

CPT4
UPDATE BY
CHED MYERS P2

CATHOLIC AGITATOR



Witness Against Torture marchers to Guantánamo Bay indicted and face up to ten years in prison see page 7.



STILL IN BONDAGE TO U.S. POLICY

HAITI



INTERVIEW WITH

FR. JEAN-JUSTE



LOS ANGELES CATHOLIC WORKER UPCOMING EVENTS:

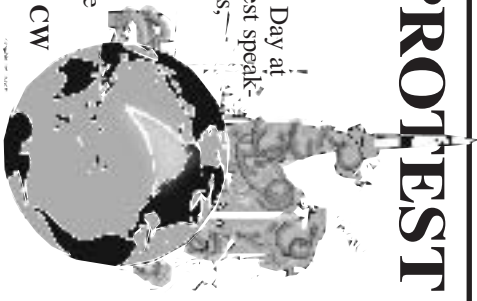
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CATHOLIC AGITATOR

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HAITI: STILL
IN
BONDAGE

Haiti has been relegated for...its entire existence to pariah status by the great Western powers, most especially...the United States, its closest continental neighbor.

DIVINE
INTERVENTION

by JEFF DIETRICH

In 1804, after more than a decade of fierce struggle and ruthless reprisals, the tiny Caribbean colony of Haiti finally freed itself from French rule, becoming the third democracy in modern history, preceded only by France and the United States itself. In addition, Haiti represents the only successful slave revolt since the Hebrew children escaped from Pharaoh and established the nation of Israel. Yet despite its great achievement, Haiti has been relegated for virtually its entire existence to pariah status by the great Western powers, most especially France, its former colonial master, and the United States, its closest continental neighbor.

It was not until 1862, into the middle of the U.S. Civil War, that the United States actually recognized the second democracy in the western hemisphere. Prior to that time, the slave southern states had considered Haiti a "terrorist state" because it offered both an example of successful slave revolt as well as succor to escaped slaves, which of course was anathema to a slave nation like the United States.

In the meantime, France in 1825, demanded 150 million francs in reparations from Haiti for lost property, namely slaves who had the audacity to free themselves. In an effort to avoid invasion and re-enslavement, Haiti agreed to pay the outrageous sum, which they continued to pay well into the 20th century.

In 1914, at the behest of U.S. corporations, the United States invaded and occupied Haiti until 1935, training a modern army that served largely to ensure that the minority mulatto elite property owners would be protected against the black sons and daughters of former slaves.

Throughout the post-World War II/Cold War era, the U.S. supported and maintained the ruthless Duvalier family, Papa Doc and Baby Doc, as a bulwark against Communist incursion from Castro's nearby Cuba.

But with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of communism, democracy took off, not only in Eastern Europe, but in Haiti as well. With the 1990 election of the Catholic priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haitians by an overwhelming majority democratically selected their first president in more than a century.

But Aristide was opposed, not only by the United States for his "communist leanings," but by the traditional mulatto elites, as well as by immigrant Middle Eastern businessmen. These two elite propertied communi-



Photo from Associated Press

Jean-Bertrand Aristide, celebrating mass during his early years as a Catholic priest.

These ballots were then miraculously found and turned over to the UN election authorities by "coco rats," the homeless street children of Haiti—an act of grace and God's little ones. We pray that poor former slaves of Haiti will continue to be blessed, as were the Israelite slaves of Pharaoh, by such divine intervention in their seemingly endless struggle for liberation.

ties, often at odds with each other, formed an alliance with the CIA and Republican neo-conservatives. This alliance, with the help of paid operatives and "rioters" quickly overthrew Aristide six months after his election.

Though Aristide was re-installed towards the end of his term in 1994, he was constitutionally unable to run for another term and forced to accept the election of his friend and cabinet member, René Preval. Preval was the first Haitian president to serve his full term and turned the presidency over to a democratically-elected Aristide in 2000.

And at that point, Aristide was quickly deposed once again by the elites. Though he was returned to power by the Clinton administration, they extracted promises from Aristide for "structural re-adjustment," a euphemism that essentially means the majority of Haitian funds will go towards the repayment of debts to U.S. bonds, leaving nothing for health and education and government services for the poor majority of Haitians. At that point, Aristide sealed his fate by imposing a tax upon rich property owners as well as demanding the repayment, with interest, of the onerous French reparations, which he said amounted to 21 billion dollars.

In 2004, the business elites, the CIA, and the French collaborated to depose the democratically-elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide and forced him onto a plane flying him to the French held Central African Republic. Though the business and property elite are a major factor in the disposition of power in Haiti, most observers assume that U.S. foreign policy is driven by the desire to eliminate any independent forces that might align themselves with Cuba's Castro and Venezuela's Hugo Chavez. Thus Aristide must be eliminated.

Despite enormous efforts on the part of the business elites and U.S. functionaries to rig the recent February elections and elect a candidate favorable to the U.S. and the "world economy," the vast majority of poor people of Haiti elected, once again, René Preval, in the hope that he would allow their beloved Aristide to return to Haiti. Though it seems impossible for the poor of Haiti to have any hope in the face of the great powers of oppression arrayed against them, Fr. Jean-Juste points out in this issue of the *Agitator*, that René Preval was only elected after thousands of stolen ballots, which someone had attempted to burn in the city dump, were doused by a fortuitous rain. These ballots were then miraculously found and turned over to the UN

continued on p.6





by CHED MYERS

“We have assumed the name of peacemakers, but we have been, by and large, unwilling to pay any significant price,” Daniel Berrigan wrote in the wake of his famous Catonsville Nine anti-war protest in 1968. “And because we want the peace with half a heart and half a life and will, the war continues, because the waging of war, by its nature, is total—but the waging of peace, by our own cowardice, is partial.”

Eight years after Dan wrote that, I was midwived into the radical discipleship movement, helped by Dan and many others. Over the last 30 years I’ve tried to do my little part to practice and teach nonviolence. But Berrigan’s words have always haunted me.

The moment our movement long dreaded has arrived. On November 26 of last year, a group calling itself the “Swords of Righteousness Brigade” abducted four human rights activists in Iraq. The four are members of the Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT): Canadians Jim Loney, 41, of the Toronto Catholic Worker; Harmeet Singh Sooden, 32, formerly of Montreal; British Baptist Norman Kember, 74; and American Quaker Tom Fox, 54. The full story can be found at www.nonviolence.org/christian_peacemakers.

The original deadline of December 10 (International Human Rights Day!) for the U.S. to meet the captors’ demands of releasing all Iraqi prisoners, with the threat that the hostages would be executed, came and went in silence. Nothing was heard until late January, when the captors released a video of our friends. Since then, no word has been heard. It has been a long three-month vigil for the hostages, their families, and friends.

The captivity continues despite a huge international outcry (no thanks to the mainstream U.S. press, which has largely ignored the story) that included impassioned and unprecedented appeals for their release from a wide spectrum of Muslim voices in North America, the U.K., Palestine, and Iraq. You can track the news daily at freethecaptivesnow.org.

The abduction of the four coincided exactly with the beginning of Advent, and for many of us the season became a true vigil of waiting, fierce prayer, and fragile hope. Now we enter Lent, our hearts still anxious. And as we wait and hope, and as hundreds around the world continue to work quietly behind the scenes for their release, and vigil for the four and other hostages and victims of the U.S. war in Iraq, it is time to search our souls. What does this drama mean to those of us committed to building nonviolent movements for social transformation?

Our nonviolence movement has often contemplated the “ultimate sacrifice,” particularly when planning serious hunger fasts or prayerful trespassing into high security military bases or accompaniment work in war zones. And all along we’ve been painfully aware of those in Third World situations (at home and abroad) who have already paid the price: Civil Rights workers slain in the American South; Stephen Biko and Amy Biehl during the South African Freedom struggle; the five labor organizers massacred by the Klan in Greensboro in 1979; the four Maryknoll Sisters murdered in El Salvador by the Salvadoran National Guard in 1980, and later the six Jesu-



Photo from cpt.org
CPT supporters holding a vigil in front of the U.S. Consulate in Toronto, Canada.

CHRISTIAN PEACEMAKER TEAMS PAYING THE PRICE

its and their companions in 1989; Rachel Corrie’s death under an Israeli bulldozer in Palestine in 2003; and so many others, mostly unknown to us by name. But I’ve always wondered how we would react when it was persons from the heart of our nonviolence movement.

Christian Peacemakers Teams was founded in 1988 by Mennonite and Brethren activists specifically in order to deepen and intensify Christian nonviolent resistance to war and injustice. This, CPT has done faithfully and with exemplary courage, from Chiapas, Mexico to Grassy Narrows, Canada, and from Colombia to Palestine. In Iraq, CPT members are the only unarmed international workers left outside the “Green Zone;” in 2004 they helped expose the Abu

Ghraib torture scandal.

“We have known from the very beginning that this is a struggle that involves people’s lives,” said CPT co-founder and former director Gene Stoltzfus in an interview with a Canadian magazine last week. “People have to face the question of life and death before they join.” The witness of Loney, Fox, Kember, and Sooden now invites the rest of us to face some tough questions.

One question is for the U.S. peace movement, and was raised by historian Mark A. LeVine. He wondered about those who “settle for the kind of ‘cheap activism’ (as one of the hostages described his activities before coming to Iraq) that has come to see periodic protests in New York or Washington DC as a legitimate sub-

stitute for the hard work of facing off against the violence of empire and occupation on the ground.”

There is Berrigan’s challenge to “half-hearted peacemaking” again. It is best articulated in the simple query that is foundational to the CPT experiment: “What would happen if Christians devoted the same discipline and self-sacrifice to nonviolent peacemaking that armies devote to war?”

The long captivity and potential death of these brothers also questions those who think that CPT’s unarmed work at the heart of a war is senseless or misguided. Such a perspective is, of course, based on deeply- and widely-held assumptions that only success, realism, or power can change the world. But the Bible suggests that a history deadlocked by violence can only be redeemed by righteous persons resisting evil—even unto death.

James Loney, a veteran Catholic Worker, understood this. He wrote last year about Bahr Kadhin Al Saady, who survived two years of imprisonment and torture for refusing to serve in the military under Sadaam’s regime. Alluding to Isaiah 53:5, Loney wrote: “I thank God for you, Bahr. You have set your face like flint against the war machine. By your wounds you are healing the world; the punishment you accept brings us peace. You are the suffering servant, all that is holding the world together.”

The same can now be said of you and your *compañeros*, James.

Finally, the witness of the CPT four sharply reminds the church of Jesus’ inconvenient but unavoidably central call to discipleship: “Whosoever would follow me must deny themselves and take up the cross” (Mark 8:34). And that is the hardest question of all.

Who abducted these men? Was it an Al Qaeda splinter group, frustrated young nationalists, or Iraqi government security operatives (with the tacit assent of U.S. forces) trying to silence the last remaining international dissident group in the country? Politically, it makes a huge difference. Spiritually, I’m not sure it does.

Tom Fox wrote just before being taken captive: “Why are we here? We are here to root out all aspects of dehumanization that exist within us. We are here to stand with those being dehumanized by oppressors and stand firm against that dehumanization. We are here to stop people, including ourselves, from dehumanizing any of God’s children, no matter how much they dehumanize their own souls.”

The truth is, these four “got in the way” (the brilliant double-entendre that is the CPT slogan). Because of their nonviolent obstruction of both the violence of the U.S. occupation and of reactionary terrorism in Iraq, they are now walking the *via crucis*.

“The monastery is never fully established,” the old monks used to say, “until you have laid the first brother in the ground.” As we reflect on the unknown fate of these disciples, it is up to all of us who would be Christian peacemakers to reflect deeply on the questions raised by their witness, as our vigil stretches now from Advent into Lent. How we respond will determine whether or not the blood of the martyrs will again become the seed of the church and hope for the world. Ω

Ched Myers lives in a small community in Oak View, California, and works with Bartimaeus Cooperative Ministries www.bcm-net.org.

The Execution of William Kemmler, 2002; Artwork by Malaquias Montoya

MICHAEL MORALES SPARED

It is not often that we have good news to report on the death penalty, but in a miraculous set of circumstances, the life of death row inmate Michael Morales was spared not once, but twice. In what appeared to be an abortive attempt to stop the execution, Morales’ lawyers argued in court that lethal injection was a “cruel and unusual” form of punishment. But the judge rejected their argument, opting instead to simply make the process “more humane” by requiring that vital signs be monitored throughout the execution.

Slated for a February 21 execution date, Morales was spared at the last minute by the prison warden who expressed inability to carry-out the judge’s guidelines without the presence of an anesthesiologist. Though the execution was rescheduled for the next day, it was once again postponed, this time indefinitely, when the two



anesthesiologists appointed to participate in the execution remembered at the last moment their Hippocratic Oath and refused to participate in taking the life of another human being.

Ironically, the actions of a judge who was attempting to preserve the death penalty by making it more humane may have inadvertently created a situation that will lead to its ultimate demise. It is difficult to imagine that any qualified physician in California will choose to violate the Hippocratic Oath in such a highly-charged public arena, only to earn themselves the unenviable title of “Doctor Death.” Ω

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A HISTORY OF HAITI'S 200-YEAR STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

LET HAITI LIVE

by PAUL FARMER

On the night of February 28, 2004, the Haitian president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was forced from power. He claimed he'd been kidnapped and didn't know where he was being taken until, at the end of a 20-hour flight, he was told that he and his wife would be landing in a French military base in the middle of Africa. He found himself in the Central African Republic.

An understanding of the current crisis requires a sense of Haiti's history. In the 18th century it became France's most valuable colonial possession, and one of the most brutally efficient slave colonies there has ever been. Santo Domingo, as it was then called, was the leading port of call for slave ships; on the eve of the French Revolution, it was supplying two-thirds of all of Europe's tropical produce. A third of new arrivals there died within a few years.

Haitians are still living with the legacy of the slave trade and of the revolt that finally removed the French. The revolt began in 1791, and more than a decade of war followed; France's largest expeditionary force, led by General Leclerc, Napoleon's brother-in-law, was sent to put down the rebellion. As the French operation flagged, the slave general, Toussaint l'Ouverture, was invited to a parley. He was kidnapped and taken away to a prison in the Jura.

In November, 1803, the former slaves won what proved to be the war's final battle, and on January 1, 1804, declared the Independent Republic of Haiti. It was Latin America's first independent country and the only nation ever born of a slave revolt. The Haitian Revolution, Laurent Dubois writes, was "a dramatic challenge to the world as it then was. Slavery was at the heart of the thriving system of merchant capitalism that was profiting Europe, devastating Africa, and propelling the rapid expansion of the Americas."

Independent Haiti had few friends. Virtually all the world's powers sided with France against the self-proclaimed Black Republic, which declared itself a haven not only for runaway slaves but also for indigenous people from the rest of the Americas (the true natives of Haiti had succumbed to infectious disease and Spanish slavery well before the arrival of the French). Hemmed in by slave colonies, Haiti had only one non-colonized neighbor, the slaveholding United States, which refused to recognize its independence.

Haiti's leaders were desperate for recognition, since the island's only source of revenue was the sugar, coffee, cotton, and other tropical produce it had to sell. In 1825, under threat of another French invasion and the restoration of slavery, Haitian officials signed the document which was to prove the beginning of the end for any hope of autonomy. The French king agreed to recognize Haiti's independence only if the new republic paid France an indemnity of 150 million francs and reduced its import and export taxes by half. The

The Haitian Revolution, Laurent Dubois writes, was "a dramatic challenge to the world as it then was. Slavery was at the heart of the thriving system of merchant capitalism that was profiting Europe, devastating Africa, and propelling the rapid expansion of the Americas."

"debt" that Haiti recognized was incurred by the slaves when they deprived the French owners not only of land and equipment but of their human "property." The impact of the debt repayments—which continued until after World War II—was devastating, turning Haiti into a country burdened with financial obligations that could never be satisfied.

By the late 19th century, the United States had eclipsed France as a force in Haitian affairs. A U.S. military occupation (1915-34) brought back *corvée* (forced) labor and introduced bombing from the air, while officials in Washington created the institutions that Haitians would have to live with: the army, above all, which now claims to have the country "in its hands," was created by an act of the U.S. Congress. Demobilized by Aristide in 1995, it never knew a non-Haitian enemy. It had plenty of internal enemies, however. Military-backed governments, dictatorships, chronic instability, repression, the heavy hand of Washington over all: this state of affairs continued throughout the 20th century.

By the mid-1980's, the hunger, despair, and disease were beyond management. Baby Doc Duvalier, named "president for life" at 19, fled in 1986. A first attempt at democratic elections, in 1987, led to massacres at polling stations. An army general declared himself in charge.

In September 1988, the mayor of Port-au-Prince, a former military officer, paid a gang to set fire to a Catholic church as mass was being said. It was packed with people, 12 of whom died. At the altar was Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the nem-

esis of the dictatorship and the army. Aristide was a proponent of liberation theology, with its injunction that the church proclaim "a preferential option for the poor." But liberation theology had its adversaries; members of Reagan's brain trust, meeting in 1980, declared it less Christian than Communist. "U.S. policy," he said, "must begin to counter (not react against)...the liberation theology clergy."

Aristide's elevation from slum priest to presidential candidate took place against a background of right-wing death squads and threatened military coups. He rose quickly in the eyes of Haitians, but his stock plummeted in the United States. *The New York Times*, which relies heavily on informants who can speak English or French, had few kind words for him. "He's a cross between the Ayatollah and Fidel," one Haitian businessman was quoted as saying. "If it comes to a choice between the ultra-left and the ultra-right, I'm ready to form an alliance with the ultra-right." Haitians knew, however, that Aristide would win any democratic election, and on December 16, 1990, he got 67% of the vote in a field of 12 candidates. No run-off was required.

The United States might not have been able to prevent Aristide's landslide victory, but there was plenty they could do to undermine him. The most effective method, adopted by the first Bush administration, was to fund both the opposition—their poor showing at the polls was no reason, it appears, to cut off aid to them—and the military. Declassified records now make it clear that the CIA and other U.S. groups helped to

create and fund a paramilitary group called FRAPH, which rose to prominence after a military coup that ousted Aristide in September, 1991. Thousands of civilians were killed and hundreds of thousands fled overseas or across the border into the Dominican Republic. For the next three years Haiti was run by military-civilian juntas as ruthless as the Duvaliers.

In October, 1994, under Clinton, the U.S. military intervened and restored Aristide to power, with a little over a year of his term left to run. Although authorized by the UN, the restoration was basically a U.S. operation. Then, seven weeks after Aristide's return, Republicans took control of the Congress, and influential Republicans have worked ever since to block aid to Haiti or burden it with preconditions.

During his few months in office, Aristide, in part because of the abolition of the Haitian army, became, in 1996, the first elected civilian to see another elected civilian, René Preval, succeed him as president of Latin America's oldest republic. Preval in turn became Haiti's first president ever to serve out his term, not a day more or less. In November, 2000, Aristide was again elected by a landslide. But problems had already arisen. In the local and parliamentary elections in

May, eight parliamentary seats were disputed and when the political opposition cried foul, the U.S. froze international aid. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), for example, had approved four loans, for health, education, drinking water, and road improvement. Haitian and American sources have confirmed to me that the U.S. asked the bank to block the loans until the electoral disputes had been worked out. Since seven of the senators in question resigned in 2001, and the other's term expired shortly thereafter, that should have been the end of the aid freeze, yet it continued throughout Aristide's tenure.

Haiti's debt to international financial institutions and foreign governments has grown from \$302 million in 1980 to \$1.134 billion today. About 40% of this debt stems from loans to the brutal Duvalier dictators, who invested precious little of it in the country. This is known as "odious debt" because it was used to oppress the people, and, according to international law, this debt need not be repaid.

Yet in order to meet the renewed demands of the IDB, the cash-strapped Haitian government was required to pay ever-expanding arrears

continued on p. 6



MY HOPE FOR HAITI

Father Jean-Juste is a Catholic priest in one of the poorest parishes in Port au Prince, Haiti. He is an outspoken critic of the coup government and the wealthy elites of Haiti. Among other things, Fr. Jean-Juste operates a service center and a soup kitchen for his impoverished parishioners. But it is his "incendiary sermons" denouncing the government and supporting the poor that have provoked the most violent reactions from opposition forces. In July of this year, Fr. Jean-Juste was falsely accused of murder. And though never officially charged, he was imprisoned by the de facto government in an effort to prevent him from running for president. But through the intervention of thousands of letters from an enraged international community, as well as through the efforts of church and U.S. officials like Bishop Gumbleton, Congressman Maxine Waters, and Senator Richard Lugar, he was released just last month and flown to Florida, where he is living with his sister and undergoing treatment for recently-diagnosed cancer.

Agitator: The U.S. has intervened and occupied Haiti numerous times in the past century and has supported oppressive dictatorships. Why do you think the U.S. is so opposed to Haitian democracy?

Fr. Jean-Juste: It depends on the administration. Usually under a Democrat administration, we have a chance to build up democracy, but under the Republican administrations we have had the bad luck to see them backing up the most reactionary, the most brutal, the most cruel dictatorships. I have seen this in my lifetime. Recently President Aristide was overthrown during his first term by the Papa Bush administration. He was restored to power by the Clinton administration, but then, under Baby Bush he was overthrown again. It seems that whenever there is a Republican administration, we have a coup d'état.

Agitator: Can we talk about the last coup in 2004, when President Aristide was overthrown?

Jean-Juste: On February 29, 2004, President Aristide was overthrown and taken away to exile by a sector within the international community dominated by the U.S., France, and Canada. At the same time, some forces, who were trained in the Dominican Republic, crossed over the Haitian border and began to attack and destroy the government institutions in Haiti—killing police and other government employees.

Agitator: The American press has characterized Aristide's administration as corrupt and unpopular with the people. Is that true?

Jean-Juste: No, not at all. The proof is in the pudding. Understand that France did not like Aristide because Aristide was claiming reparation money from the French government.

Agitator: Can you give me your reaction to the most recent elections in Haiti.

Jean-Juste: The years since the last coup d'état were very bloody—many innocent people have been killed, and though the de facto government

received a lot of money, there were no services available for the people. The government wanted to stay in power indefinitely, but fortunately the international community put pressure on them to impose an election February 7. During the campaign, it was clear that the leader was René Preval—he ran a fair campaign and everywhere he spoke he was followed by huge crowds. Clearly he was leading the pack of about 33 candidates. On election day, over 70% of the people voted for him, but the coup government fraudulently moved Preval to second place. Fortunately, their plan was foiled and stolen ballots cast for Preval were recovered.

Agitator: How were they recovered?

Jean-Juste: They were burning the ballots at a dump site and then rain began to fall and put out the fire. It was like heaven acting to take the side of the poorest ones, the oppressed in Haiti. After the rain, some street kids, in Haiti they're called "coco rats," discovered the ballots while foraging through the dump. They alerted the media to what was taking place.

Agitator: That's a miracle.

Jean-Juste: Yes, for us it was a miracle. It was evident to everyone that Preval won, and yet two officials, one from the OAS and one from the electoral council, were trying to play games with the people. But the truth was revealed and they were shamed in front of the international community. They finally agreed to give Preval 51% of the vote count.

Agitator: Tell me about Preval. Do you support President-elect Preval?

Jean-Juste: Definitely. He is somebody I worked with during his first term. I was the spiritual counselor, an official chaplain, at the national parish, and after that we always worked together. I witnessed the great job that the Preval administration had done to help people, and that made him loved by the people, as is Aristide. Understand that President Preval was, and still is, indirectly, a member of the Lavalas Party. Lavalas was not officially a part of the election, because Lavalas people were looking for the return of President Aristide. But we came to understand that boycotting the election would be a big mistake—it would give the coup leaders the ability to stay in power. We decided to participate, and in participating we know that—one man, one vote—we have carried away the election.

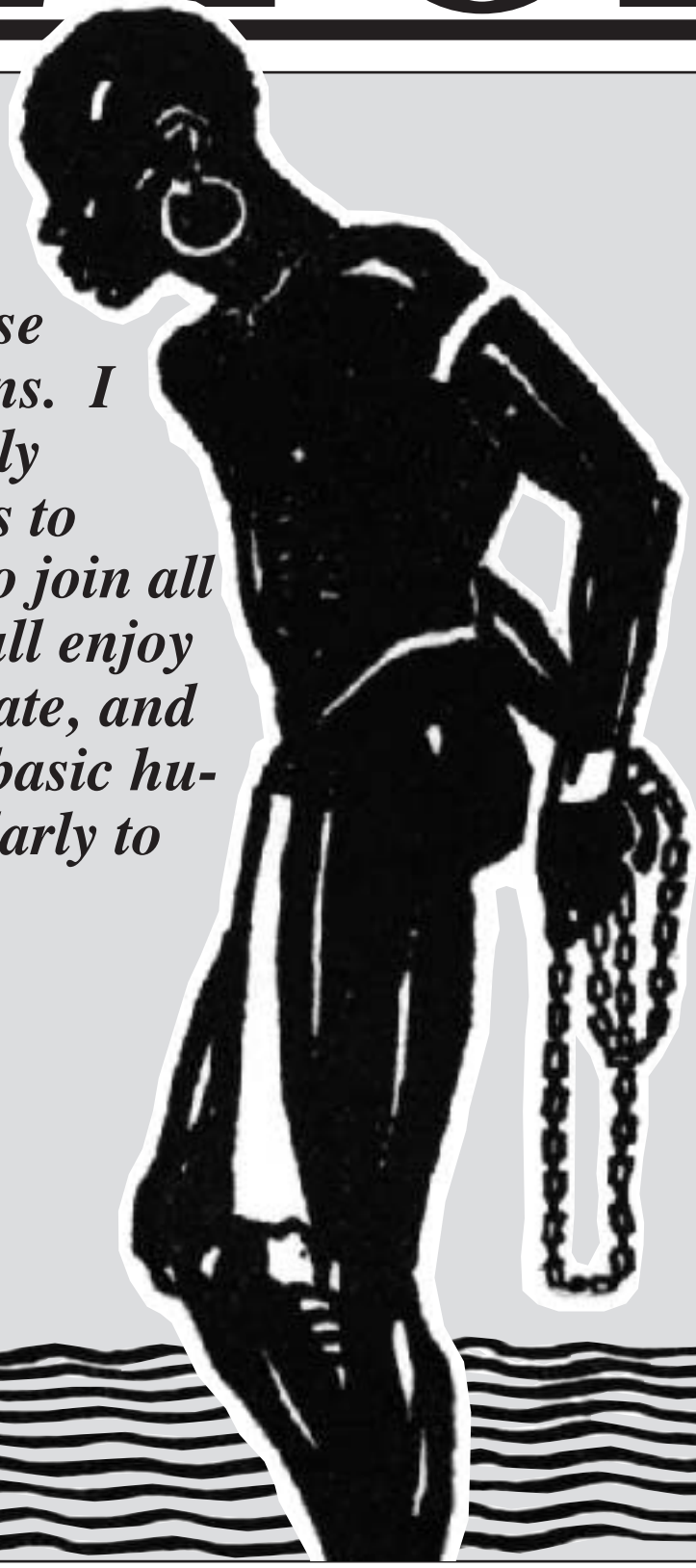
Agitator: Is President Preval going to allow Aristide to return to Haiti?

Jean-Juste: He certainly will. The matter doesn't directly depend upon him, but the constitution clearly says in Article 41 that no Haitian should be thrown into exile. President Preval answered that question at a press conference by pulling out the constitution and reading Article 41. Then he said clearly that if Aristide wants to come back, he has the right to do so.

Agitator: You were recently released from jail after six months. Could you explain why you were arrested and how you came to be released?

Jean-Juste: I was arrested because

I urge Haitians to be persistent in doing good for our country and our people. I want Haiti to rise to the level of other nations. I want those who were really mean and acted like thugs to change their hearts and to join all of us. That way, we can all enjoy Haiti, enjoy the nice climate, and work together to provide basic human needs to all, particularly to the poorest ones. There is space under the sun for all of us. Let us live as brothers!



the de facto government thought that this was the best way to stop Lavalas from winning the election. They thought that I was planning to become a candidate. I wasn't. They arrested me on the charge that I participated in the killing of a journalist. The journalist died on the 13th of July, while I was in the U.S. I returned to Haiti on July 15 and was arrested on July 21, while I was attending the funeral services of the journalist, whom I had known quite well since the deaths of his parents. In the church, a mob attacked me and almost killed me. I was miraculously saved by a young lady who threw herself on me and sustained some of the blows that were meant for me. Also, I was accompanied that day by the lawyer Bill Quigley, who deflected some of the blows as well. The lady was so very brave, yelling at people, "Don't do that to a priest!" Then they pulled out a spear, two feet long, and tried to pierce me through

They were burning the ballots at a dump site and then rain began to fall and put out the fire. It was like heaven acting to take the side of the poorest ones, the oppressed in Haiti. After the rain, some street kids...discovered the ballots while foraging through the dump. They alerted the media to what was taking place.



Photo from HaitiAction.net
Fr. Gérard Jean-Juste

the heart, but the spear hit the lady's jacket and scratched her on the side. She saved me. There was another man with a gun, but he didn't fire, because she was covering me. The government paid over 3 million gourdes in order to get the mob to act against me.

Agitator: The government paid people to go into the streets and cause trouble?

Jean-Juste: Definitely. The mob that nearly killed me was organized by government officials. The first cry in the church against me was from an official. I feel freer to speak out about this now and am collecting more information about it from Haiti. Soon I will have all the details and I will probably get ready for a law suit.

Agitator: What is the Catholic Church's reaction to your work in Haiti?

Jean-Juste: Concerning my parish work, I have praise from my Bishop.

What they didn't like was my sermons—not so much the Bishop, but others...There was a report from the government, from the Chief of Cabinet Michel Brunache, saying that my sermons were "incendiary." That is what I was arrested for. They wanted to get rid of me. In my last sermon, I said clearly that this de facto, unofficial, unelected government is traitorous. I urged people not to cooperate with the enemy which destroys our democracy and kills our people. I told the people that the highest criminals in our country were members of the government. That was my sermon. And I called upon the members of the government to change their ways, stop killing innocent people, stop the massacres, particularly in Cite Soleil. For this I was persecuted. Also, I called for national burials for the victims of the government.

When I found a dead body, I would pay funeral costs with my own money, and I would give them a Christian burial with dignity. God gave me the courage to pick up the bodies of Lavalas people who were murdered and care for them. Step by step other people began to help me in this work.

Agitator: What are your hopes for Haiti?

Jean-Juste: I urge Haitians to be persistent in doing good for our country and our people. I want Haiti to rise to the level of other nations. I want those who were really mean and acted like thugs to change their hearts and to join all of us. That way, we can all enjoy Haiti, enjoy the nice climate, and work together to provide basic human needs to all, particularly to the poorest ones. There is space under the sun for all of us. Let us live as brothers! Ω

THE CHALLENGE OF HAITI



Photo by Bill Quigley
Tom & Jan Honoré, Bishop Tom Gumbleton, and Archbishop Serge Miot of Haiti.

by TOM HONORÉ

Tom Honoré is a friend and volunteer of the LACW as well as the author of Grace at Every Turn. He and his wife, Jan, recently joined Bishop Gumbleton and others on a delegation to Haiti.

yer Bill Quigley, went to Port-au-Prince to meet with U.S. and Haitian church officials to secure the release of Fr. Gérard Jean-Juste from prison. We also went to explore with local community workers and leaders how we might help to further their work, particularly in the area of health care. My wife Jan and I were not sure at all how we, as neophytes, might contribute to this mission. We planned to watch and listen to learn if and where we might support some very specific work in Haiti.

Our delegation arrived in Port-au-Prince on the afternoon of January 16. Waiting to meet us were local leaders, three young heroes who would help us as guides and translators throughout our stay. Outside the Port-au-Prince airport were endless rows of young Haitian men desperately looking for work as porters or simply begging for handouts. I have traveled to and lived in many places, but I had never felt this kind of distress before...not in Skid Row L.A., not in the inner city ghettos of Chicago and New York, not in the all-black neighborhood of my childhood in Baton Rouge.

We lodged in one of the better neighborhoods, at a place called Mathew 25 House. This was at one time the property of a wealthy Haitian, Antoine Izmerly, who in 1993 was dragged from his pew at Mass and shot in the head. Izmerly had been a supporter and friend of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the twice-elected President of Haiti who was forced out each time by a *coup d'état*...the last time in February of 2004.

Fr. Gerry Jean-Juste is also a close friend and supporter of Aristide. And this explains his arrest by the thugs who ousted Aristide with U.S. backing.

The U.S. has never supported a strong and independent voice in Haiti. That little country was born when slaves rose up to throw off their yokes, expel the French, and declare themselves a new nation. One might have hoped that the U.S., with its new Declaration of Independence and its successful revolution against

continued on p.6



GOOD NEWS MAKERS

Dietrich, continued from p.1
election authorities by "coco rats," the homeless street children of Haiti—an act of grace and God's little ones. We pray that the poor former slaves of Haiti will continue to be blessed, as were the Israelite slaves of Pharaoh, by such divine intervention in their seemingly endless struggle for liberation. Ω

Jeff Dietrich is a member of the Los Angeles Catholic Worker and editor of the Agitator.

Honoré, continued from p.5
the British, would have befriended Haiti. But there was no way that the slave-owning politicians in this country would ever recognize black ex-slaves as sovereign statesmen and equals.

The story of U.S. double-dealing and lack of support for Aristide, the first elected president of Haiti, is consistent with a 200-year pattern of undercutting any chance for Haiti to succeed.

Our government sent troops to occupy that country from 1915 to 1934. When the troops departed, our government put in place tyrants like Papa Doc Duvalier and his murderous son Baby Doc.

Most recently, the U.S. sought to discredit Aristide in every way possible, reneging on promised loans, imposing an embargo on Haiti's trade with other countries, and ultimately facilitating the entry of U.S. surrogates who were armed and financed by our government to remove him. Many of Aristide's friends and supporters have been murdered or jailed as political prisoners. Why? Because it would not look right to allow a little black man to stand up and condemn U.S. foreign policy in the Americas. Our government could not tolerate the encouragement Aristide might give to other South and Central American countries to declare their own independence in turn. Thus the U.S. had him removed, and installed in his place an ex-patriat from Miami, who had not lived in Haiti for 25 years, but was coopera-

Farmer, continued from p.3
on its debts, many of them linked to loans paid out to the Duvalier dictatorship and to the military regimes that ruled Haiti with great brutality from 1986 to 1990. In July 2003, Haiti sent more than 90% of all its foreign reserves to Washington to pay off these arrears. As of today, less than \$4 million of the four blocked loans, which totaled \$146 million, has reached Haiti in spite of many assurances from the IDB.

Even so, it was not until March, 2004, that one could read in a U.S. daily newspaper that the aid freeze might have contributed to the overthrow of the penniless Haitian government. The *Boston Globe* wrote: "Today, Haiti's government, which serves eight million people, has an annual budget of about \$300 million—less than that of Cambridge, a city of just over 100,000. And as Haitians attempt to form a new government, many say its success will largely depend on how much and how soon aid will flow to the country... Many of Aristide's supporters, in Haiti and abroad, angrily contend that the international community, particularly the United States, abandoned the fledgling democracy when it needed aid the most. Many believe that Aristide himself was the target of the de facto economic sanctions, just as Haiti was beginning to put its finances back in order."

You and your husband have just finished celebrating your 51st wedding anniversary... What do you do now? Enjoy the relaxing good life? Travel to far-off exotic lands? Take a cruise to the Bahamas or Alaska? Visit those darling grandkids? Spend your retirement days at a cozy little condo? Or throw yourselves into the hustle and bustle of house day at Hennacy House? That's exactly what Jim and Joyce Parkhurst have decided to do, and we couldn't be happier or more grateful for this extraordinary gift. I am not sure either of them thought they'd be scrubbing toilets, preparing breakfast, washing dishes, doing laundry, answering phones, writing thank-you notes, and generally doing all the little things that make for a well-run household, but that's where their life's path has taken them. And for that reason we call them Good News Makers!

After first careers as a managing engineer for the aerospace industry (for Jim) and nursing (for Joyce), and raising five children, the Parkhursts began a second career as Catholic Workers at Hennacy House beginning in 1996. They remained here for two years. During that time, Joyce, along with Martha Lewis, cut the fence around that infamous birthplace of so many horrific weapons of mass destruction—the Nevada Nuclear Test Site, and was sentenced to nine months in county jail way out in Tonopah, Nevada.

Jim and Joyce's commitment to peace and willingness to stand up to

aggressor nation bent on making war and causing so much death, devastation, and anguish led them to prayerfully commit nonviolent civil disobedience at the start of the Iraq War. They served jail time, were fined heavily, and placed on probation. They remain steadfast supporters of all works of peace.

After opening the Peralta St. Catholic Worker in Oakland, Jim and Joyce returned to Los Angeles, and hit upon the idea of helping us out with a house day, something we desperately needed at the time. In various incarnations, this arrangement has been working for about three years now. Through Jim's severe illness and long recovery, much turmoil and war, they have remained faithful to the vision of a new, equitable kingdom—a kingdom where war is no more and all of our suffering brothers and sisters are cherished and cared for. God has surely blessed the Parkhursts, and our prayers of gratitude are ever with them. Ω

depressed...overcome with a feeling of sadness after seeing so many people moving about with vacuous expressions of quiet resignation and desperation. This reminded me of the American Apartheid of my youth in the South. I was not prepared to see that kind of racism again.

At one point in the journey, Tom Gumbleton, my wife Jan, and I trav-

That the U.S. and France undermined Aristide is not a fringe opinion. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the African Union called for a formal investigation into his removal. "Most people around the world believe that Aristide's departure was at best facilitated, at worst coerced by the U.S. and France," Gayle Smith, a member of the National Security Council staff under Clinton, recently said.

Why such animus toward an elected leader? Taking up the question of the historic French debt, Aristide declared that France "extorted this money from Haiti by force and...should give it back to us so that we can build primary schools, primary healthcare, water systems and roads." He did the math, adding in interest and adjusting for inflation, to calculate that France owes Haiti \$21,685,135,571.48 and counting. This figure was scoffed at by some of the French, who saw the whole affair as a farce mounted by their disgruntled former subjects; others, it's increasingly clear, were insulted or angered when the point was pressed in diplomatic and legal circles.

Still, Aristide kept up the pressure. The figure of \$21 billion was repeated again and again. The number 21 appeared all over the place in Haiti, along with the word *restitution*. On January 1, 2004, during the bicentennial celebrations, Aristide an-



Photo by David Gardner

Jim and Joyce Parkhurst

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nounced he would replace a 21-gun salute with a list of the 21 things that had been done in spite of the embargo and that would be done when restitution was made. The crowd went wild. The French press by-and-large dismissed his comments as silly, despite the legal merits of his case. Many Haitians saw Aristide as a modern Toussaint l'Ouverture, a comparison that Aristide did not discourage. "Toussaint was undone by foreign powers," Madison Smartt Bell wrote in *Harper's*, "and Aristide also had suffered plenty of vexation from outside interference."

It's usually easy to tell, in even the briefest conversation about Aristide, how your interlocutor feels about him. Opinion in Haiti is almost always referred to as "polarized" in the U.S. press, but this isn't true in every sense. Elections and polls, even recent ones, show that the poor majority still support Aristide. It's the middle classes and the traditional political elites who disagree about him, as well as people like me, non-Haitians who, for whatever reasons, concern themselves with that country's affairs.

Did the U.S. and France have a hand in Aristide's removal? Were he and his wife being held against their will? Most of Aristide's claims, initially disputed by U.S. officials, are now acknowledged to be true. U.S. officials have acknowledged during a

House hearing that Aristide did not know of his destination until less than an hour before landing in the Central African Republic. No Haitian authorities were involved in the choice of destination.

Many more questions remain unanswered. We know that U.S. funds overtly financed the opposition; but did they also fund, even indirectly, the rebellion, which featured high-powered U.S. weapons only a year after twenty thousand such weapons were promised to the Dominican Republic? Answering these questions would take an intrepid investigative reporter, rather than a physician like myself, working, with some trepidation, in central Haiti. It would need a reporter willing to take on hard questions about U.S. policies in Latin America. But about the return of the military, there can be little doubt. In his first public statement, the man sworn in as Haiti's new prime minister after the coup, announced that Aristide's order to replace the military with a civilian police force violated Haiti's constitution; he promised to name a commission to examine the issues surrounding its restoration. Ω

eled to the residence of the Papal Nuncio. This Vatican representative is the highest ranking diplomat in Haiti. He is first among all Ambassadors. We knew that if he so desired, this Archbishop could rally other diplomats to the cause of Fr. Gerry's freedom. The Nuncio's residence in Port-au-Prince is a very large palace located in an exclusive neighborhood in the hills overlooking the city. This palace is surrounded by very high walls and guarded by *gendarmes* carrying loaded shotguns. The grounds within the walls are lush and expansive, seemingly 50 acres or more of manicured lawns and many kinds of beautiful flowers. The contrast of this place to the living conditions of almost everyone else in Haiti was stunning. Would Jesus see this mansion and all this opulence as the appropriate living place for his special representative among the poorest people on this side of the globe? The temptation is large to condemn this man; to look down on him. But am I any better?

In the end, it was the examples of the young human rights workers in Haiti who have shown me a much better way to live and to forgive and to hope. In spite of all of the present sufferings and the obstacles to justice, they continue to work and pray and to hope without ceasing.

The most precious time for me in Haiti was the hour spent visiting Gerry Jean-Juste in prison. With smiles and peace glowing on his face, and in spite of a cancer growing in his neck, Gerry gave a greeting for us to carry wherever we might. He asked us to convey his thanks and to tell the people that he loved them. Five days after our return from Haiti, Bill Quigley was summoned back to that country to accompany Fr. Gerry out of prison and on to Miami, where he is now receiving treatment for cancer. Ω

IRAQ WAR BODY COUNT SO FAR

2,296

U.S. Military Deaths
icasualties.org 2/28/2006

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Paul Farmer is a physician, anthropologist, author, as well as the founder-director of Partners in Health. He has been serving the poor in Haiti for over twenty years.

ON THE LINE

WITNESS AGAINST TORTURE UPDATE

Seven members of Witness Against Torture, a group protesting prison conditions at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba (see February, 2006 *Agitator*), were indicted by the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). In a response sent through the Center for Constitutional Rights, Witness members refused to answer OFAC's questions, maintaining that the true crime is the torture and abuse of civilian prisoners by the U.S. Members face a maximum of 10 years in prison and \$250,000 in fines for violating the travel ban on Cuba.

—witnessstorture.org

ESCALATING POVERTY

A recent study found that at least 37 million people now live below the poverty line in the U.S. This figure has increased by over five million since G.W. Bush came to power and includes nearly 25% of all African Americans; 22% of all Latinos; and 8.6% of the white population. Over 46 million people are without health insurance. 90,000 are homeless in Los Angeles alone. The poorest community is the Pine Ridge Reservation, with an 80+% unemployment rate, 69% living in poverty, and male life expectancy of 57 years.

In the Western Hemisphere, only Haiti fares worse. In contrast, the United States also has 269 billionaires—the most of any country in the world.

—observer.guardian.co.uk 2/19

CLEAN WATER ACT

More than half of the nation's streams and wetlands could be removed from the protection of the federal Clean Water Act if two legal challenges are supported by a majority in the new Supreme Court. If the justices side with corporate developers, 50-99% of our existing waterways would be removed from federal water pollution controls.

—nytimes.com 2/20

NUCLEAR WARFARE

Files obtained through the UK's freedom of information laws show that radiation detectors in five separate British locations recorded a four-fold increase in uranium levels in the atmosphere within nine days of the 2003 "shock and awe" bombing campaign against Iraq. Scientists who uncovered the reports claimed that radiation from depleted uranium shells used by the U.S. was carried by wind currents to Britain. According to the scientists, this research proves that rather than remaining near the target, as claimed by the military, these weapons contaminate both local and whole populations, thousands of miles away.

—timesonline.co.uk 2/19

CIA TERROR

The CIA has established joint operation centers in more than two dozen countries where U.S. and foreign intelligence officers work side-by-side to track, capture, and "interrogate" suspected terrorists.

—msnbc.com 11/18

TORTURE PROTEST

On November 18, 2005, the group Stop Torture Now, served a peoples' indictment to Aero Contractors, charging them with multiple counts of violation of U.S. and international laws and treaties banning torture, by providing pilots and planes for the CIA's "extraordinary rendition" program. The arrested group of 14 was charged with trespass. On January 5, they appeared in North Carolina District Court, were found guilty, and sentenced to 10 to 20 days in jail, unless they agree to pay \$50 in fines and \$110 in courts costs and to submit to a year of unsupervised probation. The decision has been appealed. No court date is set.

—vcnv.org

TORTURE VICTIMS

Nearly 100 prisoners have died in U.S. custody in Iraq and Afghanistan since August, 2002, according to a report by the Human Rights First organization. At least 34 of these deaths have been ruled homicides, with 11 more deemed suspicious. According to the report, one person was forced to jump from a bridge into the Tigris River, while another was suffocated after being stuffed into a sleeping bag, tied up, and held down.

—commondreams.org 2/22

NUKES FOR IRAN

On February 3, the Chief of Naval Operations released a new ruling which prohibits military personnel and civilian employees of the Depart-

ment of the Navy from revealing any information relating to the presence or absence of nuclear weapons or components on any ship, station, or aircraft. The ruling at this time has raised fears that "mini-nukes" or "tactical nuclear weapons" in the form of "bunker busters" are already deployed or in the process of deployment to be used in a confrontation with Iran.

—antiwar.com 2/20

THE EURO AND OIL

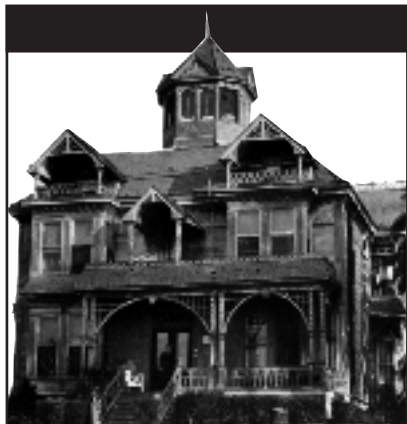
On March 20, Iran will change the currency at which it sells its oil from the dollar to the euro. Saddam Hussein also made this change about eight months prior to the U.S. invasion. If other oil producing nations follow Iran, the change, over time, could translate into the collapse of the dollar. For decades, oil has been sold exclusively in dollars.

—informationclearinghouse.info

SOA WATCH UPDATE

Thirty-three of the 36 activists arrested at Ft. Benning, Georgia last November in protest against the SOA went on trial on January 30 and 31. The defendants, ranging in age from 19 to 81, received sentences from one month to six months in jail, with fines ranging from \$500 to \$1,000. One defendant, charged with "aiding and abetting" for lifting the fence so that others could crawl under it, was sentenced to six months and \$1,000 in fines.

On The Line is compiled and edited by Mike Wisniewski.



THE HOUSE JOURNAL

We had a short but pleasant visit from Catherine's sister Eileen, who to the delight of our downtown guests reprised her role as "the other white-haired lady" in our kitchen garden. Catherine and Eileen took the Coast Starlight train north for a quick trip to Oregon, and Catherine returned to us well-rested and raring to go.

I had the good fortune to draw a week's worth of vacation during which I traveled to booming Visalia, the once cow-town turned suburb, to visit my guitar-playing buddy, the consummate host, Dick Hannigan. Dick and his lovely wife, former community member Lisa Bilek, had



Photo by David Gardner

Sarah and Philipp pause for a photo outside Hennacy House

just recently been to Hennacy House to work at our kitchen and then deliver Lisa to the airport for a month-long trip to Bangalore, India. While in Visalia, I enjoyed daily walks with the dog pack, fine concert music, sumptuous cuisine, and plenty of guitar playing. Much thanks to Dick for the fine hospitality.

We welcome Nick Towle from Long Beach, where he had been attending Cal State Long Beach. Nick enjoys yoga, nature, rock climbing, and playing any of the following instruments: guitar, piano, didgeridoo, saxophone, and djembe. Nick's gentleness with our guests at the kitchen and his wonderful sympathetic ear have endeared him to all.

Former community member Rosemary Occhiogrosso stopped in just long enough to prepare us a sumptu-

ous feast of chicken cacciatore, rigatoni, onion-stuffed squash, and herb bread. Her husband Steve Fischer, her son Damien, and her sister Christa joined us for dinner.

Catherine and Jeff celebrated their thirty-second wedding anniversary with a quiet evening. We thank God for their enduring witness.

We were all elated that the state of California could not find two qualified physicians willing to participate in the death machinery of public execution, and thus Michael Morales' life was spared. We pray that this temporary new-found restraint will become prolonged and that it will spread to other states.

Our own Patty Carmody presided over a Wednesday liturgy dedicated to the abolition of the death penalty. At an altar adorned with pictures of

recent death penalty victims Stanley "Tookie" Williams and Clarence Ray Allen, and of Michael Morales, in addition to letters and drawings from some of the 100-plus men and women in prison that she corresponds with, Patty proclaimed a moving message of healing and forgiveness—the gospel vision that Christ lived, taught, and died for. She related the humble beginnings of the stamp project for prisoners that our community continues to support by contributing stamps that the prisoners use to remain in contact with family and friends. We greatly appreciate Patty's concerted efforts on behalf of the imprisoned, the modern-day equivalent of lepers.

Sarah's friend Philipp Klausmann has joined us for two weeks before returning to the university in Stuttgart, hometown of Mercedes, Porsche, and Bosch Werks. He is studying aeronautical and astronomical engineering. In his free time he runs cross country, high jumps, and campaigns for the *Gruene Jugend* (Green Party).

Our prayers go out to long-term volunteers Bob and Terry Koenig. Terry is recovering from hip replacement surgery and Bob has been under the weather as well. We miss them both terribly and know that they are anxiously to be back at our kitchen. Please pray for a speedy recovery for both and for the health of all our volunteers and supporters. We love and need you all.

House Journal was written by Faustino Cruz.