

Ecumenical Order of Charity

Community Newsletter

Online Edition – June 2002

Letter from the Editor

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Another Days of Renewal has passed. And wasn't this a good one? DOR 2002 has got to go down in the history books as our coming-of-age party. The "honeymoon" is over, and we are finally ready to undertake substantive questions and a long look at who we are and where we are going. All signs of a healthy, growing community!

In Shaffer and Anundsen's book, **Creating Community Anywhere**, they discuss phases of community development and compare their ideas with those of other writers on the subject. I have reproduced a table below showing the evolution of community building. Where do you think we are on this table?

Phases of Community Development

A rough comparison of other systems with Shaffer and Anundsen's

Peck	Pseudo-community	Chaos		Emptiness Community	
Tifts	Spring/ Childhood	Summer/ Adolescence	Autumn/ Adulthood	Winter/ Golden Age	
Campbell	Romance	Power Struggle	Stability	Commitment/ Co-Creation	
Shaffer/ Anundsen	Excitement Getting High On Possibilities	Autonomy: Jockeying for Power	Stability: Settling into Roles and Structures	Synergy: Allowing Self And Group to Mutually Unfold	Transformation: Expanding, Segmenting, Or Disbanding

Congratulations to Br. Henri and Sr. Patricia on their first profession of vows, to Sr. Cathy and Br. Lou Anthony on their renewal of vows, and to Sr. Diana on her profession of life vows. Welcome to our new postulant, Curtis Beardsley and thank you for the bookworm bookmarks. It was also nice to get to meet some associates that most of us had no idea even existed! Congratulations to Br. Mark on his consecration to the Episcopacy of the Church of Antioch. I haven't seen so many pointed heads since I taught my last humanities class! It was a very impressive

service, and the cake wasn't bad either! Another plus was meeting Paul, Mark's brother.

Wasn't the Lutheran Retreat Center – not to mention their dining room – a great place to be? Thanks go to Br. Mark for finding such a nice location and for making the arrangements and to Br. Lou for the Spirit in the Desert “commemorative” coffee cups. I still haven't lost mine yet in the Bermuda Triangle called my desk!

Arizona was more than I had hoped for. Isn't it nice to know that **Arizona Highways** isn't just “making up” those pictures of that incredible scenery and that a place as beautiful as Sedona really exists somewhere in the world? I have seen pictures of the Chapel of the Holy Cross off and on now for years. I couldn't believe I was actually there. Looking out from the parking lot across the Arizona landscape filled me with the overpowering beauty of nature. I thought: God must want us to be happy here, because It made everything so beautiful!

Thanks to Br. Dale for devising the schedule and to the presenters of our various discussions on the vows: Simplicity of Life, Br. Benjamin; Purity of Heart, Br. John; Obedience, Sr. Patricia; opening meditation and Non-Violence, Sr. Diana; and Universal Citizenship, Br. Henri, as well as to all of the individuals responsible for our diverse “offices”. I ought to also mention here, Kathy Brietenkam for securing copies of **One World, One Heart** by Susan Schultz for us.

It was absolutely delightful to meet Sr. Diana's friend, Mary Margaret; her partner, Kathy; and Kathy's nephew, Josh. And wasn't Mary Margaret's studio interesting? You just know anyone with that many pictures of asses on her wall has got to be a fun person!

Thanks go to Br. Benjamin and Br. Hank for sharing their pictures with us and for the unsung heroes/heroines who were coerced into the endless orgy of picture taking that is always a part of any EOC adventure. And finally, congratulations to Sr. Pat on her appointment to the formation team. Enough for now.

Peace and love,

Br. John

**Since there is no rice in the begging bowl,
I put in flowers! – Basho (1644-1694)**

Once a Prophet, Always a Prophet!

The following is part of a sermon given by Archbishop Oscar Romero on July 8, 1979. I thought it would be interesting to quote it here in light of the current scandal revolving around priestly sexual abuse and the efforts of the hierarchy to deny culpability in the handling of these cases. As Archbishop Romero says, a church that refuses to acknowledge its own shadow side “is not the authentic church of Christ”:

When Father Rafael Palacios was murdered in Santa Tecla,
and his body was laid out here,
I said that he was still preaching,
calling attention
not only to crimes outside the church
but to sins within the church.
The prophet also decries sins inside the church.
And why not?
We bishops, popes, priests, nuns, Catholic educators –
we are human, and as humans we are sinful
And we need someone to be a prophet for us too
and call us to conversion
and not let us set up religion
as something untouchable.
Religion needs prophets, and thank God we have them,
because it would be a sad church
that felt itself owner of the truth
and rejected everything else.
A church that not only condemns,
a church that sees sin only in others
and does not look at the beam in its own eye,
is not the authentic church of Christ.

Growth is the only evidence of life. - Cardinal Newman

Food Facts

The following information appeared in the May 24, 2002, issue of the **National Catholic Reporter**:

- The creation of a single hamburger patty (often containing the flesh of up to 100 different cows) uses enough fossil fuel to power a car 20 miles and enough water for 17 warm showers.
- As much as 8% of the weight of supermarket chicken is not meat, but a “fecal soup” from water used in processing chickens into meat. If the U.S. Department of Agriculture were to repeal the 8% rule, Tyson Chicken alone would lose about \$40 million in annual gross profits.
- If water used by the meat industry were not subsidized by taxpayers, common hamburger meat would cost \$35 a pound.
- According to **Bread for the World**, a nationwide Christian citizens movement seeking justice for the world’s hungry people by lobbying our nation’s decision makers, the population of Oklahoma is 3,338,278. Of that total:

14% (478,158) of the people live in poverty (compared to 11.3% nationwide).

19% (161,483) of children live in poverty (compared to 16.4% to 9.7% nationwide).

The maximum cash benefit level for a family of three with no income in Oklahoma is \$292 per month.

- In Oklahoma there is a **60 month lifetime time limit**, benefits **do not** continue to children after an adult in the household has reached the time limit.

**It is one thing to praise discipline,
And another thing to submit to it. – Miguel De
Cervantes**

[Unitarian Universalist Association Principles](#)

Years ago – back in the 60s I think – I read a **Newsweek** article on the merging of the Unitarian-Universalists and the prediction of a bright future for their denomination. Well-known for their openness and diversity, as well as their ability to poke fun at themselves, someone in the article defined UUs as “atheists who haven’t gotten out of the habit of going to church.” Well, I never forgot that definition or

the healthiness of the religious sense that would allow the publication of such a funny, self-deprecating definition in a national magazine.

I was looking over the UUA website yesterday for some information and ran across the UUA Principles. Following is a list of those principles; I think you will find it interesting to see how these same principles are reflected in **The Founding Document**:

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations,
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations,
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men, which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life,
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
- Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Same Song, Different View

Psalm 46 – Zen-Inspired Translation

You are our protection and strength
Help in the storm of anguish and despair
Exactly and easily found close at hand
So we are not afraid

Even when earth's in upheaval
When mountains are carried to the sea
When the sea's waters roar and foam
And the mountains quake and tremble
with the waters swelling -

In the middle of the world there is a
river
Streams run to it, making glad your
cities
Making glad the places where you are
known
You flow as the waters of that river
And she shall not be moved
For you are with her
You are the morning that dawns over
the quiet waters

Nations rage, kingdoms tumble –
This is the sound of your voice
This is the earth melting away

You are with us, our defense, our
silent center
What we see is all your doing
These desolations

Psalm 46 – Common English Version

God is our mighty fortress,
always ready to help in times of
trouble.
And so we won't be afraid!

Let the earth tremble
and the mountains tumble into
the deepest sea.
Let the ocean roar and foam,
and its raging waves shake the
mountains.

A river and its streams bring joy to
the city,
which is the sacred home of
God Most High.
God is in that city, and it won't be
shaken.
He will help it at dawn.

Nations rage! Kingdoms fall!
But at the voice of God the
earth itself melts.
The Lord All-Powerful is with us.
The God of Jacob is our
fortress.

Come! See the fearsome things
the Lord has done on earth.

These terrifying moments –
Only your unmoving movement –

You cause wars to cease when they cease,
to cease forever
You break the bow, snap the spear
Burn up the war wagons

Be still – be still!
And know me
Be still and know
That I am what the nations grope toward
I am earth's desire

So we know you are with us
Our defense at the silent center of things

- Norman Fischer
- **Opening to You: Zen-Inspired Translations of the Psalms**

I compared this zen-inspired translation of Psalm 46 with the Common English translation, because it struck me as being the “wordiest” zen anything I’ve ever read! What do you think?

**Why wait for Heaven? Have fun now . . .
Let's choose to be like the angels who fly freely
Because they take themselves so lightly. – Ruth Hanna**

God brings wars to an end all over
the world.
He breaks the arrows, shatters the
spears,
and burns the shields.

Our God says, “Calm down, and
learn that I am God!

All nations on earth will honor
me.”

The Lord All-Powerful is with us.
The God of Jacob is our
fortress.