



Order of Christian Workers

JOURNEY



We wish to emphasize inclusiveness and kinship...to serve others in common journey... to honor fellow-pilgrims in struggles and hopes... to risk toward the possibility, passion and compassion of community—regardless of religious belief, age, gender, race, economic circumstances, or personal orientation...to include the poor and the outcast...to learn from those who choose to share community with us...to celebrate exuberantly in solidarity.

We welcome you to join us on the journey

August 2007

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**WHO IS THIS MAN...
AND WHY DOES HE HAVE CAKE
ALL OVER HIS FACE?**

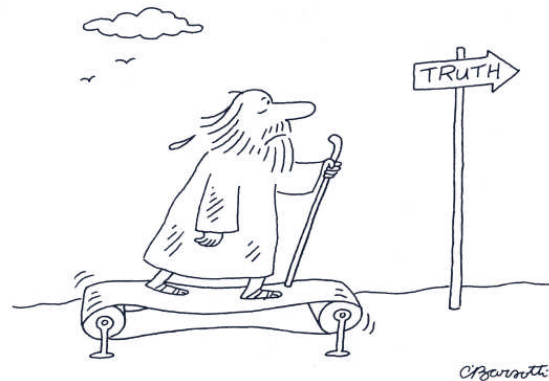
Well...yes...it's me...and today, 8/29, is my 65th birthday [YIKES!]...and last Sunday a whole wonderful crowd of folks [including *lots* of my “adopted-grandchildren”] showed up in the late afternoon and feted me with a glorious surprise birthday party...and—after making a wish and blowing out the candles [no, not sixty-five of them]—I was informed by a sweet young woman that it was an “Hispanic custom” that the person getting the cake had to take the first bite, *without benefit of utensils!* I hesitated a milli-second...saw the anticipation in the faces of the kids...and went *SPLAT* into the cake [and the kids, of course, then helped push my face *deeper* into the mess]; thank goodness the cake was huge, so there was plenty left over for *everyone!*

On the remote chance that you might want to read the “elder thoughts” of a 65-year-old, please see below

Padre

**Unsolicited Comments
& Meanderings**

[Some reminders to *myself* on turning 65]



Embrace compassion—because everyone is fearful of *something* every day [regardless of their religion, politics, vocation or station]...and they're living through it heroically as best they can [just like you, Padre!]...so you get to live and love as one family, *regardless*....

Animate “sassiness”—remember the “lively and spirited” part of the definition, not the “rude and disrespectful” aspect; so that means not trying to please everyone with my thoughts, but speaking from my heart, ‘cause hearts hear better than ears....

Eschew regrets—they're stupid...because they imply that you've always been [or are now] in control of the universe [laugh out loud here, Padre]....

Apologize openly—you know, like “I'm sorry”; explanations and excuses only confuse the act...oh, and don't forget Sheldon Kopp's dictum: “Learn to forgive yourself...again and again and again and again and again!” Oh, my....

Disdain worry—what's the point...what's the motive...what's the pay-off in *any* of it? And especially about money—because O.C.W. is *always* going to be on the edge of financial disaster [*you* set it up that way, Padre!]; just deal with the person in front of you [and the 400 Christmas kids and the hungry ones and the grieving ones], being thankful that you have food and roof and Companions....

Have courage—remembering Churchill's suggestion: “Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.”

Embrace powerlessness—you decided to follow the Nazarene [and the same goes, of course, for anyone who has chosen to follow Judaism, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, etc., etc., etc.]...so refer [above] to not pretend being the center of the universe....

Rehearse the mantra—everyday: “I’m not really in control of much of anything”; wow, what a freeing, true, and life-giving concept!

Acknowledge wrinkles—remember those words you love from Jorge Luis Borges: “Through the years, a man peoples a space with images of provinces, kingdoms, mountains, bays, ships, islands, fishes, rooms, tools, stars, horses, and people. Shortly before his death, he discovers that the patient labyrinth of lines traces the image of his own face.” Besides, even babies have wrinkles when they’re *newborn*...

Memorialize grandparents—remembering what they tried to teach you, Padre, about moderation and balance... [oh, oh...now I’m a grandparent, too!]....

Learn from AA—from all of those recovering folks you’ve listened to, Padre, over the years: not trying to control the universe, letting go, acknowledging a higher power, making amends, finding strength in community...and not having to be a member of AA to perceive its healing [‘cause we’re all addicted to something (ego?)]....

Celebrate passion—yes, the word comes from “to suffer”...but “to suffer” also means to “allow”...and what a wondrous world I live in when I *allow* life to happen to the fullest in my *self* and in those in front of me.

Finally [for today, Padre]...

Work like you don't need the money.
Love like you've never been hurt.
Dance like nobody's watching.
Live like it's Heaven on Earth.

(Mark Twain)

And now I enter my 66th year...and, oh, what a lucky man I am!

Love & Blessings,

Fr. Tom

WHAT...WHO...WHEN

Every Week—in alliance with the Benevolence Center, food and clothing is offered openly to those who need it; O.C.W. is presently providing [at least] **2,900 pounds of food** per month!

The Children’s Christmas Party [for 400 kids] is always a year-long effort, and we’re now heading into the *really* busy weeks of getting **children’s names** from various medical clinics/social organizations,

sorting toys/clothes that we've already received, and **begging** to folks who might consider being "adoptive" sponsors for the kids. At present, we expect the Party to be on Saturday, December 15, 2007...but that's always dependent on the schedule of the host church. So, **expect to hear from us before too long!**

Fr. Tom spent June, July, and early August in Culver, Indiana, much of it as "Chaplain to the Community" to the 1,370 summer students and 400 staff at the **Culver Academies**; the Academy-O.C.W. relationship remains a vital aspect of our life together, and we are expecting that winter school students will once again participate in the **Children's Christmas Party** in December...and new plans are underway to promote a Culver "**Spring Mission Trip**" of other students during Spring Break in March, 2008! We'll keep you informed of the latter as it progresses. Fr. Tom will return to the Culver campus during most of next month [**September**]...and he can always be contacted on his cell phone: **903-521-0490**.

Sr. Maria spent the summer in various aspects of nursing...to both individuals and hospital units...and she has just started the classes and clinical assignments of her last semester in the Nursing School of the University of Texas; she expects to **graduate** [and receive her nursing pin] on **December 14th**...when, likely, she will begin employment at the East Texas Medical Center in Tyler.

Community Kids and families spent the summer cavorting at Sanctuary in the Community pool...just **being kids** in joyous times of life...and now the older ones have started back to school this week....

Community sorrows—please see below....

**Our life together
is possible because of
your tax-deductible donations
to our work and ministry...
THANKS!**

Deaths in the Community

WANDA

She—this glorious 18-year-old—was “brought to us” by one of our longtime Companions, Robin; Robin first became involved in our Community in 1993, to help us in our work with those who were struggling with HIV/AIDS...and she has that natural ability to minister to folks in a wondrous, dedicated way.

Last year, Robin met Wanda...the relationship became very important to both of them...and we learned more of Wanda’s diagnosis of colon cancer; she was, it seems, one of the youngest patients in the United States with such a diagnosis. Unfortunately, by the time Wanda was diagnosed, she was already in stage-four of the disease, with little hope of remission or recovery.

Some things to know in your heart about this precious girl/woman: she lived her whole life in poverty; she was profoundly courageous; she had—among her other gifts—a truly beautiful singing voice...and she *loved* to sing in her church; she knew she was dying, and that she had *very* little time left on earth [she told us in the hospital once that she was “so excited about being able to sing in God’s Choir very soon”]. She had not expected anyone to pray for a “miracle” for her...and she prayed her own prayers of *gratitude*.

Robin was with her almost constantly...and that was Robin’s living prayer: to be there.

On July 4th, Wanda died. Her last action in life was to sing a hymn quietly to herself...and to God.

Our thanks to those of you who offered such kind donations to Wanda’s funeral fund.

If you wish to link to the internet site regarding Wanda:

<http://www.utt Tyler.edu/rkelly/family/wandam.html>

JUDY

Judy lived in our Community housing, episodically, for a long time, as she struggled with difficult life situations. Some of them—emotional and medical—seemed overwhelming to her...yet she continued on with immense courage.

She was a gifted, talented, and committed teacher for children who struggled with some of those same problems, and she left our Community a few years ago to continue her professional work in the Dallas area—and then on to her family’s home in Arkansas.

Judy died on July 17, of unknown causes, at age 55.

She will always sit in our circle...she will always be in our hearts and in our prayers of gratitude.

When Sadness is a Good Thing

In the 1960s, the pharmaceutical company Sandoz marketed its new tranquilizer "Serentil" with ads in medical journals suggesting the drug be prescribed to "the newcomer in town who can't make friends ... The woman who can't get along with her new daughter-in-law. The executive who can't accept retirement." But the FDA stopped the ads. Drugs are supposed to treat illnesses, the agency said, not the vicissitudes of living.

Isn't that a quaint idea? The FDA was worried back then about an overmedicated society; in 1956, 5% of Americans were on tranquilizers. But today 7% of Americans are on antidepressants (many more have tried them), and ads have touted the drugs for ordinary problems like fatigue, loneliness and sadness.

Still, drug companies aren't the (sole) villain in this story. As Allan Horwitz and Jerome Wakefield point out in their incisive new book *The Loss of Sadness: How Psychiatry Transformed Normal Sorrow into Depressive Disorder* (Oxford; 287 pages), we now have a "legal drug culture" built around the widely accepted idea that feeling blue is an illness. Horwitz, dean of social and behavioral sciences at Rutgers, and Wakefield, an expert on mental-illness diagnosis at New York University, agree that depression can have biological roots. But they persuasively argue that many instances of normal sadness--the kind that descends after you lose a job or get dumped—are now misdiagnosed as depressive disorder.

They also point out that the human capacity to feel sad is an evolutionarily selected trait that we might not want to drug away. They raise a great question: What if sadness is good for you?

We've been living in an age of melancholy for at least two decades. Outpatient treatment of depression rose 300% between 1987 and 1997. But while it's tempting to blame our culture—fear of terrorists, too much caffeine, living by BlackBerry—there's a more straightforward explanation for the boom in dejection.

In 1980 the American Psychiatric Association published a new definition of depression in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders--usually shortened to DSM—the compendium used by mental-health professionals to make diagnoses. The new definition was a radical departure from the old one, which had described "depressive neurosis" as "an excessive reaction of depression due to an internal conflict or to an identifiable event such as the loss of a love object."

The much longer 1980 definition (which is still used, with slight modifications) omitted the requirement that symptoms be "excessive" in proportion to cause. In fact, the revised manual said nothing about causes and listed symptoms instead. To be diagnosed with major depressive disorder today, you need have only five symptoms for two weeks, which can include such common problems as depressed mood, weight gain, insomnia, fatigue and indecisiveness.

The DSM does make an exception for bereavement: if you recently lost a loved one, such symptoms are not considered disordered. But the manual doesn't make exceptions for other things that make us sad--divorce, financial stress, a life-threatening illness.

Isn't it safer to have a broad definition so that no truly ill person slips through? Yes and no. Untreated mental illness can be serious, but misdiagnosis can also be harmful: a healthy individual might take unneeded drugs that have side effects, for instance. Also, a psychiatric diagnosis can be used against you in a divorce proceeding or disqualify you from, say, a cancer-drug trial.

Still, is there anything wrong with medicating normal sadness if you don't mind side effects? Horwitz and Wakefield take no position on this. They point out that women giving birth take painkillers even though pain is a normal part of the process.

But the authors also note that "loss responses are part of our biological heritage." Nonhuman primates separated from sexual partners or peers have physiological responses that correlate with sadness, including higher levels of certain hormones. Human infants express despair to evoke sympathy from others.

These sadness responses suggest sorrow is genetic and that it is useful for attracting social support, protecting us from aggressors and teaching us that whatever prompted the sadness—say, getting fired because you were always late to work—is behavior to be avoided. This is a brutal economic approach to the mind, but it makes sense: we are sometimes meant to suffer emotional pain so that we will make better choices.

We might want to return to a simple definition of mental illness offered by Aristotle: "If fear or sadness lasts for a long time, it is melancholia." In that case, see a doctor. But if your boyfriend just left you and you can barely get out of bed, don't assume you're ill. Your brain is probably doing exactly what it was designed to do.

John Cloud [TIME.com]

✧ *Your Prayers Are Asked* ✧

✧ For those who struggle through continuing medical, surgical, and spiritual processes: Dinah, Sam, Br. Michael, Maya [6 years old] ✧ Those courageously in recovery of addictions ✧ Those living with HIV/AIDS ✧ Those who caretake others ✧ Those adults and children who have no home ✧ Those involved in wars throughout the world ✧ Those struggling to transform their lives within the criminal justice system ✧ Our brothers and sisters at Walker House ✧ The women and children at the Crisis Center ✧ The patients, families, and staff at Women's and Pediatric Clinics ✧ The children who are living in poverty and malnutrition, lacking medical care ✧ Those "undocumented" brothers, sisters, and children who share our work

and lives ✘ Those who grieve various losses in their lives ✘ Those who care for the children in families, foster care, and institutions ✘ Those who suffer from fear, hate, and prejudice ✘ The families of those who have died from violence, as well as those who are being executed daily ✘ Those who struggle against the rape of Creation ✘ Servant-Leaders and Companions who live in solidarity with OCW throughout the country ✘ Those who give us continuing models of Christ-work: Andre House (Phoenix), Casa Maria (Tucson), Starcross Community (California), and the many Catholic Worker Houses (both Catholic and Roman Catholic) throughout the US and world ✘ Peacemakers and Holy Fools....

DESIRE, FEAR...AND GRACE

[The following prayer was sent to us by a Companion,
who found it to be helpful in their recovery]

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart,

hear me:

**From the desire of being esteemed,
From the desire of being loved,
From the desire of being extolled,
From the desire of being honored,
From the desire of being praised,
From the desire of being preferred,
From the desire of being consulted,
From the desire of being approved,**

Deliver me.

**From the fear of being humiliated,
From the fear of being despised,
From the fear of suffering rebukes,
From the fear of being calumniated,
From the fear of being forgotten,
From the fear of being ridiculed,
From the fear of being wronged,
From the fear of being suspected,**

Deliver me.

**That others may be loved more than I,
That others may be esteemed more than I,
That in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease,
That others may be chosen and I set aside,
That others may be praised and I unnoticed,**

That others may be preferred to me in everything,
That others become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I
should,

Jesus, grant me the grace to
desire it.

Hmmmm....

I'm enjoying life more fully now than I ever have ... I don't for a moment regret being seventy-two years old. It's part of life, just like getting born was; just like being a jackass and an adolescent was.... And I'm continually, repeatedly discovering or having experiences sitting out in the yard and listening to the spring coming into the land, watching my purple martins, knowing that they've been all the way down to the southern tip of South America, have come back, found the same house—same hole in the house—that they were raised in. This great capacity of life to renew itself. I think perhaps I'm more sensitive to that than ever before. I'm more sensitive to the fact that when Robert Browning had Rabbi Ben Ezra say. "Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be, the last of life, for which the first was made"—that this is absolutely profound.

John Henry Faulk

I was reading the dictionary. I thought it was a poem about everything.

Steven Wright

People who throw kisses are hopelessly lazy.

Bob Hope

Strength of character does not consist solely in having powerful feelings, but in maintaining one's balance in spite of them. Even with the violence of emotion, judgment and principle must still function like a ship's compass, which records the slightest variations however rough the sea.

Carl von Clausewitz

We look with uncertainty
Beyond the old choices for
Clear cut answers
To a softer, more permeable aliveness
Which is every moment
At the brink of death.
For something new is being born in us
If we but let it.
We stand at a new doorway,

Awaiting that which comes.....
Daring to be human creatures.
Vulnerable to the beauty of existence.
Learning to love.

Anne Hillman

My experience with power is that it is not based on strength, it is based on weaknesses. If someone says that you are strong, you are powerful, they tend to mean that you have influence, you have money, you have prestige, you have name, you have position. Those things have their place, and their time, and their appropriateness. But I think internal power—I have the capacity to move to Africa, I have the capacity to climb this rock, I have capacity to get through this divorce, I have the capacity to do my job well or to live my life well—is different. That sort of internal power, I think, is incredibly ironic. This is where it becomes very spiritual and a bit Eastern. You only gain that power by letting it go.

Gruffie Clough

A great deal of energy goes into the process of fixing and editing ourselves. We may have even come to admire in ourselves what is admired, expect what is expected, and value what is valued by others. We have changed ourselves into someone that the people who matter to us can love. Sometimes we no longer know what is true for us, in which direction our own integrity lies.

Reclaiming ourselves usually means coming to recognize and accept that we have in us both sides of everything. We are capable of fear and courage, generosity and selfishness, vulnerability and strength. These things do not cancel each other out but offer us a full range of power and response to life. Life is as complex as we are. Sometimes our vulnerability is our strength, our fear develops our courage, and our woundedness is the road to our integrity. It is not an either/or world. In calling ourselves "heads" or "tails," we may never own and spend our human currency, the pure gold of which our coin is made.

Rachel Naomi Ramen

AND OUR REMINDERS

What would you gain if you were to win the whole world but lose your *self* in the process? [*Jesus of Nazareth*]

Put greed out of your lives and be content with whatever you have.
[*Hebrews 13*]

This is the kind of fast I'm after: to break the chains of injustice, get rid of

exploitation in the workplace, free the oppressed, cancel debts. What I am interested in seeing you do is: sharing your food with the hungry, inviting the homeless poor into your homes, putting clothes on the shivering ill-clad, being available to your own families.... [Isaiah 58]

Ask me not where I live or what I like to eat... Ask me what I'm living for, and what I think is keeping me from living fully for that. [Thomas Merton]

Is it your spiritual practice—each day—to offer *gratitude* for the blessings of your life?

Announcements/Info/Quick Links

DID YOU KNOW?

...That **no one** in O.C.W. has *ever* been paid a salary or “perks” for this work and ministry

...That our only means of gaining financial support has always been *begging*

...That it would be very helpful to us (and to *you*, we hope!) in terms of sending these emails to you if you would include these two OCW mailing addresses in *your* **EMAIL ADDRESS BOOK**: [journey-ocw\(at\)earthlink.net](mailto:journey-ocw@earthlink.net) and [ocwjourney\(at\)yahoo.com](mailto:ocwjourney@yahoo.com).

...That we would *love* to offer prayers of gratitude on your **birth and/or anniversary dates**; simply email us the specifics

...That you can visit the *entire* **O.C.W. website** by going to:
<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org>

DONATIONS to the **Order of Christian Workers** are tax-deductible within the law.

OUR MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 4155, Tyler, TX 75712-4155

OUR E-MAIL ADDRESS: [journey-ocw\(at\)earthlink.net](mailto:journey-ocw@earthlink.net)

OUR INTERNET ADDRESS: www.OrderOfChristianWorkers.org

OFFICE/FR. TOM/SR. MARIA/SANCTUARY: 903-595-3191; fax 903-595-5183

HIV/AIDS SUPPORT GROUPS meet twice each week. For information, please call the SHRET office at 903-597-7558.

WILDWOOD COFFEEHOUSE (Proceeds to various non-profit organizations) Unitarian/Universalist Fellowship; for schedule/further info: www.geocities.com/uutylertx/wildwood.html

BIRTHDAY AND/OR ANNIVERSARY DATES (year not important!):

We'd love to offer prayers on those special days. Please send to journey-ocw@earthlink.net , or by postal mail.

PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians & Gays) Further information at 903-330-8901; email address is:

pflageasttexas@yahoo.com; mailing address: East Texas PFLAG, P. O. Box 130703, Tyler, TX 75713-0703.

A great gift for others (or yourself!):

The poster of
"To Follow the Christ"

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/theposter.html>



ARE YOU IN THE PICTURE(S)?

Our PHOTO-SHARING WEBSITE [over 200 pictures!]

is **really easy to use**: Just go to www.flickr.com/photos/ocw

take a look...and (we hope) send us photos to **add** to it.

The **albums** ("sets") are listed;

once in a "set," simply put your cursor over a **specific picture**,

and it will show you the **title** of the picture...

if you wish, you can click on a picture to **enlarge** it.

Another great option within an album/"set" is to click on "**view as slideshow**"...and then you'll get a **timed sequence** of the photos

in that "set"!

So, please **send us photos!**

For email, send to journey-ocw@earthlink.net;

by postal mail, send to **OCW, P.O. Box 4155, Tyler, TX 75712-4155.**

www.CommunityPilgrimage.org

Have you considered what the possibilities might be

*for your
parish or church or community?*

QUICK-LINKS FOR THE O.C.W. WEBSITE

Home Page:

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/faqs.html>

O.C.W. history:

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/aboutus/ourhistory.html>

Our work and ministry:

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/aboutus/agivenday.html>

The Annual Children's Christmas Party [for 400 kids]:

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/thechildren.html>

***Journey* monthly newsletters:**

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/newsphotos/newsletters.html>

Publications [including some free books!]:

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/publications.html>

The "To Follow the Christ" Poster:

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/theposter.html>

"Community Pilgrimage" program:

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/gatherings.html>

LINKS Page:

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/links.html>

Our Prayer List:

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/aboutus/prayers.html>

O.C.W. Memorials Page:

<http://www.orderofchristianworkers.org/aboutus/memorials.html>

JOURNEY

is a monthly expression of the ministry, work, and reflections of the
Companions of the
Order of Christian Workers,
an ecumenical, non-denominational and charitable gathering of
God's children.

Letters or other contributions are always welcome

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