



RETURN TO PALESTINE IMPRESSIONS OF AN UNHOLY HOLY LAND

By Dn. Vicki Gray, Christ the Lord Church, Pinole, CA

This is a follow-up to Dn. Gray's article *Witness in Palestine*, published in *Diakoneo* Vol. 30, #4. Dn. Gray is a 1962 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and served in Vietnam. A Foreign Service officer for 26 years, Dn. Gray was Director for Northern Europe. She has a PhD in Political Science and taught at the National Defense University.

Editor's Note: Nineteen links to videos and web sites that are integral to a full understanding of this article have been placed as end notes at the end of the article and are referenced in the text.

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It was still winter, but the Arab Spring had already begun to blossom. Travelling again to Palestine, I was anxious to learn what had changed, what remained the same since my last trip to the Holy Land little more than two years ago.

Once again, I was in the company of some thirty Northern California members of Sabeel (the "Way" or "Well") an ecumenical Palestinian Christian liberation theology group based in Jerusalem¹. Our main purpose was to attend Sabeel's February 23-28, 2011 Eighth International Conference in Bethlehem, "Challenging Empire: God, Faithfulness and Resistance," around which we would wrap another week travelling the length and breadth of Israel/Palestine.

Our group this time was somewhat more ecumenical...not just Christians, but some with Jewish and Muslim roots. Since there were among us several Palestinian-Americans and a few twenty-somethings – the sorts of people Israeli border officials single out as potential "troublemakers" – we decided to avoid Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport and fly instead to Amman, Jordan.

Taking advantage of this routing, two couples, myself, and another single woman decided to arrive early – on February 14 – and spend a week in Jordan which itself was feeling the stirrings of the Arab Spring.

We spent our last night in Jordan at one of a string of luxury hotels at the northern edge of the Dead Sea, arriving just in time for a very red sunset, the cliffs of Judea in the mist, and after dark, the lights of Jericho.

It was weekend and Jordanian and Israeli families were enjoying – together - the beach and pools. I turned on the TV in my room to catch up on the news...just in time to watch a sullen Susan Rice – our UN Am-

bassador – raise her hand – the only one in the chamber – to veto a Security Council resolution condemning Israel's continued construction of settlements on the West Bank and in East Jerusalem...to veto long-standing U.S. policy. I was stunned by the hypocrisy and, as an American, ashamed... especially as we prepared to cross the Jordan into Palestine. There would, I knew, be a price to pay. Not wishing to rub salt in an opening wound, I took the stack of postcards of President Obama and the White House that I had intended to pass out to Palestinian youngsters and buried them at the bottom of my suitcase.

Having joined our larger group in Amman, we headed north through the lush Jordan Valley to the King Hussein Bridge, a crossing directly into Israel necessitated by the fact that there were Palestinian-Americans among us. I was told to hide the black peace scarf I was wearing. It might be a "provocation." I chuckled that the universal symbol of peace might be a provocation, but complied. Sure enough, however – no provocations needed – one of our Palestinian and two of our younger pilgrims were removed for special questioning and searches in another room...the first of many such encounters.

Reunited on the other side, we crossed another checkpoint into the West Bank (no hassle there) and headed south along the Jordan to Jerusalem. Having travelled the road many times, I pointed out to the newcomers the electrified fence that had killed so many deer and other wildlife and the Hebrew-only road signs, there being no Palestinians between the mountains of Samaria to the west and the Jordan River. The entire region had

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2013 AED Conference Promises a Glimpse into the Past

The 2013 AED Conference will be held in Williamsburg, Virginia, where “historic” doesn’t begin to do justice to the richness of Anglican history in the area. An Opening Reception will be held at the Jamestown Exhibition Center, while the Conference itself will take place at The Woodlands Hotel and Suites in Williamsburg. Williamsburg is part of the historic triangle of Colonial Virginia, while Jamestown is the site of the first permanent English settlement in the New World, established in 1607.

The Jamestown Church tower bears witness to the early Anglican Church in the Colonies and is the only 17th century building still standing. During the Conference, a festival service of Holy Eucharist will take place at Bruton Parish Church, which dates from 1674, with Bishop Hollerith, Bishop of the Diocese of Southern Virginia, presiding.



Bruton Parish Church has seen George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry in its pews, as well as members of the Virginia House of Burgesses. Containing a high pulpit with sounding board, communion silver from its (English) founding, the Governor’s pew and private family boxes still bearing the names of their illustrious parishioners, Bruton Parish Church offers an authentic glimpse

into the work and worship of the early church. You won’t want to miss the opportunity to be immersed in the ongoing tradition and vibrant worship that continues today in Southern Virginia. More details of events and opportunities available at the 2013 AED Conference will be offered in the months to come.

Mark your calendars now. Don’t miss this opportunity to meet with other deacons . . . and perhaps plan a vacation your whole family will enjoy.

**AED Diaconal Assembly,
Woodlands Hotel and Suites,
Colonial Williamsburg, VA**

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been ethnically cleansed and all the truck farms along the river – in Palestine – were farmed by Israeli settlers. One of the newcomers expressed surprise that signs proclaimed this the “Gandi Road,” asking why the Israelis would name it after the apostle of non-violence. “Different Gandhi; different spelling, different man,” I replied. The road, I explained, honored the Israeli general who had done the ethnic cleansing².

Already our first day in Jerusalem was one of stark and jarring contrasts. It began in the bustle of Jewish West Jerusalem, a very modern urban setting that could have been San Francisco or Atlanta. Making our way to the second floor offices of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions³, we found ICAHD’s director, Jeff Halper, an immigrant from Minnesota, briefing a group of Israeli youngsters preparing to visit the sites of Israeli government demolitions of Palestinian homes. They left and he turned to us. I had met Jeff before and found his Santa Claus beard a good match for his usual ebullient optimism. That February morning, however, his mood turned somber, as he discussed the militarization of his country and his fading hopes for a two-state solution to the ongoing conflict. Israel, he said, had entered a “pre-fascist stage.” Surveying an American peace effort in shambles, the continued expansion of settlements, and the hopes engendered among young Palestinians by the Arab Spring, he predicted a third Intifada or uprising before the end of the year.

Soon enough the realities behind his prediction hit us like a blow to the chest. Atop a 2,600 foot mountain – ostensibly in East Jerusalem – we found the 220 inhabitants of the tiny Palestinian village of Nabi Samwil (Samuel’s Tomb) trapped in an ever-diminishing Kafkaesque no-man’s-land. The village being juridically part of the West Bank, but now on the Jerusalem side of the thirty-foot-high Wall that snakes through this tortured land, its people are physically cut off from the West Bank and, lacking Jerusalem identity cards, prohibited from visiting the city below. Their mosque above the prophet’s tomb, having been declared an Israeli national park, lies secure behind a chicken-wire fence under lock and key, a sign at the gate offering a cheery “Welcome to Nabi Samuel!” Not far away, beside a one-room schoolhouse, we listened, as villagers told us how their homes had been demolished and how they had been denied permission to expand the school or even to paint a small room intended for a women’s cooperative⁴. Unable to travel or to work, squeezed ever more tightly physically and spiritually, they seemed a people teeter-

ing on the brink of oblivion, the memory of their very existence being erased. One of our number, a woman visiting Palestine for the first time, broke into tears as she listened.

There were other tears on the bus as we drove down to Sheikh Jarrah, an East Jerusalem neighborhood where long-time Palestin-



Street Scene in Hebron

ian residents were being dispossessed and their homes turned over to Jewish Israeli settlers. There, we talked with one dispossessed family – an elderly couple - living in a tent in the garden of their former home...a home we would visit again, under more dramatic circumstances, a week later.

“Dramatic” was an apt adjective for our approach later that afternoon to the Palestinian neighborhood of Silwan just south of the Old City’s Dung Gate. Spilling down the hillside beneath that gate and the “City of David” archaeological dig there...and up the hills to the east, it, too, is feeling the pressure of Judaization, as homes are demolished to make room for an expanding “archeological park” - in a land where archaeology is political - and others systematically turned over to settlers⁵. Given the in-your-face Disneyland nature of that “park,” jammed with tourist busses blocking access to the neighborhood, and the equally in-your-face sight of settlers, automatic weapons in hand, peering from rooftops, the tension is palpable and the smell of tear gas often fills the air⁵.

We had an appointment halfway down the block from the “City of David” at the Wadi Hilweh Information Center⁶. Approaching from the bottom of the hill, the driver stopped the bus, refusing to drive further. We persuaded him to drive on and

soon understood his reluctance, as a rock hit the side of the bus. At the Information Center, however, we were treated hospitably, enjoying a lunch of bread and fruit, as Mohammed, the center director briefed us on the current situation. With him, we walked to the top of the hill, through the “park,” and down an alleyway open to the valley, stopping along the way to discuss one or another aspect of the situation. At one stop, a youngster fresh from the dig stood with us, listened awhile, and entered a large house taken over to house volunteers at the site. He soon emerged with several other young men looking none too friendly. As they started to gather around us, Mohammed hustled us along.

Back at the hotel later that night, we listened to two young Israelis describe why they could not participate in the occupation. One, an ex-soldier from Breaking the Silence⁷, spoke of his experience in Hebron; the other, an impressive high school senior from Shministin, a group of high school-leaving draft resisters, spoke of the moral sources of her conscientious objection and the support she has received from her Zionist, religiously observant parents (She is the first of several young people on this video⁸.)

Next morning it was off to Bethlehem, contiguously close for us but infinitely distant from Jerusalem for those Palestinians on the other side of the Wall that divides the two cities. There we would join a far larger group of more than 300 to attend the Sabeel conference. I won’t attempt here to summarize the entire week of speeches and roundtables. Sabeel has done that well on its website at⁹.

Bethlehem itself is hurting. On the surface, all seems well. Manger Square is jammed with Israeli tour buses and the Church of the Nativity is crowded with the tourists they disgorge. Exiting the church, however, they climb back onto the buses for the quick trip back to Jerusalem where they spend their money. The tourist shops around the square and on the side streets stand empty, as does the magnificent Peace Center with its excellent book shop (rivaled only by that at Jerusalem’s famed American Colony). Proprietors are desperate for a sale and I felt somewhat guilty bargaining for the embroidered shawl and icon of St. George I brought home.

Surrounded on three sides by the Wall – including a swath through Shepherd’s Field – and monster settlements such Har Homa and Gilo built on land annexed to Jerusalem, Bethlehem is experiencing economic depression. With unemployment at 22%,

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emigration, particularly among Christians, traditionally about a third of the city's population, has markedly increased. That said, when I visited the next to last Sunday of Epiphany, St. Mary the Virgin Greek Orthodox Church in neighboring Beit Jala was packed with clearly devout worshippers. Their faithfulness under duress¹⁰ still brings tears to my eyes.

So, too, did the optimism and determination of the students (mostly Muslim) at the Christian-run Bethlehem University, where those with Jerusalem identity cards must endure a daily hassle at Israeli checkpoints, while those with West Bank papers are prohibited from visiting the holy sites – or relatives – in Jerusalem.

And, as we left on one of our trips to Jerusalem, we passed a scene that epitomized the economic plight of this holy city – sacks of rice being distributed to a scrambling crowd from the back of an UNRWA truck.

It was a short trip back to Sheikh Jarrah, to the house we had visited the week before. In anticipation of the demonstrations that usually follow Friday noon prayers, the police and, soon, soldiers, had erected a barricade at the entrance to the street and, making us dismount from the bus, directed us to proceed on foot. In the garden, we found a large and joyful crowd...of children...of Palestinian children laughing with the Jewish Israeli teen-agers putting on a Punch-and-Judy show for them, as an Israeli radio reporter looked on. On the garden wall a large "Justice" dominated the bright graffiti. The couple we had talked with earlier was there talking with another group of "internationals," as was a still-older woman we would soon meet.

Just then, two young men in black, Hassidim, pulled up on Vespas and, pulling off their helmets, strode through the crowd toward the house they now occupied. The reporter stopped one of the settlers and began an impromptu interview. A few of our number started shouting at the man and things threatened to get ugly. Some of us quieted down our compatriots and we all adjourned to the back to talk with the old lady. Out front, the children could be heard, still laughing at the puppets.

The old lady was very angry – with considerable justification we learned. During their forcible eviction, she and her husband had been physically carried from their home. In the process her husband had suffered a heart attack and – her voice rising, now almost a growl – he had, she said, died in the emergency room. Someone asked how she knew he had died there. Dima, our Sabeel

guide who was translating, replied unblinkingly "I'm a nurse. I was in the ER."

As we made our way back to the bus in silence, I stopped to ask one of the Israeli teen-agers what group he was with. "Sheikh Jarrah Solidarity," he replied. "We do this every week to take the kids' mind off the noisy confrontations." Back at the hotel, I checked out their website¹¹. They now have a new fan an ocean and more away.

I don't think I was ready for the next stop...the Muslim cemetery of Mamilla (or Mamil Allah, "God's Refuge"). There, we could see, even the dead are being evicted... graves being toppled, names plastered over, bodies removed...to make way for – I kid



"He died in the ER"

you not – a "Museum of Tolerance and Human Dignity." It is a project sponsored by the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles and was to have been designed by the renowned Frank Gehry, who, last year withdrew from the project. As I walked among the desecrated graves, I couldn't help remembering my service as the American Consul in 1970s Krakow, Poland...of walking through ancient Jewish cemeteries in Galicia, badgering Polish officials about their upkeep, and reporting back to Washington about their condition.

It was a thought that also crossed my mind, as I looked across the street at the big American flag flying from the American Consulate General that had just been moved from East Jerusalem where it had long been a sort of "embassy" to the Palestinians, bypassing our embassy in Tel Aviv and reporting directly to Washington. I wondered how often our new Consul General Daniel Ru-

benstein walked among the desecrated graves of Mamilla and what he reported. I wonder even more now that our new Ambassador Daniel Shapiro is insisting that all reporting go through Tel Aviv.

Later in the week, a choice of travels took some of us to the southern West Bank...to Hebron, the most segregated city I have ever experienced, save perhaps, communist-era Berlin¹². It was a reunion of sorts for me, for Walid was there again to greet us at the Hebron Rehabilitation Center. Making our way on foot through the old market, covered with chicken wire to catch the garbage tossed by settlers from the upper floors they occupied, we approached the checkpoint to the main settler enclave and the Cave of the Patriarchs or Ibrahim Mosque. Would we gain the access that we had been denied two years earlier? We traversed the turnstile gate, walked through the electronic metal detector, and approached the Israeli soldiers behind their sandbags. Whew! They were in a good mood and waved us through...to the next checkpoint, a multi-gate affair, where more soldiers with automatic weapons, unsmilingly searched our bags. We were free at last to walk the ramp up to the mosque.

There, we removed our shoes and we women were issued gray head-to-toe, hooded robes. I felt like Yoda. But, it was worth it. Outside, the box-like building left a lot to be desired. Inside, it was other-worldly...and one felt close to the beginning of ours peering into the blackness below...to Abraham and Sarah.

Outside again, the light was harsh... and so, too, the sight of so many soldiers, armored vehicles, and barricades – all to protect the 500 Jewish Israeli settlers from the city's 165,000 Palestinians...or, perhaps vice versa, given the history of the 1994 killing of 29 Muslims worshipers in the mosque and wounding of another 125 by the Kach extremist Baruch Goldstein.

The Old City is still home to a handful of Palestinians, but a ghost town of sorts, with their shuttered shops welded shut on either side of Shuhada Street, the main thoroughfare, and knots of well-armed soldiers at every corner. The intersection below the mosque is dominated by a factory-like box of a building, the Gutnick recreation center built by ultra-Orthodox Jews from Brooklyn, and, across the street, two souvenir shops – one for "internationals" like ourselves, the other, sporting a metal pillbox on the roof, for Jewish tourists.

There were only two vehicles in sight, an Israeli Army armored car parked in front of Gutnick Center, and a white and red SUV belonging to the Peacekeepers of the Tem-

porary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH).

A Jersey wall divided what little pedestrian traffic there was. Two Palestinian women made their way along the one-person-wide side of the wall, while a few groups of settlers strolled the far-wider middle of the street... a truly sullen, hope-killing place, crackling with tension. Incidents we witnessed suggested it wouldn't take much of a spark to set off a conflagration... a young soldier pointing his weapon at an older woman, telling her to get back in her house; a young Palestinian shouting at a soldier and forced to remove parts of his clothing before the soldiers... and us; one of our number who, having attempted to follow some settlers further down the street, was turned back by soldiers in what erupted into a shouting match.

It was good to get away and head north. We stopped at the Arbour refugee camp, a cramped, over-crowded place just south of Bethlehem I had visited two years earlier. Amidst its squalor, we experienced a joy so missing in Hebron. After a group of children displayed that joy, performing a *depka*, the Palestinian version of step-dancing, we broke up into smaller groups to enjoy a meal in various homes. Our hostess, a twenty-something teacher at the UNRWA school, introduced us to her mom, her kid brother, and her teen-age sister, a nursing student, who proudly showed us her crisp, white uniform. And over tea, the conversation turned serious. Our pointed questions were pointedly answered. For the first time I had the sense that the Arab Spring had taken root among young Palestinians. There would, it seemed be no turning back, and everything seemed possible to the young lady who opened her home to us. Her attitude was one of “a plague on both your houses” – Israel and America, Hamas and Fatah – “we just want to lead *normal* lives in peace and dignity.” There followed the first of many lectures we were to get over the hypocrisy of our veto of the UN resolution on settlements. I agreed and wished her well, promising to tell her story when I got home. (I hope I'm doing that reasonably well.)

The time had come to head north – north of Jerusalem – to Ramallah which we used as a comfortable base for visits to Taybeh and Bilin.

Taybeh, Palestine's only all-Christian village, is the Biblical site of Ephraim where Jesus sought refuge from the Pharisees who had sought to seize him after he raised Lazarus. When St. Helen came to the Holy Land to seek the true cross, she founded a church there dedicated to the village's patron St. George. During his campaign against

the Crusaders, Saladin camped among the village's Christians and, finding them “good and hospitable” (*taybeen* in Arabic), changed the name of the place to Taybeh.

By 1967 the village boasted 3,000 inhabitants, all Christians. Due, however, to the hardship of the subsequent occupation and the emigration of young people seeking work, Taybeh's population has shrunk to 1,300. There we met with Maria Khoury, a writer of children's books, a pillar of St. George's Orthodox Church, and a dynamo businesswoman with an MBA from the University of Colorado. She and her Bavarian-trained brew master husband run Palestine's only brewery (“Taste the revolution,” read the ads for Taybeh Golden) as well as making an excellent extra virgin olive oil.

Down the road, Father Raed Abusahlia, rector of the village's Latin Church, launched a peace dove project in 2004, in the midst of the violent second Intifada. His dream is to sell 100,000 ceramic lamps in the shape of a dove to burn in Christian churches worldwide, raising awareness about “the living conditions the Christian communities face in the Holy Land.”

And, together, Father Abusahlia and the Khourys seek to provide enough work to keep young people from emigrating, helping thereby to keep Christianity alive in this nearly forgotten corner of the Holy Land. If you'd like to help, you can purchase a dove in the U.S. by calling (828) 452-5961 or (828) 734-8110 or at¹³.

Back home a few weeks later, I found myself trying to explain to church groups the roots of Christianity in Taybeh and elsewhere in Palestine. I remember being amused by the innocent question “Who was the missionary who converted them?” Putting on my best Saturday Night Live “Church Lady” imitation, I replied “Would you believe... *Jesus!*”

Bilin, to the west where the “Separation Fence” cuts deeply into the West Bank, is as Muslim as Taybeh is Christian. But we found the inhabitants of this pretty village, with its mosque and cemetery, a few shops and a civic center, just as *taybeen* as those in Taybeh. We had come to witness the weekly Friday demonstration at the fence to protest how that fence had cut off the villagers from their orchards. The protest was just ending and the demonstrators and press corps was trudging back up the hill. A sizeable Israeli military force remained at the fence, still lobbing tear gas canisters and spraying “skunk water” on the handful of remaining demonstrators¹⁴.

We gathered on a patio to listen to a

middle-aged mother – two grown sons and a young daughter looking on – describe how another son and daughter had been killed in earlier demonstrations. Her son, Bassem, had been shot in the head with a tear gas grenade; her asthmatic ten-year-old daughter died of asphyxiation from inhaling a particularly strong, probably outlawed form of tear gas. The bright sun and just flowering fruit trees beside the patio seemed to mock the pain of the place. It was, I've learned, a pain that continues. For, a month after my return to California, the other daughter, who had sat beside her mother that March afternoon, was herself shot in the leg.

We adjourned in early evening to the



Bassem's Mother

home of Iyad Burnat, the leader of Friends of Freedom and Justice Bilin and organizer of the weekly demonstrations that, by their creativity, have garnered wide media attention and, in July, actually got the Israelis to move the fence some meters westward. There, we were greeted by his wife and two boys (one of whom has subsequently also been shot in the leg) and served heaping portions of *makhlouba*, a mix of chicken, rice and peas baked in a Bundt-like mold – a Palestinian national dish of sorts.

On the nighttime trip back to Ramallah the lights of Jerusalem stood out in the blackness. So, too, did one of those self-congratulatory USAID signs on the wall of school. But this one was different! I shouted at our bus driver to stop and several of us piled out to take a picture of the sign, spray-

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painted with a huge red “VETO.” Day-by-day, mile-by-mile, I was beginning to understand the price the United States was paying in the Middle East for its hypocrisy and found myself sympathizing with those whose only weapon was a can of spray paint.

Next morning, the lesson continued. Qalqilia, a city of fifty thousand, is completely surrounded by the Wall, where it cuts deeply beyond the “Green Line” of 1967, and a ring of shining white settlements sitting on what was once the city’s farmland.

The place is suffocating and dying, with unemployment pushing fifty percent and everyone on water hours. We climbed the four flights to the mayor’s offices where we were to receive a well-prepared powerpoint presentation. But, first, we received a rather angry lecture from the mayor. The price for that UN veto would be high indeed.

We didn’t need words – not the mayor’s or anyone else’s – to understand the brewing rage. We had eyes. The causes are there to see for anyone who would but go and look. We saw it in the village of Jayous, where villagers watch others farm their lands beyond a fence with a dirt death strip patrolled by dogs and jeeps. We saw it in the black tanks atop every Palestinian home to collect the trickle of water they get each day. We saw it on the drive to Jenin, our bus, with yellow Israeli plates, zooming along well-paved highways reserved for Jews only, lined with Israeli gas stations, road signs on which the Arabic is blacked out... signs that point only to mega-settlements like Ariel with its concert hall and swimming pool, army vehicles streaming back and forth, roadblocks and checkpoints without apparent rhyme or reason, each with its own daily indignities.

As we neared Jenin, we stopped to buy some coffee – the strong, sweet Turkish kind – from an old man in a tin-roofed stand, an entrepreneur of sorts, and enjoyed it in the shade of an olive tree beside the donkey tied to it. I thought of the dignity of the old man, of Biblical times, of Turkish times, of all the occupations. I marveled at his determination to see it through on this land. And I thought of that graffiti on the Wall at Bethlehem – “To exist is to resist.”

And, then, Jenin... the bustling downtown; the pretty, seemingly prosperous suburbs; and the sullen gray refugee camp that had been plowed into a pile of rubble by Israeli tanks in 2002, posters now of “martyrs” on every corner; the “Jenin, Jenin” that lives in Mohamed Bakri’s film¹⁵. The anger – no, hatred – exhibited by so many in that film – was still palpable in the headquarters



The price we pay

of the camp committee.

We walked the gray streets and alleys... from anger and despair, it seemed, to a place of joy and hope... to the Freedom Theater, a place itself destroyed in 2002, a tragedy so well documented in another film by another actor/director, Juliano Mer Khamis’ “Arna’s Children”¹⁶. As I just watched it again, I found the tears flowing once more. For this is a tragedy that has become much too personal, a hope much too important to the survival of a people to be abandoned. It is a testament to the tenacity of that “To exist is to resist.”

Juliano, an accomplished actor in Israeli and American films, the son of Arna, a Jewish Israeli veteran of the Palmach, and a Palestinian father, abandoned his career after the theater’s destruction and his mother’s death and returned to Jenin with his Finnish wife, to rebuild the theater and carry on his mother’s work.

In the black-painted well of the theater, Juliano explained to us how he was not just training would-be professional actors but helping them to deal with the psychological trauma they had all been through... theater as therapy. And the material he chose was carefully selected to serve as therapy through the absurdity of the situation in Jenin. Wandering through the theater’s rabbit warren of rooms, I stumbled in on a group of enthusiastic students rehearsing the current production – “Alice in Wonderland.” And, on the drawing board, Juliano explained, was the equally absurd “Lieutenant from Inishmore.”

This is hard to write, for, out there in the ether of the internet, Juliano is still explaining the importance of the Freedom Theater¹⁷. His soft baritone voice and those of his kids shouting “*Hurriya!*” – “Freedom!” – are still out there in some transcendent cloud to inspire those who care. But Juliano is now but a picture on my “I love me” wall – with Nelson, Desmond, and a couple of other bishops – and a hole in an aching heart. For just weeks after my return, he was gunned down as he got into his car in front of the theater.

Speculation has it that his killer may

have been one of the al Aqsa Brigade kids he worked with or some conservative parent objecting to way boys and girls interacted in the theater. But, six months later, there has been no breakthrough in the investigation, and obscenely ironically, Israeli soldiers have, during those six months, raided the theater several times, trashing it and detaining – and later releasing – several staff members... despite the fact that Jenin is in Area A, designated under the Oslo Accords as ostensibly under complete Palestinian Authority control. During the last such raid in early September, Juliano’s Palestinian partner was detained in the middle of a rehearsal of, no joke, “Waiting for Godot.”

But we didn’t know any of this as we hurried off on our bus to the Jalama Crossing into Israel’s Galilee. It is a checkpoint that closes at sunset and that, like many checkpoints has been funded by American taxpayers through USAID. I spent 26 years as a bureaucrat in our Department of State, but never have I read a more chilling example of bureaucratise than the words so proudly displayed on the red, white, and blue sign that greets the traveller about to be searched on entering Galilee:

“The Jalama vehicle crossing enhancement was funded by the American people through the U.S. Agency for International Development to foster greater trade and economic development of the area.”

Once again, our youngest travellers were removed from the bus and taken to a special room for special treatment, grateful, I’m sure to the American people and USAID.

In Galilee, we heard the stories of Israeli Palestinian women seeking the release of their husbands, the legal hurdles they face though Israeli citizens, and the universal difficulties of single parenthood. We also drove through Nazareth Iilit (Upper Nazareth), a new 92% Jewish city intended as a counterweight to largely Arab Nazareth. And, that night, we drove to Umm al Fahm for a meeting with Israel’s Muslim leaders who described the subtleties of second-class citizenship.

After a drive down the Mediterranean coast, we arrived in Tel Aviv. On the bustling campus of Tel Aviv University, a guide from Zochrot (Remembrance), a Jewish Israeli organization dedicated to keeping alive the memory of the 531 Palestinian villages destroyed in 1948, led us on a tour of a couple of those pre-1948 villages over which the city was built. We stopped in a parking lot overlooking a large, white box of a building and, in the foreground, a gated cemetery, the last remnant of a Palestinian village. Out of nowhere, two unmarked vehicles arrived, and

we were soon surrounded by several well-armed men in civilian clothes. Our guide a Palestinian was taken aside and questioned, while we were asked whether any pictures had been taken and told in no uncertain terms to move on. The Israelis, it seems, had built the headquarters of the Shin Bet, their FBI, on the rubble of the destroyed village.

Later that night we visited the main office of Zochrot where several of us renewed acquaintances with the organization's charismatic leader Eitan Bronstein. While he was talking, several youngsters walked behind him entering a room to the right, closing the door behind them. Eitan explained that they were Jews who had come to learn Arabic. It was a welcome breeze that the flickering embers of hope I harbored sorely needed after a difficult day.

It was a day that took us from our encounter with the Shin Bet back to the beach and the blue sea where, one after the other, our senses were assaulted by a *mélange* of contradictory images and experiences. There, at the gateway to still largely Palestinian Jaffa, one of our number, Judith, produced a brown paper bag...her husband's ashes. He wanted his ashes scattered off Israel's Mediterranean shore. We walked down to the beach, Judith waded into the surf and, as she emptied the bag into the sea, I felt privileged to join in singing "Amazing Grace." And, yes, how sweet it was, that precious moment.

Making our way past a café full of carefree twenty-somethings, we came to an old stone building – the Palmach Museum, celebrating that often-ruthless arm of the 1948 Israeli forces and its "liberation" of Jaffa. And, across the boulevard, the old main Jaffa mosque provided another reminder, a forlorn remnant silhouetted against the looming David Hotel.

Across the tiny stream that separates Tel Aviv and Jaffa, the dissonance continued... old public buildings that spoke of Turkish rule, festive Jewish wedding receptions spilling out of cafes, blocks of Palestinian homes bulldozed to make way for gated Jewish-only communities financed by millionaires from Los Angeles, a seaside mosque, now a restaurant, Aladdin's. As in East Jerusalem, the Judaization was creating a new reality... creating, perhaps, more work for Zochrot.

In closing, it must be stressed that the overall trip not only revealed how quickly the prospects for peace are disappearing. It also exposed us to other Arabs under Israeli control whose plight is often submerged in the *Sturm und Drang* of the Israel-Palestine conflict – the Syrian Druze in the occupied Golan Heights and the Bedouin in Israel's Negev. And, it must be added, the situation

of both peoples has worsened markedly since our visit.

To the Israelis, the Golan Heights are a part of Israel, having been annexed decades ago. That, however, was an act that is not recognized by the United States, the United Nations, nor anyone else. It is a strange, fortified place that left me with a desolate sense of foreboding. Perhaps it is the gray, scrubby mountainous terrain. Perhaps the ghosts of the 130,000 former inhabitants of 134 destroyed villages, most of whom fled in the direction of Syrian Quneitra in the fighting of 1967.

The few Syrian Druze who still remain



The daily indignity, Hebron

are huddled in the far north below snow-capped Mount Hermon, a main source of the Jordan's waters. On the way north, we passed the Crusader fortress of Nimrod and, in its shadow, a fortified Israeli settlement, its bunkers dominating the town of Mas'ada below. Its small lake, the Ram Pool, is closed to Arab use and its waters are pumped to Israeli settlements as far away as 70 kilometers.

A few miles on lies the sizeable town of Majdal Shams, now mixed Israeli and Syrian Druze. It is truly the end of the road, abutting the demilitarized zone with Syria and surrounded by barbed wire and land mines. There we were briefed by officials of Golan for Development, a non-profit organized in 1991 to assist the remaining Arab population of the Golan Heights, and, when we asked how we could help, gently told, in essence, "We'd rather do it ourselves."

After lunch, some of us peered across the demilitarized zone at the UN observation post, the abandoned Syrian position, and

the winding road to Hadan that disappeared into the hills. It is a desolate valley, known to locals as the "Shouting Valley," where, on special family occasions, family members on either side of the barbed wire will stand with bullhorns to exchange greetings.

And it was against that barbed wire that many dozens of Palestinians and Syrians were gunned down on May 14, 1948, Nakba (Catastrophe) Day, as they sought to cross to homes on the other side¹⁸.

Toward the end of our trip, after our visit to Tel Aviv/Jaffa, we drove south from Bethlehem, past Hebron, to Beersheba and three of the 36 "unrecognized" Bedouin villages of the Negev. Before heading to the villages themselves, however, we were briefed in Beersheba by leaders of the Regional Council of Unrecognized Villages, the sole Bedouin member of the Israeli Knesset, and members of the team of Jewish Israeli lawyers representing the Bedouin in their legal battle to stave off further dispossession from their ancestral lands.

A young woman member of that team, Michal, accompanied us into the desert in the direction of Dimona. Hovering above us the whole time were two unmarked, apparently civilian, helicopters.

Our first stop was the village of Araqib, which has been demolished several times. We met beside a tent overlooking many acres once home to mature olive trees – trees that have been cut down to make room for pine seedlings being planted by the Jewish National Fund, a tax deductible U.S. non-profit.

The Israeli government seeks to 1) evict the Bedouin, who have lived in Araqib and other villages since before there was an Israel, claiming they have no paperwork title to the land, 2) concentrate them in landless, jobless reservation-like villages, and 3) free the land – the "Negev Reserve" – for Jewish settlement. For their part, the Bedouin argue that they have possessed the land – their settled villages – since Turkish times, their title, according to pre-World War I Turkish law, being based on the fact that their ancestors are buried in the villages. Indeed, the cemetery at Araqib is about all that's left.

The other villages we visited were more substantial, but all under demolition orders. Despite the harsh conditions - Wadi Alnea'am, having been moved next to a monster power plant to make way for a military base – it was clear that the inhabitants were not nomads, but living sedentary lives in cinderblock homes and making a living off their goats and olives. Having also seen the sterile, demoralizing confines of the

(See "Palestine" on Page Eight)

“Palestine” from Page Seven

places into which the Israelis would squeeze them, it was also clear why they have no desire – no intention – of moving. But, in mid-September, Israel’s National Security Council ruled they must...move¹⁹.

Having laughed with their children, broken warm bread in Al Serra with one of their mothers, and, in every way, enjoyed the traditional hospitality of these proud people, my heart cries for them, for the world seems not to see them.

Indeed, in the United States especially, none of the Arabs under Israel’s control – citizens of Israel or under occupation – are seen or heard. They are as non-people...cardboard cutout caricatures...terrorists, Islamacists, fanatics, sub-humans...who must be penned in or snuffed out.

But I have met these people...living, breathing, fellow human beings...laughing, crying, dreaming, hoping...dying...and recognized them as my neighbors to be loved, as my fellow human beings whose dignity I respect.

And I have met many Israeli Jews who want no part of further oppression or killing, who want to “do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with [our] God,” who give me hope for peace, the true peace of *shalom* that rests on justice.

But, time is running out. It is time to tell the truth, to seek peace resolutely...without fear of people who might revile and persecute and utter all kinds of evil falsely against those who would speak the truth.

The truth? On the way back to Beersheba I asked Michal what she thought about using the word “apartheid” to describe all that we had seen. She said – as I had long felt – that tactically it had not been useful, since it too often cut off conversation. Then, she paused...an eternity it seemed. “But,” she continued, “it’s time to call it what it is.”

And, back in Jerusalem, in the Church of All Nations, in the Garden of Gethsemane, the voice of Thabo Makgobe, the Archbishop of Cape Town, echoed through the fading evening sunlight:

We must not be naïve in speaking about South Africa while standing in Jerusalem....The wall of strangulation or “beautification” is worse than the South African pass laws, the Bantustans or homelands, and racial discrimination....

Visiting with Palestinians in Bethlehem and Hebron is an experience I will treasure, and I will rededicate myself to the pursuit of justice.

That is the same truth I experienced on our shared visit to the Holy Land. It is

the truth I have tried to convey here. It is the truth that compels me to petition our government, our church, our people to move beyond words, to take action, to cease funding the occupation and settlements that stand in the way of peace and reconciliation.

It is time for all of us to rededicate ourselves to the pursuit of justice.

(Endnotes)

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3. www.icahd.org
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18. (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50eSv60Z_No)
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“The Seven” -

The Association for Episcopal Deacons is pleased to announce that *The Seven* began the last week of September with two introductory teleconference calls. The Seven is coordinated by Deacon Kyle Pedersen of the Diocese of Connecticut and with the support of Deacon Susanne Watson Epting, Executive Director of the Association for Episcopal Deacons.

This new and exciting mentored experience in diaconal ministry for young adults includes eight participants from the dioceses of Connecticut, Iowa, and Olympia. The participating women and men range in age from 18-37 and have a variety of life, educational, work, and ministry experiences. Participants include:



Andrea Banfield – Andrea is a homemaker, wife and mother who is living in Edmonds, WA and is sponsored by St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church in Longview, WA. Andrea says that she “has a heart for the poor,” and is interested in discerning more about diaconal ministry through this project. Her mentor is Phyllis McCormick of Seattle.

Laura Bersos – Laura just graduated from



Seattle University with a teaching major and a math minor. Laura says, “Following a vocation makes one feel more whole, complete and filled

An exciting new initiative from AED

with the love and spirit of God. Following a vocation is not a self-motivated decision, but more a community- and God-oriented decision. She's sponsored by the Diocese of Olympia and is being mentored by Mary Shehane of Seattle.

Rachel Cosca – Rachel has a BA in International Studies from the University



of Oregon, works as a bartender/server and lives in Seattle. She tells us, "I am interested in The Seven because I care about the Episcopal Church, because I care about the Church universal, and because I want to be challenged and transformed into the person these institutions call me to be, and need me to be." She's sponsored by the Diocese of Olympia and mentored by Brian Wright of Lake Stevens, WA.

Michael Greve – Michael is a freshman at Kirkwood Community College in Iowa City,

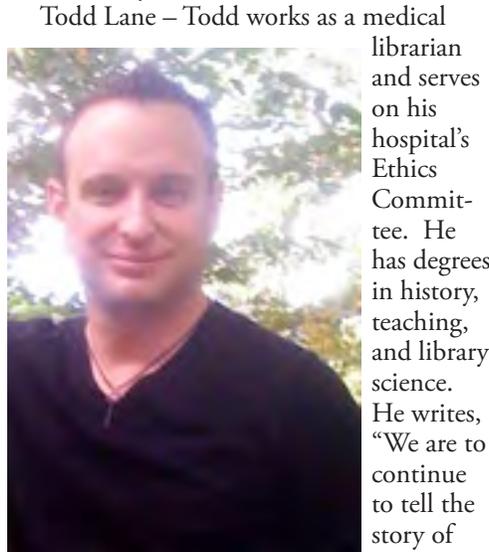


IA. He writes, "I have had a love for mission and outreach to others for a very long time. I know that is one thing that a deacon does in the church and it's something that I would like to dig deeper into as a possible vocation." Michael is sponsored by the Diocese of Iowa and mentored by Susanne Watson Epting of Davenport, IA.

Rachel Heath – Rachel is a 2011 gradu-



ate of Yale Divinity School currently looking for employment in New Haven, CT. She shares, "I am drawn to participation in The Seven because it will be a year of intentional discernment regarding whether I feel called to be ordained to the diaconate or whether I feel called to serve the church as an active lay member." Rachel is sponsored by St. Thomas' Episcopal Church and mentored by Diane Hovey.



Todd Lane – Todd works as a medical librarian and serves on his hospital's Ethics Committee. He has degrees in history, teaching, and library science. He writes, "We are to continue to tell the story of

God's love and outwardly demonstrate it through corporal works. God's love is not only found in the printed word (scripture) or in Sunday sermons; rather, it is a living entity found in each of us." Todd is sponsored by St. Thomas' Episcopal Church in Bridgeport, CT. Jose Mestra, of Bridgeport, serves as his mentor.

Tony Ramsey – A student at the Uni-



versity of Washington School of Law, and living in Lynnwood, WA, Tony writes, "I feel drawn to the diaconate because it seems to me that the deacon represents the troublemaker in the Church, continually pushing it to see and react to social and economic injustice in all its forms. As a law student, awareness of these injustices has become particularly acute." He's sponsored by Trinity Parish in Seattle and mentored by Judy Mullins.

Jason Sierra – Jason is the Officer for Young Adult Leadership and Vocations at the



Episcopal Church Center. As someone steeped in the work of the institutional church, Jason writes, "The Seven

sounds like a well-structured program for exploring the questions before me, for finding support for the projects and ministries I'm already involved in and looking to engage in more deeply, and a great opportunity to build a community of peers and mentors in ministry." He is sponsored by St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Seattle and mentored by Stephen Crippen.

Gen Grewell, who serves as archdeacon in the Diocese of Olympia, will also join us as an extra mentor, and someone who will help support the group of five in that diocese.



Starting October 1 and running through the end of November, participants will begin an on-line learning experience with the CALL program of the Church Divinity School of the Pacific. This online component will be led by Deacon Phina Borgeson and will equip participants with the competencies they will need to identify, undertake and reflect on a ministry project of their own choosing in their own community. Participants will also be joining in monthly teleconference or video-conference (once we figure out the time zone and other technical challenges!)

As the program unfolds additional contributors and advisors will help with analyzing and innovating as we prepare for next year.

Mentors for The Seven are:



Bryan Wright



Mary Shehane



Judy Mullins



Phyllis McCormick



Stephen Crippen



Susanne Watson Epting

Our advisory group includes:

Deacon Carol Archer, Christ Church, New Haven, Connecticut and Chaplain, SolAmor Hospice, Milford, Connecticut; Deacon Josephine Borgeson, Ministry Developer and Consultant, Diocese of Northern California; Ms. Lydia Kelsey Bucklin, Youth Missioner, Diocese of Iowa; The Ven. Catherine Cooke, Archdeacon, Diocese of Vermont; Mr. John Cumming, Diocese of California, Member of the Board of Directors, Association for Episcopal Deacons; The Rev. Valerie Bailey Fischer, Priest in the Diocese of Massachusetts and Coordinator for the Episcopal Peace Fellowship's Urban Pilgrimage; Prof. Willis Jenkins, Ph.D., Margaret Farelly Assistant professor of Social Ethics, Yale Divinity School/Berkeley Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut; The Rev. Steve Kelsey, Priest and Hospice Chaplain, Tuscon Arizona, and Ministry Developer, Episcopal Church in Navajoland; Deacon Aaron Perkins, St. George's Episcopal Church, York Harbor, Maine, and Chaplain, Maine Correctional Center, Windham, Maine; Ms. Emily Perow, former Missioner for Youth and Young Adults, Diocese of Connecticut; The Rev. Margaret A. Thomas, Priest and Former Coordinator of the Deacon Formation Program in Maine, and of Anglican Studies at Bangor Theological Seminary.

We are very grateful to the participants, mentors, and sponsoring parishes for their commitment to and faith in this new project. We look forward to sharing more information with you as the project unfolds and ask our prayers for God's good work in our local communities and in our world. For those planning to take part in our group next year, additional information is on our web site, including a downloadable brochure to distribute to congregations. <http://diakonoi.org>

What's in a Name? A Conversation with Deacon Jane F. Ellis

by Jane Root, member of the AED Board of Directors

2011 has produced several significant milestones for our organization, beginning with the name change from the North American Association for the Diaconate to the Association for Episcopal Deacons, introduced on the 25th anniversary of the organization. One of our own talented members was instrumental in guiding us through the name change transition, Deacon Jane Ellis.

For the past seven years, Jane has been the vice president of marketing/public relations and community health at Holy Name Medical Center in Teaneck, New Jersey. Her career work in strategic marketing and planning, including the creation and development of her current hospital system's strategic marketing direction and developing a new brand for the organization, made her uniquely qualified to assist AED in this venture.

Working with a small group of AED board members, Jane designed AED's new logo and its use with AED publications and web site. Her career spans thirty plus years of leadership in health care in hospitals and healthcare systems in the south and north-east. Jane was ordained a deacon in the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Connecticut in 2000 and is a deacon in the Diocese of Newark, NJ now.

I had the privilege to work with Deacon Jane Ellis on the name change. Since then Jane has become a member of our AED Communications and Resource Development Committee and our 'go-to' person for advice and expertise on marketing and communications.

Jane Root: What inspired you to work in the area of marketing and public relations?

Jane Ellis: I have always had a very focused passion and energy for marketing and planning. At a young age I was instrumental as a scout and as a DAR citizenship scholarship recipient for developing projects and programs targeted to helping the underserved. Throughout my life I have pursued my thirst for working with those in need of healing. Marketing and planning are skill sets that can be transferred across myriad businesses, which I have done over many years of my career. I enjoy using both sides of my brain to develop programs and strategies: the left and right, cognitive and creative.

J.R.: The mission statement of the hospital where you are the vice president for marketing, public relations and community health refers to your health care organization as a 'ministry of healing.' How has your

work, in particular, become a ministry for you?



Jane Ellis: It is incumbent upon my team to develop products, campaigns and services that reflect the healing ministry of patient care. These range from entrepreneurial 'edge running', preventative programs, such as relationship marketing to build customer loyalty, to more precise planning with physicians and clinical experts to strategically design, package and position service lines/products that target meeting the ever-engulfing need of chronic illness, such as cardiovascular disease or cancer.

J.R.: Do you think marketing and PR can be useful for our churches? If so, in what ways?

Jane Ellis: Absolutely. I think local and diocesan church organizations need strong marketing strategies for building customer loyalty, new enrollees, creating programs that reach those who are longing, as well as fundraising. More importantly, I think strategically focused programs that target unmet needs in communities can be not only rewarding for growth but measurable for bringing the Gospel to those whose needs are not being met by any other church. I am speaking mainly of un-churched individuals who crave invitation, inclusion, "radical hospitality." If churches developed their "brand," which is so much more than just name or logo, but more the "experience" one has when entering the walls/community, and they created standards and guidelines of how that experience was going to be packaged and extended to all...well, I think many more would be reached and ministered to.

J.R.: What do you see as opportunities for our churches in terms of making themselves better known in their communities?

Jane Ellis: I think churches benefit from a strategic 'deep dive' to determine what is the brand, or the experience one has when coming to "St. Anywhere." How does the community see us, what do we feel like, what do they see, what is the aftertaste? Furthermore, the parish needs to continually examine whether its very own parishioners are loyal to the brand/"experience." The parish needs to ask strategic questions like: What are our strengths and how can we maximize these to become opportunities? and What are our weaknesses and how can we dilute them so they do not contribute to hastening the closing of our doors? This kind of analysis necessitates a level of self-examination that is often, quite honestly painful, yet, I believe it can enrich a parish and will bring the Gospel into focus. However, most churches don't go through this process on a consistent basis; rather, only when they find themselves



searching for a new leader. In the marketing world, this process would be an essential element to product design, packaging and viability. So, I think it is totally appropriate for parishes to ask the hard questions: What is our product? How do we present it? What is the understanding one has when they enter our doors? This is brand identification—and making sure that the integrity of the brand is consumable is what businesses are all about.

J.R. What did you experience as challenges and opportunities for our organization in selecting a new name?

Jane Ellis: The challenges for changing the brand of NAAD to AED were simple. As in all product evolution and revolution there is the fundamental question: Is the current brand so entrenched in the customer's mind that they can't accept an update. In the case of NAAD that was not the case.

(See "Ellis" on Page Twelve)

("Ellis" from Page Eleven)

The evolution of the diaconate as a "full and equal order" required change and so the new acronym was easily accepted and I believe embraced. The logo update is more in keeping with the growing and increasingly evolving role of the deacon in the church.

There is continuity in the stole drape but the coloration is more modern, and I trust reflective of the importance of our order.

J.R.: How did you experience a call to diaconal ministry?

Jane Ellis: I remember it distinctly. It was during the Lenten season of my 40th year. I was living in the South at the time and once I recognized what that longing was all about I went to my parish priest and told him that I believe I am being called forward to

ministry. I said, "Here I am" and started the journey.

J.R.: What is the focus of your ministry as a deacon?

Jane Ellis: I recently completed a marvelous six-year assignment as a parish deacon here in New Jersey. But, change is good. Right now I am not assigned to one particular church. My diaconal ministry is evolving. I am a spiritual director. I provide teaching workshops on an array of spiritual development topics. I also have become very active in the interfaith/interspiritual ministry promoting peace, social justice and care of creation, which are also the core tenets of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace, of which I am an associate. My ministry is transcending and I can't wait to see where God will lead me next!

Siw, deacon

Ed. Note: Siw Ölmelid is a Swedish Deacon affiliated with the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe.

This interview by Kristina Rehn originally appeared in Swedish in the newspaper Hållands Nyheter of Falkenberg, Sweden, on 5 August 2011. It was translated into French for readers in Belgium, and Dn. Ormonde Plater has kindly translated it from French into English.

A Swedish Lutheran, she works in a Catholic chapel with an ecumenical calling, and she has a license to participate in Anglican worship. A Jesuit priest is her spiritual companion.

Siw Ölmelid, whose roots are found in Falkenberg (Sweden), is the only ecumenical deacon in the heart of Brussels.

As she does every summer, Siw has settled into her Falkenberg house with her family. This blue house on the west coast is their point of anchorage in Sweden, whereas most of the year the family lives in Brussels, where she moved eleven years ago.

In Brussels Siw works as an ecumenical deacon. Her workplace is a little chapel in the European quarter, with nearby neighbors the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of the European Union. This year the ecumenical Chapel of the Resurrection, also called "Chapel of Europe," will celebrate the jubilee of its first decade, and the activities carried out in its midst have notably increased during this period.

"These started out with morning prayer, but now we celebrate commemorations (memorials), ecumenical and Catholic prayers. The Finnish church also celebrates mass every other Sunday. There are concerts and conferences, and an ecumenical group of children meets there once a month."

Siw is responsible for developing ecumenism and coordinating ecumenical prayers, but she is also a partner for persons in spiritual direction. She spends three days a week at the chapel listening to those who need to talk, to confide in someone; this need has tended to increase.

"The community has changed, people feel more stressed, especially those who live within the European institutions," Siw said.

"People come to the chapel for different reasons: some come to confide their sorrows, their confusion, or their moment of crisis; others simply need to pray, to stop and rest for a while. Here everyone is welcome, what-

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in the heart of Brussels

ever their religious opinion.”

“Meeting with these people is the main part of my work. Listening to them, letting them be themselves, and letting them find their own voice,” Siw said.

There is an important symbolism in working in the core of Europe, with all the spiritual questions about ecumenism. Finding what unites, meeting in friendship, reason, and understanding. At times the chapel is described as a “center of ecumenical experimentation,” and Siw thinks that’s a good summary of the work done there.

“I have learned a great deal! I don’t believe in a single church, but we cannot allow harmless little things to separate us! I am definitely in the minority as a Protestant, but my years here have given me the feeling of being more Lutheran. At the same time, I love the other churches so much, and I see that we have much to learn from each other. But that will take time and patience,” Siw said, smiling.

For Siw, the road to becoming a deacon has not been straightforward, but looking back on her childhood she sees that the seed was sown at that time.

“When I was in school, I had occasion to work here at Falkenberg with a woman deacon named Ingrid Hallberg, a fantastic person. She introduced me to the joy we feel when we affirm someone. But I absolutely did not want to become a nurse, as were the women deacons at that time.”

Her high school studies ended, Siw became an executive in the social area and traveled throughout the world. Then she settled in Japan for eight years, where she worked for a science professor devoted to water purification and the production of health drinks.

“I enjoyed myself in Japan, but I returned to Sweden for personal reasons in 1993. That was a reverse cultural shock! I didn’t recognize my own culture, I was completely messed up.”

But from chaos came positive things. Siw met her future husband. They married and had twins, Elin and Sara.

Siw started her own business exporting to Japan care products for the elderly. Alas, life with a business and two small babies was difficult, and Siw gave priority to her family. Then came the time to realize her dream as a young girl—Siw began her deacon formation, and at the age of forty years she was officially ready to begin her new career.

At the moment when Siw was to be-

gin her new work, her husband, who is a translator, had a job in Brussels, in the EU. Without the least regret the family seized this opportunity. In Brussels their son Pontus was born.

“Brussels is a fantastic city! Twenty-five per cent of the inhabitants are foreigners, and that gives the city an international flavor. Most of the Swedes in Belgium go to live in Waterloo, but we, we go to live in the center of Brussels and associate with other peoples, not just Swedes.”



“There are three ways of behaving when you move in as a foreigner,” Siw said. “Either you continue to associate with people of the same nationality and live as in your country, or you live more internationally with other persons who have also moved in, or you learn the language and the culture and learn to know the people who live there. You simply adapt.”

“The third way of behaving is the most difficult, but also the most enriching,” Siw said. She gives as an example her children going to Belgian schools and not to the Scandinavian school.

“Moreover, it’s great to live in Belgium,” Siw said.

“Medical care here is fantastic. We’ve had the same family doctor for eleven years, and receiving help is never a problem. We, the Swedes, ought to stop thinking that we are always superior,” Siw said laughing. “Although I admit there are certain things better in Sweden.”

In the beginning it was thanks to SKUT (Svenska Kyrkan i Utlandet, the Swedish Church Abroad) that Siw got in touch with the ecumenical chapel.

“The priest of the Swedish church who was involved in the chapel made them understand that I was a deacon. It was arranged

for me to have a work project at the chapel: to be there for the Swedish employees of the EU. That was my job for three years, until the Swedish church moved into the center of Brussels and no longer needed me. But I continued to work as a volunteer, since I loved my jobs.”

“Moreover, that had the benefit of showing how the diaconate in Sweden worked. The Swedish diaconate focuses more on the social aspect, and other churches, especially the Anglican Church, are interested in our way of working.

“The only problem is that no one is ready to pay for services given by deacons, because traditionally that is unpaid work. So that’s one of my challenges, to raise the status of deacons.”

Siw is also proud of the license obtained from Bishop Pierre Whalon, bishop of the Convocation of Episcopal churches in Europe, with the power to participate in Anglican worship. She often benefits from this in All Saints Church at Waterloo.

A person who works to sustain others also sometimes needs help and support. In that area also Siw exists ecumenically.

“I have a good mentor who is a Belgian Reformed pastor. I also have a spiritual companion who is a Jesuit Catholic priest,” Siw explains.

Siw chose to acquire still more knowledge. At present she is studying the diaconate through a distance learning online course in Oslo. She has already finished the first year of her studies, and three more remain.

“Afterwards I may even have a paid job!” she said laughing. “There are many interesting fields in which I could work: missions and aid organizations. For even if it is very important to give material help to those who need it, we must also think about our spirits. It’s a great challenge to empower people, to make them understand their value.”

Ecumenism is the star that guides Siw. In her work at the Chapel of the Resurrection in the midst of the core of Europe, she encounters people holding very different religious opinions

“I am learning a lot, and I see that we have to learn a great deal from one another!”

Taking a Stand Against Poverty

by Dn. Sean D. Krausert, St. Michael's Church,
Canmore, AB in the Anglican Diocese of Calgary



Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” *Matthew 25:37-40*

These words by Jesus led me to my ordination into the vocational diaconate on September 13, 2003, and have guided my ministry ever since. And, now eight years since my ordination, I find myself living in a sparsely equipped tent without the comforts of home in order to raise awareness about poverty. Allow me to explain.

Since July 23, 2011 I have been implementing *That Poverty Project*. The objective of the project is to use social and traditional media in order to engage thousands of people in awareness and education about poverty issues, and inspire them to take action to help eliminate poverty at home and abroad. In order to garner attention and attract people to the project, I am participating in three 3-month long high-profile poverty related experiences focussing on three of the major faces of poverty . . . homelessness, the struggles of the working poor, and hunger. It is my intent to be a bridge – walking from one who “has” towards those who “have not” in order to create greater understanding about poverty by allowing readers to accompany me on the journey. In other words, *being* a deacon . . . betwixt and between.

Phase One of *That Poverty Project* focuses on homelessness, but don't think for a single moment that I am trying to replicate homelessness. You can't do it. You can't artificially replicate the hopelessness; you can't artificially replicate the despair; you can't artificially replicate the complicating factors that often exist whether that be trauma, mental illness, addiction, or chronic fear. What I *am* doing is living in a sparsely equipped tent until October 7th (Canadian Thanksgiving Weekend); having limited clothing—two sets of pants, t-shirt, socks, and underwear plus a hoodie, jacket, runners, gloves, and a toque (winter hat); walking everywhere unless I can “bum a ride”; only showering 1 – 2 times per

week; and not shaving or getting a haircut. I am situated near my house in order to be within range of my Wi-Fi (it's a communication project after all), but only go into the house to answer nature's call and to take food like one would receive at a shelter. Oh yeah . . . and I have no money unless I earn



it doing odd jobs or benefit from the generosity of a Good Samaritan.

For the next two phases, I will be in the house but that doesn't mean they will be any easier. Each phase has its own unique character. Phase Two focuses on the plight of millions of Canadians and Americans, and literally billions of people around the world . . . the struggles of the working poor. In this phase, I will have enough money to put a roof over my head but not enough to cover all of my other needs. I will need to cover food, transportation, clothing, and anything I do to entertain myself out of an average of \$7.50 per day. I say “average” because like many in the developing world the amount each day will fluctuate, i.e. one day may be a good day in the market and others may barely scratch the bottom of the barrel. I will also be introducing an element of micro-financing into the latter half of this phase. As for Phase Three . . . this is the one I'm most nervous about. For the entire 3 months, my daily food will be based upon food rations as provided by the World Food Programme to refugees (a combination of rice, corn soya blend with multi-vitamin, pulses, sugar, salt, oil, and water . . . 2,100 calories). I am a big 6'2”, and well over 200 lbs, and so there is no doubt that I will lose

some weight. Of course, I will be doing this entire project under the care of a physician, and will adjust the calorie intake if needed to avoid any permanent harm.

As of writing this article, I have been in the tent as part of Phase One for 52 days (out of 77 in total by the time Canadian Thanksgiving rolls around). In the past 7 weeks I have lost 14 lbs, having dropped from 233 lbs to 219 lbs. The weight loss isn't due to lack of nutrition at meals but simply no snacking, lots of walking, and the fact the body burns more calories when it gets colder. One of the most significant things I've learned so far is how the mind works to self-perpetuate the impoverished psyche. Basically, you start to feel bad about yourself and put yourself down, and in doing so start to believe that you are a second class citizen. Further, because of being outside in the elements all the time, and not having any time-saving tools at your disposal, it takes more energy and time to do everything. All of which simply wears you down. I've had anxiety attacks, times of feeling down, nervousness about being around others . . . and I don't even have it nearly as rough as a couple of billion people.

Another key learning thus far comes from getting glimpses at what others think about poverty. One of my goals in this project is to break down stigmas and expose myths about poverty. Accordingly, the following is a blog entry from a few weeks ago dealing with people's perceptions about the poor.

Really . . . What Does IT Look Like? (Day 35 – August 26, 2011)

Most people have an image in their mind of what poverty looks like. I know because people tell me about it.

Invariably, as I walk down the street or sit in a coffee shop or blog/post/tweet, someone will stop and tell me what I am doing wrong with how I am being “homeless” (. . . using that term loosely because I'm not trying to imitate homelessness . . . since you can't). They're not trying to be negative. Quite the opposite, they're just trying to help me do it right. And here I didn't even know there was a right way to be homeless!

If I gather up all of the advice and comments from people as to what it looks like to be in poverty or to be homeless, the picture usually resembles what one would consider a “street bum”. You know . . . the filthy guy sitting on the sidewalk with one hand out and the other hand on a bag with a bottle in it. “That Guy”, according to my gratuitous advisers, definitely doesn't live in a tent . . . doesn't have access to a bathroom . . . and doesn't see his family. “That Guy” isn't supposed to have anything and is supposed to be miserable all the time. And often, it is believed by more than a few, “That Guy” deserves

his life because he has made his bed (**if he had one**) and now he must lie in it. To be honest, I sure am glad I'm not "That Guy" . . . and I'm certainly not trying to be.

The fact is that the vast majority of those who are in poverty situations, a large number of whom are homeless, are NOT "That Guy" either. People are surprised when I share with them that most homeless in the world actually **DO** live in tents (or some other form of rudimentary or temporary shelter) . . . in refugee camps or urban slums . . . **AND** they have their families with them. I think all of us, me included, have to constantly keep our minds open as to what poverty looks like because only then will we truly see it, and truly be able to help. We have to look past the circumstance, past the stigma, and see the person like you or me that needs some help. When we do, we will see that poverty actually has billions of faces.

Let's try something . . . no, no, no . . . it won't hurt and there is no karaoke involved. I want you to take three slow deep breaths, and with each slow exhale release all of your previous thoughts or preconceptions about what poverty looks like. (**STOP! Don't read further until you've done the three breaths . . .**) Non, let's reinvent our image of what poverty and homelessness looks like . . .

The poor and homeless . . .

. . . is the woman with a battered face and broken spirit living in a relative's basement with her young kids.

. . . is the family trying to rebuild their lives after their village and everything they had was washed away by a tsunami.

. . . is the old man with his entire clan living in a refugee camp fleeing conflict or drought.

. . . is the young man on the street who has no family or friends and had nowhere to turn when depression overtook him.

. . . is the First Nation Canadian youth who "has a home" but must sleep in shifts with the 20 others who "have a home" with him, while not having access to clean water or electricity.

. . . is the grandmother living in a decrepit hut open to the elements (and critters!) who is the sole provider of her orphaned grandchildren whose parents died from AIDS.

. . . is the family of six living in the slums of a sprawling mega-city, and whose shelter is a few pieces of corrugated metal crudely attached to form a shanty enclosure.

. . . is the girl who was sexually abused in her childhood, and ran away from home only to land on the street selling her body.

. . . is the man whose "brain broke" with the sudden death of his wife and two kids, and wanders the streets talking to them.

. . . is the young 10 year old African boy, with a gaunt face, yellowing eyes, and loose

teeth who begs in the street for something, anything, to sustain him that day.

. . . is the alcoholic or addict, whose addiction has burned bridges with family and caused him or her to lose everything.

. . . is the single mom who can't earn enough to make ends meet and must "couch surf" from friend to friend with her kids in tow.

. . . is _____
_____ (fill in the blank because the above only covers a small portion of the poverty situations out there).

And guess what? None of the above are doing homeless right either. Why? Because there is nothing right about being poor and homeless. However . . . through each of us doing just a little bit more than we currently are (especially raising our voices to our community leaders and elected officials) . . . **poverty and homelessness CAN be eliminated.**

Hey!! I'm That Poverty Guy . . . let's make a world of difference together.

Each day of the project I try to be aware of things that I do that may relate to what people see of the homeless, whether they be on the streets or in refugees camps or living in slums. Then, I share my experience in order to shed new light and new understanding on that situation so that my readers may break through any misconceptions and see the people involved as regular people. The following blog does exactly that with respect to a homeless person sleeping in the park.

Never Again (Day 43 – September 3, 2011)

I will never ever . . . EVER . . . look at a street person sleeping on a park bench in the middle of the day and think that they are lazy. Well . . . never ever again.

It's way too easy to fall prey to the traps set before us by stereotypes and our own prejudices, and see "a bum" lying in the park on a nice day while thinking he is "lazy" (or worse). The truth is we have absolutely no idea what is going on for him or her lying there on the hard ground or on the even harder, but likely drier, bench. In fact, if we are to apply Occam's razor (the law of parsimony . . . which states the simplest of two or more competing explanations is preferable), then the only thing we should rightly conclude from someone sleeping in the park is that they are tired.

But, of course, as curious creatures that like some drama we don't usually want to stop at that conclusion. We want to know . . . "WHY?" We make assumptions about street homeless not having jobs (which is not true since quite a number do) and not having anything to do (which is also not true, unless you don't count surviving) . . . and we want to create for ourselves a story that explains why that

person is sleeping in a public place in the middle of the day. Alright, twist my arm . . . I'll give you some suggestions as to what might actually be going on for the "sleepy head" in question.

Last night was cold! It was the coldest yet of my 42 nights in the tent as the mercury dipped below freezing to -2C. For the most part I slept alright, I guess, although my sleep was extremely fitful. I awoke every time part of me squirmed out of the warm little cocoon I created, which was way too often. So I didn't have the best sleep ever, but add to that it had been cooler weather much of the previous 3 days. When it's cold, the body uses more energy simply trying to keep warm. As a result of the less than ideal sleep and days of my body using more energy, by about noon today I felt completely wiped. I needed a nap and, after a chilly night, I gravitated to a bench in the sun and took a snooze.

I have to confess, it wasn't the first time I've ever taken a midday nap on that bench. A few years back I was in a deep clinical depression. One day, I actually had the energy to get out of the house, but by the time I reached that bench my energy had



waned. I sat down, and mired in my own anguish, I soon found myself lying down and sleeping. In other words, I was so depressed that I only had enough energy to take a nap on a park bench. Sounds weird unless you've been depressed, but if you know of what I speak then it's completely understandable.

So back to our "sleepy head" in the park. Sure, it may be that the person is sleeping off whatever binge he or she was on the night before. However, isn't it at least equally plausible that the person is just plain tired and needing a little snooze in the warmth of the sun because . . . it is draining being outside all the time . . . it was a cold fitful night with little sleep . . . or the person is homeless, but employed, and worked a night shift cleaning toilets or stocking shelves? Or perhaps, as is the case with many people on the street, the person is depressed (or suffering from another mental illness) and doesn't have energy enough to do anything but have a sleep. As for me, I'm going to give the person the benefit of the doubt from now on and refrain from assuming something that is not very nice . . . and likely wrong.

(See "Poverty" on Page Sixteen)

Deacon Doings in The Diocese Of St. Ives

by The Ven. W. Keith McCoy, Archdeacon, Diocese of New Jersey

Welcome back to the fifteenth chapter of a regular interactive feature which continues in Diakoneo.

What this series is about is the life of deacons, and the situations we find ourselves in. Over the years, I have had my share of “problem moments,” or had friends tell me about their problems. Some of these situations could have been handled better with some knowledge or experience, and many others were cases where any number of solutions would have worked, except the one I chose. The voice of experience was needed, but it wasn't always at hand. This will be an opportunity to share our experiences, and perhaps help others when the question comes up in their lives.

(“Poverty” from Page Fifteen)

Hey!! I'm That Poverty Guy . . . let's make a world of difference together.

A world of difference for those in poverty . . . that's what That Poverty Project is all about. It's my belief that everyone has a right to having their basic human needs met – food/water, shelter, basic health care, basic education, and freedom from fear. And, I believe that we are called to be God's hands and feet on Earth ensuring that everyone has those basic needs. The good news is that we live in a world of abundance (despite whatever the economic forecasts are), and that there is plenty for everyone to have enough. All it takes is everyone who is able just doing a little bit more than they already are.

In fact, that is all That Poverty Project asks people to do. First, identify that area of poverty that most speaks to your heart and find out more about it. Second, simply do a little bit more than you already are in helping the area of poverty in which you're interested . . . that could be by using your time, treasure, or talents. And third, be an advocate for the poor by telling your friends, family, and elected officials that it is important that we compassionately ensure everyone's basic needs are met. Even the smallest efforts can make a world of difference in the life of someone who has nothing.

More information about That Poverty Project can be found at www.thatpovertyproject.com, where one can connect and follow the project through blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Anyone wishing to support the project can do so by (i) lifting it up in prayer AND (ii) spreading the word about the project.

Thus, these stories. They are set in the fictional Diocese of St. Ives, somewhere on the East Coast (no, it is not modeled on New Jersey). No one is real, but the situations are true. The names have been changed to protect the innocent, and the guilty as well. In each issue of Diakoneo -- for the foreseeable future -- there will be a new story.

Each “case study” will be an opportunity for comment. Before I make my observations (based on twenty plus years as a deacon and as a manager of public agencies) in the subsequent issue, I would appreciate your input.

I invite you to drop me a line or more at kmccoy1@optonline.net, or write to me at 14 Second Street, Edison NJ 08837, to give me your take on how to rectify the matter described. If you get back to me within a month of receiving the latest issue of Diakoneo, I'll take your comments into consideration when writing the analysis of that story, and quite possibly even quote from your solution.

The goal is to help us all deal with the craziness that crops up in our lives and ministries. By sharing our experiences, I believe we can make those crazy moments more understandable and manageable. I hope you enjoy the stories, as well.

Dn. Keith McCoy

Response to Chapter 14

Back in college, I worked in a library, where two of the librarians in my department just did not get along. Everything seemed to be a source of struggle for them. Finally I asked one of them what she thought the problem was. Her reply (referring to her colleague in conflict): “Her neuroses conflict with mine.”

Maybe one person's delightful quirk is a burr under the saddle of their neighbor. You say po-tay-toe, I say po-tah-toe. But we can't call any of it off. Minor irritations need to be worked through. It is our responsibility as Christians to seek out wholeness, and not to acquiesce to brokenness. Each of us brings different personalities, and different life stories, to our work, play, and worship. But sometimes, what makes me what I am punches the buttons of someone else. Awareness of those buttons, and who punches them or how they get punched, is important to the overall health of any group we share membership in. As with any relationship, this trait or that habit perhaps can be modified, but other parts of us will be too

ingrained or too comfortable to alter successfully -- if they need to be altered at all. You should not change yourself simply to pacify another's irrational behavior. That gives the other person too much control where they shouldn't have any.

Deacon Marta finds herself in an uncomfortable spot. She is good at her ministry, and she is well liked. Her new priest is good at his ministry, and he is well liked, too. The two of them just don't communicate, and it leaves her feeling adrift, questioning her role. Moreover, she has no idea what he is thinking, so there is also an awareness issue here.

On the surface, these two should get along. They have the same goals. They have the same likes. There aren't any major differences – there are hardly any minor differences. It could be his quirks vs. her predilections. Mainly, it is a lack of understanding. That may be fixable.

The first step to fixing this bent working relationship is to meet, and to talk and listen. Dn. Marta needs to ask Fr. Joe for some time, and to tell him in advance what she wants to talk about; she shouldn't surprise him with her unhappiness when finally she sits down with him. That would be unfair to an honest discussion. It is not just Marta's perception of what is going on with here, Joe clearly has some issues (e.g., Lone Ranger Syndrome), which he needs to bring to the table.

A good talk assumes there will be no “gotchas”, and also assumes an openness to the other's perceptions -- a listening heart. There needs to be a willingness by both to hear the other, and understand why he (or she) works the way they do. Marta obviously doesn't know how Joe sees her as a deacon colleague, aside from his few public comments. Joe may not realize how he is affecting Marta. This could be his first time working with an ordained colleague, and he doesn't know how to handle it.

Talking is what Allan Marjerison of Montreal suggests, in his comments to me. Marta can either muddle along in her new situation, and become increasingly resentful (and dysfunctional), or she can meet with Joe and talk it out.

Adele Stockman writes that Marta should try to take herself out of the center of this, and to use prayer instead to create a better center to her life and this situation. A spiritual director would help with that. As Robert Burns famously wrote (in a more impenetra-

ble Scotch dialect), “Oh would some power the giftie give us, to see ourselves as others see us.” In other words, the deacon could try to see the priest’s actions less as an infringement on her ministry, and more as a chance to find God in this.

Frequent correspondent Geoff Smith from Boston suggested much the same idea. His recommendation was that Marta needs to take a step back to reconsider ministry and her place in it. A sabbatical would be such an opportunity for reflection. He also noted that, for a person like Marta who has successfully battled many stressful issues, she maybe at the point in her life where she needs to pause, and integrate all of this before going onward. Professional counseling would be useful here. Like a spiritual director, it is beneficial to get an outside observer to comment on how the personality one presents may not be the one you have of yourself.

The situation isn’t all about Deacon Marta, but it certainly feels that way to her. Her ministry has changed, and she doesn’t know why, or how to cope with it. She needs help finding her footing, and stewing about it won’t make it better. She needs to talk honestly with her priest, as well as to her spiritual director, and possibly even to a LCSW or another mental health professional, to help her find her way into the future. Marta has unintentionally wandered off God’s path for her, and she needs an assist getting back on it.

Chapter XV – You’re just not my type

As an advocate for the homeless and the nearly homeless, Deacon Kevin Wong-Allan had made his mark in the Diocese of St. Ives. Articulate and energetic, he had appeared more than once on local television, as a spokesperson for those who needed shelter. Politicians knew him as Deacon Kevin, and the wiser ones sought him out for advice on this issue. Around the Diocese, he had done any number of workshops and guest preaching appearances since his ordination six years ago, promoting the concept of a roof over everyone as a matter of faith and justice. He was a poster boy for attracting more young people to holy orders.

When he was first ordained, Wong-Allan was assigned to St. Peter’s, Orchard Grove. But his activism was more than the rector there had counted on, and he quickly moved on to Grace in Piedmont, where he worked closely with the vicar in nursing that congregation back to full strength, and to a better sense of social justice.

But when that priest was called to a new parish in Pennsylvania last year, Kevin

became fair game in the “catch-a-deacon” market. The winner was the new rector at All Souls, New Canterbury. Fr. Stephen Carillon was as passionate about social issues as Kevin was. Plus, being in his mid-30’s, he was almost as old as Wong-Allan, so there was a Gen X bond, as well.

Another attraction for Kevin was an endowment fund designated just for assisting clergy at All Souls, and while it no longer supported a full time curate, it definitely would give the deacon a boost in furthering the ministry he was so passionate about.

All Souls used to be a “chapel of ease” up in the hills on the west side of town, where the wealthy summered back at the turn of the previous century. It had morphed into a full time parish in the Fifties, when many of the so-called cottages were replaced with large, stately homes. Lots of money had been left to All Souls over the years, and more had been saved, since it was never a parish with a large attendance, or much of an imagination aside from taking care of their own pastoral needs. Two rectors over 44 years had left the place in a dowdy and dreary state, and a majority of the vestry opted for some young blood when they called their new rector. Some of the old guard were not pleased by all this energy, let alone the political tone they detected, but they bided their time and kept their opinions amongst themselves.

The arrival of Deacon Wong-Allan at All Souls, nevertheless, was cause for celebration. It had been ten years since there was a second cleric in the parish, and this one seemed to complement the rector nicely. The announcement to the parish noted Kevin’s youth, his education and background, his call to ministry and his accomplishments. It also noted that his husband, Jeffrey Marcynczyk, would be adding his fine tenor voice to the once vaunted Men’s Choir.

Not long after Kevin joined the All Souls staff, he got a call from Fr. Carillon one afternoon. Steve said that his father-in-law had had a stroke, and he and Linda were driving down to see him immediately. He said he would be back in time for Sunday, but there was just one thing he needed Kevin to do.

“Would you take my monthly visit to Mrs. Rockefeller tomorrow? It’s at 11 am, at her house at the end of Fair Oaks Lane. She expects communion, a little inconsequential chit-chat, and for you to stay no longer than half an hour. Be on time, if not a little early, and whatever you do, don’t call her Adelaide.” Here, Carillon chuckled. “It took my predecessor four years before he was allowed that familiarity. I can only aspire to that level of confidence, some day.”

The deacon agreed to handle the home

communion, and anything else that might come up in the next few days. Since Kevin worked from home, his time was often his own, and he happened to have tomorrow morning free.

It was just before 11 am when the deacon arrived at the Rockefeller residence. A housekeeper opened the door as he came up the walk, and escorted him to the sun room. A few minutes later, a second housekeeper wheeled the elderly Adelaide Rockefeller into the room. She was visibly shocked when she spotted Deacon Wong-Allan.

“You’re not Reverend Carillon. You’re oriental,” said the dowager, making no pretense about her irritation at this change in routine.

“Rugs are oriental,” quipped the deacon. “I’m Chinese on my mother’s side.” He stepped forward and offered his hand. “I’m Deacon Kevin Wong-Allan. Fr. Carillon had a family emergency, and asked if I would bring you communion. “He gave her his most charming smile. “So: how are you, Mrs. Rockefeller?”

Mrs. Rockefeller glanced at the hand, ignored it, and inspected the unexpected cleric before her. Then she stated, as if they were foreign terms to her, “Deacon. Allan. I remember reading about you.” She rummaged around for the information in her memory, and retrieved it. “You’re the unmarried one they just hired.”

Wong-Allan could only smile at this euphemism. “As far as the laws of this state go – yes.” Then he tried again. “How are you these days?”

The woman in the wheelchair studied the deacon for another minute. Then she leaned back and said to her attendant, “Maria, take me to the garden.” As she was being turned, Mrs. Rockefeller stated to her guest, “Tell Reverend Carillon that I expect him to call if he cannot visit me on schedule. Tell him I don’t accept visits from people like you.” As quickly as Maria took Mrs. Rockefeller off, the first housekeeper appeared next to Kevin, and escorted him to the door. Kevin got back in his car, and left the Rockefeller premises.

As he headed home, the deacon wondered to himself on what level had the old lady dismissed him just now, and what, if anything, should he do about it.

membership

The Community of Deacons is grateful for the ministries of those deacons who are celebrating "landmark" ordination anniversaries in 2012.

65 Years

Edmond L. Cherbonnier, Missouri, 5/1/1947

50 Years

Warren G. Thomas, New Jersey, 10/27/1962

45 Years

Walter J. Lowe, Indianapolis, 06/01/1967
 Robert T. Coolidge, Montréal, 07/01/1967
 Albert H. Harding, Albany, 10/11/1967
 George C. Loeffler, Bethlehem, 11/18/1967
 Jerome W. Meachin, Connecticut, 12/06/1967

40 Years

Peter Bent Brigham, Central Florida, 01/17/1972
 Maurice Bernard Campbell, San Joaquin, 03/15/1972
 John Charles Lane, Olympia, 05/14/1972
 James A. Kearney, New York, 06/01/1972
 W George Scarlett, Maryland, 06/22/1972
 John Roy Kenny, Jr., Maryland, 09/16/1972
 Reese Stanley Rickards, Easton, 09/16/1972
 Hugh Wilkes, Albany, 12/01/1972

35 Years

Bobette P Reed Kahn, Ohio, 01/01/1977
 Edward R. Harris, Minnesota, 01/01/1977
 Doyle Gene Bladon, Arizona, 03/01/1977
 Philip C. Dunbar, Central Florida, 05/14/1977
 Mary Frances Kump, Central Florida, 05/14/1977
 D Michael Jackson, Qu'Appelle, 06/05/1977
 Lois H. Gatchell, Oklahoma, 06/26/1977
 Kenneth L. Grabinski, Olympia, 07/01/1977
 Donna W. Kingman, Western Mass., 10/18/1977
 Palmer O. Wilkins, California, 11/01/1977
 Ronald Owen, Québec, 11/13/1977
 Richard Buhner, Olympia, 12/10/1977

30 Years

Barbara E. Mraz, Minnesota, 01/25/1982
 James H. John, Kansas, 04/30/1982
 James L. Brown, Ohio, 06/04/1982
 Florence E. Biller, Central Florida, 06/11/1982
 Carl J. Knapp, Pennsylvania, 06/12/1982
 Cecily S. Whiteford, Western NY, 06/20/1982
 Jeffernell G. Howcott, Michigan, 06/20/1982
 Mary-Frances Jones, Minnesota, 06/29/1982
 JoAnn M. Garma, Louisiana, 08/22/1982
 Theodore A. Nitz, Spokane, 09/26/1982
 James L. Carter, Southwest Florida, 10/04/1982
 Norman E. Aubrey, Western Mass., 10/09/1982
 Jane B. Becker, Western Mass., 10/09/1982
 Carol-Ann H. Bellows, Western Mass., 10/09/1982
 Mary K. Hicks, Western Massachusetts, 10/09/1982
 Gwen W. Sears, Western Massachuset, 10/09/1982
 James C. Taylor, Nevada, 10/24/1982
 Janice S. Bales, Rio Grande, 10/27/1982
 Frederick M. Myers, Rio Grande, 10/27/1982
 Edward W (Ned) Howe, Milwaukee, 11/27/1982
 Patricia S. Jones, Albany, 12/01/1982
 Donald G. Twentyman Jr., Iowa, 12/02/1982
 Norman A. Hull-Ryde, Western N. C., 12/05/1982
 Bonnie L. Polley, Nevada, 12/09/1982
 David R. Bender, New York, 12/11/1982
 Brenda C (Penny) Berkold, Oregon, 12/26/1982

25 Years

Edith C. Patterson, Minnesota, 02/01/1987
 Gordon A. Crane, Central Florida, 02/02/1987

Barry T. Pitt-Hart, South Dakota, 02/02/1987
 Marcos A. Rivera, Central Florida, 03/02/1987
 Ann C. Howard, Spokane, 03/19/1987
 Vicki K. Black, Maine, 03/28/1987
 Carol H. Smith, Milwaukee, 03/28/1987
 James Buckingham Brooks, Idaho, 03/28/1987
 John Morelli, New York, 05/01/1987
 Sandra Lee Bearg, Colorado, 05/27/1987
 Dee Faison, Pennsylvania, 06/01/1987
 Dorothy P. Jessup, Pennsylvania, 06/01/1987
 Mary W. Echols, Southwest Florida, 06/01/1987
 Sue Boyd Ellis, Western New York, 06/13/1987
 Paulette A. Dwyer Carney, Western N. Y., 06/13/1987
 Fred T. Mills, Kentucky, 06/14/1987
 Carmen M. Anderson, Kansas, 06/20/1987
 Hugh M. Cooke, San Joaquin, 06/21/1987
 Peggy R. Thompson, El Camino Real, 06/26/1987
 Callie M. Linder, Michigan, 06/27/1987
 Robert L. Bibens, Oklahoma, 06/27/1987
 Martha L. Hodgden, Oklahoma, 06/30/1987
 Arthur P. Scrutchins, Oklahoma, 07/01/1987
 Sally K. Brown, Colorado, 07/19/1987
 Ann W. Schmidt, Arkansas, 08/01/1987
 Delinda S. Buie, Kentucky, 08/06/1987
 Richard L. Frank, Utah, 08/09/1987
 Gary L. Templeton, Oklahoma, 08/24/1987
 Robert D. Bird, Michigan, 09/10/1987
 Thalia F. Johnson, Michigan, 09/10/1987
 Virginia L. Bird, South Dakota, 09/14/1987
 Mildred C. Terry, Southwest Florida, 10/01/1987
 Barbara K (Bobbie) Armstrong, N. C., 10/04/1987
 Virginia Lee Going, North Carolina, 10/04/1987
 Charles L. Oglesby, North Carolina, 10/04/1987
 Lee Bryan Crain II, Long Island, 10/19/1987
 Anthony Warner, Maryland, 10/24/1987
 Carol Burgess, North Carolina, 10/25/1987
 Barbara T. Butler, Minnesota, 10/25/1987
 Marlene H. Ceynar, Minnesota, 10/25/1987
 Priscilla S. Gray, Minnesota, 10/25/1987
 Helen B. Hanten, Minnesota, 10/25/1987
 Frances J. Larson, Minnesota, 10/25/1987
 Thomas J. Sinning, Minnesota, 10/25/1987
 Carolyn (Kay) Studley, Minnesota, 10/25/1987
 Richard E. Studley, Minnesota, 10/25/1987
 Leland E. Allen, Kansas, 10/30/1987
 Martha J. Bradley, Springfield, 11/01/1987
 Martha Merfy, Nevada, 11/01/1987
 Helen T. Richard, Oregon, 11/01/1987
 Jean Ann Frances Wright, Atlanta, 11/27/1987
 Joan Lois V. Noetzel, Southeast Florida, 11/27/1987
 Carol Cross, Southwestern Virginia, 12/08/1987
 Virginia A. Kirk, Pennsylvania, 12/12/1987
 James K. Aton Jr, Georgia, 12/13/1987
 Joel C. Tate, North Carolina, 12/16/1987
 James Braswell, Florida, 12/19/1987
 Ruth L. Blair, Chicago, 12/26/1987
 Marga Fernandez, Chicago, 12/26/1987
 James M. Gorman, Chicago, 12/26/1987
 Solomon S. Lee, Chicago, 12/26/1987
 Donna B. Lobs, Central Florida, 12/26/1987
 K Mark Pedersen, Iowa, 12/26/1987
 William A. Rimkus, Chicago, 12/26/1987
 Harold F. Toberman, Arkansas, 12/26/1987
 John D. Wilson, Chicago, 12/26/1987

("Nesbit" from Page Twenty)

The end is in sight. *If you feel that this community of the Association of Episcopal Deacons is your community, please support it. If you hate asking for money as much as I do, please do it anyway. Encourage your fellow deacons, your colleagues in ministry and your friends to join you in supporting us.*



**Pam Nesbit
President**

Editor's Note:

To make your contribution without delay, use the Pledge Form on the facing page, or make a contribution online at https://secure.qgiv.com/cps_donors/?key=naadiaconate

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Beginning with the first issue of 2012, you may choose to have your copy of Diakoneo, the journal of the Association for Episcopal Deacons, delivered directly to your computer's-in box as a PDF file.

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Please Note: This option is available only to members of AED.

Please Note: The Membership Application Form is found on Page Twelve of this issue.

Gracious and Loving God, strengthen and uphold your servants, that with patience and understanding they may continue to love and care for all people as deacons in your Church. Nourish them with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, that they may always be living icons of Christ the Servant. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



Association for Episcopal Deacons

P.O. Box 160

Bettendorf, IA 52722-0003

www.diakonoi.org

PLEDGE

Yes! In celebration of the first 25 years in the life of the Association for Episcopal Deacons and in support of the future of AED and its goal to raise \$100,000 in 2011, I/we pledge and promise to pay the following sum:

_____ \$10 per month for 25 months [Paid via credit card authorization at
https://secure.qgiv.com/cps_donors/?key=naadiaconate

_____ \$25 per month for 25 months [Paid via credit card authorization at
https://secure.qgiv.com/cps_donors/?key=naadiaconate

_____ \$250 _____ \$500 _____ \$1,000 _____

_____ \$1,000 paid in four annual installments of \$250 per year
[You will be billed annually]

_____ Other _____

METHOD OF PAYMENT

Check enclosed. (Please make checks payable to the Association for Episcopal Deacons)

Please bill my credit card. Card type: Visa MasterCard

Account number: _____

Expiration date: _____

I have made my pledge online at https://secure.qgiv.com/cps_donors/?key=naadiaconate

CONTRIBUTOR INFORMATION

Deacon Mr./Mrs./Ms. The Reverend The Rt. Reverend Dr. Other _____

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: (_____) _____ This is my Mobile Home Business Church

Email address: _____

I would prefer that this contribution be kept confidential.

I would prefer that my name be kept confidential.

This contribution is made in celebration of _____

This contribution is made in memory of _____

In celebration of diaconal ministry, my congregation pledges _____

Please forward your completed pledge form and check, if applicable, to: **Treasurer, Association for Episcopal Deacons, 11123 Bainbridge Dr., Little Rock, AR 72112.** Pledges should be received by **October 31, 2011** to be counted as part of the \$25,000 matching gift program. There is no minimum contribution amount.

For more information please visit www.diakonoi.org or call 563-359-0541

Calendar of Diaconate Events

22-25 March 2012 *Archdeacons and Formation Directors Conference, Maritime Institute, Baltimore, MD*

13-16 June 2013 *AED Diaconal Assembly, Woodlands Hotel and Suites, Colonial Williamsburg, VA*

“... the only gospel”

By pam nesbit

“you may be the only gospel your neighbor ever reads.” st. francis of assisi

Thoughts on fundraising.... If I had but known, when I became president of AED that I would be leading this organization through a major fundraiser, I think I would have run for the hills. Can I just say how much I enjoy asking people for money? Between root canal and asking people for money, believe me I would bring on the dentist every time! I don't even enjoy thinking about money. I enjoy thinking about things like the will of God, and the workings of the Holy Spirit, and the inspiration of the Gospel. Lofty things like that. And so when it became clear that this campaign was going to take place on my watch, and that I was being called to help lead it, I did what I always do when I'm faced with something I don't want to do. I started to pray.

And in prayer I was invited to climb down from my lofty heights, and think about how organizations actually acquire the resources we need to do the work that God calls us to do. I was invited to think about how money makes things possible and how the lack of it causes terrible pain in peoples' lives, and the fact that Jesus, in the Gospels, talked about money all the time. So, it was gently suggested to me in my prayers, perhaps I should consider getting over myself and helping the organization I was elected to lead acquire the resources it needs to do the job that God has called it and us to do.

Sometimes, I have found, the Holy Spirit gets us into things that we would rather not get into, and then we have a chance to stretch our minds and hearts and to learn something.

What I have learned is that in this campaign we are challenging our community to support itself for the sake of the organization and, more importantly, for the sake of our ministry. For months now we have been telling you why we are asking for this money. We are asking in order to be able to continue to provide the logistical oversight, maintaining the best records of deacons of any church entity, the creation of regional and church-wide conferences, and the community support necessary to bring us together in many ways. But, more importantly we need it to fulfill our mission to engage the Diakonia of all believers, through such programs as The Seven, the Latin Experience and the Domestic Poverty Initiative.

And I have learned that people are responsive to this challenge.

A wonderfully surprising new learning for me was that in addition to money, there are other gifts that have come to me and to AED as we have worked together to fulfill our fundraising goals. Among these gifts are:

Recognition – It was with great reluctance that I sent out copies of the special issue of Diakoneo along with a personal letter

to people who have been part of my ministry during my 15 years as a deacon. I sent letters to priests with whom I have served in the parish, lay leaders who have worked side by side with me in the community, and supportive friends. It was wonderful when some of them made a contribution in my name, sometimes sending me a personal note offering love and support.

Generosity – Over \$25,000 has been given in matching grants, a challenge to people in the community to match the donation and thus double the value of their gift.

Community – I have come to realize that we support what we care about. We support ourselves, our families, our churches and those communities of which we feel a part. It has been very moving to see our community draw closer by supporting our organization. All over the church deacons and archdeacons have asked their local deacon communities and their bishops to give to this campaign. It comes down to this; if we value this community and feel we are a part of it, we need to make it possible for it to continue its mission.

Our goal is to raise \$100,000. As a result of generous giving, and the continued work of deacons and others all over the church we are now almost three quarters of the way to our goal.

(See “Nesbit” on Page Eighteen)