



*Charlottesville Catholic Worker: houses of
hospitality and a sustainable living center*

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REFLECTIONS—HAPPY EASTER!

Psalm 27:13 I believe that I shall see the goodness of God in the land of the living!

As we celebrate new life and the lasting hope that comes from God, we are likewise rejoicing in the coming of spring and in this emerging Catholic Worker community. This past year has been an incredible whirlwind of activity and grace bringing the Charlottesville CW from non-existence (this time last year) to its incarnation on Nassau Street. With relatively few financial resources and many generous laborers, we've (nearly) rehabbed the community house, and we're deep into the work on the first of two houses of hospitality for homeless families.

The land surrounding the houses has been cleared of debris, and is being prepared for raised-bed vegetable gardens, a berry patch and a mini-orchard. Our bee hives are doing well, and we'll receive chickens in a few weeks. Through this use and care of the land, we will provide food for our homeless guests, and provide experiential education in simple, sustainable living.

When the many labors of this effort seem overwhelming, we recall that this is a journey of faith—an opportunity to respond to God's call to be 'light in the world and salt of the earth' - something we do not in isolation, but together with many others. *Join us!*



Photos from our fall '09 house blessing

Who we are:

Laura and Steve Brown and their daughters are the volunteer resident community.



What we do:

The Charlottesville Catholic Worker will provide housing and community support to homeless families.

We sponsor times of prayer, reflection, and learning, and live simply and sustainably.

We stand and act for peace and justice in our local community and beyond.

To what end...?

The Charlottesville Catholic Worker promotes transformation of individual lifestyles and social structures toward justice: right relationships among people, and with the natural world.

Watch for our newsletter twice a year, during Easter and Advent.
For more information, check out: www.cvillecatholicworker.blogspot.com
Not on our mailing list? Let us know!

HOUSE UPDATES

A key element of the Catholic Worker movement, like many other communities and religious orders, is the practice and rhythm of manual labor. In rehabbing the once-neglected houses, much manual labor has been done and continues to be part of our lives—at a more or less steady pace.

Last summer and fall, dedicated volunteers worked to make the community residence habitable, safe, and energy efficient. Asbestos tiles were covered by new floors, single-pane windows were replaced, the electrical system was updated, insulation was installed in the attic and bedroom walls, and the bathroom and kitchen remodeled with donated and salvaged materials. Numerous projects remain, but we're focusing our time and resources on the more important task of opening the first house of hospitality to a family in need.

Significant termite damage in the hospitality house surprised us and expanded the scope of needed repairs. Our contractor, Nate Johnson, and fellow Catholic Workers, Bill and Isaac Frankel-Streit, have done amazing work gutting and renovating the living room and kitchen. A generous donor has provided nearly all of the materials needed to install new floors and walls, insulation, and windows. The work continues, with \$3,000.00 left to be raised and several months remaining to finish the job and open the house for hospitality. We trust in the Spirit that our communal labors will bear fruit and hope to share good news with you soon!



COMMUNITY-BUILDING

Gracious God,
Let your resurrected life
find witness in our lives,
Let us be for others
what you are for us.

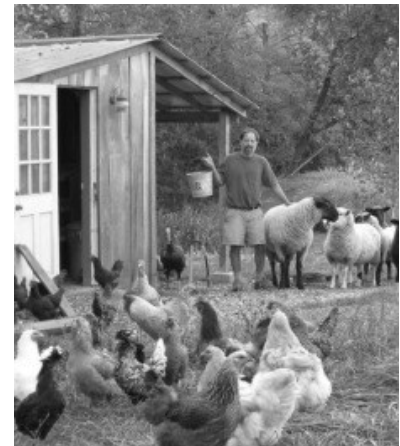
We want to spread the word that the Charlottesville Catholic Worker is coming into being! Members of our Advisory Board, Susan Pleiss, Bridget Davis, and Carroll Houle, are helping us in this endeavor. We would be happy to speak with your congregation, group, family, or class to present the Catholic Worker movement and the vision for the CW in Charlottesville.

Would you like to learn more? Plan to attend our celebration and open house on May 1 or contact us to arrange a visit anytime ~ email cvillecw@gmail.com or call 434-409-0804.

Grateful for their help, we highly recommend to you...

Doug the (Master) Electrician—“I do all the work myself the old fashioned way. I drive an old truck and clean up my mess when I'm done.” Cell: (434) 987-9421; home: (434) 295-0191 (evenings and weekends). doug@DougTheElectrician.com

Open Gate Farm—“We produce vegetables, herbs, eggs, heritage pork, pasture-raised beef, pastured chicken and turkey for sale. Our mission is to provide community members access to a real family farm in an effort to educate people about where their food comes from.” Contact Farmer Tom at 434.978.7446, tom@opengatefarm.net





ABOUT THE CATHOLIC WORKER MOVEMENT:

“The general aim of the Catholic Worker Movement is to realize in the individual and in society the expressed and implied teachings of Christ....The society in which we live... is not in accord with [Christ’s] justice and charity. A just order would provide the necessities of life for all, and needs would determine what would be produced. From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.

We advocate a personalism which takes on responsibility for changing conditions to the extent that we are able to do so. By establishing Houses of Hospitality we can take care of as many of those in need as we can rather than turn them over to the impersonal "charity" of the State. We do this...because there is always a shared responsibility in these things and the call to minister to our brother transcends any consideration of economics. “ ~Dorothy Day, May 1972 □

AN APPEAL

I have heard that Dorothy Day “sweated bullets” when preparing to write her annual appeal for funds to support the Catholic Worker hospitality houses, soup kitchens, farms, communities, and newsletter. I don’t know what exactly was difficult for Dorothy about those appeals – she was an excellent writer, begged frequently on behalf of the poor, and truly relied upon God’s grace and the intercession of the saints for her daily bread.

What makes me “sweat bullets” isn’t writing an appeal, but simply living as a new Catholic Worker.

It is the apparent fragility of this new effort, and the vulnerability that comes from having committed nearly all of our time and money to launch it. It is the difficulty of living simply in the midst of unfinished projects. It is living closer to the edge—with a poverty-level income, without health insurance, yet knowing that life is much harder and harsher for those who are involuntarily poor.

I worry about the tight financial margins and the needed repairs. But grace brings me back and reminds me that God has called this effort into being and God will see it through: “I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it...” (Phil 1:5).

I ask for your help in continuing this good work—in helping us shoulder the mortgage and repairs. If you are able, please consider making a gift for the hospitality house so that it can be opened to families in need. Or, become a regular sponsor to sustain the houses of hospitality.

Along with your help, we need the strength and grace that comes to us through your prayers. We pray that the C’ville Catholic Worker will continue to be shepherded into existence despite our worry and weaknesses.

We remember you and your loved ones in our prayers as well.



TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFTS TO THE CATHOLIC WORKER

Through the Church of the Incarnation:

www.incarnationparish.org.

Click on “About/Donate” and designate your gift to the Catholic Worker. Or, make a check payable to Incarnation with “Catholic Worker” in the memo line.

Through the Virginia Organizing Project*

www.virginia-organizing.org

Click on “Donate” and designate your gift for the Catholic Worker. Or, make a check payable to VOP with “Catholic Worker” in the memo line.

* VOP is officially registered with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, PO Box 1163, Richmond VA 23209. You can write to this department for all relevant financial statements and procedures regarding the solicitation of contributions. Your donation is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

You're Invited to our May 1 Celebration!

Join us at 911 Nassau Street in Charlottesville to celebrate the 77th anniversary of the Catholic Worker movement and see what's happening locally. Bring a friend!

2:00-3:00pm presentation: beekeeping with biodynamic (top-bar) beehives

3:00-4:00pm house tours—learn about the vision for the Charlottesville Catholic Worker

4:00-6:00pm live music, food and activities for kids

VOLUNTEERS—THANK YOU!!

Over **90 volunteers** on five service days cleaned, set up compost bins, removed poison ivy, trimmed trees and bushes, raked, deconstructed sheds, and helped us recover and recycle over 800 pounds of metal! Many other volunteers have dedicated time rehabbing the houses. We are deeply grateful.



* UVa APO Service Fraternity, Tandem Friends Upper School, UVa Catholic Student Group, United Way Day of Caring, Little Flower Catholic Worker Community, Youth and parents from the C'ville Catholic School, St. Thomas and Incarnation

* Chuck Gross, Bob Meadows, Brian Buckley, Rajesh and Mini Nair, Janie and Tom Eckman, Sergei Dougherty, The Michels, Hexters, Surats, Shorts, Thachers, Osimitzs, Bill Lankford, David Aglio, David Griffith, Mike Firkaly, Michael Reichenbach, Todd Niemeier, Susan Pleiss, Denis, Mike Brinkac, Carroll Houle, Bernie Taylor, Alan Yost

WISH LIST

- Wheelbarrows
- Curtains and hardware for hospitality house
- Lawnmower
- Firewood
- Occasional use of pick-up truck or chainsaw.

*Along the way there are **marvelous** companions on the journey. People who help, who come and do manual labor with us. People who give us the resources we need for this work. People we accompany in their journeys, and who bear patiently our attempts to be of some small assistance to them. People who tell us their stories and hear ours.*

~Bob Waldrop, founder of Oscar Romero Catholic Worker House, Oklahoma

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