

Corps Connector

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Jeanie Sweeney and Monsignor John Enzler receive IVC's *Della Strada Award* at the Seventh Annual Evening of Gratitude.

Washington DC/
Metro Maryland
& Northern
Virginia Regional
Council

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Dick Bowling

Notes from the Editor

In this issue we look back to this year's Evening of Gratitude. To Fr. McDermott who in his homily expressed his appreciation for our Volunteers who by "responding to the interior drawing of the Holy Spirit to offer your mature years in service with and for people who are disadvantaged, was a major step for each of you."

We look back to two people who couldn't deserve receiving the Della Strada Award more this year: Jeanie Sweeney and John Enzler.

This issue is dedicated to all the men and women who make IVC an association dedicated to lifting up the poor and caring about justice and eliminating torture from our world (see page 6). It is dedicated to the Volunteers, the Spiritual Reflectors, the devoted members of the Regional Council who made this year's Evening of Gratitude such a success. Dedicated to all those who contributed so generously to IVC at this Evening of Gratitude.

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Photos by Dick Bowling unless
otherwise noted

*The great Way is easy;
Yet people prefer the side paths.
Be aware when things are out of balance.
Stay centered within the Tao.
When the speculators prosper
while farmers lose their land,
when government officials spend money
on weapons instead of cures;
when the upper class is extravagant and irresponsible
while the poor have no place to turn—
all this is robbery and chaos.
It is not in keeping with the Tao.*

*Lao-Tzu: Tao Te Ching
Translated by Stephen Mitchell*

Fr. Brian McDermott Preaches

Evening of Gratitude Homily

We gather this evening to offer thanks for the Ignatian Volunteer Corps in all its dimensions: its generous donors, the volunteers themselves, the spiritual reflectors, the regional council, and for Jean Sweeney and Monsignor John Enzler, the special honorees this evening.

We gather in the Easter season, this time of enormous affirmation, of resounding Alleluias, in the midst of a fractured and struggling world.

God's word in our liturgy this evening evokes three themes which connect in a wonderful way with IVC. The Acts of the Apostles shows us the disciples in the early Church coming to a major decision. They have tried, again and again, to invite their fellow Jews to open themselves to the Good News of Jesus, to the Reign of God preached by Jesus and witnessed to by his death and resurrection. They have been met with rejection; not total, to be sure, but substantial. They make the major decision to move on to the Gentiles. They do so in the spirit of that universalistic strand in the Old Testament that views Israel as the light for the nations. Paul and Barnabas quote the prophet Isaiah: "I have made you a light to the Gentiles, that you may be an instrument of salvation to the ends of the earth."

God is always seeking partners for God's project, looking for those "weak places" of Celtic spirituality, where human hearts are vulnerable to God's love.

The passage from John's Gospel is a portion of the tenth chapter, which is all about Jesus as the Good Shepherd. The community of the Beloved Disciple, which is the source of the Fourth Gospel, is developing an understanding of Jesus that qualifies as high Christology; Jesus is being equated with God, yet distinct from God the Father. This theological position scandalizes some members within the community, and it seems downright blasphemous to the Jews who refuse to join the Jesus movement.

Ignatian Volunteers know all about major ministerial decisions. Not as momentous as the decision made in the early Church that access to the Good News for Gentiles would not necessitate their becoming Jews first. But certainly momentous in the life of each individual volunteer. Responding to the interior drawing of the Holy Spirit to offer your mature years in service with and for people who are disadvantaged, was a major step for each of you. It led you to new experiences of community, to growing in Ignatian ways of praying and discerning, and to learning to partner with God's project in the world with greater intentionality.



As you said yes to that interior tug of the Spirit, Christ was Eastering in you, as Gerard Manley Hopkins would phrase it. He was making you more his companions in service of others. You let yourselves be pastored by the Risen Jesus as you live out your lives as Volunteers. But sheep you are not!! It's interesting to contrast the Gospel talk of shepherds and sheep with the mention of fishermen and fish. One of the problems I have with the former is that the shepherd and sheep are different species. But Jesus is one of us. In the call narratives in the Synoptic Gospels Jesus summons the fishermen to leave all and follow him and then says: "From now on you will be fishers of men and women." We're not called fish but we are called

sheep!!

Anyway, we do let Jesus shepherd us, we let him orient us, direct us, and protect us, three signal services of healthy authority. We let him calm us when we are distressed, upset us when we are complacent, and provide a holding environment for us when we are in white water times.

Jesus is our pastor, and we are members of his very human flock. He will not usually provide proximate safety, but he will provide, always, ultimate safety: "No one can take you out of my hand." All our ministerial decisions, and all our partnering with Jesus our pastor, are for a consummation hidden with Christ in God. We are being led to it by the Holy Spirit, we and all our brothers and sisters, all planet earth, and indeed all the cosmos, whose deepest ground is the Cosmic Christ. We are being drawn into the new future by Christ, our Final Future. He is the one who appeared, from out of that future, to his distraught disciples at the beginning of the Church's life, to offer them forgiveness, and to create the community of the forgiven for the sake of a world-wide mission.

God wants Easter; it's all about Easter for God. Mindful of Golgotha, we can also say that God wants dying, but only the kind of dying done in self-giving love, which begets newer and richer life. Crucifixions and bombings of the innocent do not originate with God but with the enemy of human nature.



Jeannie Sweeney & Fr. Tuck Grinnell

IVC Honors Jeanie Sweeney and Monsignor John Enzler at 7th Annual Evening of Gratitude



Monsignor Enzler with Mike Curtin

Washington DC/Metro Maryland and Northern Virginia Regional Council of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) held its 7th Annual Evening of Gratitude on Sunday, April 21, 2013. A celebrated Eucharistic Liturgy at St. Aloysius Catholic Church, enlivened by the St. Camillus Multicultural Choir, was an integral component of the Evening. Fr. Brian McDermott a Jesuit and a highly respected Catholic theologian was the principle presider. In the opening to his homily (see page 3) he got to the heart of the matter regarding the annual celebration of the Evening of Gratitude. About 150 volunteers and supporters attended. Following the liturgy, those gathered for the Mass withdrew to the Commons at Gonzaga College High School for a reception and an awards ceremony.

“God is always seeking partners for God’s project...” noted Father McDermott, reflecting on the three readings from Scripture and reminding those present regarding the rationale for the Ignatian Volunteer Corps. This effective “partnering” in “God’s project,” he said, requires making wise ministerial decisions, being pastored by and shepherded by and belonging to Jesus (the Good Shepherd) in living lives as volunteers, and being “drawn into the new future by Christ, our Final Future...for the sake of a world-wide mission.” He concluded with a prayer for the work of the IVC family gathered, “partners for God’s project”: “May God, who began this good work, bring it to completion, together with all God’s labors in this vineyard called Mother Earth.”

In addition to honoring the generous donors to IVC, the IVC volunteers, the spiritual reflectors, and the regional council, Ms. Jean Sweeney and Monsignor John Enzler were given special recognition as recipients of the ***Della Strada Award***.

Jean Sweeney of Arlington, affectionately known to all in IVC as “Jeanie” and highly esteemed by her IVC colleagues, brought more than twenty years of pastoral counseling experience and faithful service to IVC. She has led retreats, days of reflection and IVC city group monthly meetings. In accepting the award, Jeanie drew attention to the essential components of Ignatian spirituality that formed her as a Spiritual Reflector: “finding God in all things, being a woman/man for others, being a contemplative in action.”

Monsignor John Enzler, President and CEO of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington, was honored for his ongoing support of his agency’s partnership with the Ignatian Volunteer Corps. IVC currently has six volunteers placed in ministries affiliated with Catholic Charities. These range from the Spanish Catholic Center to Prison Outreach Ministry to the Parish Partners Program. Following the award presentation Monsignor Enzler noted that “all of us are called to serve” He quoted retired Pope Benedict XVI who said service is “about meeting the Lord in other people,” and those gathered for the Evening of Gratitude “get it.”

The ***Della Strada Award*** honors those in the IVC family whose work and lives reflect the Ignatian values of direct service to the poor and of working and educating for a more just society. The award is named after the renowned painting of Our Lady of the Street, a painting prominently displayed in the mother church of the Jesuits in Rome, the Church of the Gesù. This was the first church that St. Ignatius and the early Jesuits staffed for the purpose of serving Rome’s urban poor.



IVC Volunteer Teaches Math at Girls School by Joe Weller

For three years, IVC volunteer Joe Weller has tutored mathematics at the Washington Middle School for Girls (WMSG) in Southeast Washington. It has been a great opportunity for Joe. It is also a testimony to IVC's diverse opportunities.

WMSG is located with other non-profits in a building called THEARC (Town Hall for Education Arts and Recreation) and participates in a vibrant center for the busy community. But for Joe Weller, the campus represents his third and best attempt to match his professional skills with local needs.

As a former physicist at the Naval Research Lab, Joe had plenty of math experience. He had volunteered earlier at SOME's Center for Employment Training and at the Washington Jesuit Academy. But traffic and travel time prompted the search for a place closer to home. With only a few possibilities; discernment and prayer led him to WMSG. When Joe attended his first staff meeting, he recalls, "I knew what it was to be a minority." He was the only male there (although he discovered later that another man was involved and a new male science teacher was hired this year). But the big difference for him was the

school and especially the students.

The school works on a double-block schedule for some subjects, including math. Each time-block is 45 minutes so math is an hour and a half long. There is a computer lab and a packaged program called IXL but it is still a challenge for teacher and students facing 90 minutes of concentration on a difficult subject. Students are continuously graded; teachers get immediate progress reports. Joe takes each set of problems himself to keep up with the students and to help them when needed. The IXL program complements the daily class work which includes warm up reviews, vocabulary, new topics, classwork, homework review and frequent quizzes and tests.

Pre-algebra is taught and, for the first time this year, a high school algebra course was open to a small 8th grade group. Joe is at the school two days a week, normally Monday and Thursday. He works with individuals who may have missed a class and students having difficulty with certain math problems and methodology. He is grateful for two excellent math teachers---Ms. Kelley Lockard and Mrs. Anna Boero Williams.

The first question people ask Joe is how is it to work with "young ladies"? There are cultural (and other!) differences between the sexes. "The young ladies can be very chatty at times," Joe says. They love music and they often use earphones with music from the computer. The teacher plays music sometimes during tests and classwork.

IVC and Joe Weller are very grateful to Sister Mary Bourdon, RJM, president and founder of WMSG in 1998. She works very hard to keep things going. She always has a smile for everyone," Joe says. "WMSG has been an exciting but satisfying challenge."



Working to End Torture

KATHERINE CROSSON New DC/Metro Maryland Volunteer

Sometimes a host agency knows exactly what it wants in an IVC volunteer. More often the volunteer and the agency work out the partnership after a brief (or extended) trial. With Kathy Crosson, a new IVC volunteer—the first at her agency—saw right away what was needed at the Torture Abolition and Survivor Support Coalition (TASSC). But doing it became almost a fulltime job.

TASSC is the only area organization founded by survivors of torture. It is devoted to ending its practice while helping its victims. But when Kathy started there earlier this year, her long federal service and her academic training were immediately called into action. She became an administrative assistant, operations manager and organizer of the growing data base. The work has not slowed down since then.

The small but growing organization still runs on a few paid staff (some part time) and a modest annual budget (about \$250,000) for its

ambitious agenda. Since its founding in 1998 by an Ursuline nun, Diana Ortiz, herself a torture victim, TASSC has helped over 6000 torture survivors. Housed in the Capuchin College near the National Shrine, TASSC is the only U.S. group run by and for survivors of torture. It is inspired by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, signed and ratified by most countries and, sadly, violated by many of them.

Kathy Crosson's long trip to her modest office began in a New England home, as the eldest of six children. Kathy spent two years at Emmanuel College in Boston and two more at Syracuse University. She entered the Peace Corps right after graduating in sociology and was sent to Togo. Togo is a West African country as small in the huge continent of Africa as her native Connecticut is in its American dimensions.

After earning a master's degree in public health education at the University of North Carolina, she



INTERNET PHOTO

by Cliff Hackett

began what became a career, working at several affiliates of the National Cancer Institute. She worked in Houston and Philadelphia before settling in Washington to begin 28 years with the federal government. In those years, she ran the NCI Patient Education Program and was later associate director of one of the centers of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

Kathy loved her government experience. "I had exciting, satisfying work and ideal bosses throughout my career which only surprises people who don't know the federal service," she says. "My IVC work calls upon my federal experience every day," she adds.

Kathy and her husband, Lynn, also retired from government work, live in Kensington, Maryland between her old workplace at NIH and her new one on Harewood Road NE.

It has been a long but happy journey for this energetic IVC volunteer.

Save the Date: September 16-18, 2013

Fall 2013 RETREAT Loyola-on-the-Potomac

Faulkner, Maryland

Msgr. Raymond G. East, Facilitator

The theme for the Fall Retreat has not been determined at time of publication.
Social Justice will be the overall theme for the 2013-2014 year.



CATHOLIC DISTANCE UNIVERSITY

IVC Northern Virginia Region's Newest Agency

Catholic Distance University (CDU) was founded in 1983 as the first catechetical institute in the United States to award the catechetical diploma and teach Catholic faith to adults using distance education. Its academic and administrative offices are located in Hamilton, Loudoun County, Virginia where IVC volunteer Bob Thomsen currently does his volunteer work.



Bob Thomsen works under the supervision and guidance of the Assistant to the President and Director of Operations for CDU . Bob has worked on a wide variety of projects with the CDU staff from the Admissions Office , Registrar's Office, Business Office, Marketing, Information Technology, and the Course Development staff. CDU recently was awarded a grant to update their paper courses for the prisoner program and brochures for the prison chaplains. CDU offers financial aid to the inmates in their prisoner program and offers a tuition assistance program that is currently available to all the US Military Services .

CDU offers degree programs in the following: Associate of Arts in the Liberal Arts with a concentration in Catholic Studies; a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts in Theology and it offers the following non-credit education programs : certificates in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Catechetics , Sacred Scriptures, and Church History and three week interactive on-line seminars.

CDU offers training for the following : Director of Religious Education, Catholic School Teachers; Diaconate Theological Training; Catechist formation and Catholic Inmates in prisons.

CDU is accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC), an agency approved by the U.S Department of Education, and is certified as a degree granting institution by the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia (SCHEV).

Bishop Loverde is the Chairman of the CDU Board of Trustees.

CDU recently launched a new web site where more information can be obtained about the university at <http://www.cdu.edu/>

CDU students represent all 50 states and over 60 countries from all over the world.

Bob Thomsen



