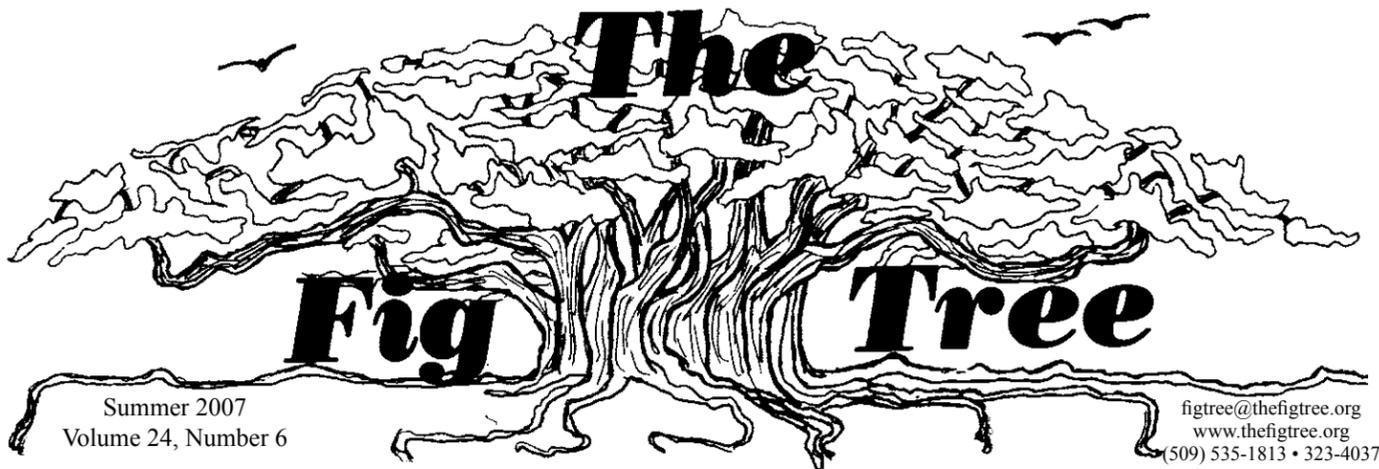


## A NEW LOOK

Changes in postal regulations on mailing label placement mean we have a new look to the front page. Along with that, mailing costs have increased, so our reader sponsorships need to keep up. Please become a new donor or send your 2007 renewal with the form on page 2.



Monthly newspaper covering faith in action throughout the Inland Northwest

# Sr. Bernadine Casey blessed The Fig Tree



Sister Bernadine Casey, SNJM, in December

For Holy Names Sister Bernadine Casey, co-founder and co-editor who continued with *The Fig Tree* 23 years until her death May 10, *The Fig Tree* was a gift of love.

When some asked why in her 90s she continued to edit, she told them, "because it is life giving." Even weakened as she was dying, she helped edit the May issue, making five corrections that escaped the other editors.

Sr. Bernadine reminded *Fig Tree* staff and volunteers that each issue was God's work, said Mary Stamp, editor, colleague and friend throughout those years.

Some insights on her life come from articles in the 10th and 20th anniversary editions of *The Fig Tree*, an article on her jubilee, a review of the book she edited on her uncle Fr. Solanus Casey, OFM Cap, and some excerpts of an autobiography read during the May 14 vigil service by her niece, Sr. Anne Herkenrath, SNJM, who is at St. James Cathedral in Seattle and who accompanied Sr. Bernadine on trips to visit family, across the United States and in Europe.

In the 1994 issue, Sr. Bernadine "counted the ways" she appreciated being part of the ministry.

"Foremost is the opportunity to carry out my mission of education in the faith as a Holy Names Sister and my community's mandate to work for social justice," she said.

*"The Fig Tree* is religiously slanted educational  
Continued on pages 8 and 9

## Elevator dedicated in April

# Orofino church makes improvements to be accessible

By Mary Stamp

Lilia Felicitas-Malana, who began her ministry in a rural church in the Philippines, now helps the Orofino-Peck United Methodist Church in Idaho identify their assets and community needs.

One asset is that the building recently became more handicapped accessible with a sloped entry and the addition of an elevator so it can better serve its own members and others who have had knee and hip replacements.

Members refer to themselves as the "wounded knee and hip" church. Seven members had surgeries replacing those joints, said Lilia of the congregation in which most of the 55 who attend worship are aging.

"When my husband, a truck driver, and I moved to Orofino a year ago, our four children doubled the size of the Sunday school," she said, "and brought diversity to the community."

On April 29, they dedicated a key-operated elevator so people could go from the social hall on the lower level to the sanctuary.

The church raised funds for the \$50,000 elevator and used funds from the sale of the Methodist church in Peck, a small community six miles west, after it merged with the Orofino church in 1988.

After the elevator was installed, two people began attending, including one woman in a motorized wheel chair with a service dog.

"She was so happy when she



Lilia Felicitas-Malana, Ted Leach, trustees chair, and Ron Banks, board member, discuss the dedication. Photo provided by Orofino-Peck UMC

learned about the elevator," said Lilia, who grew up in a Methodist church in the Isabella Province in northern Luzon.

After "accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior" at the age of 16, she became active in church, singing in the choir and teaching Sunday school in the congregation of 40 people.

While some had urged her to consider ministry, she had her mind set on medicine. However, when her brother and she both

were eligible for a government college scholarship and only one in a family could receive one, he took it. Then a "Good Samaritan" offered to finance her education at a Bible school to learn Scripture and help in children's ministry.

She saw it as God's way to set her on the path into ministry.

"We have our plans and God has plans," said Lilia, who has been in ministry 21 years.

She completed Bible school, was ordained an elder and had

served in ministry 15 years in the Philippines when she had the opportunity to serve a Filipino-American congregation in Seattle and study at the Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry for a master's of divinity. She has not yet finished the degree.

For four years, she helped start the multi-ethnic, multi-generational church, an outreach of Beacon United Methodist Church. Then she was appointed for two years to serve a church in Tieton near Yakima, before being appointed just over a year ago to Orofino-Peck.

Orofino is a community of 3,200 with 20 churches, many retired people, schools, two hospitals, a fish hatchery, a state prison, nursing homes, a logging company and farming in the surrounding area.

Lilia sees her gifts in ministry as pastoral and apostolic.

By apostolic, she means reaching out to unchurched people so they know there is a God and can find their way to live faithfully. Whether ordained or lay, she believes Christians are called to share the Good News.

Continued on page 4

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## Religion News Briefs

# Around the World

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 CH - 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland Tel: +41-22 791 6111  
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### NCC head will head Common cause

New York (ENI). The Rev. Robert Edgar, the general secretary of the National Council of Churches, has been named the head of the Washington-based advocacy group Common Cause. A six-term Democratic Party congressman from Pennsylvania, he said in October he would not seek a third four-year term as the council's general secretary.

Common Cause is a citizens' lobby group for issues such as better governance and reforming the U.S. campaign finance and election systems.

He will continue with the NCC until the end of August while also beginning his duties in Washington. The NCC had appointed a search committee to find a successor.

### Indian Christians hail ban on discrimination

Anto Akkara, Bangalore, India (ENI). Christian groups in India hailed the recommendation of a federal commission that asked the government to end discrimination against Christian and Muslim Dalits. The National Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities recommended an end to discrimination against Christian and Muslim Dalits, who are excluded from free education and a special job reservation limited to Buddhist, Hindu and Sikh Dalits, or low castes treated as untouchables.

Lauding the recommendation as a victory for Dalit Christians, the All India Christian Council in a statement urged the government to implement the recommendations without delay.

"We are witnessing the making of history. We hope the rights denied to us for so long will be granted now," the Rev. Madhu Chandra, spokesperson for the Christian council told ENI.

### Teach water management, Ugandan urges

Entebbe (ENI). Uganda's minister for water and environment, Maria Mutagamba, urged churches in Africa to educate people on the continent about water use and management at a May conference of the Ecumenical Water Network in Entebbe on the shores of the 69,000 square-kilometer Lake Victoria, Africa's largest piece of water.

"I beseech you, as church leaders, church organizations, you have the communities at your disposal. They listen to you. So please let's help our communities understand how to use water," she said. An estimated 300 million people in sub-Saharan Africa lack access to adequate and safe drinking water, but, she said, if communities were correctly informed they could be empowered to conserve and protect what they have.

About 70 participants including church leaders, officials from international non-governmental organizations and agencies, water experts and theologians from 25 countries attended.

### Ending 80-year rift, Russian churches reunite

Sophia Kishkovsky, Moscow (ENI). The Russian Orthodox Church and an émigré church that broke ties in 1927 over a Russian church leader's declaration of loyalty to the then Soviet state have reunited at a ceremony in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

"Church divisions are being overcome, and the confrontation in society inherited from the revolution is being beaten back," said Patriarch Alexei II of the Russian Orthodox Church after the signing of an act of canonical union on May 17.

The New York-based ROCOR, which has 400 parishes from Europe to Australia, was created by émigrés who fled Russia with the White Army, which battled the Bolsheviks. In Russia, the Orthodox Church endured brutal repression in the early 1920s. Hoping to stave off complete destruction, the church's acting leader stated in an encyclical that the church would not oppose the state, but another wave of bloody suppression followed in the 1930s.

In a twist of fate, Russian President Vladimir Putin, formerly in the KGB, played a key role in bringing the churches together.

## REGIONAL ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH NEWS

# Catholics share insights on misconduct

Out of informal meetings and prayer in solidarity related to clergy sexual misconduct, a group of Catholics and Evangelical Protestants is offering three sessions to help all churches learn more about the legal, ethical and practical issues.

While recent sex abuse scandals have been publicized about the Catholic Church, they occur in all churches and throughout society, said John Repsold, one of the organizers and former pastor of Fourth Memorial Church in Spokane.

Hundreds of victims and thousands of people in the Inland Northwest have been affected by abuse, making church a place of hurt, shame and abuse for too many, he said.

On three days in June, the church leaders will host three identical two-hour seminars, "Becoming a Healing Church for Our Hurting Community," to equip churches with the knowledge, tools, resources and systems to end sexual abuse in the church

and heal people who have been sexually abused in or outside the church.

The workshops are at 7 p.m., Tuesday, June 12, at First Church of the Open Bible, 8303 N. Division; 10 a.m., Thursday, June 14, at Spokane Valley Nazarene Church, 15515 E. 20th Ave., and 1 p.m., Thursday, June 28, at Life Center, 1202 N. Government Way.

They are geared to children's and youth leaders, pastoral leaders, clergy and lay leaders.

In addition to John, organizers include Bishop William Skylstad, Father Steve Dublinski, the Rev. Ian Robertson, the Rev. Joe Whitwer, the Rev. Monte LeLaCheur, Msgr. John Steiner, Deacon Mike Miller, Jeff Smith, Shaun Cross and Doug Durham.

John said there are several goals:

- 1) To educate pastors and lay leaders on legal issues;
- 2) To hear what the diocese learned, safeguards they have instituted and examples of pro-

cedures, policies and practices in place for prevention;

3) To find out what brings healing and to understand the fallout of sexual abuse for parishioners. A survivor and a victims' advocate will speak.

4) To ask churches to share what they learn with their boards and to establish an agreement to adopt certain procedures and have an annual audit.

"While many churches have addressed these issues, many independent Protestants may not have it covered," John said. "We seek to stamp out sexual abuse in the religious community and be a healing community."

Shaun, the lead attorney for the Catholic Diocese of Spokane's settlement, said that the Catholic community wants to share with the Protestants.

"It's tempting to think that the problem is just in the Catholic Church, but it goes beyond there," he said. "It's a massive societal problem. This is a start."

For information, call 443-2451.

# Unity in the Community will be Aug. 18

Spokane's 2007 Unity in the Community Multicultural Celebration will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 18, at Riverfront part, a new location for the event.

This is the 13th year for the event that is "an uplifting gala that emphasizes diversity, a network of community resources and family fun," said coordinator Ben Cabildo, of the African Ameri-

can, Hispanic, Asian and Native American Association.

"One Community - Many Cultures!" is the theme for this year's celebration.

As Spokane's largest multicultural event, Unity in the Community incorporates career, cultural and educational information and activities, he said. There are live performances and a mix of interactive cultural villages.

The Career, Health and Education Fair features several of the area's companies with employment opportunities, businesses showcasing products and services, and nonprofits.

Mid-day activities introduce cultural performances, jazz and soulful sounds, live demonstrations and raffle drawings for adults and youth.

For information, call 838-1881

# Sudanese in Spokane organize

More than 70 Sudanese people in Spokane have formed a non-profit organization, the Sudanese Cultural Community Outreach of Spokane. They will help each other learn English, fill out immigration papers, access services and assist widows and orphans in Darfur and Southern Sudan.

Some are new to Spokane and some have been here a long time. Many came as refugees and were resettled through World Relief. Some are Muslim, and some are Christians, said Golan Khotdiang, one of the organizers.

"In my country, we thought that the fighting between the North and South was about religions, but

now we realize it was a problem with the government wanting resources and power. Those in power are of Egyptian ancestry," he said.

The organization reaches across the differences to form one community. They will also offer speakers about Sudan, including on Darfur.

When new refugees come from Sudan and are resettled through World Relief, the organization will assist them.

For information, call 838-0023.

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## Guatemalan poet, theologian comes in October for Fig Tree Dialogue

Guatemalan poet, theologian and human rights advocate Julia Esquivel will discuss human rights, poverty, justice and the power of poetry to address oppression when she visits Spokane from Saturday, Oct. 12 to Monday, Oct. 23 for The Fig Tree's Faith in Action Dialogue. Events with Women Walking Together, Gonzaga University, Whitworth College and other partners are being planned.

Organizers will schedule her for events and classes. Plans include a talk at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 16, at Gonzaga University's Cataldo Hall, and a presentation during the Bioneers Conference on Saturday, Oct. 20.

Fig Tree editor Mary Stamp met her when they participated in graduate studies at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey, Switzerland, in 1969-70 and again at the

6th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1983 in Vancouver, B.C., while she was living in exile.

Women Walking Together coordinator Sandi Thompson-Royer met Julia on her first trip to visit CEDEPCA, a Central American center for ecumenical and pastoral studies and encounter.

Julia has worked as a teacher, principal, pastoral social worker, writer and human rights activist, part of a hopeful peace and justice movement through 30 years of civil unrest, dictatorships, resistance movements and civil wars in Guatemala.

She spoke out on behalf of indigenous people. Thousands of Maya, Quiche and other indigenous people were murdered. Their villages were wiped out and survivors faced communal trauma.

Some took up arms, but Julia followed a path to peace, editing a magazine, *Diálogo*, as a way to witness to God's justice and compassion, and to bring healing to her land.

Threats and harassment by police and the military led her into exile in 1980, living eight of her 12 years in exile with the nuns of the Grand Champs monastic community in Switzerland, and then in Mexico and Nicaragua. She traveled from these bases throughout Europe, the United States and Canada to speak and advocate on behalf of those suffering in the "Guatemalan holocaust."

Having known so many who experienced fear, torture and death, Julia used her exile to heal, reflect and pray—facing her own suffering and the wounds of her nation.

She eventually resettled in Guatemala and has created a ministry of reconciliation. Working with global solidarity movements, churches and Guatemalan communities, she expresses truth and compassion in her poetry that communicates wisdom in the face of suffering and reveals a longing for love and hope.

Her books include *Secrets of God's Reign* (2002), *The Certainty of Spring* (1993) and *Threatened with Resurrection* (1982).

Julia considers suffering a school of wisdom, "part of our education as Christians."

The Fig Tree and Women Walking Together seek volunteers and sponsors who will share in making her visit possible and drawing people to events.

For information, call 535-1813.

## Project HOPE shows films to stir awareness of gangs

Project HOPE (Helping Our Young People Excel) seeks to educate the public about the life, culture and condition of street gangs in America through a Friday night film series and discussions with former gang members.

Gathering at 6:30 p.m., June 8, 15 and 22 in the gym of Salem Lutheran Church, at 1428 W. Broadway, viewers will trace the history of street gangs in America, explore the inner workings of the CRIPS gang, and journey with five gang members from their youth into adulthood. Film content is appropriate for adult viewing only.

Former gang members who will tell about their experiences in gang life include Pastor Shon Davis of Jesus Is the Answer Apostolic Church, Jeff Doud of Victorious Warriors Native Church, Alvin Morino of Victory Outreach and Theo Acosta, who now has a job and is in college.

Beginning in West Central Spokane in 2006, Project HOPE works to provide gang prevention and intervention for Spokane's growing youth gang population.

It is a collaboration of business- and community-based organizations, faith communities, law enforcement and schools. It will offer outreach, recreation, socialization and employment, job development, and micro-enterprise services.

It seeks to re-launch God's Gym, which was first started

in the 1990s at Central United Methodist Church to draw gang members off the street to activities in the gym in order to build relationships and self-esteem, and help them find jobs.

Salem Lutheran is now working with a group to provide gym space and educate community and church members to join them as volunteers responsible for the program.

The idea is to find church sponsors for each month, helping four Fridays a year, working with community organizations, law enforcement and schools.

"The goal is to prevent gang activity," said Connie Copeland-Malone, one of the organizers. "In the 1990s, people felt there was no gang problem, so there were not enough people to continue God's Gym."

"We don't want to wait until there is a crisis," said Connie. "There are gang killings, but not drive-by shootings. We see tagging—making gang signs and graffiti on buildings."

Project HOPE recently announced several neighborhood Economic Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Initiatives to foster job development.

Among the partners are Youth for Christ, Our Place, St. Paul's United Methodist, St. Joseph's Catholic, Westminster Presbyterian, Life Center, and West Central Community Center

For information, call 328-6527.

## SCC offers program for native students

Spokane Community College will again offer its Summer Academy for eighth- to 10th-grade Native American and Alaskan Native students from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday, June 25 through Thursday, July 26.

The program focuses on Native American and Alaskan Native

cultural history and traditions, emphasizing honor and respect for all peoples. The college's Native American advisory committee prepared the curriculum.

Students also participate in life-skills training and college and career choices.

For information, call 533-8009.

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# Filipino pastor brings diversity to rural church and community

*Continued from page 1*

"I challenge church leaders in every message that that's what we do because we enjoy God's love and grace—share it with others."

As a pastor, Lilia said, her primary role is to listen.

"I love visiting people and listening, whether they are well or sick," she said, noting that as the first ethnic pastor there, she brings the gift of her diversity, expressing the reality that "we are one. Color does not matter. We can do ministry together. Diversity makes it brighter."

When she came, the congregation's focus was on survival.

Her challenge is: "What are we doing? Why are we here? Are we fulfilling our purpose here as a United Methodist church?"

"Doing outreach in the Philippines is different," she said. "There we bring the Good News to villages, teaching children and adult Bible studies, feeding spiritual aspects of people's lives."

"Here outreach means more of a program for the church to help the community," she said.

For example, members help support and volunteer to run FISH, Inc., Friends In Service of Humanity, an outreach of the churches collecting and selling



**Sloped curb and elevator are among improvements.**

Photos provided by Orofino-Peck UMC

clothes, and using the proceeds to provide food, clothing or medicine for people in need who come to a church for assistance. FISH is open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mondays and Wednesdays, and 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Fridays.

The congregation also supports missions through the regional and national United Methodist Church, such as collecting loose

change for Hope for Children in Africa to support children in an orphanage that educates them and trains them in work skills.

Lilia is one of the local clergy volunteering as chaplain in a six-week rotation at the Clearwater Valley Hospital and Clinic.

Recently, she taught confirmation for five youth. When she asked how they would spend their

could sign up to help them.

"They decided that they could show they are Christian by helping and realized that to have faith and be Christian is both a blessing and a responsibility," said Lilia, who is helping the congregation identify their assets as a congregation and the needs of the community.

"A successful congregation does not depend on what the pastor says or does, but on the congregation's knowing their gifts and responding to the community," she said.

While some in the congregation have wounded knees and hips, Lilia is helping them realize their physical issues are only one aspect of their lives. They do not need that to hinder them from what they can do for Christ.

When some felt after spending the funds for the improvements, they had done what they needed to do and had no money, she reminded them that "God is good all the time and promises to provide. We need to claim the promise and continue to believe."

So she continues to challenge the congregation to consider what their church will look like and be like in five or 10 years.

For information, call 208-476-5617.

summer, they said they would be on vacation. She told them that in the Philippines Sunday school is year round.

She asked them what they might do in the summer to show they are Christian. They agreed to do something for elderly people, like offering to do an hour of yard work, house cleaning, walking a dog or other project.

The church members were asked to submit their needs so youth

## Media Matters documents bias in media coverage of religious issues

Washington, D.C. - The National Council of Churches' general secretary, the Rev. Bob Edgar, said recently that he has long felt the media has given Americans a distorted view of what people of faith believe.

Research from Media Matters now proves that.

Bob joined other religious leaders at a National Press Club news conference in Washington, D.C., in May, meeting with representatives of Media Matters for America, a research and analysis group that monitors national media.

"Left Behind: The Skewed Representation of Religion in Major News Media," is the title of a report issued by Media Matters.

The group studied major television and print media outlets from the day following the 2004 election through December 2006. They discovered that television news programs interviewed, mentioned or quoted conservative religious leaders 3.8 times more than progressive or mainstream faith leaders. Major newspapers quoted conservative leaders 2.7 times more often.

"I know that news judgment

is often affected by harshness of rhetoric or degree of conflict and scandal involved," he acknowledged, "but the vast majority of American faith groups are engaged in none of these, and thus won't appear in the media unless enterprising reporters and editors balance their coverage with what the majority of faithful Americans are doing from time to time."

Media Matters identified 10 national religious leaders from each side and tracked their presence in the major media. The media watchdog group identified Bob as a progressive leader.

"I found on my book tour last year in city after city people were tired of hearing only one point of view from the religious leaders they were hearing in the media," Bob said. He is the author of "Middle Church: Reclaiming the Values of the Faithful Majority from the Religious Right."

"At a time in which political polarization is perceived to be intensifying, news media have a responsibility to accurately portray the body politic in all its diversity," concludes the Media Matters study," he reported.

Instead of giving readers and viewers an accurate picture of American religious belief and its effects on politics, news organizations have presented a picture in which religious Americans are usually defined as conservative religious Americans.

If religion is an important topic for news media to explore—and it plainly is—then they have a responsibility to do so fairly and accurately. Our results suggest that in recent history they have failed to do so, he said.

"I hope both the print and electronic media in this country will now seek the balance so many of them profess to have as they continue to report issues of religion and its impact on our society, government and the American culture," the NCC leader said.

The NCC is the ecumenical voice of America's Orthodox, Protestant, Anglican, historic African American and traditional peace churches. These 35 communions have 45 million faithful members in 100,000 congregations in all 50 states.

For information, call 202-756-4103.

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## Thin Air Radio is one of few low-power community stations on the air

Since 2000, about 100 volunteers have helped Lupito Flores launch and operate Spokane's low-power, 100-watt community radio station, Thin Air Radio on 92.3 and 89.9 FM.

KYRS hosts, co-hosts, substitutes, music reviewers, event organizers, fund-drive participants and other helpers all are volunteers.

Its programs incorporate perspectives and discussions on peace, social, economic and environmental justice, human rights, democracy and multiculturalism.

"We seek to give back a small slice of the air waves to the community, to voices not heard on commercial radio," said Lupito.

**He became aware** of how mainstream media covered environmental and conservation groups as a volunteer while studying English literature and technical writing at Eastern Washington University.

"They were not covered or not covered fairly. If there was coverage, it was 30 seconds focused on a protester, not on the speakers," said Lupito, who is now station manager of Thin Air Radio. "I saw media twisting and sensationalizing issues."

During college and after earning his bachelor's degree in 1991 and master's degree in 1995, he worked with Save Our Wild Salmon, the Kettle Range Conservation Group, the Idaho Conservation League and Save the Hanford Reach Campaign of the Audubon Society. He also volunteered with the Sierra Club and the Lands Council, helping with their newsletters.

"As media consolidate and fewer corporations own more media, community radio is more important than ever," he said. "The FCC is allowing the largest media corporations in the world to gobble up the last frequencies, stations and newspapers."

"A global network of major media is owned by seven corporations. In 1998, media conglomerates reached 75 percent of the world. Fox News and other media giants have a blatant bias and take political sides, vilifying and name calling," he said.

"Democratic government cannot operate without people having access to media," Lupito said. "We have 'state-run media,' owned by a corporate class that funds politicians and pay to put people in office so they make rules favorable to them."

"We need free media to be a watchdog for abuse of power. Our media is in bed with power. The government even hires journalists to develop news pieces to push a slant, idea or product through Video News Releases (VNRs), which are fake news—propaganda. Nearly 25 federal organizations spend \$250 million producing hundreds of VNRs as fake TV



Lupito Flores has persisted in efforts to make community radio possible in Spokane.

news segments."

In 1999, while working with Kettle Range and Save the Reach, Lupito learned that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) was offering a new FM service, low-power, 100-watt FM.

"With most mainstream media controlled by huge corporations, citizen radio was appealing. Organizations and people working for peace, social justice and environmental sustainability never had a fair shake. Learning the FCC was giving a sliver of air space, I knew I had to act," he said.

**There are many regulations.** A 100-watt channel needs to be locally owned by a nonprofit in existence for at least two years and be for noncommercial community radio.

When low-power FM was instituted in 2000, 3,000 applied—about 60 percent were churches. In Spokane, five people came to the first gathering of people interested in a low-power station. They met at the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane.

In 2000, the application process began. Lupito and planners filled out pages of documents, hired a broadcast engineer and asked Citizens for Clean Air to serve as the nonprofit. The Community Building, at 35 W. Main, offered space for the station.

In 2001, a seven-day window opened in Washington, and Clean Air applied, but heard nothing until February 2003, when they received the permit.

Over the two years, they raised funds and kept up interest. By the summer of 2003, they had

100 founding members, who each gave \$100 or more.

By October 2003, they bought equipment. Lupito found parts of two towers and a local ironworkers union donated labor to make them into a 120-foot tower.

**The Prometheus Radio Project,** a low-power support group that does "station raisings," in the tradition of barn raisings, drew about 100 volunteers from around the country—Hawaii to New York—to help raise the tower and build the station. Lupito helped with a station raising in Louisiana.

Prometheus also held workshops, training people to use the equipment and do interviews.

"It was an engineering feat," said Lupito, describing working within the restriction requiring a low-power station to be three clicks away from any nearby station. A Sandpoint station is at 95.3, so Thin Air had to locate its transmitter antenna 10 miles west of downtown on the West Plains to avoid conflicting with that station.

**On October 26, 2003,** they flipped the switch and went on the air with 12 of the 64 program proposals submitted.

Because it was crackly downtown and could be picked up on the South Hill and North side, they needed a translator or repeater to rebroadcast the signal to a wider area on another frequency—92.3 FM—but the FCC would not allow Thin Air to own that frequency.

The Peace and Justice Action League applied and was given that 50-watt frequency. Then Thin Air

Radio could be heard downtown, throughout Spokane and as far as Coeur d'Alene, Spangle, Fish Trap and Deer Park.

"Most people listen to the station on the translator," said Lupito. "Some also listen to it online at kyrs.org."

The week the translator went on in February 2005, they learned the Sandpoint station had a permit to move its station closer to Spokane, which would knock Thin Air off the air.

**"We were discouraged,"** Lupito said. "We looked at several options. We wanted to play by the rules."

So they held a conference call with their broadcast attorney, the Prometheus Radio Project and their engineer. They talked with the staff of Senator Maria Cantwell, a champion of the low-power FM bill in 2004.

The law says low-power FM cannot be three clicks away from an existing station, but does not say it can't be two away, so they asked Senator Cantwell's staff to check with the Congressional Research Service. With the Senator's advocacy, the FCC agreed they could relocate to another frequency, 89.9 FM. The stations two channels away from that frequency granted waivers by

August 2006. The antenna was re-adjusted.

"The regulations show how the FCC and media corporations dominate what we see, hear and read," Lupito said. "The window to apply for low-power stations is closed, so there will be no more. Spokane is one of three big cities in the country to have a station. Most are in rural areas, but the cost of operations means many have stopped."

"Thin Air gives voice to the populations underserved and underserved by commercial or public radio," he said.

**The 60 programs**—most of which are weekly—include two local teen programs, Raise Your Voice by high school students and Detention hosted by middle school students; a Spanish program and a Russian program; a locally produced environmental show, Earth Matters Now; Gospel Hour and Persian Hour. Kim Thorburn has a program on public health issues. Brad Read does interviews on global and local issues on Zombie Nation. There Goes the Neighborhood looks at city and county government.

Music filling times when there are no programs includes reggae, hip hop, punk rock, blues, jazz, country, indie rock, world music and native music.

Thin-Air is listener-supported radio, relying on listeners to be members at \$25. Locally owned small businesses can underwrite programs.

**The station has applied** for its own nonprofit status as Thin Air Community Radio with a board of 14 directors to develop policies and build committees, so it is no longer a steering committee of Citizens for Clean Air.

Lupito, as the only full-time staff, raises funds and manages day-to-day operations. He worked on it five years as a volunteer, then quarter time, then half time. In February 2006, he came on full time with a half-time program coordinator and an underwriting coordinator working on commission. There's a volunteer coordinator and coordinator for the on-air fund drives. The office assistant is a part time volunteer. For information, call 747-3012.

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# Arts complement therapy and programs rehabilitating boys at ranch

By Deidre Jacobson

An integral part of the rehabilitation process for troubled boys living at Morning Star Boys Ranch on Glenrose Prairie, healing arts bring new hope and complement therapy and other programs.

Guiding growth and wholeness through the use of healing arts is the work of Sue Rolando, cultural diversity and healing arts facilitator for the 10- to 17-year-old boys at the ranch.

Having created Spiritleaves, a spiritual art form involving painting on maple leaves, Sue understands the healing value of art.

"I have used art to get through tough situations in my own life. I grew up with creativity in my home," she said.

As resident artist since 2002, she has sought a tangible way to bring healing through art, to help the boys express their feelings.

Through Art with a Heart, a nonprofit association dedicated to healing children and youth through creativity, she discovered the Chill and Spill Program.

The program offers 20 activities to promote self-awareness, self-expression, positive decision-making, hope and inspiration. Youth keep a journal to help them



**One resident said about this drawing in his "Chill and Spill" journal: "This is the flute of peace. This is where I go to find peace and to calm down. The dog in the front of the flute is magical. He protects my peace place. I also have a secret entrance that only I know about. No one else can use it. There is another door for the others to use. I want them to come."**

Photo provided by Sue

convey both their suffering and strength. They create collages, draw, paint and design a unique identity crest.

"Chill and Spill opens doors to healing," Sue said. "It helps our youth communicate difficult issues and emotions, reduce stress and normalize feelings. Pictures, drawings and words pour from the boys into their journals."

Sue encourages them to reflect, share present and past experiences

and find hope for the future.

Brian Barbour, program director for Morning Star Boys Ranch, said the healing arts program provides foundational work for the clinical staff.

"As the boys explore their identity and self awareness, the counseling is enriched," he said.

"The expression of emotions, including anger, through the arts is healing. Traditional treatment has been anger management.

Chill and Spill complements that program, allowing expression and release," said Brian.

Morning Star Boys Ranch, founded in 1957, provides treatment for youth who have not been helped by other programs. Some were in failed or failing adoptions, others have attachment disorders or authority issues.

The boys can stay up to 12 months, while clinical staff assess their needs, develop a treatment plan and provide rehabilitation services designed around their unique situations.

The program's ultimate goal is family unification or transition to independence.

Most attend public school. Many once went from school to school. Boys who need special assistance attend a transitional school in a one-room schoolhouse near the ranch. In the past nine years, all have graduated from high school.

The ranch has different residence houses for boys of different ages—one for pre-high school boys, others for high school students and youth over 18 needing continued support, such as while attending college.

Sue said that in providing the boys with opportunities to express themselves in healing arts, they "discover their talents and strengths, discern what is important in life and begin to set goals. They can safely explore their own hidden beliefs and desires."

One option involves a skateboard project. After the boys

take 15 hours of instruction on elements of art, they are given a blank skateboard deck and design art to decorate it. When the design is complete, the boys assemble the skateboard with wheels and bearings, a unique creation.

Sue incorporates awareness of diverse people and cultures into her program by inviting guests to share their traditions and arts each month. The boys also explore and experience cultural diversity programs in the community.

A Native American guest recently shared about the Native tradition of the talking stick and other aspects of the culture. During the presentation, the boys learned respect and listening skills, because only the person holding the talking stick could speak. All others have to listen as the speaker shares his ideas. After the presentation, the boys created talking sticks in Sue's art class.

Drawing supplies, painting supplies, glass fusion and clay are available for the boys' use. They throw, hand build, fire and glaze pots.

The finished products can be sold at the ranch's silent auction. They receive the proceeds.

Sue allows open studio time for the boys to work on projects.

"This time seems to be life-giving for them," she said.

Personal-interest time, part of the studio time, allows boys to make creative personal projects, which they give to their families or sell in the silent auction.

For information call 448-1412.

# Episcopal Diocese and congregations expand use of earth friendly practices

By Kathy Dellwo

While walking around her garden at Paulsen House and the grounds at St. John Episcopal Church, Gloria Waggoner realizes the natural system is efficient.

"It only breaks down when humans interfere. If we work with nature and not against it, we will benefit," she muses.

Gloria continues to work with nature and spread environmental awareness throughout the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane.

"Outside the lawns and gardens are flourishing from seven years of purely organic methods for feeding and weeding," she said.

The Myrtle Paulsen Quiet Meditation Garden at the rear of the parking lot is open to the public weekdays from early morning until evening, spring through fall.

"In our daily practices inside, we use earth- and people-friendly cleaning products and are changing to fluorescent light bulbs throughout the house as incandescent lights burn out," she said.

In addition, all office papers, magazines, cardboard and newspapers are recycled. The diocese subscribes to an on-site shredder and recycle bin from a local com-

pany for office correspondence and envelopes.

Gloria added that appliances are being updated to those bearing energy stars for efficient performance, and she plans to investigate alternative power sources for some energy needs.

She loves to talk with individuals and groups about the environment, and about social and economic justice.

"I am still engaged in working with the churches in our diocese towards going as 'green' as possible," she said.

For example, the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist has stopped using chemicals outside and serves fairly traded coffees at their Coffee House.

St. David's Episcopal Church is "on the path, heading in the direction of more environmentally friendly practices," she said. "They use only recycled paper for their bulletins and are recycling more and more."

St. Stephen's Church had decided to be a pilot project for environmental action.

"It will be interesting to see how far we can go with defining green in each church as there is such a desire to respond to the earth's and peoples' needs," Gloria said.

In the basement of Paulsen House, the nonprofit, environmentally aware lifestyle boutique, Rosa Gallica, offers fair-trade foods, skin products and other items, plus antiques, art, organic fertilizers and garden accessories.

The boutique also offers free environmental educational material and organic bedding plants.

"The first step toward helping our environment is to live in the present moment, to meditate, think, and to really see and observe nature, the nature within us and all around us," Gloria said.

For information, email gloria@spokanedioocese.org or call 624-3191.

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# Church in transition gives voice through song to people in transition

Having sold its 36-year-old building, the 121-year-old Covenant Christian Church sought a new style of ministry.

"We realized we our church was not the building but about being followers of God," said Julie Banks, moderator the last four years and a member since 1975 when she was in high school.

The church is now renting space on the third floor of the Ben Burr Office Building at 5915 S. Regal. It has an untraditional space for the church's praise worship. Its electronic musical instruments, audio-visual equipment and a 16-track recording studio are also conducive to its new musical outreach to homeless people and youth.

The move to this transitional space with a three-year lease has opened the congregation to envision how to become a "heart church," Julia said.

The pastor, Michael (Redhawk) Rice-Sauer, came to the church in 1995 in response to the congregation's desire for change.

When he went into the community to help the church find its ministry in the world, he found hungry, hurt, homeless people, and people feeding, giving homes, reading to and clothing them.

"The church decided to give voice to the voiceless, power to the powerless and sight to the blind. We want to be God's presence, creating relationships with people in need," he said.

Such relationships are developing through The Voiceless, a choir of homeless people he leads and through "HeartSongs," an annual concert the church promotes.

The concert is at 7 p.m., Friday, June 22, at the Bing Crosby Theater, 901 W. Sprague.

The concert includes The Voiceless, local musicians and a community choir, sharing in song the stories of "the least among us," the homeless people who are gaining



Voiceless Choir sings at the Spokane CROP Hunger Walk in April.

a voice through songs composed to tell their stories.

In addition to composing many of those songs, Redhawk recruited songwriters to meet with homeless people, hear their stories and compose songs to share them.

"HeartSongs raises consciousness so people know they are part of each other," he said.

The choir began in partnership with the Spokane Neighborhood Action Program (SNAP), first rehearsing at St. Ann's Catholic Church and meeting Monday evenings at the Salvation Army, beginning with a meal.

The Voiceless has given concerts at advocacy events, the CROP Hunger Walk and other nonprofits and church events.

Redhawk helped them record two CDs, "The Voiceless Among Us" and "The Voiceless Messengers." Proceeds go to help SNAP fund programs for homeless people.

"Voiceless people gain power when they gain their voice," Redhawk said. "How we treat

prisoners, the elderly, the mentally ill, the homeless and other 'least' is a true measure of who we are. The Gospel is about justice."

Julie said: "We often feel powerless to affect change, create justice, honor the least, give voice to the voiceless, but we can do it by taking tiny steps.

"HeartSongs shatters the image of the homeless being men standing on street corners. The average homeless person is nine years old, and most homeless people are families," she said.

"The Voiceless puts a human face on homelessness," Redhawk said, describing himself as a bard or troubadour who "sings about souls," telling stories of human beings living on the edge.

"Many people don't see homeless people because they choose not to see them," Julie said.

The song, "Gone," sings the experience of a mother, overextended by working two jobs to earn enough to survive, giving in to someone who offered her meth. Then she lost her home, her jobs,

her children and everything she worked for.

"Eventually she straightened out her life and now volunteers with us," Redhawk said.

"When you take a story that is part of your life and share it with me, it takes camp in me and becomes part of me," he said. "In the 'least' we find God's blessings. Words and music are powerful," he said.

For information, call 448-1311.

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## Jubilate! opens program to commuters

The Jubilate! Summer Festival 2007 from July 23 to 28 at Immaculate Heart Retreat Center in Spokane will encourage commuters to join in the ecumenical retreat, experiencing the program's worship, arts and theology.

Jubilate! offers participatory, visually enhanced, creative worship with varied music forms—from hand bells to sacred movement to congregational singing.

Beryl Ingram of Bellevue First United Methodist Church, chair of the Annual Conference Worship Planning, will be chaplain. She was on the United Methodist

Hymnal Revision Committee.

The keynoter is Robin Knowles Wallace, professor of worship and music at Methodist Theological Seminary in Ohio, speaking on "Re-Imagining Worship."

She has a doctoral degree in theology and worship from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and Northwestern University. She also has degrees in church music and theology. She served 25 years as church organist and choir director, and is author of four books on worship themes.

Erin Walker, faculty advisor for

international programs at Shoreline Community College, will direct the Jubilate Choir. She has a master's in vocal performance from the University of Idaho, was director of music at Blaine Memorial United Methodist in Seattle for six years and director of the 2006 Jubilate China Tour.

Jubilate! was established in 1978 by the Pacific Northwest United Methodist Conference and is a chapter of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts. For information, call 253-922-1410.

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Celebrating 50 Years

# Fig Tree stories give an overview of associate editor's life and gifts

*Continued from page 1*

journalism, oriented to building a more just society. Whether writing or editing articles that deal with issues of social concern—acquainting readers with injustices and sharing ways of being socially responsible as Christians—I engage in Christian education and promote justice.”

Sr. Bernadine described her childhood as “pleasant and ordinary,” in a lower-middle class family that had adequate food with its backyard pear and cherry trees, berry bushes and a grape vine.

“We had adequate clothing, not extras. As a child, I enjoyed sledding, skating, picnics, swimming, doing shows and playing school,” she wrote. “We were also a family of faith and strong religious and civic values.”

**Her family was the only** Irish Catholic family in the Seattle neighborhood where she grew up. Her brother, sisters and she played with neighborhood Protestant, Jewish and African-American children, and the families cared for one another.

Learning early that “people are people,” she valued and sought out relationships with people ethnically or religiously different from her.

“That neighborhood was a blessing. We were real neighbors. Some were life-long friends. Our front porch was the gathering place,” said Sr. Bernadine who attended Catholic and public schools.

“I realize how much of our religious faith is similar,” she said.

**For her jubilee**, the 50th anniversary as a Sister of the Holy Names, Sr. Bernadine reflected on her ecumenical and Catholic journey.

The idea of becoming a nun first surfaced when she was in junior high, but she forgot about it until she was in the first class of women admitted to Seattle College, now University, studying liberal arts with Jesuit teachers. She had to drop out when her mother became ill.

She felt a growing conviction that God was calling her to a religious life, and planned to enter in 1936, but her mother had a stroke and again needed her help.

“I had had fun in high school and college, enjoying ballroom dances at school. I enjoyed my social life, but it began to seem empty,” she said. “Even so, the decision to leave it for the convent was difficult.

**After struggling about her call**, she entered the congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, a natural for her



Sr. Bernadine Casey, SNJM, editing in 2004

because so many other family members were in that order.

“After I decided, I had no vocational indecision since the day I said, ‘All right, I’ll go.’ I was spared the problem some have in each step on the way to full profession,” she said. “God was calling me.”

She completed her bachelor’s degree in English and French at Marylhurst College near Portland, Ore., and later earned a master’s in English literature from Gonzaga.

She also studied at the Universities of Washington, Oregon and Notre Dame, Seattle University and the Catholic University Angers in France.

“I might not have chosen teaching as a career, but to be a Holy Names sister was to be a teacher. The hardest part was learning and preparing lessons for new subjects,” she said.

**She enjoyed interacting** with students, believing God wanted her to bring young people to a greater knowledge of God. Over the years, she has shared knowledge of God and God’s grace directly through religious education and indirectly by the religious atmosphere of her teaching and life.

She taught English, history, French and religion in both all-girls and co-ed high schools in Portland, Eugene, Medford

and Salem, Ore.; Winnepeg, Manitoba, Seattle and Spokane, where she taught at Holy Names Academy.

“There were good days and years, and hard ones,” she said. “Many students kept in touch for many years.”

Sr. Bernadine left the classroom in 1975 and helped out for a year at Marian Hall, her community’s convent for semi-retired sisters in Spokane. Then she went to Fort Wright College, first as campus housing director for three years and then in succession as assistant to the academic dean and the dean of students.

After the college closed in 1982, Sr. Bernadine took classes in radio and TV at Spokane Falls Community College.

While a student there, she became involved with the work of the Spokane Christian Coalition—later the Spokane Council of Ecumenical Ministries—with the Religious Broadcasting Commission. That involvement led to her connection with *The Fig Tree*.

“It was like the voice of the Lord. I was getting my resume ready for broadcast media, but by the second meeting of the Steering Committee for this new publication, I was asked to be associate editor. Although I had strong interest in and some ability for the

radio media, I felt clumsy about the mechanical technicalities, and it seemed that God just dropped this into my lap,” she said.

“Without Sr. Bernadine’s help, we could not have produced or continued *The Fig Tree*. She and I semi-volunteered our way into modest-paying jobs,” said Mary, “something few consider in this money-driven society.”

Bringing skills as an English teacher, Sr. Bernadine adjusted formal grammatical style to journalistic style, and *The Fig Tree* adapted Associated Press journalistic style to some grammatical matters on which Sr. Bernadine was adamant.

“Her talent in editing and proofreading has kept our accuracy high, not only in grammar but also in sensitivity to diverse religious understandings,” Mary said. “We had a great working re-

lationship and friendship, through struggles of editing one another’s work. Her skills complemented mine.”

Through her years with *The Fig Tree*, she interviewed more than  
*Continued on next page*



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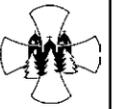
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# Sr. Bernadine valued ecumenical encounters, seeing 'people as people'

*Continued from previous page*  
250 people in local social agencies, on church committees and in community projects, people living active Christian lives.

"I have become acquainted—frequently in only an hour's interview—with many beautiful people: ordained and lay men and women, individuals who have shared with me, sometimes deeply, their personal stories and shown me a rich variety of gifts used for building the kingdom," she said. "They inspired me and enriched my life. God has often entered my soul through the wonder and the goodness of subjects of my feature stories."

Sr. Bernadine also enjoyed contacting and connecting with the many volunteers who helped mail and deliver papers. In the early years, there were hours of socializing around counting, sorting and bundling the newspapers to prepare them for bulk mailing, until computerized lists and automated services made it more practical to leave it to the printer.

"Sometimes the work was tedious. Fund raising and selling ads were not my most relished activity, but brought some non-monetary rewards, such as telephone acquaintances with people I never met in person," she said.

Many advertisers she brought in continue to have a regular presence in *The Fig Tree*.

"Not least, *The Fig Tree* has contributed to developing my social conscience and call to responsibility that broadened my horizons," she said. "Social justice, a key element in the charism of my community, whose educational mission is to develop and educate the whole person with preferential option for the poor and disadvantaged," she said.

"Through the people I interviewed, I have developed a deeper appreciation for other confessions. I didn't know before just how similar most of us are in beliefs and interpretation of Christ's message," Sr. Bernadine commented.

"I also have a deeper appreciation of my own tradition, the Catholic faith, which has been enhanced by the ecumenical encounters," she said.

Sr. Bernadine was active for many years at St. Patrick's Catholic Parish in Hillyard, where she lived with two other Holy Names sisters, before moving to Marian Hall and more recently to the Convent of the Holy Names at 2911 W. Fort Wright Dr., where she died.

At St. Patrick's, she was in the choir, on the social justice committee and formed an ecumeni-



Some of Sr. Bernadine Casey's Fig Tree family surround her after a healing service in the winter, Deidre Jacobson, Sr. Rose Theresa Costello, SNJM, Mary Stamp, Carl Milton and Nancy Minard.

Photo from Convent of the Holy Names archives

cal committee that spearheaded bringing many churches together for ecumenical services. She was also sacramental minister and sacristan for daily Mass in chapel.

She appreciated the opportunity to promote Christian unity both *The Fig Tree* and as neighborhood ecumenical coordinator through St. Patrick's ecumenical studies and worship experiences.

"Perhaps the day will come when intercommunion will be allowed," she said.

When Sr. Bernadine entered the Sisters of the Holy Names, who were founded in Montreal nearly 150 years ago, nuns wore black and white habits.

"Most of us now wear modern dress. We first changed in the 1960s to a shorter black skirt, jacket and short veil. In the 1970s, I stopped wearing a veil and went into colors, which I consider to be among God's good gifts.

"Our manner of dress used to make us more outwardly visible, but now we are more visible in terms of being out in the world in places we never were before.

"We are mixing more with the secular community," she said. "There is now more emphasis on responsibility to live out our religious life than on following specific rules within the framework of a daily community schedule. We have more open space to live

out our commitment."

At first, most Holy Names sisters were classroom or music teachers. Now there are fewer schools and the sisters are in a variety of ministries in Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba; Massachusetts, New York, Florida, Washington, Oregon and California; Haiti and Lesotho, an independent state surrounded by South Africa. Some are working in special ministries among the poor in Honduras, Mexico, Texas and Mississippi.

Another one of her passions was working with Capuchin monks in Detroit to help promote the sainthood of her uncle, Father Solanus Casey, a Capuchin Franciscan friar who was the monastery doorkeeper. She had hoped to go there in July.

He was a simple man who brought joy to the lives of many people.

Sr. Bernadine helped his words of faith spring to life 43 years after his death in a collection of his letters she selected and edited for the book, *Letters from Solanus Casey, OFM CAP.*

Sr. Bernadine often prayed to Fr. Solanus, revering him for his humility and the compassion with which he comforted families as they struggled with sickness and other problems.

In one letter, Fr. Solanus told a

friend, "God condescends to use our power if we don't spoil God's plans by ours."

In the introduction, Sr. Bernadine points out that "Fr. Solanus perhaps without being consciously aware of it lived and preached a code that ran counter to the spirit and culture he knew in his 87 years of life. Not only did it bring him happiness and deep joy in living even in the midst of suffering, but also the wisdom and compassion growing out of it brought positive things to the lives of thousands of other people, even in the midst of their suffering."

Even when she knew she was dying, Sr. Bernadine said she didn't feel like she was dying. She was considering what her next career might be.

"Sr. Bernadine, called 'Bunnie' by many, was ageless—standing tall, still able to hear and mentally and spiritually clear. She defied the reality that we are all dying, because her path on that journey was to live each day," said Mary.

"She blessed the life of *The Fig Tree*, her family, her church, her religious community, the community and the world," Mary said.



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## Sr. Bernadine Casey chose fun, faith and living over sorting things

Her step was light though shortened by recurring illness. Her smile was always welcoming. It was easy to forget she was uncomfortable and tired easily in her last months. She rarely mentioned it.

Sr. Bernadine Casey was one of *The Fig Tree* founders. This is the first issue that hasn't had her fingerprints on it, but her fingerprints will always be here.

Late in April, she asked for copies of the stories for May, and editor Mary Stamp took them to her in the care center at the Convent of the Holy Names. She could not complete the job to her satisfaction, but still caught errors the rest of us didn't.

Incidentally, we began following the now common practice of not italicizing the name of a publication, but Sr. Bernadine liked the old way, so we are doing it in this issue.

During the early years of *The Fig Tree*, Sr. Bernadine was involved in all aspects of production: interviewing, writing, editing, ad sales, distribution, board meetings and fund raising. Over the years, she cut back to editing, board meetings and distribution.

Editing starts third Fridays and continues the following Monday and Thursday. While we sat at the dining room table with our different colored pens, most of the work was silent as we read through the stack of stories Mary printed out for our corrections, revisions and comments.

Occasionally, we would have much to catch up on. Surprised at how much time we let slip by, like two guilty schoolgirls we would giggle as we sorted out and edited short ones so we would have something to show when Mary brought more.

Conversations covered everything from delight at the Dalai Lama's solution for

world hunger—"share"—to the gross abuse of apostrophes and quotation marks in popular usage today. We struggled with whether dashes are grammatically moral. Two former English teachers were still working on other people's spelling and syntax.

At a vigil or memorial, we usually know where we fit in the life of the person being remembered, but we don't always have a grasp on the scope of that life. The vigil in the chapel of the Convent of the Holy Names on May 14 gave many people a chance to see how others fit into her overall picture.

Sr. Mary Ann Farley, convent community director, called the service a dance to celebrate Sr. Bernadine. "It's as if she typed a tune for us. She is the common theme among us. We celebrate her dance of life. In her religious life, she danced to music God set for her graciously, gracefully, consciously and beautifully. With her death, we have the gift of looking at her life and God's marvelous work through her life."

Jim Conley, a nephew who lives in Florida, considered his Aunt Bonnie his second mother. She took his children canoeing near Seattle, read poetry to them, and danced the conga with them. "She embraced life to the fullest. Now she embraces eternity," he concluded.

Sr. Anne Herkenrath, Sr. Bernadine's niece, read an autobiographical sketch Sr. Bernadine had written. Parts of it are quoted elsewhere in this issue.

Sr. Anne also commented on noticing a stack of *Fig Trees* in Sr. Bernadine's room at the care center. "The morning after she died, the stack was gone. I could only think

there was a miracle and that she had come back and handed them out."

In fact, Sr. Bernadine carefully told Mary where she delivered copies in the convent. Mary told Sr. Rose Theresa Costello, who now helps with editing and volunteer tasks. She hoped to take Sr. Bernadine in a wheelchair to deliver them, but she was too weak, so Sr. Rose Theresa delivered them.

Mary spoke of their work together, from the earliest planning meetings to the May issue, and how Sr. Bernadine had become a member of her family. She commented that she and I decided that when we grow up, we want to be like Sr. Bernadine.

Her uncle, Fr. Solanus Casey, is being considered for sainthood. She helped the Capuchin community in Detroit by giving them family history and her editing skills. Brother Richard Merling, OFM Cap, said, "We appreciated her wisdom and help. She edited his letters for a book. We appreciated her humor."

Brother Leo Wollenweber, OFM Cap, said she "made him come alive for us. Her book of his letters showed his humanity and simple virtues. The short biography I wrote would not have been done without her expert editing. The last time Brother Richard and I came to Spokane, we rode the carousel in the park. Sr. Bernadine and I were in our 80s. She got the gold ring."

Jo Hendricks, a co-founder of *The Fig Tree*, described her as "a workaholic for the Lord. We would sit and chat. She always had that twinkle in her eye. If I was mixed up on Scripture, she was helpful. If she said something critical, she did it in a kind way, asking a question, 'Do you think it could be this way?' Her heart and soul was in

working for a better world."

In a poem she had written for Sr. Bernadine's birthday, another friend expressed the theme of dances in her life and the way she used words to shake the world awake to a justice journey.

Sr. Anne read a poem Sr. Bernadine had written while on retreat 20 years ago. It speaks of darkness enveloping her and of seeing ahead of her: "The spirit of dance takes hold of me, and I take one joyous leap into the night. ... Then I pirouette myself into a whirl-around, buoyant and starry and free."

Commenting on Sr. Bernadine's habit of looking ahead purposefully, Sr. Mary Ann said, "Three weeks before she died, she was annoyed that I suggested she might not make it to Detroit this summer."

Opening the memorial Mass, Sr. Mary Ann assured: "There is time. Bunnie lived a long life, but never had enough time. She had several careers: teacher, administrator, media worker and an unknown next vocation. She was committed to her faith and ecumenism. She enjoyed dancing, theatre, symphony, travel, boating and outings.

"She chose fun over sorting her things.

"She knew there were seasons, but death had little to do with her. She was so concentrated on living that she was hardly aware she was dying. Much to her surprise, Sr. Bernadine died while planning a retreat to Cottonwood, a trip to visit her brother Jim, and a trip to Detroit."

She also hoped to be with us for *The Fig Tree's* 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, so we will bring her to the 25th by compiling a book of selected articles.

Nancy Minard, editorial team

## Suspicion of people of different cultures, faiths still in national psyche

More than 60 years ago, America in a frenetic attempt at national security, rounded up thousands of loyal U.S. citizens, stripped them of most of their property and herded them into barbed wire encampments, termed "internment camps." These innocent victims of our collective paranoia had done nothing deserving this treatment except possess the physical characteristics of their Japanese ancestry. It was an act fueled by fear, vindictiveness and rampant suspicion. It will forever remain as an unre-

quited black mark on our national history.

Pearl Harbor had been bombed and nearly the entire Pacific fleet wiped out. What was to prevent Japanese sympathizers from committing further acts of war through sabotage and espionage? The simplest way to deal with the problem was to remove anyone who even had the appearance of being Japanese. Thus went the logic. Was it just or reasonable? Of course not.

Why bring up all that now? Only because the more times change, the more

they remain the same. Today I detect in our national psyche much the same kind of suspicion and mistrust. Compassion takes a back seat to self preservation, reason to manias, and justice to fear.

Hispanics are "destroying our culture." Muslims are "taking over the world." Chinese are "ruining the economy." Individuals are being judged, not by their loyalties, opinion or world views, but by their dress, accents and religion.

Every time hysteria holds the power,

justice is the victim. The ancient prophet, Amos, made it clear that God has no primary interest in large worship gatherings, impressive offerings or mesmerizing music.

Rather, he said, "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream. (Amos 5:24) In this age of national jitters, security should not mean the demise of justice.

Wilbur Rees - Shalom United Church of Christ - Richland - guest editorial

Lecture Excerpts

## Sounding Board

Reflections

## Sojourners editor encourages youth to connect religion and justice

Impressed by efforts of Gonzaga University students to bridge the divide between students of differing persuasions, Sojourners editor and author Jim Wallis came to reinforce Coexist. Speaking in May at St. Aloysius Church, he said he believes such a group can be part of a public movement to help people make changes and be "the ones we have been waiting for," overcoming mountains of violence and apathy.

**Bringing diverse people together** does not mean they would agree, but might mean they would put the best interpretation on what each says. Jim wants people of faith and politicians to learn from each other. Having grown up in a Christian family, he left the church when justice claimed his heart, because he thought church and justice were not compatible:

"It's sad when justice cuts into young people's hearts, and they become unsure about religion, the moral foundation that leads to a hunger for justice. Many don't know they can be Christian and care about poverty, war and the environment.

"The idea that religion is on one or the other side of the aisle—Democratic or Republican—is silly. God challenges politics and politicians for failing to address the issues of our time: 30,000 children die each day for lack of clean drinking water.

Millions lack food. Global warming is changing our climate. There is genocide in Darfur. Women and children are trafficked. Terrorism arises from endless war."

**Politics is broken**, because it fails to address the major issues of life and the world. Instead of solving problems, politicians use issues to stir people's fears, blame the other side, and then take a poll to see who won. The country is hungry for political solutions and hope. Social movements with spiritual bases are arising, he said.

"Left and right keep us from solving problems," said Jim, whose book says *The Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It*. "People are not looking to the left or right but to the moral choices beneath political debates, seeking a moral center."

"Faith helps when things seem insurmountable. We won't act for social justice without a revival. Young people focus on spirituality, not religion, as if it's a new denomination. To do justice, we need to harness spiritual power.

**"I thought racism was political**, and religion was personal. God is personal, but not private. God knows all about us and still wants a relationship with us," Jim said.

"We think the choice is between belief and secularism," he said, "but it's between hope and cynicism. Cynics see the world

realistically and try to change the bad stuff for a while. When it doesn't change, they become discouraged and step back into cynicism, thinking it can't change.

"Hope is a decision made because of faith. Hoping for the impossible, we see evidence that makes us unsure, but then watch evil change."

**He saw change in South Africa** when Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu called for solidarity to end apartheid. Jim joined clergy around the world for a rally. Police canceled it, so Tutu led worship in St. George's Cathedral. Outside were three times as many police in riot gear. As he began to preach, some came inside and lined the walls, holding note pads and recorders to take down what he said.

"You're powerful, but you're not gods," Tutu told them "I serve God, and God will not be mocked." He smiled at them. "So we invite you to join the winning side."

Ten years later Nelson Mandela, released from prison and elected President, turned to Tutu in his inauguration speech and said: "Today they join the winning side."

"We could not see that 10 years earlier. Our faith led to hope and action that brought change," Jim said.

**He knows pressures students face**, leaving college in debt and tempted to find

careers to earn money, rather than taking time to choose a vocation through internships and volunteering to use their gifts.

"You may lose track of time discerning where your gift meets the crushing needs of the world," Jim said.

He then told about preaching as a young, white pastor in the late Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, pulpit in Atlanta. He felt jittery as he began to preach.

A voice said, "Help him. Lord." Then, "Preach it!" Soon Jim was "preaching it." After the service he met Deacon Johnson, saying, "You pulled the sermon out of me." The deacon replied, "I've done it many times."

**"Bad religion** pulls out our fear, prejudice, hate and inability to talk about issues with civility. It may lead us to kill each other. Good religion pulls out compassion and hunger for justice.

"When people say a problem is too big, the budget is too small and there are no Martin Luther Kings, we need to hope and then watch evil change. We are the ones we have been waiting for."

**The end of the war in Iraq** will take an act of faith when citizens form a bipartisan movement that changes politics: "We are to be prophetic, interrogators and the wind that changes direction."

# Churches seek just peace in Middle East

To highlight the urgency for peace in Palestine and Israel, the World Council of Churches (WCC), member churches and related organizations are organizing a week of prayers, seminars and advocacy June 3 to 9 to mark the anniversary of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The goal is to raise awareness in churches and society and to call governments to new efforts to end the conflict and negotiate a just settlement.

Participants from Australia to Sweden and Canada to South Africa are organizing peace walks, meeting their governments or staging public forums. An ecumenical service will be held in Jerusalem on Sunday, June 3.

In the United States, church groups are joining mass public demonstrations.

In Brussels and other European capitals, Pax Christi members are part of joint Roman Catholic delegations to the European Union and member governments.

In South Africa, the national broadcaster has been asked to hold talk shows with ecumenical accompaniers, WCC volunteers who have lived with those affected by the occupation.

In Stockholm, the archbishop is inviting the media to breakfast.

In Sydney, an interfaith prayer service will be followed by the planting of an olive tree with the local Palestinian community.

In some places, especially the Nordic countries, church events related to Middle East peace are routine. Other churches are taking action for the first time as part of this WCC initiative.

The initiative is called "International Church Action for Peace in Palestine and Israel."

Events will take place in 14 countries and news is still coming in from the 100-plus countries in the membership of the WCC and Pax Christi, as well as the Lutheran World Federation, which has endorsed the initiative.

The Jerusalem prayers and readings, distributed around the world, have raised much interest.

In the Philippines, the Netherlands and scattered congregations in Australia, for example, parishes using the service are likely to generate wide participation.

The search for peace between Israelis and Palestinians has been on the agenda of WCC governing bodies since 1948. Judging from the frequency with which it arises, its importance to member

churches has only grown as conflict and crisis continue.

In addition, the Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism (ECOT), which brings together church and other networks, advocates for tourism in the region that is fair and equitable, enriched by insight from people-to-people exchanges.

ECOT visitors to the Middle East see the occupation, sanctions, violence, hardships and suffering among Palestinians. They find fear, anxiety, violence and suffering among Israelis.

"ECOT calls for a just peace that will allow both to enjoy lives informed accurately by govern-

ment structures, governed by justice and human dignity," said Caesar D'Mello, executive director of ECOT, which has headquarters in Thailand. "A Just Peace in Palestine is the reverse side of a Just Peace for Israel."

"The Palestinian, and Israeli, people have suffered enough. It is a tragedy that precious human energy has been expended on the blame game, and not on peacemaking. It is time for those with power and influence to exercise a new vision, a new imagination, and a new courage. The world awaits," he said.

WCC and ECOT News

## Calendar of Events

**Check with your congregation about summer opportunities for church camping experiences and vacation Bible schools**

- June 1-16 • **Habitat for Humanity-Spokane Blitz Build** - call 534-3553
- June 2-July 21 • **Leadership Garden** service-learning opportunity, 5305 N. Harvard, 8 a.m. - noon, Saturdays - 323-3575
- June 7 • **Fig Tree Board**, Manito United Methodist Church, 3220 S. Grand, 1 p.m.
- June 7-9 • **Organizational Leadership Seminar**, Joseph Albert, associate professor of organizational leadership, Continuing Education at Gonzaga University - 323-3572 or www.gonzaga.edu/ce
- June 8, 15, 22 • **Film and discussion series on gangs**, Project HOPE, Salem Lutheran, 1428 W. Broadway, 6:30 p.m. - 328-6527
- June 9 • **Race Unity Day**, Coeur d'Alene City Park, 1-4 p.m. - 208-664-5410
- June 9 - Aug 25 • **Conservation Northwest Hikes** listed at www.conservationnw.org/events - 747-1267
- June 12 • **"Becoming a Healing Church,"** First Church of the Open Bible, 8303 N. Division, 7 p.m. - 443-2451
- **"Deconstructing Empire: The Hands of Empire,"** Mark Hamlin, 35 W. Main, 7 p.m. - 838-7870
- June 14 • **"Becoming a Healing Church,"** Spokane Valley Nazarene, 15515 E. 20th Ave., 10 a.m. - 443-2451
- June 21 • **Directory of Congregations and Community Resources** publication and distribution - call 323-4037
- June 22 • **"HeartSongs,"** Bing Crosby Theater, 901 W. Sprague, 7 p.m. - 448-1311
- June 25-July 26 • **Summer Academy** for Native American and Alaskan Native Students, Spokane Community College - 533-8009
- June 27 • **"American Blackout,"** 92.3 FM Film, Community Building, 35 W. Main, 8 p.m. - 747-3807
- June 28 • **"Becoming a Healing Church,"** Life Center, 1202 Government Way, 1 p.m. - 443-2451
- July 9-13 • **Whitworth Institute of Ministry, "Wisdom from the Elders,"** with Eugene Peterson, Roberta Hestenes and Earl Palmer, Whitworth University, 300 W. Hawthorne - 777-4345 or tsutherland@whitworth.edu
- July 11 • **"United for Peace: Family Disputes,"** Celeste Crine, OSF, St. Joseph Family Center, 1016 N. Superior, 5:15 p.m. - 483-6495
- July 15 • **Spokane Fall Folk Festival** performer application deadline, forms at www.spokanefolklore.org
- July 21 • **"Christmas in July,"** Habitat Builders Supply - 535-9517
- July 21-22 • **Festival of the Arts** on the Shadowy St. Joe, St. Maries - 208-245-3417
- July 23-28 • **"Jubilate!"** ecumenical retreat and workshops on "Reimagining Worship," Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, 253-922-1410
- July 30 • **Catholic Charities Grant Seminar**, 1023 W. Riverside, 1 p.m. - 358-4273
- Aug 6 & 9 • **National Days of Remembrance and Action**, "Rekindling the Memory of Hiroshima and Nagasaki" - www.icpj.net/?p=132
- Aug 5 & 7 • **"Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival on Tour,"** Benefit for The Lands Council and Center for Justice, New Magic Lantern Theatre, Saranac Building, 25 W. Main, - 838-4912
- Aug 8 • **"United for Peace: Work Situations,"** Celeste Crine, OSF, St. Joseph Family Center, 1016 N. Superior, 5:15 p.m. - 483-6495
- Aug 11 • **"Reuse-A-Shoe"** Collection at Kids Day, Gondola Meadows, Riverfront Park, Spokane Regional Solid Waste System Booth - 625-6800
- Aug 18 • **Unity in the Community**, Riverfront Park - 838-1881
- Alt. Tues • **Need to Know**, Emmanuel Lutheran, 314 S. Spruce - 848-4409
- Tues-Sats • **Habitat-Spokane** work days - 534-2552
- Fris • **Colville Peace Vigil** - 675-4554
- 3rd Mon • **NAACP** - 467-9793
- 1st Sat • **Ministers' Fellowship Union and Ministers' Wives/Widows Fellowship**, Holy Temple Church of God in Christ, 806 W. Indiana 624-0522
- 2nd, 4th Weds • **Pax Christi**, St. Joseph's Catholic, 1503 W. Dean, noon - 844-4480
- Sept 5 • **Fig Tree Distribution**, St. Mark's Lutheran 24th & Grand, 9 a.m.
- Sept 6 • **Fig Tree Board**, Manito UMC, 3220 S. Grand, 1 p.m.

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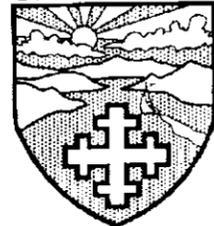
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In political science and environmental studies

# Professor knows balance appears unbalanced to those taking sides

Seeking to present a balanced picture as he teaches classes on environmental studies, political science and the Middle East at Gonzaga University, Jon Isacoff is aware that presenting a balance of perspectives may seem unbalanced to people of strong views.

He finds that true both in the area of his research—the Arab-Israeli conflict—and in environmental studies.

“As an educator, I hope to give students ideas and tools to use to make a difference,” he said, such as helping people weigh economic values with environmental values, or weigh the perspectives and experiences of both Israelis and Palestinians.

“Gonzaga’s new environmental studies program is not training activists, although some may choose that direction. Our goal is to invite students to look at implications of political, scientific, philosophical, historical, psychological, religious and sociological perspectives on environmental issues,” he said.

The program covers issues from water quality to pesticide use, from civil engineering to recycling products, from toxic waste cleanup to the divine in nature.

Five core faculty and eight affiliated faculty from a variety of disciplines help students work in science labs, study environmental policy, learn about the history of wilderness areas and explore the ecological philosophies of Henry David Thoreau and John Muir. There are 19 students enrolled.

Environmental studies were in the plans before Jon came three years ago.

While it is being offered as a minor with a broad curriculum and an interdisciplinary seminar, he hopes it will become a major.

“Around the country, and especially in the Northwest, environmental studies has become a standard part of the liberal arts curriculum,” Jon said.

His interest in the environment began when he was growing up in Armonk, N.Y., outside New York City. When he was 11, his family began hiking, backpacking and bird watching in national parks in California.

Academically, his interest in environmental studies stems from teaching a class on global environmental politics when he was a teaching assistant at the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned a doctoral degree in political science in 2002. He also taught at St. Joseph’s University in Philadelphia.

Jon’s doctoral research was on the politics of Israel and Palestine, which took him to the Middle East



Jon Isacoff

in 1994, 1997 and 1999. There he experienced the tenuousness of his concept of balance. He found “no balance in the Arab-Israeli conflict.”

Despite his Jewish heritage, Jon does not like to be characterized as taking sides in the Arab-Israeli dispute.

“I’m pro-Israel, pro-Palestine and pro-human. For some, just saying that Palestinians have rights means being biased. When I say that I consider myself pro-human, I mean that both sides—all people—have rights and reasonable needs,” he explained.

“Some people on either side think that it’s not right to acknowledge the other side’s rights,” he said.

Jon believes that in the United States, there is more empathy for Israel’s problems with terrorism and more identity with its cultural, political and military life. So he thinks there is need for knowledge of the Palestinian story.

of Catholic leaders globally and locally supporting the integrity of nature.

“To study nature is to study the human relationship to the environment,” said Jon.

“A social justice thread runs through environmental conflicts between those with more power and those with less power. Knowledge taught is usually what

those in power want taught,” he said. “The same is true in the Arab-Israeli conflict. We know what those in power want us to know.”

“The goal of courses on those issues is to advance intellectual understanding of problems and help students contemplate solutions,” he said.

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Location: East Valley High School Cost: \$20

**Save the River Camp (July 16-27)**  
Ages: 13-18 Time: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Location: Peaceful Valley  
Community Center  
Cost: \$270; \$20 registration fee

**Modeling the Environment Camp (July 23-27)**  
Ages: 13-18 Time: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Location: East Valley High School Cost: \$20

**Help the Animals Camp (July 30-August 3)**  
Ages: 13-18 Time: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Location: YWCA Downtown  
Cost: \$135; \$20 registration fee

**Making Environmental Video Games (August 6-10)**  
Ages: 13-18 Time: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Location: East Valley High School Cost: \$20

(There is no additional charge for camps above. Camp costs are provided by a grant from the National Science Foundation.)

**Biz Miz Camp (August 13-17) GIRLS ONLY**  
Ages: 13-18 Time: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Location: YWCA Downtown Cost: \$20

**Street Art Camp (August 20-24)**  
Ages: 13-18 Time: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
Location: The Courtyard Office Center  
Cost: \$135; \$20 registration fee

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