
Wallyhouse News



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Third Issue - Advent 2018

A Special Christmas Issue on Prayer and Protest

On Prayer, or "The bigger the front, the bigger the back"

We have a new **prayer wall** at Wallyhouse! It was inspired by a conversation Niambi and barbara had about special places to pray. barbara mentioned how moved she was by praying at the Western, or Wailing, Wall of Jerusalem, all that's left of the 2nd (Herod's) temple (ca.19 BCE). There devout Jews pray and leave petitions written on scraps of paper tucked into its crevices. Surely it was her prayer that brought barbara and David to serve as Catholic Workers at St. E's. Now folks can come and leave their intentions in our humble wall recently blessed by Fr. David and the congregation of St. E's.

On the first day the prayer wall was ready for use, Friday, October 19, we hosted our monthly **clarification of thought** gathering with our local houseless community. Attendees at the meeting vary from 5 to 15, but this time we had 25, all promptly arriving at 2:00pm. We had some good discussions about the importance of community organizing, of taking responsibility, and of using the local social services.



But the real reason *everyone* came was that they were panicked about the upcoming weekend. They had to be off the street by 6am Saturday morning until Monday evening for a 3-day **sweep**, in which the city brings heavy equipment and clears everything in its path. After a lot of discussion about options, we came to propose that each person store one wagon of items in our backyard. Their items would be

secure and relatively out of sight. At the meeting's end, some on their way out stopped to insert a prayer into the new prayer wall.

Community members broke down their encampments to store their items in our yard, maybe a bit more than one wagon each. The process, over the weekend, was done in an organized fashion and with respect. When, on Monday, they vacated our yard and resettled on Kanoa Street, they even raked, leaving our yard better than they found it.

We were touched on that weekend by the cross section of people who came and tucked personal prayers into the new wall: young, middle and old, housed and unhoused, and of a variety of cultures. It was the juxtaposition of the dreaded sweeps in the back and the hopefulness displayed in the front that struck us. We were reminded of the Taoist aphorism: *the bigger the front, the bigger the back*. This ancient Taoist saying is expresses an interconnectedness between two elements, whereby the movement of One results in a corresponding, often

opposite movement of the Other, such as sayings of Jesus (the first shall be last, and the last first). The yin/yang symbol represents how seemingly opposite or contrary forces are complementary, interconnected, and interdependent. Neither extreme is able to exclude the other, such as front yard prayer and back yard action.



On Protest

Hotel Workers represented by UNITE HERE Local 5 recently settled with several Kyo-ya owned/Marriott managed hotels after a 51-day strike--one of the longest in Hawaii's labor history. Citing the need for many of their workers to hold multiple jobs to support their families, the union adopted the slogan: "One Job is Enough." The settlement includes a four-year contract which brings Hawaii workers more in line with their mainland counterparts.

Many churches in Hawaii supported the workers during the strike, with clergy and laity joining strikers on the picket lines. Our Catholic Worker community was represented by Father David Gierlach and Wally Inglis, who participated in several events, including clergy vigils and prayer services in front of the hotels.



Catholic Worker support for workers on strike for decent wages and better working conditions goes back to the movement's earliest days, when Dorothy Day and members of CW houses stood with maritime workers and women employees of department stores. Most notably, Dorothy spoke out against New York's Cardinal Spellman, who authorized scab workers to replace striking gravediggers in diocesan cemeteries. Later in life, she traveled to California to support Cesar Chavez and the United Farmworkers.

As we walked the line with Local 5 members, proudly carrying a "Catholic Worker House Supports Hotel Workers" sign, we were inspired by a long tradition started by Dorothy Day in the 1930s. Her spirit guided our every step, as it does at our monthly Peace Vigil at the State Capital (see 9/18 newsletter).

—Wally Inglis

We close with a hymn, aka Easy Essay, by Peter Maurin:

(leader sings to asterisk; people sing italicized line.)

What Makes Humanity Humane

To give and not to take,*
that is what makes humanity humane.

To serve and not to rule,*
that is what makes humanity humane.

To help and not to crush,*
that is what makes humanity humane.

To nourish and not to devour,*
that is what makes humanity humane.

And if need be, to die and not to live,*
that is what makes humanity humane.

Ideals and not deals,*
that is what makes humanity humane.

Creed and not greed,*
that is what makes humanity humane.



Merry Christmas 🎄 All!

Love from the folks at Wallyhouse:

David, Barbara, Niambi,
Wally & Kay

Surely the arrival of Jesus, God incarnate, is prayer and protest of our inhumanity. Let us rejoice in the arrival of the Christ Child by practicing that which makes us humane.