



THE SOWER

True justice is the harvest reaped by peacemakers
from seeds sown in the spirit of peace. James, 3:18

Strangers and Guests Catholic Worker Farm, Maloy, Iowa- Number 53, Summer, 2025

SUMMER IN MALOY



BETSY'S REPORT FROM THE FARM

As the soil warms in Spring, the pace of life at Strangers and Guests in Maloy speeds up. Birds are arriving and finding nesting sites- busy building nests, laying eggs, searching out food. The bird feeders become neglected as bugs and berries appear. As the days lengthen, we work longer hours outside- removing unwanted plants, placing seeds and plants where we want them. The birds have been active in the past year-feasting on various "wildlife plantings", and sometimes on fruits we had planned to eat ourselves. Then they redistribute the seeds of elderberries, mulberries, grapes and cherries in new spots around the neighborhood. Squirrels play hide and seek with the black walnuts. How much easier to tuck them away in the garden space where some else has already done some digging!



Garlic curing on the front porch

As well as clean-up from last year's garden and the effects of the birds spreading seeds, as Spring progresses, we plant other seeds and bring out plants we have grown indoors, trying to give them an easy start during the vulnerable time of sprouting or striking root under open sky-exposed to the wide variety of spring weather in the



Betsy showing off Joan of Arc, 10 weeks old

Midwest. After the Spring bulbs, some of which Brian has acquired after his peacemaking trips to the Netherlands, many perennials and self-sowing flowers, herbs and vegetables make their appearance. Iris, poppies, chives, sage, calendula, marigolds, hollyhocks, borage and phlox all appear in their turn-drawing the insects which both pollinate and draw the birds, who spread the seed and control the insects.

With the ample rain we have had this season, the time we spend supplying moisture to the garden is limited so far to germination times and transplanting- But mowing and weeding, with the cutting back of unwelcome saplings and shoots has demanded more than usual. We are fortunate to have had visitors here to help with this effort.

But first the goat report: Lily, who has faithfully supplied most of our milk for the last couple years, has developed a limp one of her front legs. She has proved adaptable to her infirmity, and birthed lively twins on May 10th-both females. We are calling them Daisy and Hazel. Lily has cared for them diligently, is providing milk for them and for us and continues to be the easiest to milk of any goat over these past decades. She is the namesake of our very first dairy goat, who in effect taught us how to milk.

Our yearling goat, Alice also had twins, on May 30th. She's a first-time mom, so the twins were a bit of a surprise.

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ON THE LONGEST DAY, WE CHOSE PEACE

CELEBRATING THE SOLSTICE AT STRANGERS & GUESTS

by Sarah Scull
June 23, 2025

At the precise moment the United States bombed Iran, I was eating chocolate chip cookies under a shade tree in Maloy, Iowa. Maloy is a town in Ringgold County, so small its entire population could fit in a single school bus. But on Saturday, its population more than doubled.

It felt like the right company to be in as this sort of news came across my phone. I was attending the 31st annual summer solstice celebration at Strangers and Guests Catholic Worker Farm, hosted by Brian Terrell and Betsy Keenan, longtime peace activists and practitioners of radical hospitality.

The Catholic Worker movement, if you've never heard of it, is a kind of anarchist gospel. Founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in the 1930s, it's less about being Catholic and more about being decent. You know, doing things like feeding and housing people, resisting war, and doing it all with a kind of stubborn gentleness that makes the average church look like a hedge fund. These are people who walk the walk. No slogans. No branding guide. Just a deep, marrow-level belief that community and human life matter, and war is the fruit of systems that value power over people, profit over life.

The gathering began in the city park across from the farmhouse, which is accessible by a quick, walkable path. Guests brought everything from peach pie to vegetarian lasagna. Brian laid out his homemade crackers alongside a bowl of goat cheese mixed with herbs snipped straight from the garden. Betsy and house guests added a tray of baklava to the table. There were pitchers of rhubarb juice, and mint lemon balm tea, also clipped from the garden. I saw the tea steeping in the sun as I arrived.

What I love most about attending events at Brian and Betsy's house are the people. I met a woman in her eighties who, when in her seventies, had walked across the

United States for climate justice. I felt inspired and slightly ashamed. I had a fun convo with another woman, who works at the Library of Congress. She has a big job cataloging, and I assured her that people like me appreciate what the library offers. A woman from Wisconsin, who chose to celebrate her birthday at the solstice party, told me about coming out decades earlier, back when it wasn't just difficult, but dangerous. And a parent shared the joy raising their trans daughter, and fear and hope she has for her in these terrifying times.

Then there was the veteran. Quiet. Kind. We were sitting in a meadow reflecting on the recent news that the U.S. had bombed Iran, and our thoughts on the genocide happening in Palestine. He told me about finding a boat of starving people during his time in Vietnam. They looked like skeletons, he said. But they were alive. Because of his discovery and quick action, he was able to save them, which earned him a humanitarian medal. He didn't mention it like a brag, more like a haunting. "War," he said, "is no place for anyone. Not even your enemies."

As the news continued to break, the air shifted. There were no speeches. Just a short prayer and silence that settled among us like a thin layer of ash. The news felt so heavy, but I was thankful for shade and safety, sobered by the reminder that others were not granted such luxuries.

As we continued our festivities at the house, I worked on some dishes while Sophie stood in the front yard calling

out steps to folk dances. Everyone laughed and smiled as they twirled. As the sun began to set, we migrated toward the bonfire Brian built.

Brian said this solstice gathering is also a tribute to John the Baptist, who lived with conviction in the wilderness. It made sense. So many in this crowd are wilderness people. Peace walkers. Protest sign painters. Seed planters. Bonfire keepers. People lighting the way.

As the sun started to set, and bombs lit up a sky far away, we lit our own fire. It was smaller than any explosion on the news, but somehow felt bigger. Because it wasn't about destruction, it was about tradition. Resilience. Light. Love.

Sarah Scull is a recovering journalist, wannabe memoirist, and proud member of the Iowa Writers' Collaborative.



THE FLAG FLIES

by Eugenio Ferrari

The peace flag flies on the porch at the Strangers and Guests CW Farm. It sends its message of hope and wishes regardless of how many people it will reach or benefit. It doesn't matter. The message needs to be sent.

Years back, my wife Theresa gave me a copy of Charles Eisenstein's book *The More Beautiful World Our Heart Knows Is Possible*. In it, Eisenstein refers to the neo-capitalist, consumerist, inhumane system (filthy and rotten in Dorothy Day's words) we live in as the Old Story and promises that a New Story is possible. He fails, however, to tell us how to get there.

In my sheltered life, nothing has prepared me for this quest.

I've been thinking about it (daydreaming is probably more accurate) ever since, every year becoming more aware of my paralysis, of my inability to act. It's scary to intentionally give up your hard-earned middleclass life, even if you know of all the negative consequences, both personal and global, it entails.

"Fear," said my wise nephew Dario, "fear is the opposite of love". I don't want to live in fear.

When Theresa told me about Brian, Betsy and the Stranger and Guests CW farm, I immediately knew we needed to visit. What if my New Story is "simply" a personal story of degrowth (using this still powerful buzzword)? I can only hope.

"We are not optimists," said Brian with his spontaneous and loving bluntness "but we have hope, hope is all that matters", or all you need, as the Beatles sang.

Hope cannot be stopped by the nuclear arsenal, nor by the fascist resurgence, nor by the insults of counter-protesters. My hope in Maloy was not stopped by chiggers, ticks, mosquitoes and poison ivy either. It has actually grown stronger. Oh, wait. You don't want to hear about my existential crisis; you want to hear about the stay. It was awesome.

The phone forgotten all day somewhere around the house, we ran around the farm completing a task at a time. In this version of Eden, every task has a clear and tangible scope because you don't work for the man, because com-

pliance is not an end to itself, because bureaucracy and profit are not in the picture.

Hospitality does not need to be sophisticated. Good company, a healthy and hearty meal, a glass of wine, a bottle of cold

beer. It's not complicated.

Well, if it's not, why is it so rare?

My first answer, straight from the hip, is that it's rare because people like Betsy and Brian are rare, sadly. I'm also guilty of having looked for Betsys and Brians in all



"PACE" = "PEACE" in Italian

the wrong places. It is rare because of fear (again). Fear of the unknown, fear of the stranger, fear of the limited resources (financial and/or temporal) always perceived as too thin.

Oh, yes, the stay.

I got fewer blisters and more bites than I expected. I thought it was a good trade off, now I'm not so sure. I felt ridiculously proud of my accomplishments, the city boy making in it at the farm.

I bribed the goats to love me with copious amounts of fresh leaves. I carried dead wood, cleared brush, scythed grass, mowed lawn, hoed dirt, laid straw, and spread manure. I even learned how to weave (take that neo-capitalism!) I went to sleep early and still couldn't get out of bed in the morning.

The result, from my personal point of view, is a farm of extreme beauty, functional beauty, sustainable beauty, peaceful beauty.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you Brian, thank you Betsy.

I left fighting back the tears (yes, I'm an emotional guy), the flag waving peace and hope to the world.



Gino Ferrari and Theresa Bartoldus came from Las Vegas to spend a week with the goats in Maloy

We Go on Record: the Catholic Worker Response to Hiroshima

by Dorothy Day
September, 1945

Mr. Truman was jubilant. President Truman. True man; what a strange name, come to think of it. We refer to Jesus Christ as true God and true Man. Truman is a true man of his time in that he was jubilant. He was not a son of God, brother of Christ, brother of the Japanese, jubilating as he did. He went from table to table on the cruiser which was bringing him home from the Big Three conference, telling the great news; "jubilant" the newspapers said. Jubilate Deo. We have killed 318,000 Japanese.

That is, we hope we have killed them, the Associated Press, on page one, column one of the Herald Tribune, says. The effect is hoped for, not known. It is to be hoped they are vaporized, our Japanese brothers – scattered, men, women and babies, to the four winds, over the seven seas. Perhaps we will breathe their dust into our nostrils, feel them in the fog of New York on our faces, feel them in the rain on the hills of Easton.

Jubilate Deo. President Truman was jubilant. We have created. We have created destruction. We have created a new element, called Pluto. Nature had nothing to do with it.

Created to Destroy

"A cavern below Columbia was the bomb's cradle," born not that men might live, but that men might be killed. Brought into being in a cavern, and then tried in a desert place, in the midst of tempest and lightning, tried out, and then again on the eve of the Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ, on a far off island in the eastern hemisphere, tried out again, this "new weapon which conceivably might wipe out mankind, and perhaps the planet itself."

"Dropped on a town, one bomb would be equivalent to a severe earthquake and would utterly destroy the place. A scientific brain trust has solved the problem of how to

confine and release almost unlimited energy. It is impossible yet to measure its effects."

"We have spent two billion on the greatest scientific gamble in history and won," said President Truman jubilantly.



Thomas Merton

The papers list the scientists (the murderers) who are credited with perfecting this new weapon. One outstanding authority "who earlier had developed a powerful electrical bombardment machine called the cyclotron, was Professor O. E. Lawrence, a Nobel prize winner of the University of California. In the heat of the race to unlock the atom, he built the world's most powerful atom smashing gun, a machine whose electrical projectiles carried charges equivalent to 25,000,000 volts. But such machines were found in the end to be unnecessary. The atom of Uranium-235 was smashed with surprising ease. Science discovered that not

sledgehammer blows, but subtle taps from slow traveling neutrons managed more on a tuning technique were all that were needed to disintegrate the Uranium-235 atom."

(Remember the tales we used to hear, that one note of a violin, if that note could be discovered, could collapse the Empire State Building. Remember too, that God's voice was heard not in the great and strong wind, not in the earthquake, not in the fire, but "in the whistling of a gentle air.")

Scientists, army officers, great universities (Notre Dame included), and captains of industry – all are given credit lines in the press for their work of preparing the bomb – and other bombs, the President assures us, are in production now.

Great Britain controls the supply of uranium ore, in Canada and Rhodesia. We are making the bombs. This new great force will be used for good, the scientists assured us. And then they wiped out a city of 318,000. This was good. The President was jubilant.

Today's paper with its columns of description of the new era, the atomic era, which this colossal slaughter of the innocents has ushered in, is filled with stories covering every conceivable phase of the new discovery. Pictures of the towns and the industrial plants where the parts are made are spread across the pages. In the forefront of the town of Oak Ridge, Tennessee is a chapel, a large comfortable-looking chapel benignly settled beside the plant. And the scientists making the first tests in the desert prayed, one newspaper account said.

God, Our Creator

Yes, God is still in the picture. God is not mocked. Today, the day of this so great news, God made a madman dance and talk, who had not spoken for twenty years. God sent a typhoon to damage the carrier Hornet. God permitted a fog to obscure vision and a bomber crashed into the Empire State Building. God permits these things. We have to remember it. We are held in God's hands, all of us, and President Truman too, and these scientists who have created death, but will use it for good. He, God, holds our life and our happiness, our sanity and our health; our lives are in His hands. He is our Creator. Creator.

And as I write, Pigsie, who works in Secaucus, New Jersey, feeding hogs, and cleaning out the excrement of the hogs, who comes in once a month to find beauty and surcease and glamour and glory in the drink of the Bowery, trying to drive the hell and the smell out of his nostrils and his life, sleeps on our doorstep, in this best and most advanced and progressive of all possible worlds. And as I write, our cat, Rainbow, slinks by with a shrill rat in her jaws, out of the kitchen closet here at Mott Street. Here in this greatest of cities which covered the cavern where this stupendous discovery was made, which institutes an era of unbelievable richness and power and glory for man

Everyone says, "I wonder what the Pope thinks of it?" How everyone turns to the Vatican for judgement, even though they do not seem to listen to the voice there! But our Lord Himself has already pronounced judgement on the atomic bomb. When James and John (John the beloved) wished to call down fire from heaven on their enemies, Jesus said:

"You know not of what spirit you are. The Son of Man came not to destroy souls but to save." He said also, "What you do unto the least of these my brethren, you do unto me."

August 6 marks the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, a crime that Pope Paul VI condemned as "a butchery of untold magnitude" in 1967. The U.S. 2022 Nuclear Posture Review says "the fundamental role of U.S. nuclear weapons is to ...deter all forms of strategic attack," but also to "allow us to achieve Presidential objectives if deterrence fails." Presidential objectives!

"No New Nuclear Bombs!"

six arrested at the Kansas City National Security Campus

At dawn on Monday, May 19, 23 activists greeted workers arriving for the early shift at the Kansas City National Security Campus. The KCNSC is a National Nuclear Security Administration facility managed and operated by Honeywell Federal Manufacturing & Technologies that makes 80 percent of the electrical and mechanical parts for the US's growing nuclear weapons arsenal.

At present, the KCNSC is participating in seven "modernization programs" of land, air and sea-based nuclear weapons, including the newly accelerated production of the B61-13 gravity bomb, 25 times more powerful than the one dropped on Hiroshima and more flexible and precise than earlier versions.



With more than 7,000 employees, the KCNSC is undergoing a construction project that will double its size. A banner on the gate of the construction site reads "Safe, efficient and timely delivery of KC next critical infrastructure," celebrating several contractors' contributions to a mad rush to produce more powerful and easier to use nuclear bombs.

In anticipation to the protest, the "campus" security closed the plant's main gate, diverting workers to another entrance. After the morning rush, six of the activists, Ann Suellentrop of Kansas City, KS, Henry Stoeber of Overland Park, KS, Mike Miles of Luck, WI, Brian Terrell of Maloy, IA, Jane Stoeber of Overland Park, KS, and Brother Louis Rodemann of Kansas City, MO, took their protest onto the KCNSC. The six were placed under arrest by officers of the Federal Protection Force who turned them over to the Kansas City Police Department. They were cited for violations of local ordinances that Kansas City prosecutors declined to press.

Photo by Jim Hannah

BETSY'S SUMMER REPORT

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Alice is a slimmer goat and for their first birth does often have just one. Multiple births more common that after that, and we have had twins, triplets and quadruplets. In honor of the day's feast of Joan of Arc on the Catholic calendar, we named the lovely black and white female for Joan of Arc, and her mostly brown brother is Thomas. With the "granny" goat Frida we have a pleasingly mixed herd. Now the young ones have settled into a routine of sleeping "kids only" in the spare barn up the hill, so we can milk the does in the morning and the kids and does spend the day together.

Having helpers here was crucial in establishing that routine - Amy Phillips and Chris DeLorenzo helped get Lily's kids started and then Theresa Bartoldus and Gino Ferrari with Alice's kids a couple of weeks later. All 4 of the humans enjoyed working with the animals and were a fine civilizing influence on the kids.



Chris and Amy, in the light of the solstice fire

arrangement: for a seasonal investment, they received a share of what was produced for 22 weeks of the year, from asparagus, rhubarb and spinach in early spring to the winter squash, tomatoes and peppers of Fall. Jane is now retired from teaching and comes out to work, and share the plenty-and sometimes the disappointments. Whatever did happen to all those plums, ripening with such promise on the little tree? Some critter a bit too heavy for its branches paid a visit leaving behind bare and broken branches.

An annual party around the longest day (and shortest night) has been a part of our community calendar for more than 30 years. This year the appropriate Saturday fell on June 21st, the day after this year's astronomical solstice. Amy and Chris came from Washington, D.C. the week before to help us with preparations and to celebrate some

This season we have had steady help with cleaning and prepping the garden, getting things planted and keeping them weeded from Jane Uhlenkamp- one or two mornings a week. Jane and her husband Jim, who both taught in the local school district while our children attended school there, shared our gardens' bounty for years with a C.S.A.

of the joys of summer in this deep rural setting. As we prepared gardens to look welcoming and attractive, we needed to clean up and arrange the space for the ceremonial bonfire that Brian constructs-assembling well dried wood for its framework and seating for its admirers. We also have some prep work to do in the Maloy City Park where we picnic and play, usually until dusk brings us up to gather around the fire. Plenty to do, getting things mowed and tidy.

A few of the guests from earlier years arrived in time to help with set up the day of the party. Anne, a high school friend of Brian's venturing to Maloy for the first time with her partner JJ also made store runs and provided help in the kitchen as the set up progressed.

A minor emergency over power for the recorded music for the folk dancing was solved by moving the dancing up to our yard from the park. The festivities preceded from there- dancing, fire lighting, live music and the ambiance of gathering around a fire-togetherness, the magic of fireflies, and peace.

It was good to see old friends, and meet new ones-but if course there was plenty of clean-up to do. Some folks



Lots of eggs but not "much drama" in the chicken yard

stayed around to help with that- Amy and Chris

headed back to the big city. Brian and I took a bit of a rest- just enough work to keep up with things. On the next Saturday Theresa and Gino arrived from Las Vegas. Brian has worked with Theresa on the Sacred Peace Walk sponsored by Nevada Desert Experience, so they were connected by peace work, but not so familiar with the Catholic Worker movement. Gino's view of their visit sent shortly after their return to their big city of Las Vegas (they all look big from here) is also in this issue of "the Sower". Like Amy and Chris, they enjoyed the interaction with our animals, and making them happy. With both couples we had many interesting conversations-why we do what we do and what happens next? When we are able to enjoy sitting outside for supper, in the shade of the house the cats join us on the benches, but don't show any unseemly interest in what we might be eating- just keeping us company.

The chickens have not provided much drama in the past few months- but since they have supplied eggs pretty steadily, I don't complain. The Rooster supplies the re-

quired soundtrack, sometimes drowning out the robins, catbirds, wrens, cardinals and sparrows. One out the 8 hens persists in escaping the chickens' designated yard, but so far, she has evaded predators even though a fox has been sighted in the vicinity. Drama may yet develop.

Gino did a lot of trimming and lopping, especially the mulberry branches that the goats favor. Therese cleared the encroaching apple mint from the sidewalk along the east of the house, and all the other vegetation that crept under the cover of the mint. Theresa harvested the garlic between the rains. Brian judged it was time for it to be drying out, but the forecast promised more rains. Gino and Theresa took some turns a cooking and more than their share of cleaning up. Mowing was caught up again before their departure, but looking a bit shaggy again now. In the morning things are very wet with dew, even if it hasn't rained overnight. Growth in the garden is rapid, too-no complaints about that!

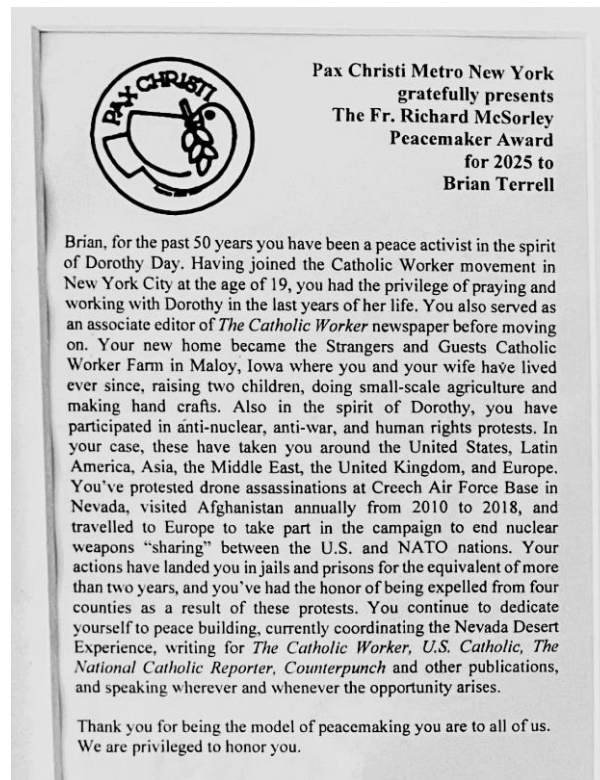


On June 14, Brian joined Jane and Jim Uhlenkamp and about 150 other SW Iowans protesting authoritarian rule in Creston, 30 miles from Maloy
photo by Sarah Scull

We have another helping visitor expected, Tom Heuser from New York City, while I go off to visit family in Western New York. We can hope that the story of these happy visits may inspire someone else to come for some space, quiet, work, discussion and sharing. Sometimes we have some music on the porch in the evening- sometimes we are busy in the kitchen, putting up food for the winter. As space appears in the garden, we may plant for the fall, or fill in with cover crops, to reduce weeding chores in the future. This week some of my weaving is at the County Fair, and during my brief visit dropping it off I spoke with an old customer and a possible new one. When it is too hot in the sun, I can weave, with the help of a fan.

With gratitude for all who help us on our way, we pray and work, welcome guests, and continue to hope.

Betsy



On June 7th, Pax Christi Metro New York honored Brian with its annual Peacemaker Award. While in New York, Brian was able to join Veterans for Peace and their allies fasting and vigiling at the United States Mission to the United Nations for an end to the war and siege of Gaza.

While in the city, he enjoyed the hospitality of Mary House Catholic Worker. He was able to join CW and other friends for the regular Saturday vigil for Yemen in Union Square and their Sunday presence at Saint Patrick's Cathedral, calling on Catholics and Cardinal Dolan in particular to condemn the genocide in Gaza.



photo by Anthony Donovan

THE SOWER

Strangers and Guests

Catholic Worker Farm

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From CW artist Sarah Fuller, in response to the deadly ICE raid on a farm in Ventura County, CA, on July 10:
“St. Isidore, patron saint of agricultural workers, pray for us.”

“We must never get used to war!”

Dear brothers and sisters,

The Church is brokenhearted at the cry of pain rising from places devastated by war, especially Ukraine, Iran, Israel and Gaza. We must never get used to war! Indeed, the temptation to have recourse to powerful and sophisticated weapons needs to be rejected. Today, when “every kind of weapon produced by modern science is used in war, the savagery of war threatens to lead the combatants to barbarities far surpassing those of former ages” (SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, 79). For this reason, in the name of human dignity and international law, I reiterate to those in positions of responsibility the frequent warning of Pope Francis: “War is always a defeat!” And that of Pope Pius XII: “Nothing is lost with peace. Everything may be lost with war.”



Käthe Kollwitz

Pope Leo XIV, General Audience, June 18, 2025