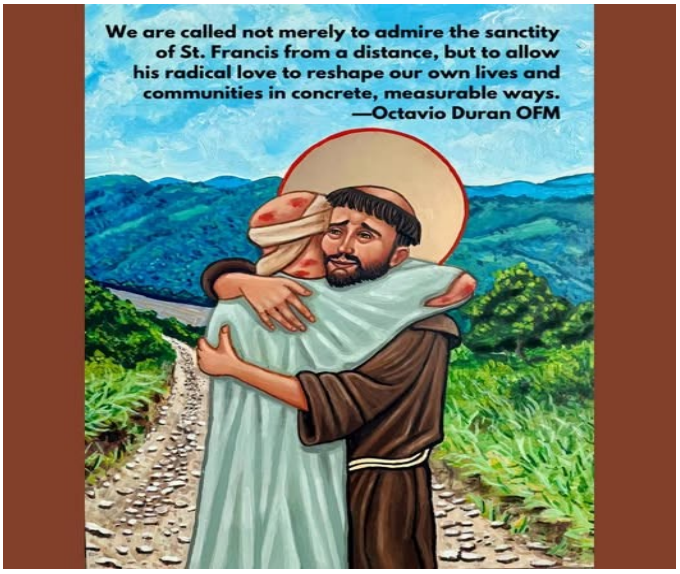


Taken from **Be Like Francis**. A religious organization based in Austin TX. Humbly sharing the teachings of St. Francis and what it is to live with a Franciscan spirit! https://www.facebook.com/belikefrancis

"At some point, the situation in this country stopped being about Democrats versus Republicans, left versus right, or even Trump versus his critics. It became about what we are willing to accept morally and ethically from one another as human beings.
"Politics is supposed to be about policies, priorities and how we govern ourselves. But when the conversation becomes about dehumanizing people, excusing cruelty, attacking minorities, dismissing suffering, or treating truth as something you can simply reject because it's inconvenient, it has moved beyond ordinary political disagreement.
"I can disagree with someone politically and still respect them. What I struggle to accept is being told that compassion, human rights, democracy, equality and basic decency are somehow partisan issues.
This stopped being about politics a long time ago. It's about what kind of people (and what kind of society) we choose to be."

Keep On Following "The Way" and the Light

By: Michele Naar-Obed

It is so difficult not getting caught up in the political drama and upheaval that our country has been experiencing these past years. As of this writing, we are approaching midterm elections and many folks are putting great hopes in election outcomes.

Hildegard House Catholic Worker

Many of us in the Catholic Worker Movement don't put a lot of hope in the political system. We continue to look to the road map that we find in the Sermon on the Mount, the Works of Mercy and the Beatitudes. I feel like I can't emphasize enough the importance of those teachings and the need to be very intentional in following them, especially as more and more of them are criminalized.
At Hildegard House, we continue to find our place in addressing the humanitarian crisis that migrants are facing. We do this by offering asylum seekers hospitality at the house and by addressing the unjust policies our government has imposed on them.
Currently, we are building a relationship with the Prairie Alliance For Human Dignity to stand in solidarity with immigrant families in opposition to inhumane treatment of migrants through detention at the Prairie Detention Center in Appleton MN.
As of June, 2026, over 200 billion dollars has been allocated to Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The largest portion of the "Secure America Act" funding goes directly to ICE to support enforcement and removal operations (Brennan Center of Justice, 2026).
Feb 13 (Reuters) - U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement plans to spend $38.3 billion by the end of the year on detention centers to detain and process tens of thousands of immigrants slated for deportation, according to an overview of the plan published by New Hampshire Governor Kelly Ayotte's office.
After purchasing 11 massive warehouses across multiple states, tremendous public opposition and legal hurdles scrapped the plan, resulting in a 20 million dollar irrecoverable loss. However, they have not stopped there. In July and August 2026, ICE moved massive sums to purchase four major facilities from the private prison firm CoreCivic—including the Prairie Correctional Facility (MN), the Midwest Regional

Reception Center (KS), the Otay Mesa Detention Center (CA), and the California City Detention Facility (CA) (CBS News, Sept. 2026).
There are currently over 70,000 individuals in ICE custody and 71% have no criminal record. Over 50 detainees have died in ICE custody between January 2025 and September 2026.
There is a debate going on about whether these immigration detention centers can rightly be called concentration camps. In the conclusion of "The Rise Of The Modern American Concentration Camp" published in Immigration and Human Rights Law Review, April 2026, the author states, "The expansion of mass civil detention centers in the United States represents a harrowing departure from the Constitution and international human rights obligations.[92] The Trump Administration's desire for an unprecedented surge of deportations led to the recreation of concentration camps in the United States, filled with women, children, and noncriminal detainees.[93] Recognizing these facilities as concentration camps is neither rhetorical nor extreme; it is an accurate and necessary classification.[94] History warns that such concentration systems do not remain static.[95] Left unchecked, American concentration camps will expand in both scale and severity, inflicting increasingly significant harm on broader populations. The trajectory is not theoretical: it is well documented.[96]"
These facts lay out a very dark path in our current history. We don't have to follow this path. We can follow a different Way.

On October 11, 2026, 3 of us from Hildegard House joined the Prairie Alliance For Human Dignity to stand in solidarity with immigrant families in opposition to inhumane treatment through detention at the Prairie Detention Center in Appleton MN. This is the latest detention center that was purchased by Homeland Security from CoreCivic. CoreCivic has a 5 year contract with DHS to manage and operate the facility. CoreCivic has a long-standing and widespread reputation for human rights and civil rights violations. Faith leaders and Appleton organizers will hold vigil monthly and teams are developing "call to action" plans to raise awareness, hold ICE accountable for all human rights violations, and provide compassionate support to people affected by detention. Prairie Alliance for Human Dignity is asking for statewide support in planning for solidarity, mutual aid and resistance actions. The next vigil is scheduled for Nov.14, 2pm. Follow them on facebook for news and updates.
https://www.facebook.com/PrairieAlliance/

Appleton

By: Marce Wood

On the brilliant morning of Sunday, October 11, Greg, Michele and I left Hildegard House and began our journey to Appleton, Minnesota. Appleton is where a former 1600 bed prison, known as The Prairie Correctional Facility has been taken over by ICE. It is being prepared to detain immigrants.
We were on our way to attend a Vigil organized by the Prairie Alliance for Human Dignity, a grassroots group of strong, radiant people who "stand in solidarity with immigrant families in opposition to inhumane treatment of our neighbors…"
The trip to Appleton is about four and a half hours from Duluth. The day was gorgeous, another sun rich, warm and colorful day of this October. Our superman driver, Greg, graciously did all of the driving.
We stopped at my favorite coffee shop in Ogilvie, an independently owned shop called Jitters, and had fabulous refreshment, including scones!
We arrived in Appleton a little before the two o'clock Vigil began. Yay Greg! We met a group of about 75 gentle people outside at the Civic Center grounds, a lovely, grassy area in town. The event was very well orchestrated, and lasted about an hour and twenty minutes. A friendly, supportive police officer kept an eye out for us.
Speakers included:
Maggie Kluver, organizer of Prairie Alliance, gave a brief history of their group, listing their goals and intentions.
Lutheran Pastor Albertson, from Wilmar, and a young woman deacon, led us in very clear, strong prayers for peace and justice for immigrants and their families, and for all our world. The words and sentiments shared by both of these lovely people were nourishing and inspiring.
A local man from Appleton, whose name, unfortunately, I didn't catch, gave a brief history of the strong farmer labor union history of Appleton. It was interesting and valuable.



Myriam Dickinson, from Haven Watch, gave a history of her grassroots group, which helps to protect, transport, and meet the many needs of immigrants and their families. This group formed in January, 2026 as a result of the inhumane treatment of ICE metro surge in Minneapolis. She shared moving stories of individuals she has worked with.

Aliya Rahman, an American citizen, and resident of Minneapolis, shared her story as a survivor of reckless ICE violence and detention. Her greatest concern and message is that citizens know how brutal conditions are for detainees.

Beautiful resistance songs were led by citizen groups Rise Up Singing, and Singing Resistance at different times throughout the Vigil. We were given candles to hold for unity and hope as we sang.

We closed with prayers, information gathering and farm apple sharing. Alliances were created.

After driving down the road to view the huge detention facility, we hit the road for home. We chose a sweet little prairie town called Benson to stop, and enjoy the delicious lunch lovingly packed by Michele in the morning. We quickly found a pretty little park in the middle of town with a picnic table.

Back on the road, we arrived home around nine.

I'm so grateful for this beautiful day of community building for a more peaceful world for all people.

Praise God

BEATITUDES



BLESSED are the **poor in spirit**,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

BLESSED are they who **mourn**,
for they will be comforted.

BLESSED are the **meek**,
for they will inherit the land.

BLESSED are they who **hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they will be satisfied.

BLESSED are the **merciful**,
for they will be shown mercy.

BLESSED are the **clean of heart**,
for they will see God.

BLESSED are the **peacemakers**,
for they will be called children of God.

BLESSED are those **persecuted for sake of righteousness**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Houses of Hospitality and "Christ Rooms": A Step Along "The Way"

By: Michele Naar-Obed

Hildegard House Catholic Worker is one of over 200 houses of hospitality in the U.S. Catholic Worker Movement. Hospitality houses are a key feature of the CWM. Our house is small. With all rooms filled, we could hold 7 adults. We are currently 6 adults and a baby. 3 of the adults are asylum seekers from 3 different countries. We could cram more people into our house, but we are not a shelter nor are we an extension of the city's shelter system. We are a home and we are a community with each other.

When Hildegard House joined with the Twin Ports Interfaith Committee for Migrant Justice (ICMJ), our contribution to the immigration crisis was to give flesh and bones to one of the traditional Corporal Works Of Mercy; when I was a stranger you welcomed me (Matthew 25:35). But like Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, we envisioned more than a catholic worker house in the city. We envisioned individual members of ICMJ opening up a "Christ Room", a room set aside to house the stranger, the refugee, the asylum seeker, the migrant and to welcome them as a member of the family. After some time, a few people stepped up to the plate and in some cases, they received direct support from their congregations. We worked through language barriers, cultural barriers, economic barriers and religious barriers. The table got bigger, our hearts got bigger and our community became richer in spirit.

With the sweeping oppressive immigration policies, it became harder for people to take migrants into their homes. People are reluctant now. They are asking, are they "legal"? Will I be harboring an "illegal alien"? Can I afford to house and feed another person in my household? How long will they stay? Will they eventually be able to find work and their own housing?

While all of these are valid questions and concerns, we are left with that gnawing, disturbing feeling that our faith is really being put to the test here. Not only is our faith in God tested, but so is our faith and trust in each other. We are in hard times right now; politically, economically and spiritually and we need each other to get through this. I can only envision God smiling when we are able to keep even one more person from suffering in ICE detainment.

I am praying that the leaders of every parish, every congregation, every faith community will encourage its members to open a "Christ Room" for God's sake. I am asking you, our readers in the Twin Ports area, to think about the possibility of opening up a room in your home. You won't be doing it alone. You can become part of the Hildegard House Catholic Worker and ICMJ network and you will be part of the network of angels and saints and other such sacred beings and spirits. Please contact us at Hildegard House (contact info on the last page of our newsletter) if you are at all considering this.

Finding Christ in Today's World

By Mabon Finch

So often today, Christians are desperately wondering where they can find Christ. Some seek Christ in worship, others in prayer, and others in silent contemplation. However, in the Gospels, there are two distinct places where Christ said He could be found – where "two or three are gathered" and among "the least of these". Time after time, Christ stresses the importance of community and service in maintaining a relationship with God. Unfortunately, in much of the world today, Christianity has been polluted by individualism and apathy.

How can we restore that devotion to community and service? I believe an important step is taking the parable of the Sheep and the Goats to heart. In the parable, Christ says, "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing; I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." When the blessed ones ask when they saw Christ in such conditions and helped Him, Christ responds, "Just as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me". It can be so easy to ignore those in need if we merely see them as "homeless bums", "convicted prisoners", or "illegal immigrants". However, what if we saw them as Christ Himself?

Without a doubt, treating others as we would treat Christ can be very difficult. It can be difficult enough to care for those we know and love as if we were caring for Christ Himself—more so those we have never met before. However, we may find that doing so improves not only the lives of those we help but our own lives, as well. Community is a beautiful thing; one needn't move to a Catholic Worker or become a monk/nun to experience the benefits of community. One might only need to open a Christ Room in their house to welcome Christ in the stranger.

Volunteering at the St. Scholastica Monastery

By: Greg Boertje-Obed

Michele and I were live-in volunteers with the Benedictine Sisters at the St. Scholastica Monastery in Duluth MN for about 3 ½ months. We joined in the daily prayer and work, and enjoyed intensive study of the history of monasticism in other parts of the world.

Many people have asked how was our time there and what did we do? One reflection is that I was offered a room on the 5th floor where stunning, magnificent sunrises often awakened me. Such sunrises often remind one that God is near and at work in creative beautiful ways.

Another reflection is that the monastery is located next to 175 some acres of woods which are like a nature preserve. This spring and summer a family of four Great Horned owls continually let themselves be seen around the area. One morning around sunrise I saw a parent owl bring what looked like a dead rabbit outside our glass door to the roof area. Two juvenile owls came; one to eat and the other let itself be seen for a bit and photographed while it watched our door.

Later, one evening crows alerted us to the presence of an adult owl on the roof area outside our door. After the crows moved on, a robin bravely stayed, giving warning calls while sitting about 10 feet directly in front of the predator.

Another observation of wildlife was seeing hundreds and hundreds of blue jays and some very strikingly colorful warblers migrating north. The jays came in waves and would rest in the trees, look for insects, and then continue flying. They came over an expanse of the wooded areas, some not far from the buildings.

Concerning the work that was needed, I did mostly landscaping work, with some sewing, painting, and driving Sisters to medical appointments. A variety of landscaping work was needed, such as moving rocks back to where they had been before being displaced by snowplows, expanding fences around apple trees, and moving wood chips to the expanded areas. The work with trees included planting four plum trees, pruning trees and shrubs in various areas, watering trees in different places, raking leaves, and cutting down buck thorn.

Painting and staining included painting a picnic table, staining two garden swings, and staining benches and a deck in the cemetery. Other tasks consisted of transplanting flower bulbs, weeding in various places, sweeping sidewalks and steps, and picking up trash.

For recreation, we were happy to learn to play the domino game called Mexican Train. We enjoyed it so much that we bought a set and have taught it to our Hildegard House community. Folks here are also excited to play it. Lucy has said it is her favorite game.

We were grateful for the new experiences at the monastery and for being able to help out.

We also greatly appreciated the four volunteers who came to live at Hildegard House, which allowed us to be away. Marce Wood, from Grand Marais, Jason Hering and Natalie Hubbard came from the upper peninsula of Michigan and Elyse Acompanado came from Dubuque, Iowa. Each contributed unique and lasting gifts from their hearts to the Hildegard House community.



Why Do the Members of Christ Tear One Another?

By Dorothy Day February 1, 1942

Summary:

Protesting against a journalist's assertion that they are sentimentalists in their pacifism and afraid of suffering, she challenges her critics to spend time in the city slums where Catholic Workers regularly battle the realities of disease, poverty, filth, cold, foul smells, etc. Quoting Dostoevsky, she assures her readers that Catholic Workers were not sanctimonious but approached their work with true humility and love. Notes with irony that pacifism, while not popular with society as a whole, was the philosophy which society wished to impose on the poor and disenfranchised victims of America's class war. Rejects the suggestion that they should remain silent. (DDLW #390). The Catholic Worker, February 1942, 1, 4, 7.

Why do the members of Christ tear one another? "Why do we rise up against our own body in such madness? Have we forgotten that we are all members one of another?"-St. Clement.

Fr. Stratman writes: "We think with Cardinal Faulhaber that Catholic moral theology must in fact begin to speak a new language, and that what the last two Popes have already pronounced in the way of general sentences of condemnation on modern war should be translated into the systematic terminology of the schools. The simple preacher and pastor can, however, already begin by making his own words of the reigning Holy Father (Pius XI), 'murder,' 'suicide,' 'monstrous crime.' "But we are at war," people say. "This is no time to talk of peace. It is demoralizing to the armed forces to protest, not to cheer them on in their fight for Christianity, for democracy, for civilization. Now that it is under way, it is too late to do anything about it."

One reader writes to protest against our "frail" voices "blatantly" crying out against war. (The word blatant comes from bleat, and we are indeed poor sheep crying out to the Good Shepherd to save us from these horrors.) Another Catholic newspaper says it sympathizes with our sentimentality.

This is a charge always leveled against pacifists. We are supposed to be afraid of the suffering, of the hardships of war. But let those who talk of softness, of sentimentality, come to live with us in cold, unheated houses in the slums. Let them come to live with the criminal, the unbalanced, the drunken, the degraded, the pervert. (It is not decent poor, it is not the decent sinner who was the recipient of Christ's love.)

Let them live with rats, with vermin, bedbugs, roaches, lice (I could describe the several kinds of body lice). Let their flesh be mortified by cold, by dirt, by vermin; let their eyes be mortified by the sight of bodily excretions, diseased limbs, eyes, noses, mouths. Let their noses be mortified by the smells of sewage, decay and rotten flesh.

Yes, and the smell of the sweat, blood and tears spoken of so blithely by Mr. Churchill, and so widely and bravely quoted by comfortable people. Let their ears be mortified by harsh and screaming voices, by the constant coming and going of people living herded together with no privacy. (There is no privacy in tenements just as there is none in concentration camps.)

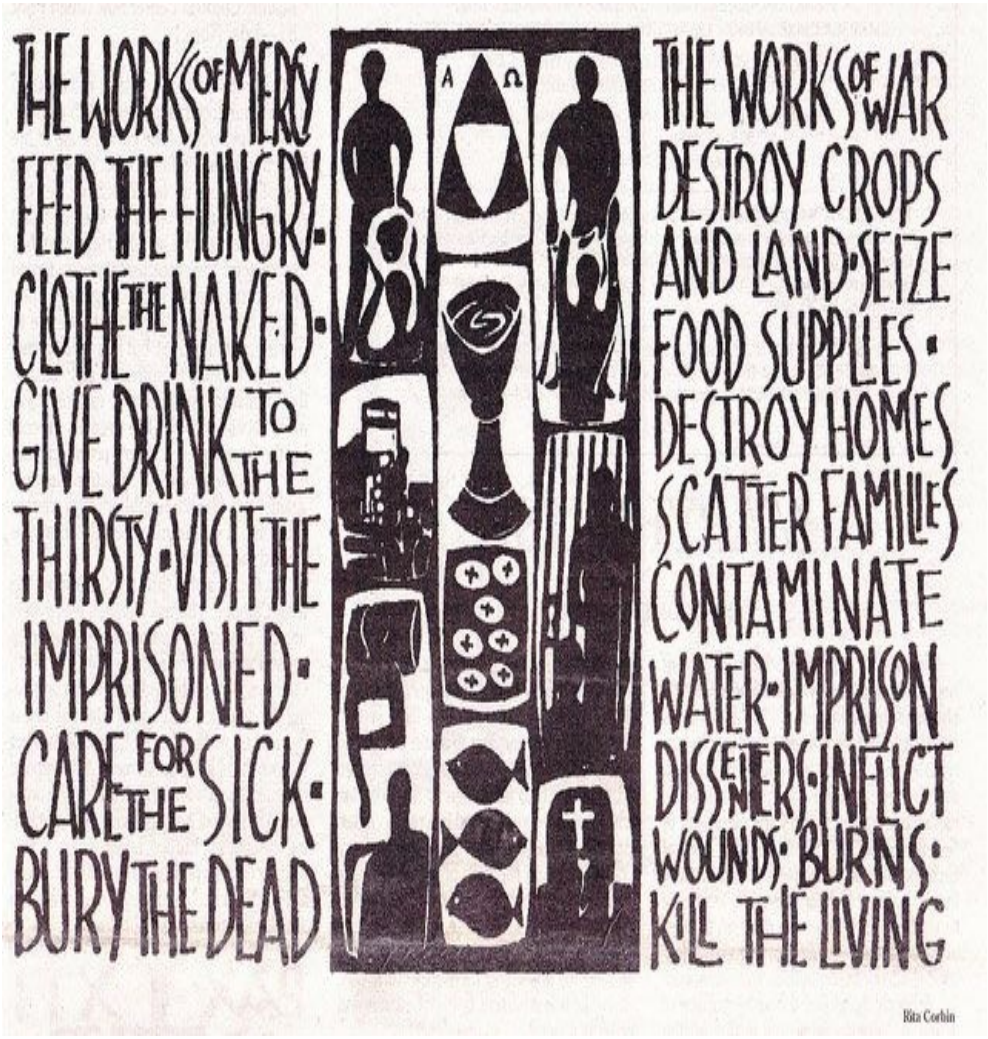
Let their taste be mortified by the constant eating of insufficient food cooked in huge quantities for hundreds of people, the coarser foods, the cheaper foods, so that there will be enough to go around; and the smell of such cooking is often foul.

Then when they have lived with these comrades, with these sights and sounds, let our critics talk of sentimentality. "Love in practice is a harsh and dreadful thing compared to love in dreams."

Our Catholic Worker groups are perhaps too hardened to the sufferings in the class war, living as they do in refugee camps, the refugees being as they are

victims of the class war we live in always.

We live in the midst of this war now these many years. It is a war not recognized by the majority of our comfortable people. They are pacifists themselves when it comes to the class war. They even pretend it is not there. Many friends have counseled us to treat this world war in the same way. “Don’t write about it. Don’t mention it. Don’t jeopardize the great work you are doing among the poor, among the workers. Just write about constructive things like Houses of Hospitality and Farming Communes.” “Keep silence with a bleeding heart,” one reader, a man, pro-war and therefore not a sentimentalist, writes us.



But we cannot keep silent. We have not kept silence in the face of the monstrous injustice of the class war, or the race war that goes on side by side with this world war.

Hildegard House
617 N. 8th Ave. E
Duluth MN 55805

Change Service Requested

WE NEED YOUR HELP

In keeping with the Catholic Worker tradition of opening up ways in which many people can be part of the life of Hildegard House we continue to ask for monetary donations. You can send a monthly pledge or a one time donation for the year. **Checks can be made out to Hildegard House and sent to our address.** We are not a tax-exempt organization because we are convinced that justice and the works of mercy should be acts of conscience without need for governmental approval, regulation or reward. All donations go directly to keeping the heat and electricity on, the garbage out and communication lines open. We continue to believe that the Holy Spirit is guiding us and we will get what we need. We remain grateful to all of you who have donated regularly throughout the years. Times are tough for all of us and so we are equally as thankful for all the prayers, moral support, guidance and encouragement we have received.

Contact: email—hildegardhouseduluthcw@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook: Hildegard House Catholic Worker. If you would like to be on our mailing list to receive our newsletter or notification of events, please email or send us your postal address

Who we are: Michele, Greg, Mabon, Judy, Treasure, Soulaman, Veronica, Lucide, and Aisha. With the Benedictine Sisters of St. Scholastic as our spiritual advisors.