the first chilly morning of the season. And even as I was keenly aware of the shiver that gripped my bones, my thoughts quickly shifted to the long line of homeless brothers and sisters that passed before me. Today the line seemed infinite; there was a charge of desperate energy that filled the air.

We had finished serving our soup when I heard a call. A man was slumped over and being supported by two others standing nearby. It looked like the start of a seizure, a familiar occurrence to those who live on the streets. The two helpers knew what to do. They laid Jim gently on his side and rested his head in their hands. I just stood among the circle of support which had gathered. "You'll be okay, Jim. Don't worry, it's all right," a friend comforted. "Keep him warm," someone instructed. Immediately a sweater was placed over his shoulders. With this processed sacred offerings of jackets and sweaters from the homeless crowd. Soon a patchwork of tattered garments covered Jim's entire body. And as if to complete this grace-filled moment, a young man bent down with his unravelled bed roll and wrapped it about his infirm brother. We took Jim to the hospital where he received the medical attention needed. And we learned that his epilepsy was a consequence of severe child abuse.

There are many days at the Catholic Worker when we feel overwhelmed by the impending crises which surround us. Even our best human efforts just seem to scratch the surface. We continue because we believe that Jesus calls us to take personal responsibility for the needs of our brothers and sisters. Indeed, if we who are materially comfortable could give with the same sense of personal responsibility as I have often witnessed among our impoverished brothers and sisters, then a moment of grace would arrive. No one would be homeless and no one would be hungry.

Help us continue to respond to this call. We need your financial support. As we begin our fourth year in Las Vegas, our ministries still include a daily morning coffee and food line, a weekly dinner meal for the homeless, a hospitality house and a quarterly newsletter. This year we have the additional financial burden of rehabbing our new hospitality house and repaying a \$10,000 loan used for this purpose. Our funds are running low and we will need your generosity to continue.

Thank you for all the support you have already shown us. May the blessed compassion of our God be with you this Christmas season.

Julia Occhiogrosso
Julia Occhiogrosso

Jean Uhlenkott
Jean Uhlenkott

LAS VEGAS CATHOLIC WORKER SCHEDULE

Come and see and help!

Monday - Saturday: Serve coffee and food. 6:30 am - 7:30 am. 'A' and Wilson Streets.

Wednesday: Dinner meal. 5:30 pm - 7 pm. St. James the Apostle Catholic Church, 821 N. 'H' Street.

Thursday: Prayer vigil in front of the DOE building. 3:50 - 5 pm. 2753 South Highland Drive.

Friday: Mass and potluck dinner to follow. 5:30 pm. St. John the Baptist House, 500 W. Van Buren.

WE NEED BLANKETS & SLEEPING BAGS for people sleeping outside.

VOLUNTEERS: We are looking for more full time, live-in volunteers. For more information, write us or call at (702) 647-0728.

PRAYER, ACTION, REFLECTION AT THE NEVADA TEST SITE

WHEN STONES CRY OUT

Lenten Desert Experience IX
February 28 - April 15, 1990

*"If the people are silent,
the stones will cry out."*



Nevada Desert Experience

Box 4487 Las Vegas, NV (702) 646-4814

"I Came That You May Have Life In All Its Fullness":

A Day of Reflection on
Catholic Worker Spirituality

Saturday, February 10, 1990, 10 am - 5 pm
St. John the Baptist House, 500 W. Van Buren

Lunch will be served.

For more information, call Julia or Jean at
647-0728.

WE ARE NOT TAX EXEMPT

All gifts to the Catholic Worker go to a common fund which is used to meet the daily expenses of our work.

Gifts to our work are not tax-deductible. As a community, we have never sought tax-exempt status since we are convinced that justice and the works of mercy should be acts of conscience which come at a personal sacrifice, without governmental approval, regulation or reward. We believe it would be a misuse of our limited resources of time and personnel (as well as a violation of our understanding of the meaning of community) to create the organizational structure required, and to maintain the paperwork necessary for obtaining tax-deductible status. Also, since much of what we do might be considered "political," in the sense that we strive to question, challenge and confront our present society and many of its structures and values, some would deem us technically ineligible for tax-deductible, charitable status.

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