

ONEWORLD

Gonzaga University



Volume 3: 2009-2010



Photos by Beth Mueller



Dear Readers,

OneWorld 2009-2010
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Cover Photo by Julia Biemann
Back Cover Photo by Lynda Quinn

It is our firm belief that we, the Gonzaga family, as members of a university community and the larger Jesuit solidarity network have both privileges and responsibilities. We are called to educate ourselves, to raise awareness and to take action for social justice. Our hope is that this journal will serve as a source of information, and inspiration to build a world where dignity, respect and love are not experienced by only the privileged few. Education is one step on the path towards lasting change, and for this reason we present you a journal that openly talks about divisive world issues, the kind usually barred from daily discussion. We believe that these conversations must be had, for only through greater understanding can we hope to be united in our efforts for peace.

OneWorld acts as a vehicle for members of the Gonzaga community to express how they have been transformed by experiences beyond the everyday. The articles, photos and stories before you aim to stir passion and curiosity to discover possibilities for cooperation while also presenting the realities of poverty, ignorance, injustice and hope. You will find each story to be unique, though all are united in a common vision for justice. Our goal is to present new ideas and different cultures so that you, our readers, may come to recognize the importance of social change and, ultimately, the need for a common humanity. Many on our campus have acknowledged the call for social justice and are sharing in the struggle to attain it; we want to encourage each of you to join in their efforts. By walking with the homeless, the suffering and the labeled, we may blend the lines that separate the marginalized and forgotten from the privileged and powerful. In becoming a part of the reality that parallels our own we challenge the divisions of society that prevent the unification of humanity.

We encourage you to continue to allow passion to drive you and your understanding of common human experience. Take from the voices expressed within these pages and be inspired to make a difference. Let us not forget that despite our cultural, linguistic and geographical differences, we are one world. It is only by opening our eyes to the injustices that exist that we may have compassion and empathy, prerequisites for establishing true solidarity. The material within these pages is presented for your thoughtful consideration. We hope it will ignite in you a greater interest and desire to learn more about issues of suffering and inequality that exist within our own country and around the world. We challenge you to discover ways to actively take part in the solution, not to sit idly and wait for someone else to take on the job. This is not a task beyond our reach. Let us break down the barriers that divide us and be catalysts for social change. It is time to stand together as OneWorld.

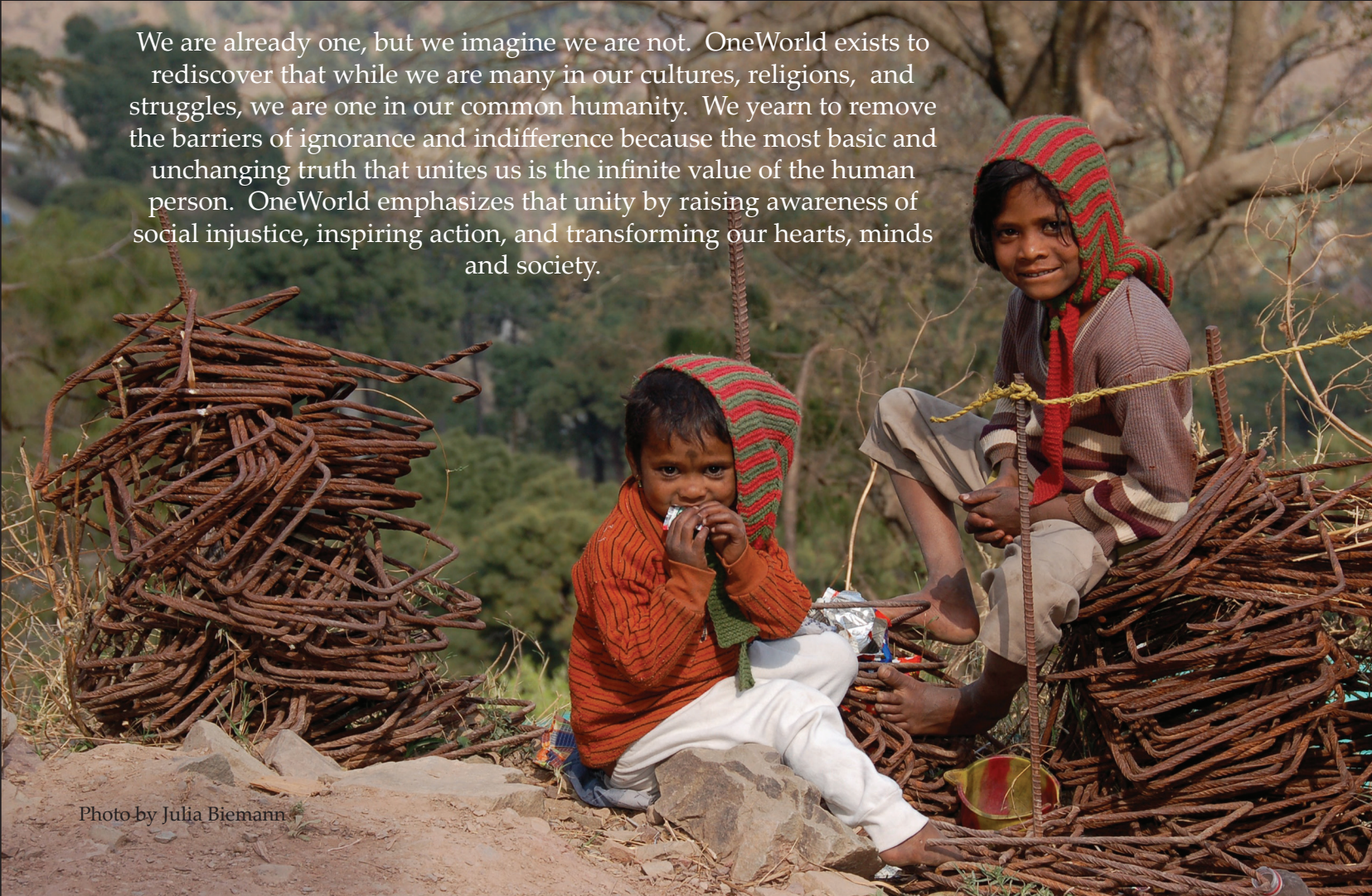
Sincerely,
The OneWorld Team

Interested in writing?
We are looking for stories of social justice
that will inspire our community.
E-mail us at
oneworld@gonzaga.edu

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We are already one, but we imagine we are not. OneWorld exists to rediscover that while we are many in our cultures, religions, and struggles, we are one in our common humanity. We yearn to remove the barriers of ignorance and indifference because the most basic and unchanging truth that unites us is the infinite value of the human person. OneWorld emphasizes that unity by raising awareness of social injustice, inspiring action, and transforming our hearts, minds and society.



Belonging

By Katie Mulcaire-Jones

"Belonging is related to longing. . . Longing is a precious instinct of the soul."

- John O'Donohue

It is almost two p.m. on a Tuesday in February, and I'm wasting time at a coffee shop in one of the Tacoma neighborhoods near the water, counting months on my fingers. I have been living as a L'Arche assistant here for almost six months now, I discover in my calculating, and check to make sure that it is still gray outside. It is.

An explanation of the organization L'Arche itself doesn't seem as important to my reflections as the desire behind being a part of it that led me to apply for L'Arche in March of my senior year at Gonzaga: to serve, to live intentionally, to help improve the lives of those around me, to share

adults with developmental disabilities. I get to share prayer, meals, stories, outings, bathrooms, bathrooms on outings, and stories about bathrooms and outings with these two of L'Arche Tacoma's core members (the "disabled") and other assistants like myself (also disabled, only in different ways). Is living and working in L'Arche the post-college volunteer experience I had envisioned? Perhaps. There are moments

fit for the best promotional video, the most tear-jerking reflection: I'm in the kitchen with Sharilynn listening to bluegrass music and baking bread. We are wearing aprons on our bodies, smiles on our faces. Or great moments for laughing, like when

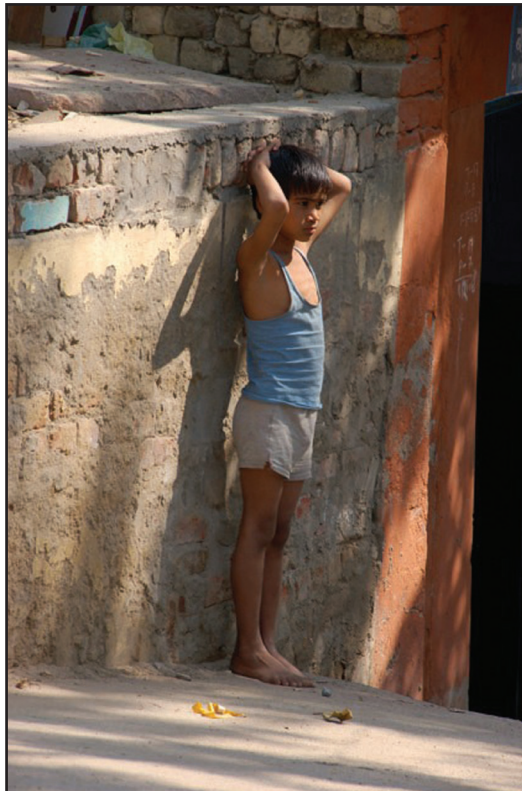


Photo by Julia Biemann



Photo by Julia Biemann



Photo by Erin Apte

my joys and sorrows with the marginal. If you aren't terribly versed in the lingo of the socially conscious (for which I would not judge) "marginal" refers to people who exist on the outsides of general society. The margin, as in the side of your paper where you aren't supposed to write or type, the space between making it and not making it, the word before "error" when discussing predictions. For most people, the margin is to be avoided.

It is in our very being that we belong

As a graduate of a Jesuit institution with modest hopes of changing the world, the margin poses a certain appeal as a place to visit and put into action all the discussions about service and social justice. So while the margin is not a place to be born into, it may be somewhere you want to visit. Margins are great places for doodling.

So here I am. Doodling, dabbling, dedicating a year of my life to living with some of society's vulnerable and marginal. I live in a home with Shann and Sharilynn, two

Stacy (another core member) finishes preparing the communion gifts at a L'Arche mass, turns to the priest, and says "Go ahead, weirdo schmierdo!" Despite these moments of joy and connection with the folks I share my days with, there are also moments of extreme frustration in the life I have chosen. Moments when language is painfully limited, and communication as I know it is insufficient to express or understand the demands of a housemate, or the sobs of a strange core member. Moments when the well of my patience is dry again, when I question my own perception of myself as compassionate, when I end the day in exasperation or exhaustion. Am I really out of patience again? In these moments, the desire to be with the "marginal" fades into tears at my own inability to convey to others or even myself what I need or what I desire. A longing to serve melts away into a longing to give up caretaking and move home to let my mom take care of me again. I long for my boyfriend to tell me I am loved, or long for my old housemates who didn't throw plates or a walker if

they didn't get what they wanted. I long for my sister and brothers who laugh at my jokes, or at least acknowledge that I made one. My longings to do good melt into nothing more than a longing to be known for who I am, for where I come from, for who I am missing, for what I hope to become.

There is irony in such moments of frustration, vulnerability, hopelessness, or fatigue (inappropriate for a photo montage or inspirational video: do we ever see people

The primal act of service must be to acknowledge our own desperate need for love, acceptance and belonging

throwing things and crying in exasperation to the sounds of "World on Fire" or "With My Own Two Hands?"). It is in these moments, in the longing and the

frustration, that I am beginning to understand where the meaning of sharing my everyday life with the core members and fellow assistants comes from. The longings I experience show me how it is that I am marginal: how I desire to be safe in a cushioning center of acceptance and understanding. The center where there is enough. Enough money, enough communication, enough stability, enough food, enough heat, enough understanding, enough love; whatever it is that we find ourselves longing for. A desire to help

has brought me to an awareness of my own places of emptiness, to where I am out of patience and out of pride. A breakdown of expectation has led me to the painful and liberating truth I have been seeing again and again most of my adult life: we all desire the same sense of safety and belonging.

In some ways, the primal act of service must be to acknowledge our own desperate need for love, acceptance and belonging. The need for healing and protection is not found only in the margins. It is on every front page, every heading, every moment. It is in our longings themselves, our desire for those deep places where we feel known and welcomed for who we are. Here we learn how to offer that welcome to others. Here we find we may also belong to the moments and places of breakdown, of brokenness. When looking for the face of God in the marginal, I must also see God's face when I look in the mirror, struggles and all. It is here that belonging begins.

L'Arche seeks to "celebrate the unique value of every person and recognize our need of one another." In striving to earn my own sense of worth in the work that I do, I often neglect the very truth our core members share with us everyday: it is in our very being that we belong; a value beyond gifts straight into our desperate need for one another, and our deepest desire to be brought in from outside.

The International Federation of L'Arche consists of 133 communities in 35 countries around the world. Each L'Arche community, in each country and in each zone, is unified by the following Statement of Identity and Mission: We are people, with and without developmental disabilities, sharing life in communities belonging to an International Federation. Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our journey together. We celebrate the unique value of every person and recognize our need of one another.



Photo by Martha Biemann



Photo by Hannah Back



Photo by Lynda Quinn

Manuel's Story

By Scott Hippe

"I am from El Salvador. My name is Manuel Antonio Hernandez."

His crisp Salvadoran Spanish carried a bit of a rasp belying untold tribulation. The tremor that occasionally rippled through his inflection pattern as he recounted his astounding journey, the occasional pause for thought, and the stoic expression on his face, all of these contributed to the chorus of emotion emitting from his lips. Before I got on the plane to come to Boyle Heights, one of the poorest neighborhoods of Los Angeles, I was not expecting to find myself in a situation such as this. We were there to cook for people who found themselves on the street, to serve in the grade school run by the local parish, and to learn about the history of gang violence that has plagued Los Angeles for decades. Not in a hundred years did I think I would be sitting on a playground bench in Boyle Heights peering firsthand into the life of what I was supposed to be learning about. And so I sat, fixated on his eyes: holes dug by hardship, wells long dried of tears. Eyes that have seen tragedy, weathered storms, and continue to gaze upon a harsh and apathetic world. Eyes that speak without making a sound. So began Manuel's story.

• • •

"The store was sold to a company from Holland. They owned 600,000 supermarkets, and although I was a manager and worked very hard, I was let go in the transfer. Many of us lost our jobs. The colón had been replaced by the dollar, and there was no more money to feed our families. Because of this I had to abandon my country. Many did. Some stayed behind. I don't know how they are doing."

"I left El Salvador for the United States traveling by land. We crossed the border into Guatemala at night, traveling in small rowboats. We traveled across the country by night, walking through forest and over mountain. By the time we reached the border with Mexico we were eighty people. We had a long journey to D.F. (Mexico City). We traveled in combi (small trucks), packed in way too tight. We had to ride out of sight. The coyotes (smugglers of people) would never let us out to get a drink or relieve ourselves. Food was something they never considered. There were Hondurans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Mexicans, many other countries. Sometimes they wouldn't get along with each other, saying many bad things."

"We had been traveling for weeks. They said that the trip would take two. Wearily we arrived at the mountains that divided Arizona from Mexico. We stayed for a few days in a large house. The coyotes there were terrible. They are different, the coyotes in Mexico. They began to rape a twenty-year old woman that I was friends with. They did the same to a woman who was 45 years old. If they did not comply, the coyotes threatened to turn the girls and women into the immigration services." Manuel finally pauses for a second. "It was so terrible. I don't have the words to describe it."

His face looks slightly more downcast. The pain that he still feels is apparent. My heart breaks for him.

"They threw us at the mountains, called the 'Devil's Spine.' As we were walking along beside the road, a truck pulled up. We took off running. I looked back and saw a woman and her child being caught by the immigration services. We had heard that they sometimes take the people they catch out into the corn fields and shoot them. I didn't turn around to look again."

"We traveled by combi for eight more days to arrive at a giant house where we waited to be sent off to Mississippi, Washington, California, and Texas. Sometimes we ate, sometimes no. The problem was that they wanted to get rid of all of us quickly, but the money didn't arrive very soon for some. Mine did not arrive for a very long time."

The bored coyotes would take women into the bathroom and violate them.

"The first job I found was working in a veg-

etable processing plant for \$6.75 an hour. I got by for about a year like this, sending whatever money I could home to my family. I lost this job, but found myself working for Iranis, Japanese, Russians, anyone who had work for me. I give thanks to this country because it helped me achieve what I wanted: I was living in a house with small comforts that I couldn't have dreamed of before."

"But I found myself homeless after losing my job. I walked the streets looking for work, food, a place to sleep. Many of my friends were alcoholic, but not me." He continues on about his various struggles living in Los Angeles over the past eight years. But I notice that one aspect of his story has been missing. I decide to ask him.

"Do you think of your family?"

His train of thought is derailed. His expression softens a bit. Opening his mouth slowly, he begins, *"Sometimes I don't have money to buy calling cards to talk to them. I had to say goodbye to my wife. I don't know how she lives now, if the money I send reaches her. I left my daughter when she was seven. Now she is fifteen. I left my son when he was three. Now he is big and grown. I have not seen even a picture of them in eight years. I left my father, who died six months ago. And I couldn't be there at his funeral. I am a stranger to my own country, but it [the journey] was something in my destiny that I had to do."*

After hearing this, the question 'do you think of your family' seems unworthy. I feel like I am in the presence of something greater than myself. Something more significant. We make more small talk. We discuss the finer points of the soccer game played earlier that day. When it is time to say goodbye, Manuel concludes with this:

"I give thanks to my-- this country for all that it has given me and I continue praying to God, that He who gives and takes away would let me return to my country. That is all. Thank you for listening to my story. Tell them, because it is true and not false, a history lived out."

• • •

On that sunny March afternoon in Boyle Heights, one of the roughest neighborhoods in Los Angeles, I touched an angel. This spirit that I physically felt materialized out of the bowels of the City for a brief moment to teach me. For an instant this phantasm ceased to be a label and a statistic and became for me a man. With eyes that see. With hands that feel. With a stomach that gets hungry and a heart that gets broken. And then he faded, left me once again to melt into the shadows of a country that does not even acknowledge his presence. His one desire is to return to his country, forced instead to battle daily for his life and that of his family. After talking with him I felt ashamed, dirty, and unclean. My life had nothing at all to say, no response to enunciate that could ever be heard amidst the deafening silence left by the end of Manuel's story. I came to Boyle Heights to

serve food, and I ended up having my world served up like a tennis ball and rocked like a rowboat on the open ocean.

Eyes tell a story, and one that not even the finest words can express. Long after I forget the sound of Manuel's voice, the way in which he longed for his family, a job, anything concrete to hold onto in this world, I will remember those eyes. I can never forget them because I see echoes of them often, gazing at me from the dredges of destitution and hopelessness. Is it true what they say, that we as a society are only as fast and strong as our slowest and weakest people? I was convicted on that day, condemned to feel the pain of the forlorn and forgotten. And I will remember that as long as I see those eyes, Manuel's eyes, that the collective destitution and hopelessness staring back at me are nothing more or less than my own.



Photo by John Mulcaire-Jones



Photo by Martha Biemann



Photo by Erin Apte



Photo by Julia Biemann



Photo by Lynda Quinn



Photo by Martha Biemann



Photo by Julia Biemann



Photo by Julia Biemann



Photo by Erica Jones

Giving Your Heart Away in a Heartbreaking World

By Mairghread Foley

Recently, while sitting in my 400 level Philosophy course in Antiguo Cuscatlán, El Salvador, my professor posed a question that I found difficult to answer: How do we live in a world marked by suffering and injustice? This question had never even crossed my mind throughout my two years living at Gonzaga University. For some, the question is easy to answer. To lead an “out of sight, out of mind” type of life is certainly a fulfilling one. But let’s just say you aren’t one of those people. Let’s just say you’re one of the thousands of Gonzaga students who feel called to serve others. As humans we have the innate desire to give our hearts away. We long to pick a vocation, find true love, and pursue our passions. But how do we muster the courage to give our hearts to a world so capable of disappointing us?

The study abroad program I chose for this semester is a unique one. The Casa de la Solidaridad, sponsored by Santa Clara University, allows students to immerse themselves in the reality of Salvadoran life by spending two days a week in rural Cuscatlán. The other three days are spent going to class at the University of Central America. My site partner and I spend each Monday and Wednesday in Tepecoyo, an extremely poor community consisting of three neighborhoods. To be honest, it sometimes feels like the majority of our days are spent suppressing our frustration as we speak extremely broken Spanish while making the ugliest corn tortillas ever.

But our purpose goes far beyond simply the task of stepping outside our comfort zones. Our tasks assigned by the program are twofold: “home visits” on Mondays and teaching English on Wednesdays to students ages 7 to 14. The teaching English part I could understand. A bilingual Salvadoran’s chance of finding a job and becoming a contributing member of society had to be higher than the Salvadoran’s who spoke only Spanish. I had come to El Salvador to make a difference and teaching offered a means for me to measure my impact here. Upon hearing I would be teaching ESL, my imagination began to conjure images of students not knowing a word of English on day one and by my last day, speaking full sentences. Home visits were another story. I knew exactly what that meant. “Home visits” was code for “sit awkwardly on a stool in a Salvadoran’s shack of a house and munch on his only mango that he insists you eat even though that was probably his dinner for the night.”

How could I possibly make a difference by just sitting there? What difference would my listening to (and only half understanding) these horrible stories of murder, hunger, illiteracy, and disease have on those who suffer? Five semesters’ worth of international studies courses can’t explain the causes behind the lack of social justice in the developing and underdeveloped worlds and even if they did, I am certainly not capable of solving any of their problems. Why would I ever choose to give my heart away, invest my whole self, in a community that will ultimately leave me feeling empty and unaccomplished come my departure in May? How, after an experience like the one I’ve had thus far in El Salvador, could I continue the fight against social injustices when I will leave this earth having made no real measurable difference at all?

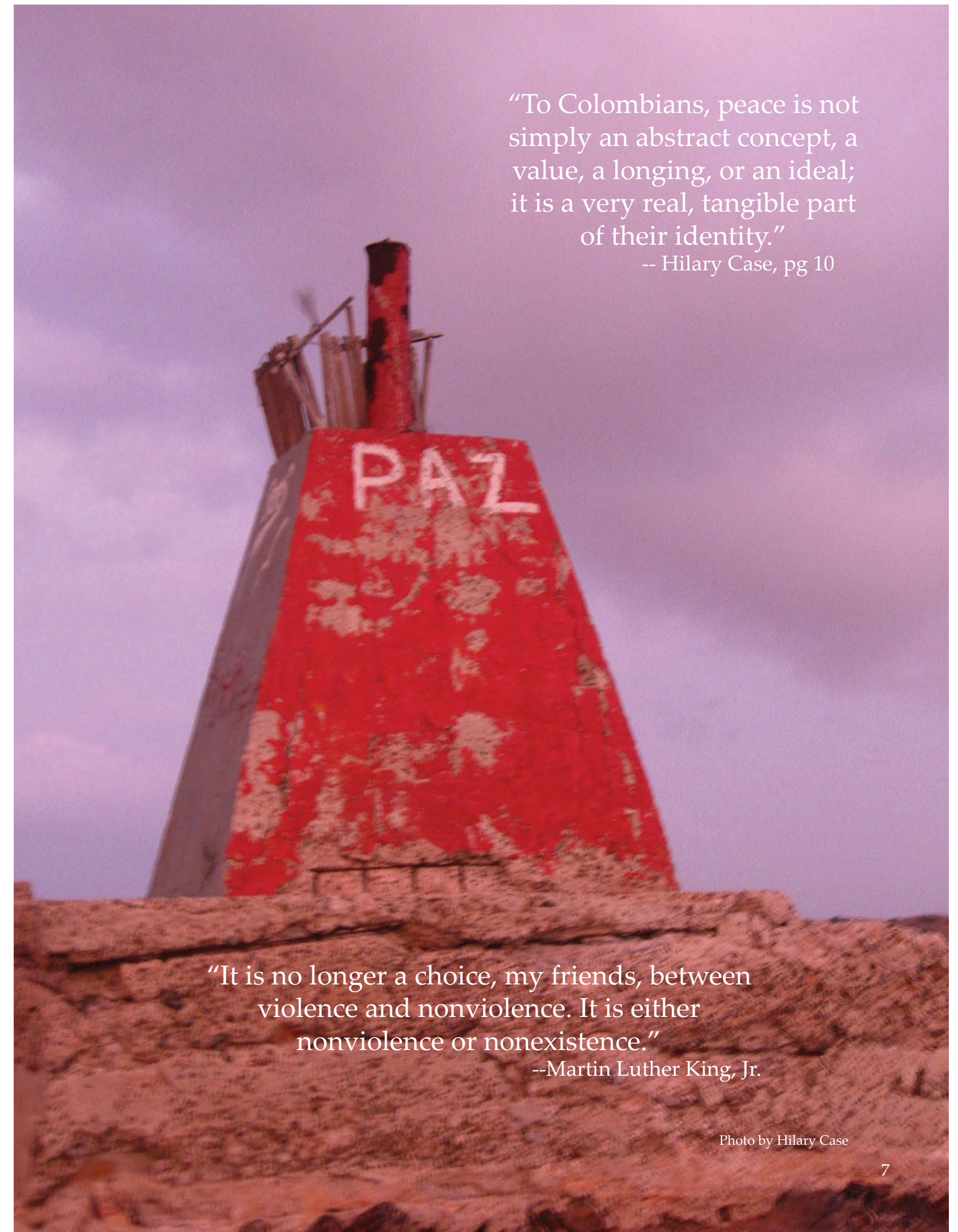
Let human suffering be your drive to make a difference, though your progress may seem scarce

How does one continue to invest in a world plagued by suffering? If there is one thing that five semesters of international studies courses have taught me, it is that there are too many problems in the world to even fathom, let alone solve. I have since lowered my grand expectations of leaving my students fluent by my last day as a maestra. What I thought was an opportunity to change the world has transformed into an opportunity to create beautiful friendships and learn from the love and resilience that is shown to me every Wednesday from the children I teach. Like the other hundreds of problems in the world, I can’t solve those of the people of El Salvador. My 1 hour 15 minute class isn’t going to raise the standard for education in Tepecoyo. My home visits aren’t going to offer any explanations as to why so many Salvadorans live in subpar housing. I can’t make any profound difference in this country and yet I long to give my heart to them. Our faith, living conditions, language and interests are so vastly different and yet it is as though my suffering and liberation is bound with theirs.

Seeing the rest of the world is important, but experiences like the one I’ve had thus far in Tepecoyo can happen at Gonzaga. Organizations like GUSR, Campus Kids, ZESST, Knights and Setons and so many others are calling students to give their hearts away even after countless disappointments. The point is to give your heart away to a cause, person or vocation, have it be broken and let it be broken for life. Let human suffering be your drive to make a difference, though your progress may seem scarce. Let your heart be broken, find renewed strength in the beauty that is the human spirit of those who suffer, and reinvest joyously in the world again.



Photo by Mairghread Foley

A photograph of a red, weathered concrete structure, possibly a monument or a marker, with the word "PAZ" (Peace) painted on it in white. The structure is situated on a rocky, uneven ground. The background is a cloudy sky. The overall tone is somber and reflective.

“To Colombians, peace is not simply an abstract concept, a value, a longing, or an ideal; it is a very real, tangible part of their identity.”

-- Hilary Case, pg 10

“It is no longer a choice, my friends, between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence.”

--Martin Luther King, Jr.

Photo by Hilary Case



Liturgy for El Mozote

By Michael Gray

1. Fort Benning Rd, Columbus, Georgia, November 22, 2008

I walk (among many) with the names of the dead rising in the cold Georgia air,
 like the smoke of El Mozote. For these
 sons, daughters, slaughtered in Salvador,
 a somber litany:

- DOMINGO CLAROS, 29, wood cutter
- CRISTINO AMAYA CLAROS, 9, son of Domingo Claros
- MARIA DOLORES AMAYA CLAROS, 5, daughter of Domingo Claros
- MARTA LILIAN CLAROS, 3, daughter of Domingo Claros
- MARIA ISABEL AMAYA CLAROS, 8 months, daughter of Domingo Claros
- ISIDRA CLAROS, 60, aunt of Domingo Claros
- BONIFACIA RODRIGUEZ OR ANASTACIA ARGUETA, 65
- LEONISIA RODRIGUEZ OR DIONISIA RODRIGUEZ, 27, seamstress daughter of Bonifacia Rodriguez
- VILMA RODRIGUEZ, 2, daughter of Dionisia Rodriguez and Manuel Alvarenda
- MARTINA RODRIGUEZ, 35, daughter of Bonifacia Rodriguez and sister of Dionisia and Vilma Rodriguez
- RUPERTO CHICAS, 40, farmer, husband of Martina Rodriguez
- MIRNA CHICAS, 10, daughter of Martina Rodriguez and Ruperto Chicas
- CHILD, 6, son of Martina Rodriguez and Ruperto Chicas
- CHILD, 4, daughter of Martina Rodriguez and Ruperto Chicas...

...a list, the enormity of which overwhelms.

I raise my hand, clutching a wooden cross, among thousands,
painted white, bearing the names of those killed.

“those killed”,
not
“those who died”.

For them we stand, responding, a three-toned elegy of “Presente.”
The dead no longer speak, no longer scream, no longer wail.
We speak for them; their throats were slit.
We scream for them. Our voices rise,
wailing
while
black helicopters hover, drone,
like the Atlacatl Battalion, who
descended upon El Mozote.

2. El Mozote, December, 1981

El Mozote, where they cut campesinos’, campesinas’ lives short.

Cut short, charred children entombed in the sacristy of the church of Santa Catarina
where once, they worshipped,
Gaunt corpses, flesh shriveled in the heat;
bodies rotting like overripe fruit.

With rifle butts, those soldiers
crushed skulls, cut loose thick, snaking streams,
soaking the soil red.

Another bayoneted them in a schoolyard.
thrusting steel to skin,
through skin, and
thick, mud-crusting boots
kicked them
aside.

3. Fort Benning, Georgia, November, 22, 2008

Eleven years later,
unearthed, the dead of El Mozote
jutting, jaggedly, like the
white wooden crosses clustered
in the barbed wire fence.



“Peacing” Together Colombia

By Hilary Case

Hilary Case is the Coordinator of Student Engagement in Gonzaga’s Center for Community Action and Service Learning (CCASL). She served as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar in Cali, Colombia, from 2008 to 2009. She studied “Peace Building, Human Rights, and International Humanitarian Law” at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana—a sister school of Gonzaga.

I went to Colombia to study peace.

The irony of this decision didn’t strike me until my first day of classes, when one of my colleagues matter-of-factly stated, “Aside from that gringa over there [pointing at me], not one of us knows what it’s like to live in peace.”

His declaration instantly shattered my idealistic and naïve expectations. How could I learn about something so foreign and abstract to these people and this setting? It was as if I’d traveled to the Arctic Tundra to learn about tropical flowers or the Saharan Desert to take up igloo building. Peace was distant and irrelevant to the realities that surrounded us.

The growth of my Spanish vocabulary soon supported this conclusion. Within a few weeks, my language repertoire was infused with words like *traquetos*—the right-hand men to the drug lords, *minas terrestres*—landmines, *niños soldados*—child soldiers, *sicarios*—hitmen, ma-



“How do you say ‘peace?’” she asked.

I gave her a befuddled look, obviously confused as to how this question related to the current topics of instruction.

“It’s a very important word,” she explained.

It wasn’t much longer before I was in the midst of a massive peace mobilization that inspired over 4.8 million Colombians at over 387 events across the country to unite and take a stand against violence. The air was filled with passion so intense it gave me goose bumps. Roads were shut down; schools were closed; and everyone donned white t-shirts (symbolizing peace) and colorful signs, flags, banners, and symbols expressing the desire for the horrendous violations of human rights to end. This was the first of four such peace demonstrations that I would attend throughout my stay. I felt enveloped in forward momentum and hope.

Thus, Colombia became my great teacher of peace. It is true that the country has been cursed with a violent history and still finds itself in a terrible conflict. But one doesn’t have to live in a utopia to truly understand what peace is.

To Colombians, peace is not simply an abstract concept, a value, a longing, or an ideal; it is a very real, tangible part of their identity. It permeates their daily lives. It can be found in their prayers, on their minds, and throughout their conversations. I was stirred by the juxtaposition of evil and beauty, and I was constantly reminded to acknowledge the peace that had entered my own life—never letting it go unnoticed.

It is this appreciation—this hopefulness—for peace that glues Colombians back together in their brokenness. In spite of the suffering and loss, this “gringa” learned to recognize the peace poignantly seeping through the harsh realities that surrounded her. My courses taught me many great theories and concepts about peace, but it was the Colombians themselves who were the true “experts.”



sacres—massacres, “paras”—slang term for paramilitaries, guerillas—guerilla warfare groups, los desplazados—the displaced peoples, los secuestrados—the kidnapped, and los desaparecidos—the disappeared. I felt as though I were earning my Masters degree in “Violence and Suffering.”

The gradual process of overcoming this sense of disillusionment, frustration, and helplessness began during my English classes. I volunteered in a home for girls who had been directly affected by these forms of human cruelty and was conducting basic language lessons. I was going over the most elementary concepts—“good morning,” “good afternoon,” “how are you?”—when one of my smallest pupils raised her hand.

Photos by Hilary Case



Initial Sacrifice

Photo by Beth Mueller

By Katie Hoffmann

"What is your name?" said the port official in colonial America.

"James McMullen" he answered.

"Where do you come from?"

"Scotland"

"Why are you here?"

He answered with both excitement and despair in his voice. "I left because my clan is at war. I have no place to live. I am here to find a new life."

"What is your name?" said the man at Ellis Island outside of New York City.

"Karl Fischer," he answered.

Where do you come from?"

"Germany."

"What are your plans?"

His voice was tired yet determined. "I came for a new life. I survived a storm crossing the Atlantic Ocean while cramped on a boat with vomiting and sick people. I will move to Iowa and start a German speaking church because I do not know English. I will farm and am willing to work hard."

"What is your name?" said the immigration officer with a disgusted look seeing that she was Irish.

"Catherine Roche."

"Why are you here?"

She answered with a tear stained face. "Famine has devoured my land. My kids are hungry and I have nowhere else to go. I have no money, but I hope to find work."

These are my ancestors. These people are the reason why I am here in America today. Their road was not easy. Little did they know they would face persecution from the Ku Klux Klan for speaking German, be sneered at for taking jobs away from "non-Irish" Americans, and live in possibly some of the worst living conditions in US History full of rats, disease, and biting cold. Little did they know they would journey across the country on a wagon trail or fight in the Revolutionary, Civil, and World Wars. Little did they know how much they would sacrifice initially.

Have you ever asked why you are here today sitting in America? What did your family have to give up to come here? What did they gain? Every American has a story.

New American stories start every day. Immigrants are coming to the USA and many settle here in Spokane, seeking new lives. One person asked me once why the USA would want more people. There are a plethora of reasons. Without going into great detail, I will say that the USA has a strong history of immigration and cultural mixing. This country has been made strong by the contributions of immigrants. Their legacy has given us the reputation of being the "land of opportunity." The USA also recognizes crises overseas and the effects of thousands of displaced people. In such times of crisis, our country welcomes not just immigrants, but refugees, striving to live out the words in the poem "The New Colossus" which is embedded in the base of the statue of liberty:

"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

I have the privilege to work with this specific kind of immigrant, the refugee.

According to article 1A, paragraph 2, of the Geneva Convention read now together with the 1967 Protocol and without the time limit, a refugee is "any person who is outside their country of origin and unable or unwilling to return there or to avail themselves of its protection, on account of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular group, or political opinion" (<http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/ha/prsr/prsr.html>). These people have a different legal status than other immigrants. Refugees enter legally after a long process overseas of registration, health screens and background checks, to ensure they are not a threat to our nation's security. *continued on page 12*

I work with an organization called World Relief. We are a VOLAG (Voluntary Agency) that partners with the US State Department. According to Linda Unseth, the Spokane affiliate director, "there are ten VOLAGS in the United States. Within World Relief there are 24 affiliate offices scattered throughout the United States. In Spokane alone, World Relief processed 460 refugees in the 2009 federal fiscal year and will process roughly 500 refugees in fiscal year 2010." World Relief works to resettle these people and assist with employment and citizenship.

I am a caseworker in the Resettlement and Placement department (R & P). Fellow caseworkers and I assist the refugees when they first arrive. We greet them at the airport and set up housing arrangements for them. We give an orientation to welcome them to Spokane, as well as brief them on healthcare, employment, social security, and many other necessary topics. Within the first thirty days the R & P department sees them quite often. As the client becomes more independent, we see them less frequently. World Relief's relationship with their clients lasts about five years as we assist them in job coaching, family reunification, legal permanent residency (green cards), and finally citizenship.

Initially, things that seem so natural to us seem frightening or unthought-of to a newcomer. For example, the concept of car seats and seatbelt laws are completely foreign. Many places in this world do not require seatbelts. Many people have never owned a car and have rarely ever been in one. It takes time to adjust to this and many other concepts.

Another concept we discuss is law enforcement. We educate refugees in the proper procedures to follow should they be pulled over or questioned by a policeman. Many of the refugees have been in countries ridden with corruption. Police from these places are often ruthless and refugees are terrified of them. Post traumatic stress syndrome can be triggered by the approach of a police officer. World Relief holds seminars where we have law enforcement officers talk to refugees about how to respond to a policeman and how to react in emergency situations. Learning to adjust to these and other changes is a long process.

Along with helping refugees adjust to new concepts, R & P caseworkers also help the families apply for benefits, register for ESL (English as a Second Language), and communicate with landlords. We show them how to pay rent and take them to medical appointments. Perhaps most impor-



Photo by Katie Hoffman

I am challenged daily to ask myself what is important in life

refugees are required to pay back the price of their airplane ticket. They are also required to attain economic self sufficiency. True freedom is not to be dependent on the government. Although the job market is challenging in these economic times, World Relief sets a goal to have clients employed within four and a half months. Thankfully, "in the USA if you work hard you will earn money. In some countries you can work all day with the promise of money and never receive it" states Dmitry Chaban, World Relief's Employment Department Supervisor.

As a caseworker I am touched by the refugee's stories, determination, and hearts for their people. I am challenged daily to ask myself what is important in life. It becomes hard to complain about anything when I know that the lives of so many have been much harder than mine.



Photo by Kristen Tordillos

Through my work at World Relief I have been able to hear the hearts of many refugees. When I am with clients, I like to ask questions to assess how they are adjusting. One of the questions I ask is, "What is one thing you enjoy about Spokane?" I get a wide variety of answers. Some say they like the peacefulness of the city. People are not fighting with each other. Others say they are really enjoying their new friendships with Americans. Some tell me they love school. Education is unavailable or of poor quality in some countries. I will never forget the day I was sitting in a room with a lady and I asked her this question. She smiled and said, "I don't have to watch my children starve."

I also ask what things they don't like or one thing they would change. Some say the cold is hard. Many are frustrated with the challenge of finding work. It is hard to survive and even harder when English is your second language. Some are frustrated that they now feel poor in a rich society. Refugees get a varying amount of dollars per month

tantly, we encourage them daily to continue to press forward in this time of change.

Many people don't realize that refugees are not void of responsibility. They do not have a free ride to the USA. The government requires them to attend ESL classes for 15 hours a week, search for a job 25 hours a week and go to all the needed medical appointments within a year. I am responsible for writing reports which are sent to the US State Department stating that the refugees have fulfilled their responsibilities and also that we at World

Relief have fulfilled our responsibilities. Financially,

depending on the state they reside in as well as how many are in their family. One thing is certain: the amount is barely enough to cover necessities. Some become distraught when they realize the hurdles they must jump. As they run the race some grow weary. They sometimes doubt their decision to come here. Refugees also struggle with emotional baggage and new emotional challenges. Some families have been separated for years. Others were just separated or just reunited. Each of these situations has strong emotional ramifications.

There are many ways that we, more experienced US citizens, can react to the plight of the refugee. Often times we hear stories of people struggling and our natural reaction is to sympathize, but we do nothing more. Another reaction is to grow angry that people are coming into the USA. A third reaction is to try to change the world ourselves. This reaction commonly ends in burnout and frustration. There is far too much need in this world to solve it alone. The fourth option, which I propose is the best, is to partner with others that are helping out/taking action. All of us are blessed with different skills and talents. As a team of many individuals we can slowly help refugees face the challenges they must overcome. Why not start here in Spokane? There are many opportunities here to get connected and make a difference.

I challenge you as students to utilize your education to assist the needy. Treat your education with purpose. The knowledge we attain is not meant to be stored up but meant to be used in practical ways. The topics we study,

whether they pertain to the arts or sciences, can be used to help people. While you are in this process of learning, supplement your education with volunteer time. Get out in the world and give yourself a reason to study. Apply what you know to helping people in your community and around the world. Remember where you came from and why you are here in the USA today. Remember that for many people their story in America is just starting and for others their family has been on this journey for hundreds of years.

"Who are you?"

Proudly I say, "I am Katie Hoffmann."

Where are you from,

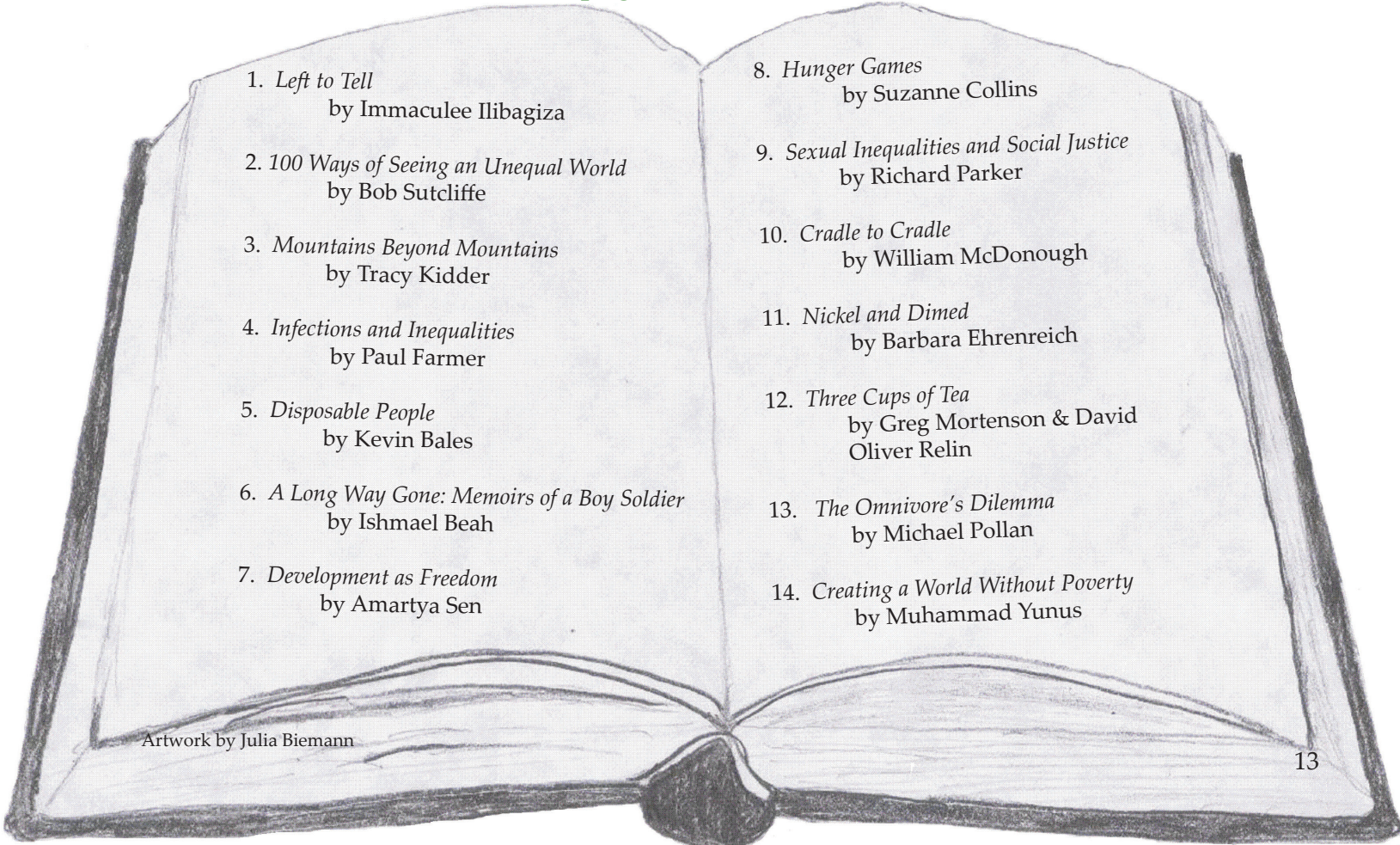
"I am from Spokane, Washington in the United States of America."

"Why are you here?"

"I am here because my forefathers made the journey. I am here because my family died for their country during war-time. I am here because my family's sweat farmed the Mid-western ground during peacetime. I am here because I want to be, and I will not forget the journey of the ones who came before me."

Educate Yourself

Find inspiration not only within the pages of this journal, but also within the pages of these books

- 
1. *Left to Tell*
by Immaculee Ilibagiza
 2. *100 Ways of Seeing an Unequal World*
by Bob Sutcliffe
 3. *Mountains Beyond Mountains*
by Tracy Kidder
 4. *Infections and Inequalities*
by Paul Farmer
 5. *Disposable People*
by Kevin Bales
 6. *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*
by Ishmael Beah
 7. *Development as Freedom*
by Amartya Sen
 8. *Hunger Games*
by Suzanne Collins
 9. *Sexual Inequalities and Social Justice*
by Richard Parker
 10. *Cradle to Cradle*
by William McDonough
 11. *Nickel and Dimed*
by Barbara Ehrenreich
 12. *Three Cups of Tea*
by Greg Mortenson & David
Oliver Relin
 13. *The Omnivore's Dilemma*
by Michael Pollan
 14. *Creating a World Without Poverty*
by Muhammad Yunus

Gay: A Crime Worthy of Death

By Francis Keller and Jim Sydnor

The American gay has had it easy for quite a while. This is not to deny the oppressive nature of contemporary or past politics; the denial of gay marriage is most definitely an emblem of how sexuality is regulated in this country. But while the penalty for the 1970's bathhouse or truck stop homosexual was a guilty conscious, Ugandans currently risk life in prison and may soon face a much worse penalty: death.

This is all part of Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality bill. The object of the legislation is "to establish a comprehensive consolidated legislation to protect the traditional family by prohibiting any form of sexual relations between

he or she will be punished by death. This rule also applies to a man who has sex with a disabled man or if any drugs – including alcohol – were consumed before practicing homosexual acts. The Ugandan government refuses to see this as a human rights issue; "Uganda's minister of ethics and integrity (who previously tried to ban miniskirts) recently said, 'Homosexuals can forget about human rights.'"²

Yet we should not be surprised considering how Uganda has treated homosexuality in the past. In 1999, over a decade ago, President Yoweri Museveni passed legislation mandating the arrest and persecution of all homosexuals. Many Ugandans opposed this legislation yet extremist anti-homosexual groups quickly made it their responsibility to purge the country of its homosexuals. Gay Ugandans face complete ostracism, forced into seclusion in order to prevent their imprisonment. The "closet" in Uganda quickly becomes a jail cell and might soon become a noose. Those who do try to maintain a public life are at high risk and are often subject to immense discrimination. "Gay Ugandans already describe a world of beatings, blackmail, death threats like -Die Sodomite!- scrawled on their homes, constant harassment and even so-called correctional rape. "Now we really have to go undercover," said Stosh Mugisha, a gay rights activist who said she was pinned down in a guava orchard and raped by a farmhand who wanted to cure her of her attraction to girls."

One in 20 people in Uganda test HIV-positive, and in a response reminiscent to that of America in the 1970s, the LGBT community quickly became the scapegoat for the spread of the virus. Although these laws are an attempt to fight the HIV/

AIDS epidemic in Uganda, "Lessons from the past three decades of the HIV epidemic have shown that recognizing the rights of

people with different sexual identities is a crucial element of efforts to respond to the virus."³ Until stigma and discrimination around homosexuality is decreased, little can be done by way of prevention and treatment. Ironically, although the LGBT community is a high risk population, Ugandan policies disallow outreach programs to target them. Instead of allowing gay Ugandans to obtain these services, this new bill seeks to execute homosexuals who are HIV-positive in addition to imprisoning those who are not.

It is all too easy to ignore the ongoing struggle in Uganda as their problem; something which is not connected to us. This is the biggest lie we could tell ourselves. America has been outsourcing *family values* to Uganda for quite a while and must carry a heavy

This new bill seeks to execute homosexuals who are HIV-positive in addition to imprisoning those who are not



Photo by Emily Back

persons of the same sex; and the promotion or recognition of such sexual relations in public institutions and other places through or with the support of any Government entity in Uganda or any nongovernmental organization inside or outside the country."¹ The bill reifies homosexuality as criminal; those who are found guilty of homosexuality are penalized with a life-long sentence. It also contains provisions regarding individuals who know of others *guilty* of homosexuality. These individuals risk being charged with conspiracy and receiving up to three years of jail time for not disclosing such vital information. Free speech is also a major concern with this bill since anyone promoting homosexuality can receive five to seven years in prison. The scariest part of this legislation is the "aggravated homosexuality" clause. Those who are *guilty* of homosexuality are forced to be tested for HIV; if he or she tests positive,

¹Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill

²Gettleman, Jeffrey. "Americans' Role Seen in Uganda Anti-Gay Push." New York Times. 1/3/10. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/04/world/africa/04uganda.html>

³UN News Center, No author cited, 22 January 2010 <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=33552&Cr=discrimination&Cr1=>

burden for this catastrophe. Last March, only months before this legislation was written, three evangelicals gave a series of talks warning Ugandan locals and politicians the danger of homosexuality. While it is comforting to know that the Evangelicals who led the event have little to no respect amongst American academics and the people, this is what our nation is exporting globally: hate. Since the Anti-Homosexuality Bill has gotten international attention, the missionaries have backed away from the legislation. However, one of the missionaries – Scott Lively – was not very successful in covering his tracks. Gettleman reports that Mr. Lively met with Ugandan lawmakers in the drafting stage of the bill while the Ugandan organizers for the conference played a very significant role in formulating the legislation.

Another organization known as “The Family” has played a significant role in Ugandan anti-homosexuality politics. This secretive organization, full of elite Americans and politicians, “converted Uganda’s President Yoweri Museveni to its anti-gay brand of Christianity, which is the -intellectual- impetus behind the anti-gay crackdown.”⁴

We live in one world. It is impossible to deny our connection with Uganda; our politics heavily influence the Ugandans as we export “family values” and ideals. The Anti-Homosexuality legislation, which many are calling genocidal, seeks to oppress the gay community with the threat of imprisonment and death. While HIV ravages the country, the Ugandan government is only further contributing to the epidemic by reinforcing a dangerous stigma and ostracizing an at-risk group. The United States has started to take a stand.

Hilary Clinton has publicly denounced the legislation, there have been threats to cut off foreign aid, and there have been local protests. Yet it seems if we are going to live in this one world, we need to not only evaluate the values present in our own country but also those developing abroad. The Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda is a flagrant violation of human rights and would be vehemently contested in our own country, so why would we allow this to happen elsewhere?

Gay Ugandans face complete ostracism, forced into seclusion in order to prevent their imprisonment

⁴Besen, Wayne. “American Evangelicals Play Role In Uganda Effort To ‘Wipe Out’ Gays.” 9/18/09. Truth Wins Out. <http://www.truthwinsout.org/pressreleases/2009/10/4397/>

Raising Consciousness: Music and Film

Take another listen; these often familiar songs speak of injustices, cry out for change, and raise hope for the future

1. Masters of War - Bob Dylan
2. My generation - The Who
3. Folsom Prison Blues - Johnny Cash
4. Mercy, Mercy Me (the ecology) - Marvin Gaye
5. London Calling - The Clash
6. Chase the Tear - Portishead
7. Windowsill - Arcade Fire
8. Connect For - Common Market
9. Knowledge of Self Determination - Talib Kweli
10. Heal the World - Michael Jackson
11. Migra - Santana
12. Peaceful World - India Arie & John Mellencamp
13. My Own Two Hands - Jack Johnson and Ben Harper
14. Give It Away - Quincy Coleman
15. Homeless - Paul Simon
16. Waiting for My Real Life to Begin - Colin Hay

Not just another movie; these works not only give a voice to the voiceless, they are sure to inspire and motivate action

1. Innocent Voices (Vozes Inocentes)
2. Invisible Children
3. Crash
4. Gattaca
5. Death and the Maiden
6. Philadelphia
7. Darwin’s Nightmare
8. Good Night, and Good luck
9. Les Ordres
10. Missing
11. Bus 174
12. Go Further
13. City of God (Cidade de Deus)
14. Sin Nombre
15. Posada
16. Favela Rising



Photos by Julia Biemann

Let Us Always Remember

By Anita Marie Esperanza Timpani

All those whose rights are compromised,
all those who have migrated to other countries,
and all those who are seeking refuge and asylum.

Kambiz Barzini came from a land so different than from what we know in the United States, where corruption and destruction are apparent in everyday life, and where right and wrong do not align with the ideals we have in this country.

Despite the corruption, he was raised with solid ideals that align with those in our country today – freedom, family, education, and justice. Living in a hell on earth, as some people describe the Iranian Revolution, the Barzini family was able to escape, fleeing political and religious persecution. For several years his family lived as refugees in Germany. He was fortunate enough to get the opportunity to come to the United States, to leave behind a lifestyle that we cannot even begin to imagine – knowing that the United States is a land we imagine each person being guaranteed the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. What better place, than the United States of America? Barzini is an intelligent man who fluently speaks, reads, and writes four languages. In the states he was given the opportunity to continue his education, compete in wrestling at the collegiate level, and earn his bachelors degree. But this opportunity was taken away from him. For years Kambiz did as he was told –hoping to one day to become a U.S. citizen. Or at the very least be granted political asylum in our country. He was well aware that if forced to return to Iran, his punishment would be imprisonment, torture, and ultimately death.

Because of where Kambiz came from, how he was raised by his parents with the notion of right and wrong, and the challenges that his family endured, he has learned to appreciate and value life. His appreciation for life extends past his own and the lives of his loved ones to all people with whom he comes in contact. He has a genuine compassion and care for other people and is dedicated to serv-

ing others while demanding nothing in return. His ability to connect with people, to listen with his whole heart and to offer wisdom when he can are only a few of the reasons why I admire Kambiz Barzini. He teaches others what it means to appreciate our eyelids – the things that are right in front of us that we do not even realize and often take for granted. His hope and trust in humanity remains even though he has been to hell and back. He believes that human beings are ultimately good and we are placed on this earth for only a brief time to help one another, because one day there will be a time when we need help ourselves.

He is now trapped, being held at Broward Transitional Center, fearing for his life and the decisions that may be made. He has been held for 150 days, as of January 20, 2010. We should not tolerate the deportation of our dear friend and loved one. He is an asset to the United States, not only as a talented athlete, coach, and trainer, but as a compassionate person and someone who stands up for others, and speaks the truth when determining right and wrong. He is being deprived his inherent right to life. Regardless of a person's legal status they possess inherent human dignity – which should be respected. The injustices and broken laws that exist in regards to the immigration system are keeping this young man from pursuing his dreams: from furthering his college education, from giving back to others as others have given to him, and from freely loving others as he has been loved.

Kami's story is only one story of many stories. Let us always remember his story and our role in working to make a difference in the lives of others. The fight for a more just world continues daily. It is in these stories that we are reminded of the importance of protecting human rights and the freedom for all, fighting against the injustices that exist in our world, but especially in our country.

“This country was founded on the concept of asylum that you never return those who flee persecution to countries where they are persecuted. Are we living up to this commitment?”

--Eleanor Acer
Director, Human Rights First

People of the Wasteland

by Chris Alma

In a time when everything is “out with the old and in with the new,” many cities promote clean, environmentally conscious electronic recycling centers. Sometimes for free or for a small fee, you can take your old computer or any electronic device to a recycling center with the peace of mind that it will be recycled properly. This, however, is not always the case.

In August of 2009, 60 Minutes, an investigative TV show on CBS, aired a story entitled, “The Wasteland.” At the center of the story is a town in southern China that is one of the most toxic places on earth. Guiyu is a place where “you can’t breathe the air or drink the water, a town where the blood of the children is laced with lead.”¹ Unfortunately, much of the poison comes from the offices, homes, and schools in America. In the United States, nearly 130,000 computers get thrown out every day. Many of today’s electronics contain valuable metals that recyclers often salvage, yet many also contain toxic materials. According to Allen Hershkowitz, a senior scientist and authority on waste management at the National Resources Defense Council, many electronics contain lead, cadmium, mercury, chromium and others “that have known toxicological effects that range from brain damage to kidney disease, to mutations, to cancers.”¹

Under both Chinese and U.S. law it is illegal to import or export old electronics containing toxic materials, yet it is happening anyway. In an attempt to see firsthand where the waste came from, Scott Pelley, a CBS News correspondent visited Executive Recycling in Englewood, Colorado. He found hundreds lined up in front of Executive Recycling hopping to properly dispose of their electronic waste. According to Brandon Ritcher, the CEO of Executive Recycling, the problem with shipping waste overseas is that “...they’ve got low-income labor over there. So obviously they don’t have all of the right materials, the safety equipment to handle some of this material.”¹ This is certainly true. However, 60 minutes tracked a cargo container filled with CRT computer monitors leaving Executive Recycling’s Colorado yard headed for Tacoma, Washington where it was eventually shipped to Victoria Harbor, Hong Kong.

Unfortunately, Executive Recycling is just one example of many companies illegally shipping electronic waste overseas. To such *recycling* companies, shipping waste to China may seem like a way to cut costs, however to countless others in rural China, such recycling may be a course of illness or death. In Guiyu, China, there are literally acres of computer monitors and various electronic wastes. Here, women extract metals from circuit boards over coal fires while men use a medieval acid recipe to extract gold. As a result, pollution has destroyed the town to the point where drinking water must be trucked in. Scientists who have studied the area have found that soil samples in Guiyu

¹ “Following the Trail of Toxic E-Waste.” 60 Minutes. Solly Granatstein- August 27, 2009. <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/11/06/60minutes/main4579229.shtml?tag=contentMain;contentBody>

contain the highest level of cancer-causing dioxins in the world. According to one worker, “The air I breathe in every day is so pungent I can definitely feel it in my windpipe and affecting my lungs. It makes me cough all the time.”¹

In Guiyu, China, this is not just an environmental issue, but a social justice issue. There, people are suffering because western companies wish to *recycle* more cheaply. In Guiyu, people work in the wasteland as a means of survival earning a mere eight dollars a day. There are no other jobs with sustainable pay. When asked if the workers minded working with the electronics, many replied they didn’t like it, but would rather work than go hungry. Essentially, the people of Guiyu must make a decision between poverty and poison – starving or getting sick later. One would never have to make such a decision in the United States, yet people in Guiyu make it every day. According to Jim Puckett, of Basel Action Network, a watchdog group for toxic waste dumping, “we should never make people make that choice.”¹ Surrounding Guiyu is literally a river of ash from the remains of soldered and burnt computer parts. No one, anywhere, should have to live in such a toxic environment.

To test the likelihood of U.S. companies illegally exporting electronic waste, the federal Government Accountability Office set up an undercover operation in which U.S. investigators acted as foreign importers. Not only did Executive Shipping, the company whose cargos CBS traced to Hong Kong, offer to export 1,500 CRT monitors and 1,200 CRT television screens, an additional 42 other companies agreed to sell old electronics to the GAO’s fictitious importer in China.¹ Instead of choosing to recycle responsibly, companies like Executive Shipping are exporting thousands of old electronics to China to be scrapped and improperly recycled by poor people who have little or no other options for work.

Today, mobs rule the area of Guiyu and do their best to keep its toxicity a secret. “They are afraid of being found out. This is smuggling. This is illegal. A lot of people are turning a blind eye here. And if somebody makes enough noise, they’re afraid this is all gonna dry up.”¹ Thankfully, this issue is gaining some attention and word is getting out. Many newsgroups including the BBC, CBS, and various environmental and social justice groups have reported on this issue. What ultimately needs to be realized is that this is not just an environmental issue, but a social justice concern as well. Sure there are blatant environmental repercussions of exporting electronic waste to poor countries, but the fact of the matter is that by allowing this to happen people’s livelihoods are affected. As the illegal river of electronic waste flows into China from the U.S., be mindful of what you throw out. Ask yourself, do you really need the latest gadget or can you get by with the old one? Perhaps then there will be one less piece of electronic poison dumped onto the people of Guiyu, the people of the wasteland.

When asked if the workers minded working with the electronics, many replied they didn’t like it, but would rather work than go hungry

The Environment and Social Justice: What's the Connection?

By Kristina Kielbon

How are environmentalism and social justice connected? Environmentalists just care about trees, and social workers only care about equal rights for everyone, right? Perhaps for most of you reading this, the answer might already be a clear resounding, "wrong," but it is surprising how often the two issues seem to be somehow in competition with

ing in a developing region plagued by immense poverty, my views on environmental justice radically changed.

I realized my views on Mother Nature were entirely influenced by my white, middle class, yuppie, college student world-view, and I was extremely bothered by that. I hate elitism, and here I was pondering my role in the elite class of the world. Environmental justice is much more than saving endangered species and tying yourself to old-growth trees. Let me present you with one of the first instances that forced to me search for a new understanding of environmental justice.

After living in Guatemala for three weeks in a relatively nice backpacker's paradise, I was preparing to spend the next month with a poor rural family in northwestern Honduras, in a tiny town called La Cumbre. It's not on a map – I've looked. And I'm only about fifty percent sure I can find it on Google Earth. For this month I was going to live with a family and simply become one of the cousins. I was not there to change them or "educate" them; believe me I learned more from that community than I could have taught them. I was given my own room in the tiny house, which was located right next to the kitchen, and within that tiny

kitchen was a very active wood stove. I quickly became aware of my proximity to the kitchen, and had to deal with the effects of using a wood stove every morning, because each day I woke up to a room filled with smoke from the kitchen; thick, black smoke that filled my lungs and caused me to have a scratchy throat for the entire month. I still don't think anyone in La Cumbre knows what my real voice sounds like.

How is this related to environmental justice though? Well, looking at the hills surrounding La Cumbre, it was immediately noticeable that there were almost no trees on the tops of them. They were mostly bald and smooth, like the top of Mt. Spokane. It was

equally evident that these hills were probably a lush rainforest at one savvy student I was it was evident to me why there were no trees -wood stoves that devour considerable amounts of fuel every day. Starting at the break of dawn my host-mom Enma had the fire going to make tortillas for breakfast. Then, she kept it going so she could boil wa-



Photos by Julia Biemann

each other. For those of you that have already figured out where I am heading with this, good for you. For the rest of you, please stick with me. Environmental justice encompasses so much more than the concern over endangered species, or the impacts that we have on the earth. These important issues can only hold weight if we accept the equally critical issues of social and economic justice, and human rights for all people. Only then will environmental efforts be significantly effective.

One of the most formative experiences during my undergraduate studies at Whitworth University was a four-month study abroad called the Central America Study Program. During these four months we covered almost every subject possible, including environmental justice. Prior to leaving for the program I was proud to consider myself an environmentalist – I knew I should recycle, it was bad to poach animals, I was considering becoming a vegetarian, and for god's sake we must stop cutting down the rainforests! Yes, an environmentalist. However once I began travel-



ter for coffee, or cook lunch. At night the fire was started again in order to heat dinner and consume our tenth and eleventh cups of coffee while we watched telenovelas. The young-environmentalist version of me would have possibly considered condemning thoughts of a community that was not doing more to provide alternatives to wood stoves, and educate its population that cutting down surrounding forests for fuel is wrong. Perhaps that version of me would have even tried to start teaching my family and the whole town about the evils of cutting down the forest, then organized a demonstration or teach-in to save the rainforest. However, through my interaction with my Honduran family I realized that it was a systemic problem that forced them to go into the woods for fuel. They weren't ignorant;

Photo by Lynda Quinn



they were surviving, and in order to do so they needed fire wood. I was then I came to realize that environmentalism is intrinsically linked to issues of social justice and poverty.

In the journal *Environmental Justice*, David Pellow argues that if we as a society address environmental justice as a purely ecological problem, “not only do we ignore the social basis of these problems, we implicitly accept the “techno-fix” orientation that much of the environmental move-

ment has embraced for the four past decades.”¹ In other words, if we forget that environmental justice also entails social justice, then we will not come up with lasting and effective solutions to climate change. If over half of the world’s population is living in survival mode, how do we expect them to care that the bald eagle is an endangered species?

Environmental justice is such a broad and far-



Photo by Hannah Back

reaching topic it would be easy to become lost down any number of rabbit holes while discussing the subject. However, one thing is certain – without addressing social inequality and systemic violence, any attempt to enact meaningful environmental policy is mute. The kind of change that political leaders, grassroots organizers, students, the global community and environmentalists are demanding will require far more than clean energy technology and CO2 reductions. It will take whole, global-systemic change to bring about true environmental justice.

¹ David Naguib Pellow, “We Didn’t Get the First 500 Years Right, So Let’s Work on the Next 500 Years,” *Environmental Justice* (2009): 4.

“The ultimate test of man’s conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard.”

-- Gaylord Nelson

Former governor of Wisconsin, co-founder of Earth Day



Photo by Emily Back



Photos by Addie Baker

WATER in BENIN

By Ian Anderson, Erica Jones, Max Magee

In the summer of 2009, a group of students and faculty from Gonzaga and James Madison University traveled to Benin Africa to continue the WATER project (Water for Africa, Technology, Education and Reciprocity) that was started by Brad Streibig in 2002.

Benin is a sliver of a country located on the coast of West Africa. Water is plentiful in Benin, but clean accessible water is a luxury that relatively few enjoy. Despite the wet climate, the available water is contaminated with a variety of viruses and bacteria. These contaminants, when ingested, can cause sickness or even death, especially in the young and the elderly.

This underdeveloped country became a subject of the WATER project not because of water scarcity, but because of a need for a mechanism to purify existing water. Gonzaga engineering students took on the challenge of developing a way to make pure water more accessible, and in 2006 brought a water filtration technology called the Filtron to the Songhai Center in Benin. The Songhai Center is a non-profit sustainable agricultural center where students from across West Africa can stay and learn appropriate technologies in agriculture, food processing, and animal farming to bring back to their home villages. The Songhai Center was started in 1985 by Father Godfrey Nzamujo who hoped that the empowerment of rural villages to create their own economy would stop environmentally harmful urban migration. Today, the Songhai Center manufactures and sells the Filtrons at locations throughout Benin. Father Nzamujo's ideals have inspired many and the Songhai Center has grown to six locations in Benin. During the summer of 2009, the WATER team celebrated with the

Songhai their expansion into Nigeria. This summer marked the end of the WATER program's direct involvement with the Songhai Center. In the future the Songhai Center will become a base of operation for WATER projects in Benin.

During our time in Benin, we spent a few days at a maternity clinic which was in great need of supplies and structural repairs. This maternity clinic was originally built by a Swiss non-profit organization in the 1990's to ensure maternity care to the women of the surrounding rural villages. These women would normally not receive care at an urban hospital due to the social stigmas regarding tribal facial scarring that many of these women receive. Currently the clinic is being run by an African non-profit organization, but is only staffed by one nurse. The small building is in very poor condition. Women give birth in dimly lit, unventilated rooms on torn mattresses. If the mothers wish to eat, they must prepare their own food at an open pit outside of the main building. There are limited medical supplies, and if there were any complications during birth the only option would be transportation by motorcycle to the nearest hospital two hours away. The WATER program hopes to continue a relationship with the African organization running the clinic to provide medical supplies and engineering work to improve the quality of care for the women.

After the past summer the WATER program finds itself heading in a new direction. Now that the water filters have become an accessible and high-quality product at the Songhai Center, the group can now turn its focus to projects with greater need. The past summer provided an opportunity to streamline the filter production process while

also taking the first steps in a new direction; our initial meeting with the maternity clinic has set up a framework for following groups. Projects like these are fantastic for students as well as the Beninese people because rather than providing charity to a faceless cause, it creates the ability for people to help themselves. The WATER program exists not to give monetary aid, but to help empower the Beninese people and solve problems through cross-cultural cooperation.

As zealous college students, we went on this trip expecting to make a substantial difference, to get our hands dirty, and to put our knowledge to use. We were humbled, however, to learn about the difficulties in trying to apply our ideas to a foreign culture. Ideas about sustainability, sanitation, and health may take years to catch on in a cul-

ture that has never seen indoor plumbing. What we learned is that these changes take place over years of trust and relationship building. Sometimes the most effective and powerful thing that you can do is have a conversation with someone or simply play with a child. While the people of Benin live without the many common conveniences that we have, they are a joyful people none the less. The paradoxical images of poverty and joy we saw will stay with us forever, making us always appreciate the luxuries we have and motivating us to work for an advanced quality of living for everyone.

If you would like to learn more about the WATER program or get involved, contact Susan Norwood at norwood@gu.gonzaga.edu.

Resources at Your Fingertips

No matter how much passion is present, the power of action trumps all. Here is a list of resources to help you move your passion for social justice into action. Use and enjoy. Think local: ways to get involved around Spokane.

World Relief Spokane

<http://worldrelief.org/Page.aspx?pid=1667>

World Relief provides economic, social and legal council and support to immigrants and newly arrived refugees

Global Neighborhood

www.global-neighborhood.org

Global Neighborhood provides long-term, holistic, and relational support to Spokane's refugee population

L'Arche Spokane

<http://larcheusa.org/larche-spokane.html>

L'Arche enables able bodied and disabled adults to share while living together in communities of faith and friendship

Transitional Programs for Women

www.help4women.org

Transitions sponsors and initiates programs which provide support for women and children in need. Transitions is the umbrella organization responsible for the Transitional Living Center, Miryam's House, EduCare, The Women's Hearth (Spokane's only drop in center for low-income and homeless Women) and The New Leaf Bakery Cafe

Catholic Charities Spokane

www.catholiccharitiesspokane.org/?page=2

Catholic Charities is a network of agencies that administer programs which provide food, shelter, clothing, education, counseling and support to those in need. Programs include: Catholic Campaign for Human Development, Catholic Relief Services, House of Charity, St. Anne's Children and Family Center, St. Margaret's Shelter and Senior Services

Education: The Tool for Change

By Kristin Weakly

If you want to serve others, the only way to do so is to enable them to succeed on their own. Showering gifts and donations on the heads of the needy will certainly quell their hungry stomachs and heal their hurting bodies in the short term. However, in order to truly abet people, you must give them the power to face their own hardships with sharp tools and strong support. The most liberating tool you can give someone is an education. This is widely accepted as an effective way to enable others, but is difficult to execute.

Many countries, including India, offer primary school education free of charge for young children. They have recognized that families face many obstacles in sending their children to school and have made an effort to remove some of those obstacles. However, taking a child from home every day also removes their hands from doing work around the house or in the field and helping their family. Even though a family does not have to pay for their child's education, they lose money from the work their child would otherwise be doing. Young girls are often denied the opportunity for education and there is a common mentality in India that educating men is a better use of resources; that men deserve opportunities and responsibilities. The lower castes and classes, where poverty hits the hardest

and the need for education is the largest, hold this mentality most strongly. Although it is becoming more acceptable to send young girls to school, it is still not very feasible for many families. Many girls will marry young, bear heirs, and run the home under the rule of their husbands, just like their mothers. But, if more women in India could gain an education, and then return to their home, it would mean an education for the whole family.

India as a nation is very conscious of the importance of education. Education of the middle class helped them rise as a hub of information technology and step onto the world stage. However, there is frequently a misconception among the upper castes and classes that education is a birthright. Living in a hostel with twenty educated and financially independent young Indian women, I received their Brahmin point of view: Brahmins reign as priests from the top

of the Hindu caste system. They cite the reservation system (a beefier relative of affirmative action) as the nation's solution to decrease disparity in access to education and create equal opportunity. However, these privileged Brahmins often fail to recognize that there are inherent problems with the system. While working in a clinic in a nearby slum area, it became apparent that the system fixes the problem for the wealthy but not for the poor. It allows the Brahmins to wash their hands of the issue, but there are still grown men and women who have never stepped foot in a classroom.

In order to truly abet people, you must give them the power to face their own hardships with sharp tools and support



Photo by Kristin Weakly

Even if individuals are fortunate enough to be awarded a job or a spot in a university from the reservation system, discrimination and hardship becomes a concern. Many people believe that they take the positions of others more deserving and they lower the standards of the businesses and schools with which they are involved. This attitude is demeaning to the people in those positions and divisive to the institutions. If these disadvantaged individuals

were given equal opportunity from square one, they would not require assistance from the reservation system and they would be able to contribute more fully to society. There are myriad NGOs (non-governmental organizations) that work for equality of education, but their impact is limited (both spatially and temporally). Socially aware individuals and organizations from the outside can help address the issue and be catalysts for change, but a real solution will require more than an after school program in a slum. Any permanent change would require both an upper class epiphany of their obligation to create justice and a lower class inspiration to create equality for themselves. Until that time, some lucky people will receive an education and rise to their potential, while the majority of women and the underprivileged masses will work the rest of their lives without tools of their own.



Dear Gonzaga...

By David Whitehead

"...The baby chickens, they were just dumping them out of these mailroom trays onto the dirt floor, like piles of yellow, fluffy rocks. It sounded like a bunch of tennis balls being dumped onto the court over and over again."

I was having a conversation with a friend about food, a topic not uncommon among two men. More specifically we were talking about the American food system. I was busy being indoctrinated into the realities of our industrial food system through a number of my classes and through a few of those food-documentaries that came out last year (Food Inc., Fresh). As I was sharing how my habits and views were changing because of these recent realizations, my friend sat and listened patiently. At the end of my diatribe against Big Corn and Tyson Chicken, he simply looked at me and said something that bore a hole straight through me, into that center part of the mind that acts like a broken DVD and replays the same scenes over and over without ceasing, forbidding you to forget them. It has sat festering deep down in there ever since:

"I don't know, I sometimes feel like there is just too much bad in this world, and it's hard to fight against all of it. I think you just have to pick your battles and choose a few unjust things to worry about at a time. It's like there's too much to care about, too much to worry about, just too much. I feel like there's not really anything I can do about it all."

Dear Gonzaga,

What are we doing here?

I don't know if you've noticed, but the world around us sucks. We live in a country that consumes resources at ridiculous rates. Our consumption and our obsessions are literally starving our earth, and more horrendously, starving our fellow human beings. We live in a country that tolerates six-figure-salaries for executives of companies that systematically oppress, impoverish and brutalize the poor. We might never hear of this or catch a glimpse of it; save if you travel to sweat shops of Latin America and Asia, or the tire factories of Africa, or the oil wells of Ecuador. But we will see these oppressed thousands in those video clips and pamphlets during the charity season, see their world and their plight, but never their six-figure oppressors. We live in a country that spends billions of dollars every year on the defense of Americans and the American Way of Life, money that feeds an autonomous and often unscrupulous system of weapons manufacturing and private military operations. Yet we bicker over legislation that tries to reduce healthcare costs of Americans who really need protection from bankruptcy, eviction and unjust systems of finance.

We are college educated students in one of the wealthiest and most stable countries in the world. Even in times like these, there are opportunities waiting around the corner for us at every turn; yet what are we doing here? Are we just going through the motions, getting that degree to get that job to get that family to get that house to get that salary to pay those taxes to live in and support that country that does so much we don't agree with? Are we satisfied with being citizens of this place that in fact is either directly or indirectly the lead player in much of the evil and injustice we see in the world?

What are we doing here?

I am tired of feeling helpless in the face of all these problems. I am tired of having these conversations that end in, "Well, the world sucks, but seriously, what can we do about it?" I am sick and tired of being so easily distracted by the illusion that is my own busyness, the illusions that are my priorities, the illusion that is my powerlessness.

Who am I kidding, there *are* options aren't there? There *are* things I can do? I might not be able to stop the injustices my country is forcing upon the world. I might not even be able to stop the injustices our city is forcing upon its own people, its own homeless and poor.

However; I can refuse to be silent.

I *can* demand that we have these conversations with our friends, in our homes and eventually in our congresses. I *can* refuse to buy certain items or to avoid certain brands and companies that I *know* are hurting the world and its people. I *can* choose public transportation, I *can* choose to educate myself about these issues, I *can* choose to vote. I *can* choose to not be ignorant of what my country and my lifestyle is doing to the "others" out there in the world, or even what it is doing to the "others" here in *my* city, in *my* alleyways and *my* neighborhoods.

I can refuse to be silent about this.

And I can choose to be angry about this.

So that's where it stands Gonzaga. I *am* angry about what *my* country is doing to *my* world. I *am* angry about what my school is doing or not doing to and for our community around us. I *am* angry about my fellow students and friends who choose to live in silence - who refuse to look into this stuff for whatever reason, be it stubborn ignorance or the simple plea, "there's too much to worry about". And finally, I am angry at myself, for my inaction and disbelief, for my twisted sense of "priorities" and my lifestyle, for my lack of empathy and real sorrow, and for my time that is wasted on unsubstantial things.

So what now Gonzaga? Where do we go from here? Where are the students of America? Where are the protests and movements of old? What does it take to inspire us, to get us moving like the generations before us moved? Where is the change, or at the very least the attempts at change? Are we content with this? What are we doing here?

I guess I'd do more if I weren't so busy with this homework...

ZESST: Zags Encouraging Student-Senior Togetherness

By Kristen Tordillos

When I first came to Gonzaga in 2006, there was no volunteer program available for senior citizen outreach. The program ZESST began in the fall of 2007 and I immediately signed up, and quickly came to realize what a wonderful gift it is to volunteer at a retirement home. It has been amazing to witness the number of senior residents who have come to cherish our time spent together. I've been one of the student coordinators of ZESST for the past 2 years, and it has honestly been one of the most life-changing and rewarding experiences of my time here at GU. Every Wednesday and Thursday we go to Maplewood Gardens where we play Bunko, do arts and crafts, play pool, socialize and chat with residents. Some students have "senior buddies," whom they visit on a weekly basis to catch up on life and share stories. Whenever we are on break, they say how much they miss us, and whenever we are there- they tell us how much they appreciate us spending time with them. Volunteering across generations has extreme value and typically our community tends to focus more on volunteering with children rather than with the elderly. Developing relationships with individuals who have indispensable life experience instigates learning and establishes an integrative community. It's inexplicable how important relationships are in a lifetime, and for the seniors that we have befriended, there have been incalculable benefits for both them and for us.

Campus Kids

By Brittany Wright



Photo by Brittany Wright

"I bet my Wednesday afternoon is better than yours!" This is the phrase that is written on one of my favorite long sleeve t-shirts. It is a rather old, oversized, dingy white t-shirt but the meaning behind the phrase makes it wonderful. When I came to the Gonzaga campus for the first time, our tour walked through a mob of children among the university students. I asked why there were so many elementary students on campus and was given a short explanation of the Campus Kids program. I was so impressed by the community service that Gonzaga offered, especially serving the youth in Spokane.

I began to volunteer with Campus Kids my sophomore year and every Wednesday I spent time with one "very cool" fifth grader; my Wednesdays truly were better because of Campus Kids. Each "staff" member received this shirt and we wore them with pride. In Campus Kids, each mentor is assigned a specific mentee and I do not think I could have been assigned a better fit. My mentee's name was Summer and she surely brought light to my life. Every Wednesday afternoon I would help her with her homework, roam around campus showing this very insightful fifth grader what Gonzaga was like, and laugh, a lot! My sophomore year was brightened so much by my experience with Summer and Campus Kids as a whole, giving a little bit of my time to someone else each week gave me much more in return. Although Gonzaga mentors are encouraged to inspire children into seeing the possibility of a bright future that may entail attending a college, we ourselves become inspired but the relationships we form with our mentees.

Science-in-Action

By Kristen Tordillos

Science in action (S.I.A.) is a Gonzaga sponsored program that sends GU students out to local Spokane elementary schools to teach science experiments. I've participated in this program since it began in the fall of 2007. Many of the schools S.I.A. visits are under-resourced and the students are from families residing below the poverty line. Our weekly visits generate excitement about science for both students and teachers. Spending time with children is a wonderful way to volunteer; with S.I.A. we are not only mentors, but educators, helping the students expand their academic interests while they learn about the scientific process. From learning about frog lifecycles to learning about density, we see real learning occur. Through my experience with S.I.A., I've discovered that it's possible to positively change the attitude children have toward learning. I believe that S.I.A. demonstrates that Gonzaga values education and their community. Through this volunteer work I have discovered my own passion for teaching, and I believe that perhaps I even inspired the next generation of scientists.



Photo by Martha Burwell

YMCA

By Martha Burwell

There are a lot of GU students who haven't spent much time around Spokane, and know little about what a great city it is. Until last summer, I was one of those students. During the summer and fall of 2009, I held an unpaid volunteer internship at the Inland Northwest YMCA, contributing a total of 160 hours. I worked with Laura Eckardt, a Gonzaga grad, in the Youth Fitness Department, mainly at the Central YMCA and corporate office. My main goals were to learn as much as I could about how a nonprofit like the YMCA runs from the inside and gain experience in the administration, activities, and planning of the YMCA. Through this experience, I had the chance to spend time with people of all types from Spokane. One big project I did was a kids' triathlon held at the Spokane Valley YMCA. With about 50 participants from ages 5 to 14, I planned everything from the course to the volunteers who would be helping facilitate the event.

My final project was to plan a brand new fitness program for special needs youth, for which there is a great need in Spokane. I had the chance to go to some PE classes in Spokane, and spend time with the kids and teachers alike. It really opened my eyes to this underserved population, which seems to be too often put out of sight and mind in our society. This made me look with fresh eyes at the justice of the way our society and culture functions. Instead of profit, the YMCA considers community. I had the chance to experience and be a part of Spokane's community and I feel much more connected to Spokane and all the different types of people that live here. I would encourage other GU students to do the same, to step outside the bubble of Gonzaga and explore the city, or even volunteer your time to contribute to the greater community. You just might find something inspiring.

The International Justice Mission Gonzaga University Chapter

By Kathy Kading

The International Justice Mission is a non-profit human rights agency headquartered in Washington, D.C. Gary Haugen, the founder and current CEO of the organization, created the International Justice Mission in response to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

Gary Haugen attended Harvard University and earned his Juris Doctor at the University of Chicago. Early on in his career, Haugen worked as a Senior Trial Attorney with the Police Misconduct Task Force, a civil rights division of the Department of Justice. Haugen also served as the Officer in Charge of the U.N.'s genocide investigation in Rwanda as part of the United Nation's Center for Human Rights. It was the experience he gained while in Rwanda that inspired Haugen to create an organization that seeks to legally prosecute the perpetrators of acts of injustices and protect the victims of these crimes. He developed the International Justice Mission in 1997 in Washington, D.C.

IJM attorneys, medical professionals, and business people work in coordination with governments in twelve Latin American, Asian and African countries. IJM professionals provide training courses for authority in lesser developed countries, lawyers and investigators to represent victims in court, and legal assistance for those who have experienced

wrongdoing. The most common forms of oppression IJM aided victims encounter are human trafficking, bonded slavery, police brutality and illegal land seizure. The International Justice Mission is a Christian based organization that offers aid to all people regardless of their beliefs or religious affiliation.

The International Justice Mission campus chapter at Gonzaga University is a student led club that serves as a bridge between the Gonzaga community and the International Justice Mission headquarters in Washington, D.C. The IJM chapter at Gonzaga is operated by a board of students who plan and organize on campus events. These events are designed to educate and inspire the faculty, students, and staff at the university to act on behalf of the victims of violent oppression worldwide. The campus chapter is committed to financially supporting the work of IJM professionals by raising a minimum of \$1,000 per academic year through various fundraising events held on campus and in the greater Spokane area. The chapter has also committed to increasing the level of awareness among the Gonzaga community about global injustices by inviting speakers to campus and by providing information regarding various injustices worldwide, which prevent citizens from being able to utilize their basic human rights.

On Being Transformed

By Ellen M. Maccarone, PhD

June 2009 a cadre of Gonzaga faculty, staff and administrators traveled to Fairfield University, one of our sister Jesuit institutions, in Fairfield CT to attend the Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education Conference. These conferences are designed to bring together people who work for justice by working in education. This conference's theme, "Transforming the World and Being Transformed" (from Fr. Kolvenbach's speech about Jesuit education) really hit home—it was a transformative experience for many.

Like most academic conferences there were lots of papers and presentations, coffee breaks and meals, disputes, debates and dialogues. But there was also an aura of excitement, learning, revelation and shared experience. As we prayed and listened, ate and conversed, everyone had something to offer and something to take away. People shared social justice theory, how service learning can further social justice, what a campus can do to set a standard in a community, and what faculty in one area can do to set a standard for a campus. My contribution to the conference was a paper on virtue, cura personalis and educating for justice, yet I feel I came away with so much more than I brought.

People were eager to learn from others' experiences. This was no more evident than in the attention given to the keynote addresses. Most were from people who work for justice in other countries—India, Nicaragua, Colombia, Kenya, to name a few. The strength, courage and perseverance are reminders that God really can be found in all things and the opportunities to participate in the magis are there if only we would look. These ideals of Jesuit education come profoundly together in the education for justice. The conference served as a reminder that we who educate for justice are not alone. The transformative element was a reinvigoration, a deep respect for the ways others do this work, and a reminder that solidarity with others who do this work is important for doing this work well.

Fr. Jeffrey von Arx, S.J., President of Fairfield University, gave the opening address in which he argued that educating for justice is educating for love. Love of one another is how we share in the suffering of the victims of injustice which prompts us to act and is part of the counter-cultural mission with which we have been entrusted. Looking around the well-appointed dining room as von Arx spoke I was reminded that sometimes it might seem that we talk more about justice than do something about justice. But again, looking around the well-appointed dining room what did I see? People listening intently, taking notes, people who had traveled far, people who had given of their time, all to share about the work of justice and how to inspire others to share in that work. What did I see? I saw love. And in seeing love, I saw the future of justice.

Radical Compassion: Simple Action

By Luke Waitrovich

Really what does it mean to serve and show compassion to someone or a group here in Spokane? There are many poverty concerns in Spokane so perhaps our answer lies in working with the poor. But again, what does that mean? Is it driving around downtown in a pickup truck tossing sandwiches to hungry people? Is it rounding up all the homeless and sending them off to a tent city? There are many things one can do to serve others and many ways to show compassion; however, it boils down to a simple action: treat people like people.

Service is a personal act. It is about making a connection with those whom you are serving. True service requires



Photo by Luke Waitrovich

a relationship to form between the server and the one served. For example, writing a big check for an agency can be a charitable act, but it is not true service unless a relationship is formed between the writer of the check and the patrons of the agency. So, going back to the poverty scenario, providing food to hungry people is not always the best thing to do. In my example, it is clear to see how some acts of charity fall short of the idea of service, which involves establishing a personal connection. Tossing sandwiches to hungry people is impersonal. The server cannot make a personal connection to those who are given food. It is like the one who is tossing the sandwiches views those served as animals gathering feed instead of people who are hungry and in need of food. This is not service because it is not reaching or making that personal connection like true service should.

This idea becomes really important when analyzing my second option, creating a tent city. Tent cities alleviate the effects of homelessness by providing a space for those without homes to call their own. Just last year, Spokane debated this topic and some students even went as far to say that Gonzaga should be a site for a tent city. Creating a tent city would be a good act, helping both the homeless population and the city of Spokane. Downtown Spokane would not be as populated with homeless, thus boosting commercial interest, and the homeless would not be 'homeless' anymore. But before we go and do any work to create a tent city, we need to ask ourselves one simple question: is this what the people want and is it what they really need? Treating people like people implies respect between the server and the one served. I like to think of this

relationship in terms of a friendship. In a significant friendship, both parties are on the same level and both have equal say in the relationship. Likewise in service, treating people like people demands a similar reciprocity. It is crucial that we are aware of the needs and wants of the population we are serving. This awareness will follow from having personal contact with those whom we serve.

It is so important that whenever we serve a population, whether senior citizens, the mentally disabled, children, or the homeless that we treat all of them like people. I believe that every person intrinsically has worth and as a result deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. It is an injustice when people work hard and play by the rules and then cannot put food on the table. So serving them a meal is a charitable act, but because everyone has an intrinsic worth, I believe that we are called to do more than simply provide them food. We are called to show them compassion. It is with compassion that we must acknowledge their humanity and realize that they have emotional needs too. In other words, they might need someone to talk to and respect them more than they need the food. At times, simply listening to someone seems so irrelevant when that person is hungry and does not have a place to spend the night. We feel that more action is required of us, but that is where we can be wrong. Truly serving someone or a group here in Spokane requires compassion, which requires that we treat people like people.

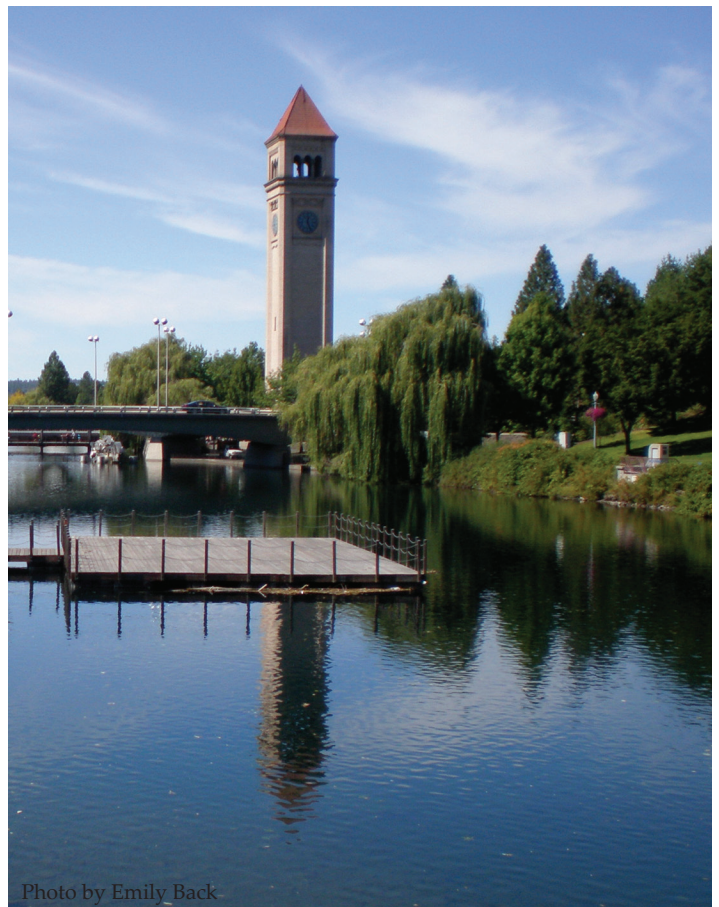


Photo by Emily Back

iNingizumu Afrika

A New Home

By Anonymous

This is a reflection of time spent with Feedback in South Africa. Feedback was a non-governmental organization whose mission was to collect and redistribute quality food that would otherwise have been thrown out or wasted. It has currently upgraded and changed its name to Foodbank South Africa. Feedback/Foodbank Durban covers a wide area of townships and touches the lives of thousands through providing a 'hand-up' in order to help beneficiaries become sustainable and independently run. If you would like to get involved or would like more information, go to the website www.feedback.org.za



Sawubona! Igama lami nguSisi Khumalo. In August 2007 my name took on the new title of Sisi Khumalo. “*uSisi Khumalo,*” I tried out the name and found the ring greatly pleasing. I was dumbfounded that a family with whom I had spent a total of four hours of my life, and with whom I could not even communicate, would be able to so open-mindedly accept me as their own, and put aside my differences. What an act of trust the Khumalos, a once victimized people, placed in me. The crimes of Apartheid and struggles of the past which had seemingly shackled South Africa were ignored by this Zulu family that adopted me, the “enemy,” with an absolute sense of sincerity and the purest form of forgiveness.

The tumult of sentiments was as foreign to me as the land I began to inhabit. I had lived my entire life in Minnesota, a place where its residents are as rigid as the frozen wasteland that covers all life for eight months of every year. The Zulu, as a people, are the polar opposites of the Minnesotans in more ways than simply their geographic location. Even when faced with extreme hardship, as was the case of the Khumalos, they are constantly smiling and laughing. I discovered that the Zulu *hleka*—laugh—is contagious and I soon developed a constant stitch in my side from their never-ending jokes and good nature. The little boys were full of life as they terrorized the chickens, chasing them around the yard, clucking and hawking and making a ruckus. The more I absorbed the mood, the more I found myself sharing in their happiness and being swept away by an African *lunjiwe*—magic—so powerful I momentarily forgot the devastation that

had impregnated the air as we had entered the ashen forest.

We slammed and bounced around in the boot of the Feedback delivery van as it jolted along the rutted out dirt road that led to the Khumalos’ establishment. They had built a small community of 50 family members living in what used to be nine mud-hut homes. Their unpretentious village was tucked away in a pine grove—one could imagine how green and lush it must have been before the July fire rolled through and bulldozed all but 3 homes to the ground. Instead, the skeletons of charred pines stood solemn and foreboding, jeering in the face of memories filled with livelier times. The buildings and their surroundings were dead and gone. The fire had burnt the colour away to a scorched clay. Resting on a blackened log that used to be the frame and structure of a house, sat my little *ubhuti*—brother. His red shirt with a bear on it was the only vibrant colour in the vicinity, but what stuck out the most was his bare bottom. It was winter and I was wearing a t-shirt, a fleece jacket, and jeans to little avail—I was still cold. My heart immediately went out to *Ubhuti*. My *ugogo*—grandmother—was also in bad condition as she had gotten caught in the path of a fire with such ferocity that simply the heat of it was enough to leave her a white woman. She lay on her mattress—they did not own any bed frames—for the better part of the day and every time she moved, a newly formed skin layer ripped off where the scab had hardened to the blanket. When we visited her, three weeks after the fire, she barely walked and had still not gone to the hospital for lack of money. What money they did possess was being put aside to pay for the construction of their new homes as they were being forced to relocate. Later that night, as I lay in bed mulling over everything the translator had related to me about my new family, I did something I had not done in a long time—I cried. My Minnesotan shell had



cracked and a refreshing rain sprinkled the ground, uncovering sprouts of life that yearned to grow and make a difference.

I knew I had to help my *urdu*—kin—and so with a conviction and determination I had never experienced before, I set about, with a newfound strength, devising ways I could make a difference. With the dollar being so much stronger than the South African Rand, I saw infinite possibilities unfolding. I decided I could maximize the exchange rate through the Rotary International Programme, so I wrote a proposition for a matching grant. After many days, numerous phone calls, several hours spent on the computer, and lots of pestering both my Umhlanga and Hopkins Rotary Clubs, I found out my project would never be approved. It was deemed “unsustainable,” which meant that the project would not reach enough people or serve a communal purpose. I felt deflated and stunned. I had never known this kind of defeat before—especially for something I

had worked so hard and wanted so badly. I had failed them. I was a failure, and the worst part is that when I gave it one last half-hearted attempt and fell short again, I simply wallowed in my misery.

I never saw them again, though I received periodic updates from others who paid them visits up until the point of their relocation and disappearance. From what I have been told, Ugogo Khumalo was slowly nursed back to health, and miraculously a neighbouring Rotary club heard of their plight and provided financial aid to help build their homes. I was happy to know my *umu*zi—family—would be aided along the way even if I failed to be the one to help them. At this point in my life, all I can do is pay forward the same kindness and love the Khumalos bestowed upon me to my *ubhuti* and *usisi*—brothers and sisters. In order for me to achieve this I must put aside my security blanket and step outside of my comfort zone. I must continue to grow as *uSisi Khumalo* and reach out to spread their kindness to others that need loving as much as I did.

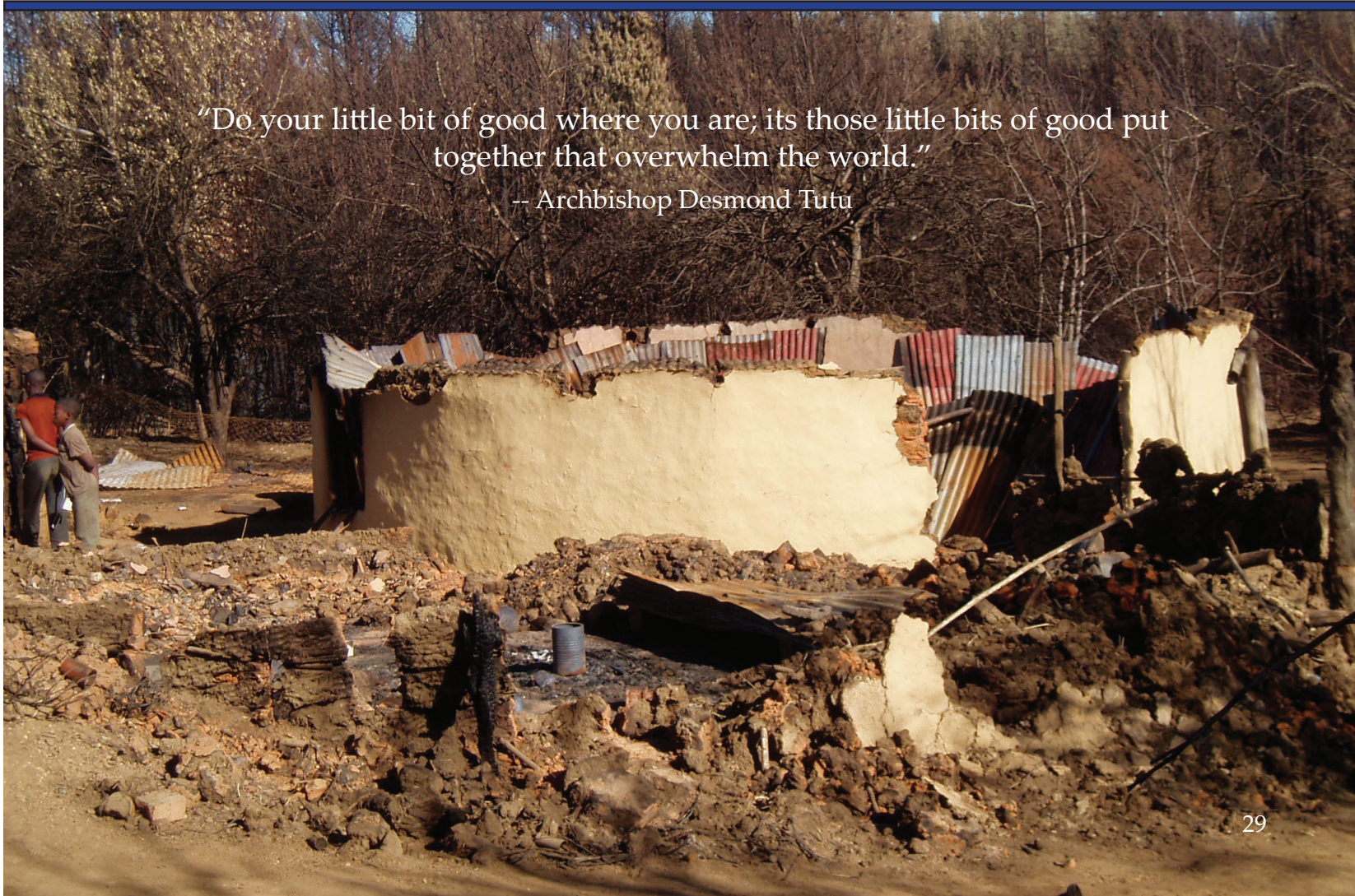


Ikhotha eyikhothayo—help others and they will help you.

Photos by Anonymous

“Do your little bit of good where you are; its those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”

-- Archbishop Desmond Tutu



Lessons from Rwanda

By John Mulcaire-Jones

Rwanda. When you hear that word, what comes to mind? With good reason the horrifying genocide leaps to the mental forefront for most, but this country is so much more than the memories and scars of the violence of the mid-nineties. This past fall I lived and studied abroad in East Africa, in Uganda for two and a half months and in Rwanda for about a month, and I want to share some of what I discovered in my time in Rwanda. Although the genocide cannot ever be forgotten and continues to shape the society, the Rwandan people and nation refuse to let the genocide ultimately define their country and their lives.

A quick historical background: Social divides and years of discriminatory colonialist policy left the Hutus and Tutsis of Rwanda bitterly divided. Extremist “Hutu Power” leaders had been seeking to eliminate the Tutsis, and in 1994 they used cunning propaganda to execute their genocidal ideals. Most estimates place around 1,000,000 people killed in about 100 days, a murderous rate never seen in all of human history. The numbers are staggering, but so are the individual stories. Much of the killing was done by hand, with machetes or clubs, and the world saw again how seemingly upstanding citizens can be turned into killers. Neighbors killed their neighbors, doctors killed patients, teachers killed students, and families even turned against each other. These facts certainly shock and overwhelm, but as Flannery O’Connor said, the truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it.

I’ve known the basic facts about the genocide for a while, but neither time nor further learning about the event makes it easier to understand. Visiting genocide museums and memorial locations where thousands were slaughtered offer no help in processing. Everyone undergoes their own struggles to acknowledge and deal with the reality of evil in the world. We must come to our own conclusions about the dignity and value of human life, about trying to reconcile this evil with a loving God, and how to live our lives in response to such tragedies.

Like many people I was familiar with the events before and during the genocide, but knew little about what happened after the genocide. How did the country continue to exist after a million of its citizens were killed, when another million fled the country, and when its infrastructure, government, and social structures were entirely destroyed? One of the classes I took in Rwanda focused primarily on the rebuilding process. And as hard as it is to understand the genocide, I have been just as baffled by the progress of Rwandans in rebuilding their country. After just 15 short years, this country that has experienced unimaginable pain is now one of the most stable countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Its people are firmly committed to building a united society where everyone is safe and valued. Reconciliation and justice are taking hold. Survivors have been able

to forgive and physically embrace the same perpetrators who slaughtered their whole family. For every instance of the dark and savage side of humans, there are equally incomprehensible examples of love, forgiveness, and sacrifice.

I heard many incredible stories of survival and courage from the people we met. One of our guest speakers was Mr. Antoine Rutayisere, the vice president of Rwanda’s National Unity and Reconciliation Commission. He and his family were living in the capital city Kigali when President Habyamarina was assassinated, sparking the genocide. As he and his family were preparing to escape their house for a safer location, he heard a group of Hutu *Interahamwe* outside his front gate, debating how best to slaughter the family. I cannot begin to comprehend the despair he must have felt

when realizing that any chance of escape was now impossible. The Rwandan Patriotic Front, a predominately Tutsi rebel group, was advancing through the country from the north and still miles from the capital, except for one small group that was located in Kigali

for negotiations with the government. Somehow this lone band of armed resisters to the genocide turned the corner onto the street in front of Antoine’s house and engaged the *Interahamwe* just before they smashed down the gate. The skirmish allowed enough time for Antoine and his family to escape, but their ordeal was far from over. They lived under the stairs at the Amahoro National Stadium for an entire week, helpless as government shells rained all around them. A UN tank was outside the stadium, but despite all of Antoine’s pleadings, the soldier manning the tank refused to go beyond the UN mandate and engage the enemy.

The details of Antoine and his family’s incredible struggle for survival could fill a book, but it was his words of wisdom after his story that I have never forgotten. After his story, he gave an imitation of the typical “foreigner” who visits Rwanda trying to help. Here is a rough paraphrase of what he said:

“People come to Rwanda all the time seeking to help, bringing their notebooks and malaria medication and good will. They run all over the country, jotting down horrific facts in their notebooks: ‘Oh my goodness, 5,000 people were slaughtered at this church! How can this be? 130,000 people are HIV+? What a tragedy! 60% of Rwandans still live under the poverty line! How horrible. Wait, this is devastating, TEN THOUSAND innocent people were killed by their neighbors in this very spot! What can we possibly do?!’ before they finally are overwhelmed and throw their hands up in despair.”

Antoine paused, gazed out at us, and then gave some advice I will never forget: “Start by loving ONE person. Make a difference for ONE person. Then move on from there.” He struck at the heart of what social justice now means to me.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

Antoine's insight is the best answer I can give to this immensely challenging question: How are we to respond in the face of so much brokenness, so much suffering, and so much apathy? When we authentically open ourselves to the realities of the world, we find the raw truth is that we are simply unable to solve all the problems of the world. On this side of heaven there will always be injustice, suffering, and violence, and the sad realities of our world can be overwhelming, even paralyzing.

So what are we to do? As Antoine pointed out, we must recognize each other's humanity. Social justice is based upon the inherent value of all individuals. Trying to tackle abstract problems of the world will only leave us frustrated and cynical. By starting on the most fundamental aspect, a relation with one other human, and continuing from there, we are acknowledging our incomplete yet simultaneously incredibly important roles in making the world more just. It may appear that by just loving one person we are

somehow surrendering to the seemingly insurmountable problems of the world. However, isn't social justice ultimately about ensuring that every single human receives the love and dignity they deserve? Where else can we start but with one person, one cause that truly inspires us?

Oscar Romero said it best: "We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well....We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own." Our job is not to overcome these abstract concepts of "poverty", "oppression", or "injustice." This realization liberates us to focus on that which truly makes a difference, walking alongside our brothers and sisters across the world. Cynics may criticize and point to statistics to claim that we cannot make a "real difference," but by simply showing love to just one person, by helping one person to reclaim his or her own humanity and inherent dignity, we leave an enduring impact on our world.

Resources at Your Fingertips

After four years of involvement in our Spokane community, where do we go from here? Our hope is that your passions will guide you forward to future action. The following is a list of organizations to help you on your journey. Use and enjoy.

...Act global: post graduate service opportunities

Domestic service organizations

AmeriCorps
www.americorps.org

Jesuit Volunteer Corps
www.jesuitvolunteers.org

Teach for America
www.teachforamerica.org

Catholic Worker Movement
www.catholicworker.org

National Coalition for the Homeless
www.nationalhomeless.org

Children's Defense Fund
www.childrensdefense.org

Feeding America
www.feedingamerica.org

Student Conservation Association
www.thesca.org

International service organizations

Maryknoll Lay Missioners
www.mklaymissioners.org

Cabrini Mission Corps
www.cabrini-missioncorps.org

Cross Cultural Solutions
www.crossculturalsolutions.org

Friends of the Orphans
www.friendsoftheorphans.org

AmeriCares
www.americares.org

Equality Now
www.equalitynow.org

Peacework
www.peacework.org

Christian Foundation for Children & Aging
www.cfcausa.org

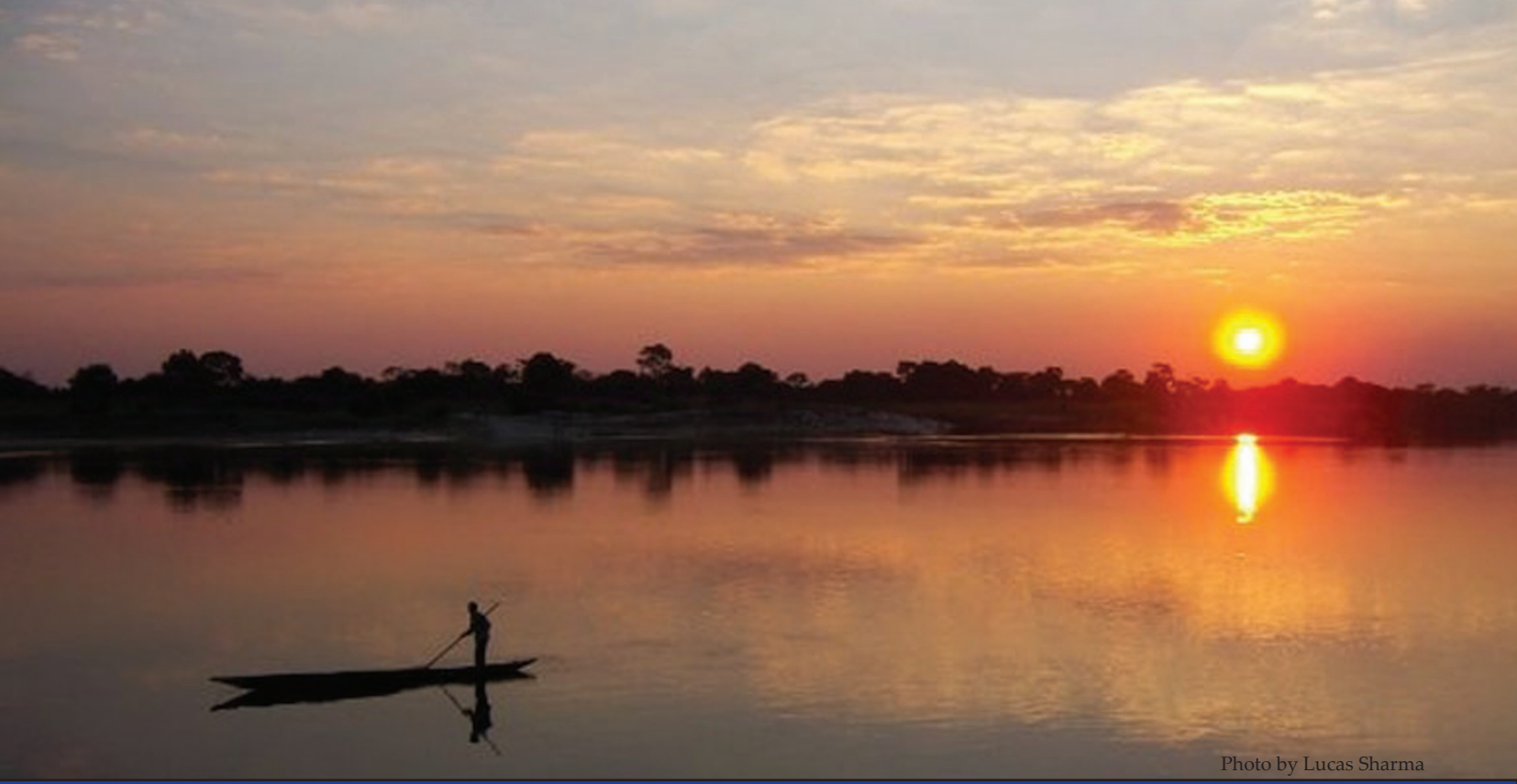


Photo by Lucas Sharma

One Among Them

By Father Dominic Mizhi Sandu
and Kelly Norris

My home – Zambezi, Zambia – is one of the poorest districts in Zambia. The rural location contributes to the level of poverty my people face, and as a priest who overlooks 80 congregations, I find that being one among the Zambians has changed my outlook on African hardship.

The church in Zambia is in a stage of transition from being a church run by missionaries to a church of the local people. As different Western powers colonized Africa, missionaries created a culture where Africans looked only to others for help. This culture of dependency has thrown Africa into a state of poverty that is difficult to overcome. As an African priest, this is where I come in. I want to show my community how to step out of the mindset that keeps us from progressing to become an independent, self-sustaining society. Yet, in order to do this, I must fight against a history of expectation that those who minister to local Africans must also provide for them.

A few years ago, some of my parishioners came to me asking for my help in constructing a permanent building for worship in their community. I was delighted to help, and saw their desire to construct their own church as a step forward for Zambezi. However, my community wanted others to finance and build the church for them. As their priest, the church members expected me to find ways to finance,

construct, and complete the project on my own. I believe that we are richer than any donor – we have our hands that together could build this church. I knew that if each community member brought one brick,

we could begin to construct a foundation. Furthermore, if each community member brought two bricks, we could begin to construct walls. All it would take is a willingness of my people to be self-sustainable.

I called my people to action, asking them to rely on themselves and commit to building a church. Brick by brick, the Zambezi community began building its own church, using each other as resources and empowering themselves in the process. By working together, the congregation was able to assemble a place of worship raised by their own hands. In this, I see progress as we are slowly creating a society where Zambians rely more and more on themselves to provide change.

It is true that Africa needs help – I see it everyday within my community of Zambezi. Yet, we need help that will empower us to stand on our own two feet instead of help that will provide us a temporary crutch. We must invest in Africa's future as if we are branches on the same tree; we are all connected, and thus we can enable each other to be self-sustaining. If everyone brings just one brick, we can work together to uplift and support Africa.



Photo by Josh Armstrong

Haiti: A Call to Action

By Emily Back

"I think Haiti is a place that suffers so much from neglect that people only want to hear about it when it's at its extreme. And that's what they end up knowing about it." -- Edwidge Danticat, a Haitian-American author

In 2008 Haiti was hit with four hurricanes, a school building collapsed in Petionville killing nearly 100 and injuring many more, and for years Haitians have struggled with food rights, mass starvation and death, economic deprivation and political turmoil. Yet on January 12th 2010, shortly after news became available to the U.S. regarding the earthquake that hit Haiti, the world paused to give this Nation of about 9 million people some attention. It took an earthquake striking Haiti and causing the deaths of over 230,000 people for attention to be drawn.

Following the earthquake, almost all national news media outlets were broadcasting the reports of the devastating events in Haiti, and it seemed as though everyone was listening. The world responded: donating money, organizing fundraisers, and providing shipments of needed supplies. Around the U.S., concerned citizens volunteered for rescue and relief missions in Haiti. Millions of people around the world, including many in the Gonzaga community, have realized the great need in Haiti and have shown support by donating money and resources. However, the struggle in Haiti requires a lot more than the welcomed and important response to the latest devastating natural disaster. As news dies down of the disheartening events in Haiti, the overwhelming fear is that the attention of the masses will shift, and Haiti will be left in the dark once again. The most important message to the world may not be that Haiti has suffered terribly from this devastating earthquake, but more importantly that Haiti does not have the governmental and structural systems of a working society in place to respond to this, or any other, disaster.

The earthquake has given us all a reason to continue to help and acknowledge need in Haiti. But over time there is a danger that the needs of Haitians will become less of a concern and we will turn our attention to other issues. Before the earthquake, Haiti was struggling as a nation to survive, and afterwards the same will be true unless long-term solutions are developed by the support and attention of members of the world community working together with Haitians to build a viable, independent nation.

As the world watched Haiti being leveled, and news rolled in of the hundreds of thousands dead and millions homeless without food or water; and we now see the "compounding" of this devastation by the absence of any Haitian infrastructure or support systems--we hope and urge an end to apathy and indifference towards a nation that has lived in devastating conditions for too long. It is also obvious that it is time, and that there is ample justification, for reasoned intervention by the international community of governments to help Haiti put in place a viable system of government and infrastructure that can address the fundamental needs of its people. It is time we recognize this larger issue and keep Haiti in the forefront of our minds. We must look at the devastation in Haiti and dare to envision a positive future. OneWorld challenges you to consider how you can help address both the earthquake needs and the longer-term problems in Haiti, and asks you to share your thoughts and decisions with fellow students and community members.

Partners in Health
www.pih.org

Working to provide needed healthcare and sustainable change to Haiti's residents by mobilizing clinics

Unicef
www.unicef.org

Helping to improve sanitation, protect and restore children's education in Haiti

Mercy Corps
www.mercycorps.org

Helping families rebuild, securing clean water and cleaning up communities in and outside of Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Live
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in being the
change

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