

Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps

Love in Deeds of Service

Winter 2005
Vol. VII, No. 1



CityTeam Ministries Welcomes ILVC Philadelphia

Dan Campbell, ILVC Philadelphia Member

In December, members of ILVC Philadelphia visited CityTeam Ministries, a ministry site in Chester, Pennsylvania, approximately 10 miles south of downtown Philadelphia. The purpose of the visit was to hold our monthly meeting at a service site with a substance abuse recovery program, providing the opportunity to see first-hand the treatment side of Fr. Gary Smith's work in *Radical Compassion*, the book ILVC is using this year for discussion and reflection. It also provided the chance for members to work together in a group service project.



Brian, CityTeam House Manager

CityTeam is a non-denominational Christian Rescue Mission. CityTeam has headquarters in San Jose, California and has sites in Oakland, CA, Portland, OR, Seattle, WA, and Chester, PA. (ILVC members will recall that the experiences recorded by Gary Smith, S.J. occurred in Portland.) Chester is CityTeam's only East Coast facility. Its mission is to glorify God by serving people in need. We heard CityTeam's staff, and our own member, Paul Homan, speak with passion of its many services to the poor.

Housed in a decaying Buick dealership, which was gutted and beautifully restored by volunteers over the past 16 years, CityTeam's primary ministry is a drug and alcohol residential rehab program, currently helping thirty-two men. From Brian, the house manager and resident, we learned the program consists of nine to 24 months of in-depth spiritual and drug counseling, job skills training, and learning center participation.

Brian's life story places him among the 48% of CityTeam graduates successful in overcoming their ad-

diction. This rate stands in marked contrast to the 5% success rate of short-term, non faith-based programs. Brian told us his former life was fifteen years of child and sexual abuse, robberies, prison, drug use, and racial hatred. At CityTeam, he found a new identity in realizing that Christ is with him, recovered his memory once lost to drugs, asked forgiveness of those he hurt, and learned the gift of giving from others that gave to him.

CityTeam offers shelter, a hot shower, and clean clothes to homeless men in the community, and 63,000 nutritious meals a year to the poor of Chester. It has a Well-Baby Care Program used by 700 moms and 1,700 babies a year. Clean clothes, essentials of early childhood care, Christmas gifts, Easter baskets, and back-to-school supplies are some of the family services provided in imitation of Christ.

Capping off our visit, ILVC members wrapped and bagged Christmas gifts. The next day, 64 volunteer CityTeam drivers delivered thousands of gifts to needy families.

CityTeam is an impressive, well-managed operation. With its \$1.6 million annual budget and hard work of committed Christians, it gives real hope to "the least of these," as Jesus put it, working to transform lives of poor men, women, and at-risk children. CityTeam reaches out in Jesus' name with all its many programs. The presence of Jesus could be felt in the hard work and care ILVC witnessed in CityTeam's staff as they worked to help others find Christ in their lives.

ILVC Mission

The Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps (ILVC) provides men and women age 50 and over the opportunity to serve the needs of people who are poor, to work for a more just society, and to grow deeper in Christian faith by reflecting and praying in the Ignatian tradition.

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801 St. Paul Street
 Baltimore, MD 21202
 410-752-4686/888-831-4686
 www.ilvc.org

From the Executive Director



Suzanne Geaney

Dear Friends,

As I write this, the year 2004 had ended. The New Year always prompts me to look back over the previous year. For ILVC, the year 2004 was certainly eventful.

We welcomed some new staff members. **Josie Piranio** began the year as Regional Director of San Diego and became Regional Director for California by the end of the year. Josie is leading the creation of an ILVC program for Los Angeles. Mid-year, **Sue Elsesser** (Regional Director for ILVC New York) persuaded Deacon **George Brown** to assist her with strengthening the Long Island ILVC program. In the fall, Sue selected long-time ILVC volunteer member, **Ed Stankiewicz**, to help her launch a Northern New Jersey ILVC program.

This summer we welcomed **Tamara Zavislan** as our new Development Director. Tamara replaced **Eileen Capshaw**, who had been Development Director for 5 years, when Eileen decided to retire from the full-time work world.

October was a sad month. On the 14th we lost longtime friend and benefactor, **Otto Ruesch**. Otto and his wife, **Jeanne Ruesch**, provided significant help and advice around the program's growth. Two years ago they even shared their home – hosting a lovely reception for ILVC. On the 29th, we lost ILVC co-founder, **Fr. Charlie Costello**, who created ILVC with **Fr. Jim Conroy**. Fr. Charles P. Costello, S.J. went to God after 44 years of priesthood and 56 years in the Society of Jesus.

In honor of our dear friend and co-founder, we are creating the "*Charlie Costello, S.J. Expansion Fund*". This fund – formed from all the gifts given to ILVC in Fr. Charlie Costello's memory – will be dedicated to the growth of ILVC with more members, more agencies, more spiritual reflectors, more friends and more cities.

We ask you to continue to pray for ILVC. We invite you to contribute to this Fund which will strengthen both the service and spiritual parts of the ILVC program. Fr. Charlie Costello, we ask for your help, too, as we step out in courage to do *more* for the greater glory of God!

Sincerely,

Suzanne Geaney



Father Charles P. Costello, S.J.

November 25, 1928—October 29, 2004

Father Charles Patrick Costello, S.J., teacher, administrator, mentor, brother, uncle, and Jesuit priest, was called to his eternal reward on October 29, 2004.

In 1994, working with Fr. Jim Conroy, Charlie – as he was affectionately called – co-founded the Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps (ILVC). ILVC began with 11 men and women in Baltimore, Washington, and Philadelphia, and now has 200 members in nine states and the District of Columbia.

Born in Philadelphia, Fr. Costello entered the Society of Jesus in 1948 and taught at Loyola High School (MD) in the 1950s. He was ordained a priest in 1960 after completing studies at Woodstock College (MD). He earned a master's degree from Fordham University in 1964. Fr. Costello taught at Georgetown Preparatory School (MD) and served as headmaster and president of



Rev. Charles P. Costello, S.J.

Loyola High School (MD) through 1969.

In 1970, Fr. Costello was named an administrator for Jesuit high schools in the Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus. He served as president of the Jesuit Secondary Educational Association in Washington DC from 1986 to 1992. Fr. Costello returned to Baltimore in the early 1990's, living at Wheeler House and working to establish ILVC. His declining health prompted him to move to Philadelphia

in 2003.

Charlie was a voracious reader, a lover of all things Irish, the keeper of the family tree, and a committed, loving man of God. He is survived by two sisters in Pennsylvania, many nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews, and by countless spiritual children. *Christ's Peace!*

Charlie Costello, S.J. Expansion Fund

In honor of our dear friend and co-founder, we are in the midst of creating the "Charlie Costello Expansion Fund". This fund - formed from all the gifts given to ILVC in Fr. Charlie Costello's memory - will be dedicated to the growth of ILVC to recruit more members, serve more agencies, develop more spiritual reflectors, reach more friends and grow in more cities. To contribute to ILVC in Charlie's name, please use the envelope provided in this newsletter, or contact:

Tamara Zavislan, ILVC Director of Development
 Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps
 801 St. Paul St.
 Baltimore, MD 21202
 410-752-4686 or 888-831-4686

A Tribute to ILVC's Co-Founder Charlie Costello, S.J.

Rev. Charles Patrick Costello, S.J. deeply touched all those who knew and worked with him. This tribute is offered by Michael O'Donnell, Regional Director, ILVC Baltimore/Washington DC/Northern Virginia.

“I had the experience, but missed the meaning.”

Charlie Costello often quoted this line from T. S. Eliot's *“The Four Quartets”* and then used it as a starting point for spiritual reflection with the members of the Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps. “What was your experience of working with the poor?” he would ask. Then he would follow up with, “What was the meaning of that experience?”

When Charlie passed away on October 29 last year, I began reflecting on Eliot's quote. What had been my experience of Charlie Costello, and what was the meaning of that experience?

I was privileged to know Charlie on three levels: first as a professional colleague, second as a spiritual mentor, and third as someone I was privileged to assist. When I was hired at ILVC in July 2000, Charlie was vacationing in Ireland. When he returned, I was immediately struck by his unconditional acceptance of me. He welcomed me as a member of his staff, trusting completely in the judgment of those who had hired me. He never questioned my commitment to the mission of his Jesuit organization, in spite of my own Dominican background and several hundred years of Jesuit-Dominican rivalry. Our friendship began, in part, by baiting one another in that rivalry, and the bait that we accepted from one another led to a deeper friendship.

It did not take long to learn that Charlie was a man deeply in love with his God, and Charlie exemplified the Jesuit motto of finding God in all things. Charlie found God through traditional means like the sacraments, the rosary, and in contemplation, but he pointed me to this God who could be seen in the natural world and in family, friends, and the members of the ILVC. Charlie never lost sight of the holiness of the poor, and he never let me see them as any less valuable than the Holy Family.

The privilege of knowing Charlie took a deeper turn as his health continued to decline, resulting in a greater loss of mobility and independence. In little ways around the

office, I was blessed to minister to this man who had ministered to countless others. Finally, his need for assisted living was such that he moved to the Jesuit infirmary in Philadelphia in 2003. In the years I worked with him, I never heard him complain about his health, his pain, or his loss of independence. He was finally called home to God, coincidentally on the day the ILVC board of directors gathered for its annual retreat.

What was the meaning of my experience of Charlie? The evening after Charlie's funeral, I wept, as Jesus had wept at the tomb of his friend Lazarus. But the tears I shed were not tears of sorrow. Yes, I miss Charlie, and look forward to seeing him again in the next life. But my tears were really tears of gratitude, as I stood in awe of a gracious God who had given me the honor of knowing Charlie Costello.

Expressions of Love

Many thanks to those who have made gifts in memory of Fr. Charlie Costello. These gifts will be used for the Charlie Costello, S.J. Expansion Fund - to grow ILVC in Charlie's name. *(Gifts listed received between July 1 - Dec. 31, 2004)*

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George Aschenbrenner, S.J.	Lorraine Knight
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Changing Lives in ILVC New York

Dennis Morgan, ILVC New York Member

When I say that I work in a courthouse childcare center, the first reaction is often a very puzzled look, and I have to admit that I initially had some healthy skepticism myself. However, as part of this journey, I'm learning to follow where the road leads me, while not trying to impose my will on the direction.

After two months, I'm almost over being the only male at the center. I've actually had several instances where children seemed to have responded better to a male figure. Also I believe it is beneficial for some kids to see that men can be kind and generous (and at times silly) rather than abusive. Also being a white man, I think, can help with some kids' impressions of racial trust. I sincerely view this assignment as a serious responsibility and a great opportunity to perform at my best.

Although the children are transient through the center, which doesn't afford us the opportunity to get to know them well, it does offer us an occasion to reach a large number of kids with kindness, patience, and a safe, loving environment. Although it's more difficult than a soup kitchen or a counseling center to determine the need of the recipients, the purpose of the center is clear and necessary. The court docket is presented to the center each day, becoming a tool in the intake process to verify that the family member is assigned to a courtroom. The overwhelming majority of the families who use the center are there because they don't have the means (family, friends or money) to shield their children from the anxiety of the courthouse environment. Sometimes, as you look at the guardians, you wish that you could invite them into the center for some fun and relief from the situations that brought them into the courthouse.

In addition and to a much smaller degree, I have also become the self-proclaimed champion of minor repairs and semi-heavy lifting at the center for which I'm most appreciated by the staff. I really consider myself fortunate to work with such dedicated individuals. It is a far cry from some other work situations I've been exposed to over the years.

ILVC Minneapolis/St. Paul

Congratulations, Ed!

Ed Bohrer, a 3-year ILVC member, was a finalist this fall for the Archdiocesan of St. Paul/Minneapolis Leading with Faith Award. The award recognizes members of the business community for their commitment to living out faith values in the workplace. As an ILVC member, Ed works at San Miguel Middle School.

Growth in the Twin Cities

Congratulations and welcome to our new members – Beverly Bailey, Liz Borreson, Steve Linney, Chuck McJilton, Mariah Snyder, and Tom Vogt.

ILVC California

San Diego

Eight new spiritual reflectors, steeped in Ignatian Spirituality and from a variety of faith traditions, have been added to the program, thanks in large part to the efforts of Barbara Quinn, RSCJ (Director of the Center for Christian Spirituality, at the University of San Diego). Six new volunteer members have joined the community of returning ILVC members.

Josie Piranio, our San Diego Regional Director, continues to work to get the message out to the local Church about the wonderful opportunity for the laity to serve those in need and work toward a more just society.

Los Angeles

Welcome to our newest ILVC region! Josie Piranio will be the Regional Director for both the Los Angeles and San Diego regions.

She has been aided by planning committee members Bob and Joan Harper, Randy Roche, S.J., and Helen Kerschner (President and CEO of the Beverly Foundation and member of the ILVC National Board).

If you or someone you know who lives in the Los Angeles area would like more information about helping to establish the Los Angeles region contact, Josie Piranio at 858-484-0027 or SanDiego@ilvc.org.



Randy Roche, Suzanne Geaney, Josie Piranio

ILVC Chicago Book Club



Frank O'Hara

ILVC Chicago member Frank O'Hara, an avid reader, often refers to his most recent literary discoveries, especially as they relate to the ILVC mission, during city-group meetings. Encouraged by other members to share his insights, Frank created the "ILVC Book Club."

Here are Frank's December 2004 selections:

- *Parish Ministry in a Hispanic Community* by Charles W. Dahm, OP.

Father Dahm was the co-founder of the Eight-day Center for Justice in Chicago and has been pastor of St. Pius V in Pilsen since 1986. This book is full of the stories of Hispanic immigrants and the parish structures that help them.

- *Talking about Death Won't Kill You: Find Comfort and Control by Lifting the Cloud of Denial* by Virginia Morris.

The chapters on choices and possibilities are the best.

- *Sarge: the Life and Times of Sargent Shriver*: by Scott Stossel.

Outstanding biography of a man who lived his Catholic faith and pushed through legislative initiatives which embody our core beliefs in programs that continue today.

- *Never a City so Real* by Alex Kotlowitz.

The author profiles the kinds of Chicagoans who live out the 'preferential option for the poor' while discovering the dignity and strength of the poor they serve.

Thanks to all the Friends and Supporters of ILVC

We are proud to recognize the individuals and organizations whose generous financial support helps to provide ILVC members opportunities to serve the needs of the poor, to work for a more just society, and to grow deeper in Christian faith by reflecting and praying in the Ignatian tradition.

Alphabetically listed gifts received between July 1, 2004 and December 31, 2004.

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The Zavislan, Smith, Koontz, Kerekes, Howe, and Weaver Families

Mr. & Mrs. Barry Zavislan

Gifts Given in Memory Of:

Edmuchi Anabell, S.J.;
L. B. Kines, S.J.; and
Joseph Fortescue, S.J.
William J. Ray

Deceased members of the Brady,
Casal, and Ward families
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Our son, Tommy
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Charles W. Herald,
my beloved husband
Mrs. Elizabeth F. Herald

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In memory and honor of
Kerrie, Harold, Mary,
and Amy Lauth
Lawrence V. Lauth

Delia McDermott
Mr. & Mrs. John Geaney

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Edward's Story

Nick Sharkey, ILVC Detroit Member

Edward (not his real name) came to his first Men's Encouragement Group meeting on a Friday morning in early October. He had arrived in Detroit that Monday from an East Coast city and he had no money. That weekend Edward's bag of clothes was stolen after he had fallen asleep on a park bench.

Since his discouraging introduction to Detroit, Edward has started to put his life back together. As he says, "I work on a piece of the puzzle at a time." In a few weeks he had a Michigan driver's license, local bank account, library card, temporary place to sleep and part-time work. He still has much to do. He is now aggressively looking for a full time job and an apartment.

The day before Thanksgiving, Edward asked me for an envelope so he could make a donation to the Warming Center. He wanted to thank the Center for the support he had received. A few minutes later he returned a sealed envelope to me.

Is Edward typical of the 75-100 men and women who visit the Warming Center every day? No. There is no "typical" poor and homeless person. We may not like to admit it, but they are just like you and me. For many different reasons--perhaps the loss of a job, an addiction, or mental illness--they have fallen off the track.

As we begin a New Year, let's make a resolution that the next time we see a homeless person on the streets we will take a few minutes to look at the face of Christ.

Experience and Wisdom

Francis M. O'Connor, S.J.

Grace. Wisdom. Experience. Action.

These four words together express the spirit and life of the Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps. The two Jesuit co-founders of ILVC, Fr. Jim Conroy and the late beloved Fr. Charlie Costello, chose these words when they were reflecting about their hopes and desires for the nascent ILVC. The words appear on the stationery and brochures of ILVC. When Jim Conroy was recently asked about the history of the words in ILVC, he recalled that he and Charlie were looking for a very brief way of articulating their vision of ILVC, and decided that these four simple words accurately and succinctly expressed that vision.

It might be interesting to reflect briefly now on two of those words – experience and wisdom – and, in a later issue, to explore the other two – grace and action.

Charlie Costello often quoted T.S. Eliot's *The Four Quartets*. One sentence that fascinated Charlie was: "I had the experience but missed the meaning." These eight words found their way into the life of ILVC in the reflections members share in monthly regional gatherings or in their individual meetings with a spiritual reflector each month. In these contexts they try to find and voice the meaning of their ILVC experience. They attempt to see beneath the surface of the experience.

At a regional meeting, I heard a member, Tom Coyne, describe one of his experiences. Tom is an engineer who is not merely theoretical but also very practical; he can fix things. As an ILVC volunteer, his practical skills are used to provide maintenance for three poor churches.

One day last winter after a snowstorm, Tom accompanied a church employee, Geraldine, on an errand in the church van. Geraldine tried to start the vehicle but it was parked on a patch of ice. While the wheels kept spinning, the van remained stubbornly in the same icy spot. Fortunately three men appeared and offered to help. After much pushing and shoving, the van moved off the ice and was on its way. The three helpers refused to accept any money for their efforts. As Geraldine and Tom pro-



ceeded on their errand, she told Tom that the three men were drug dealers who used a house across the street from the church to ply their trade. Somewhat startled at first, Tom later reflected on the incident and the timely welcomed generosity of the three men. He concluded that no person is purely evil; there is good in every human being. Wasn't this a lesson Jesus taught in his friendships with some marginalized people in his day?

Tom had this simple rich experience but, unlike T.S. Eliot, he also was given the meaning beneath the surface – a dose of realism to see events and people as they are. It is also a clue to the presence of the gift of wisdom.

We might say that someone who learns from experience is a wise person. Have you ever had a problem to solve or an important issue to settle – a job change, family move to another state, the time to retire – but needed some other person to advise you? Wasn't the person you chose someone you knew had experience, was mature, had learned from experience? Someone who saw things as they are? A realist? In sum, a wise person?

Wisdom is a gift. In fact, in Catholic theology, wisdom is a gift of the Holy Spirit received in Baptism. Through this gift the Spirit of God works in us, makes us mature human beings, gives us insight to sense God's presence in all things. This means that we are given a "contemplative attitude" through which we see God everywhere.

The word "wisdom" is derived from the Latin "sapere" which means to taste, to savor, to relish. Wisdom helps us to taste and see God's love and goodness. The wise person savors God's living and working in our personal human experiences, helping us to learn from them, making us truly wise. The wise person sees the world as God sees it. Wisdom provides a reality check that keeps us grounded in truth where God lives.

Members of ILVC are men and women who have learned from their wealth of experience. They infuse wisdom into their deeds of service. We thank God for such people. What a gift they are!

Journaling—A Path of Discovery

Kay Sempel, ILVC Washington DC/Northern Virginia Member

The unexamined life is not worth living.
– Socrates, 469-399 BC

As members of the Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps, we are encouraged to keep a journal as one means for reflecting upon our work and how God is asking us to use our gifts in service to the poor.

According to Ronald Klug, author of “How to Keep a Spiritual Journal,” a journal is a book in which you keep a personal record of events in your life, of your different relationships, of your response to things, of your feelings about things – of your search to find out who you are and what the meaning of your life might be.

It is a book in which you carry out the greatest of life’s adventures – the discovery of you.

Benefits of Journaling

1. *Growth In Self-Understanding*

Keeping a journal provides the time and structure for exploring our lives – our thoughts, feelings, dreams, relationships with others and with God, our gifts, our beliefs. It can increase our awareness of God’s leading and action in our lives.

2. *Making Sense And Order Of Life*

By sorting out the events of the day in writing, journaling gives time for reflection and helps us gain perspective.

3. *Releasing Emotions And Finding Positive Ways To Handle Situations*

Journaling not only helps reduce negative emotions - it reinforces positive ones. Writing about our negative reactions in a journal gives us a safe place to express our feelings honestly, and examine this area of our life so we can develop a plan to deal with the problem and, hopefully, find a solution. When we write about our joys, achievements and pleasures, we strengthen and reinforce them. We find balance in our lives by examining both positive and negative emotions as they arise.

4. *Greater Awareness Of Daily Life*

Journal writing helps nourish the “gift of awareness” – that gift St. Iranaeus wrote about when he said: “The glory of God is a human being who is fully alive” – that is, fully alert, aware, conscious.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh wrote in her prayer diary: “God, let me be conscious of it! Let me be conscious of what is happening while it is happening. Let me realize it and feel vividly. Let not the consciousness of the event, as happens so often, come to me tardily, so that I miss half the experience. Let me be conscious of it!”

5. *Self-Expression And Creativity*

Journaling is an act of creativity, and it can be a relaxing, joyful experience. It provides a non-threatening environment, free of criticism, in which to exercise creativity. Journaling keeps us more aware of what is going on inside and around us. It helps make us alert to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit within you. It keeps us alive and growing.

Your journal can be your best friend, or it can be a little used book sitting on a shelf somewhere. If you’ll give journaling a try for 15 minutes a day for 21 days (psychologists say it takes 21 days to establish a new habit or routine) you may discover the most rewarding “gift” of your life.

In the next issue, Kay will explore the techniques of journaling and offer direction from her personal experiences.

A Blessing from Ignatian Volunteers in Italy!

ILVC received a warm letter from an Ignatian Volunteer in Rome - Caterina de Pasquale. Having read an article about ILVC, she considers our programs to be "cousins".

Recently, she was among a group of volunteers who met with the Pope. She wrote,

“When I knelt in front of the Pope, I said to him, "Holy Father, we bring you the love of all Ignatian Volunteers." He cried out with energy and satisfaction, "Brava!" He put his hand on my cheek and gave his blessing. This blessing is as much for you as for us.”



Caterina de Pasquale with Pope John Paul II

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