

Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps

Love in Deeds of Service

Winter 2004
Vol. VI, No. 2



Justice sometimes depends on who you are...

by Tom Morgan

Last year was my first as an ILVC volunteer at Cleveland Works, a program that is designed to provide motivated, dependable workers for employers in the Greater Cleveland area. Most of our clients have come from the inner-city neighborhoods of Cleveland, lack a high school education, have been associated with drug abuse, and have been incarcerated for some periods in their lives. They are constantly facing the stigma of their poor choices when seeking employment.

Because I am always amazed at the strength of the human spirit that many of these people possess and their deeply held abiding faith in a good God, I felt I needed to come back for a second year. They have paid their dues to society and yet society will not forgive them. They are making a sincere effort to be productive members of society.

In my assignment at Cleveland Works, I prepare clients by doing one-on-one mock interviews. I assist them in expressing themselves coherently about their job experiences and skills. We rehearse the mechanics of interviewing, including an explanation about the felony conviction. However, the very nature of the interview process many times takes me into a very personal review of the client's life, their background, their poor choices, their convictions, their hopes, dreams and aspirations. At times, it is a very emotional experience for me. I have truly come to believe that there is disparity in our judicial system. Justice sometimes depends on who you are, where you live, and your personal wealth. I have also come to believe that we, as a society do not forgive, as Christ has forgiven all of us.

I have chosen to return to Cleveland Works because the staff truly serves the poor and the marginalized in our society. I know that Our Lord is at work here. The classroom facilitators treat my analysis and feedback with a great deal of respect. Because they are able to utilize my skills and experience, they can spend more time working with those most in need, providing them with additional instruction.

The organization is undergoing a challenge to its survival since its director is being prosecuted on various charges related to drug possession. I feel that my skills are really needed now to support the staff who are working very hard to keep the agency afloat and help the people we serve build good and productive lives.

Both Tom and his wife Anita have been ILVC volunteers for two years.



Tom talks with a client at Cleveland Works

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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair, Robert Waters
Vice-Chair, Lorraine Knight
Secretary, Jim Conroy, S.J.
Treasurer, William Anderson
Executive Director, Suzanne Geaney
Frances F. Butler
Stephen Callahan
Roseanne Casey
William Creed, S.J.
Michael F. Curtin
Sr. Bernadette Duross, RSM
Kitty Higgins
British Robinson
Jim Scheibel
Sharon Scibek
Kathleen Zeifang

From the Director

Suzanne Geaney



Suzanne Geaney

It is tempting, during these bleak and cold days of winter, to get caught up in the anxieties of life. I worry about the hundred-plus Ignatian Lay Volunteers Corps members who work in cold areas and who travel on icy roads to their work sites. I picture the people they serve: people suffering all kinds of ills – from physical hurts to spiritual hurts. I worry how we are going to make this year's budget and how I will get all my work done with a "to do" list that never stops growing.

These anxieties cause some panic in me. They lead me away from trusting in God. They make me forget that God is with us, within us and all around us, this moment and every moment. When I forget that, I am lost and I begin to feel hopeless about so many things.

What pulls me back?

I remember hearing members of the ILVC say how they feel a deep sense of sharing the pain and hurt of their guests or clients. They say what they offer is their compassion. They do not abandon their guests or clients. And they trust that God had a hand in placing them in their ministry even if they feel inadequate at any particular moment.

One ILVC member explained she sometimes knows she simply cannot help solve the problem she's been presented. Then she excuses herself for a moment and walks outside and prays, "God, I really need your help." She knows God will not abandon her or the person at hand.

You can do it!

“We’re kids from North Philadelphia and everyone knows we’re dumb.”



From the moment Edie Tierney heard that comment from a sixth grader at St. Malachy where she is an ILVC volunteer, she was determined to let each and every child she worked with know of their potential if they were willing to work. She works on drawing them out, asking about their interests and aspirations.

One young lady told Edie that she loved to dance and wanted to be a professional ballerina, but she had never been to a ballet or heard of the Pennsylvania Ballet. Another student said he wanted to be a policeman when he grew up. He didn’t know what he would have to do to attain that goal, but did understand that he would have to work hard on his schoolwork. A young second-grade boy who was having a great deal of trouble in his classroom, confided in Edie that he just loved football and the Eagles’ quarterback Donovan McNabb. And so they read the Sports pages that day – it was football season

– and that young child discovered that he could do it, with help and encouragement, he could read.

Delmarva Food Bank

The Delmarva Food Bank is the largest independent food bank on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. In 2003, they gave out 60,000 pounds of free food to needy residents. If your church or school would like to have a food drive to support the Delmarva Food Bank, give Lorrie Latchford a call at 410-641-7246.

Edie comments, “My heart really goes out to these kids. They truly come from disadvantaged backgrounds and need all the reinforcement of their potential and a positive outlook on their capabilities. Thankfully, the children at St. Malachy who work with Edie Tierney are getting a big dose of “you can do it, you are important, you matter, you can achieve!”

News from the Regions

Maryland Province

Baltimore

Volunteers & Reflectors in Baltimore, Washington, and Northern Virginia have been gathering socially more often than usual these past few months. In November, a large group turned out for co-founder Charlie Costello's 75th birthday, bringing a delicious variety of appetizers, sides, and deserts for the occasion. In December, the various city-group meetings were expanded to include pot-luck lunches in honor of the holidays. Finally, in January, the Baltimore ILVCers joined the local JVCers for pizza, beer, and faith-sharing. Unfortunately, the Washington and Northern Virginia ILVC/JVC pizza party had to be rescheduled due to inclement weather. Perhaps the local mission of Baltimore, Washington, and Northern Virginia ILVC should include eating well in addition to serving the poor and reflecting in the Ignatian tradition.

Philadelphia

The Philadelphia Region of ILVC and St. Malachy's Parish, with the support of the Jesuit communities in Philadelphia, Camden, and at St. Joseph's University, are sponsoring an Ignatian study series for the second consecutive year. The series is held one Sunday each month for six months from November through April. Invitees include



parishioners from St. Malachy's and other local parishes, ILVC members in Philadelphia and Central New Jersey City Groups, and former JVC members residing in the greater Philadelphia Area. The

purpose of the program is to discuss, support and enrich the lived experiences of Ignatian Spirituality in our various communities. The six topics-themes are the basis of the four parts (weeks) of the very spiritual exercises. For ILVCers the program is a perfect complement to the readings in Inner Compass, which is an introduction to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the foundation of Ignatian Spirituality.

New York Province

Upstate New York

The staff of Job Connection in Syracuse, NY would like to thank Ed McCarthy for his nearly six-year contribution as a volunteer. Retired from the military and as a real estate agent, McCarthy "re-retired" from Job Connection last spring and his presence is missed! McCarthy joined the Job Connection staff in 1997 and greatly contributed to the growth of the program by facilitating orientation sessions and forming relationships with employers. By greeting participants as they walked in the door for the first time, McCarthy's personable and welcoming character always made a lasting impression on employers and participants alike. Thanks Ed for your generosity and for making a difference at Job Connection. Enjoy your retirement!

Metro New York/Long Island

The Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN) is happy to have the services of ILVC volunteer Mary Ellen Sheerin who is the Soup Kitchen's coordinator. The INN, founded in 1983 in Hempstead NY, now operates 19 soup kitchens, four emergency shelters, two transitional housing programs, and 23 long-term housing sites. These programs offer a wide array of support services to hungry and homeless Long Islanders. All of the INN's programs promote self-sufficiency and attempt to address the underlying causes of poverty.

Wisconsin Province

Minneapolis/ St. Paul

St. Margaret's Day Academy, Minneapolis, MN. honored alumna and ILVC volunteer Pat Helin, for her outstanding achievement in community life. According to the Citation Award committee, Pat is a remarkable example of selfless serving - to family, friends, young children and adults struggling for dignity. As part of her volunteering, Pat works at Catholic Charities Branch 3, a drop-in center for homeless men. She helps with laundry, handing out hygiene kits and towels for showers, and keys for lockers. Pat says that being a compassionate listener is an important part of the job. "The homeless share their stories and dreams." And, listen, she does. Congratulations, Pat!

Chicago Province

Chicago

Several ILVC Chicago members are alumni of Loyola University Chicago. An article in the Loyola Magazine recently featured several ILVC volunteers and alums, including Frank O'Hara, who volunteers at L'Arche community, an organization for developmentally disabled adults that Frank first heard about as an undergraduate at Loyola in 1964. Frank shuttles L'Arche residents home from work and helps them to prepare evening meals. He leads activities and prayer meetings. He says he values most his friendships with community members and his experiences with fellow volunteers. "This work deepens the humanity of everyone involved," he says.

Detroit Province

Cleveland

The Detroit province hosted a dinner/information meeting at St. Ignatius High School for Cleveland area Jesuit Social Ministries. Cleveland's ILVC was invited to join in exchanging mission information and sharing concerns and successes. It was a

wonderful evening in which to bond with our fellow Jesuit social ministers.

Detroit

ILVC Detroit is pleased to say one of our volunteers, Nick Sharkey, is working this year at the Reggie McKenzie Foundation in Highland Park, MI. Professional football player Reggie McKenzie started this foundation in 1974. Since then the foundation has grown from offering one athletic program in a poor community in the metro Detroit area to offering a wide range of after school programs. Today the Reggie McKenzie Foundation serves over 1,500 boys and girls, 8-18 years old, with year-round academic enrichment programs, life skills classes, and five sports clinics. The organization promotes self-esteem, self-confidence and builds character by emphasizing academic excellence, athletic accomplishment, and civic responsibility. A steep drop in contributions from the foundations financial supporters, due to the current economy and an increase in costs has seriously jeopardized the foundations programs. Nick will use his skills to help bring in new funding to maintain current programs and restore recently dropped programs.

California Province

San Diego

ILVC San Diego is searching for a new regional director since Kathleen Spreen has had to step down from the position she has held since 2001. Kathleen has been a wonderful asset to ILVC, starting as a volunteer in New York, moving on to regional director for the New York Metropolitan area, and upon relocating to San Diego, beginning the program in the region nearly three years ago. And now, she is volunteering once again to help ILVC transition to a new director and keep ILVC San Diego strong and vital. Thank you Kathleen for all you have been for ILVC -- for the commitment you have had to the program, your volunteers, and the people they serve.

Thank You!

ILVC is very grateful for its many generous donors. The following gifts were received between October 14, 2003 and January 20, 2004.

Mr. & Mrs. Chris Adams
Alberto Hurtado Jesuit Community
Julia Albrecht
William N. Albus
C.R. Altenhof
Mr. & Mrs. William Anderson
Anonymous
ARC of Baltimore
George Aschenbrenner, S.J.
Harry J. Augliera
Charles A. Beard, III
Elissa Beere
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Bellanca
Mary Louise Bick
Michael J. Bielefeld
Dick Bligh
Ed Bohrer
James J. Boland
Cathy Borer
Rev. Bill Bosch, S.J.
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Boyle
Tom Brady
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Brewer
Bill Brick
Deacon George Browne
Jim Bruni
Bobbye Burke
Mr. & Mrs. Francis J. Butler
Pierce Butler
Thomas Byrne
California Province of the Society of Jesus
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel J. Callahan III
Mr. Steve Callahan
Eileen Capshaw
John Carroll
Nicholas J. Carroll
Dr. & Mrs. Louis J. Carusillo, Jr.
Roseanne Casey
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Clark
Elisa Colas
Patricia Connelly
Frank Cook
Gerald Coppola
Thomas J. Cosgrove
Tom Cotter
John Culkin
Dr. Donald J. Curran
Tom Curran
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Curtin
George B. Curtis
Mr. & Mrs. John S. Daly
J. Alan Davitt
Catherine Dawson
James A. De Witt
Mr. & Mrs. R. Daniel Devlin
Margaret Dickerson
Ruth B. Dinbergs
Maureen Dineen
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Dolan
James Dolan
Fleur Donegan

Joseph B. Doty
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dougherty
Dorothy L. Dougherty
Sr. Bernadette Duross, RSM
Mr. & Mrs. John Dwyer
Mary Ebel
George J. Eisele
Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Erhard
Mr. & Mrs. Richard J. Evans
Rosemary Fafinski
Msgr. Charles Fahey
Dr. & Mrs. Cornelius J. Feehley
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Fiorello
Ben Fitz
James J. Fitzpatrick & Barbara Carroll
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Fleming
Margaret Fleming
Cathy Flynn
John P. Flynn
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Franey
Mr. & Mrs. John Friderichs
Kilian J. Fritsch
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Fritz
Marion Galla
Jay Gallagher
Gerald Galloway
Natalie Ganley
John J. Gannon
Mr. & Mrs. John Geaney
Suzanne Geaney
Mr. & Mrs. John G. Gent
Vincent Giallorenzo
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Glennon
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Gray
Rev. Tuck Grinnell
Mr. & Mrs. William B. Grogan
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Guerra
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Hain
Sister Helen Veronica Hamill, OSF
Thomas W. Hardy
Mr. & Mrs. Ashley L. Hawken
Aline Haynes
Ambassador Theresa Healy
Alice S. Herald
Mr. & Mrs. Cullan Herald-Evans
Mr. & Mrs. Clyde Herr
Mr. & Mrs. George M. Hezel
Richard T. Hezel
Kitty Higgins
Dr. & Mrs. George Jeffers
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Jeffs
Jim Jenkins
Jesuit Community at Wheeler House
Jesuit Community of Western North Carolina
Mr. & Mrs. Fray C. Johns
Maria Jorstad-Perger
Mr. & Mrs. James Kane
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Keber
Mr. & Mrs. Gordon L. Keen
Mr. & Mrs. John Keiser
Mr. & Mrs. Bernard J. Kelley
Mr. & Mrs. Bernie Kelley
James Kelley
James A. Kelly, Esq.
Mrs. Joan Kelly
Mr. & Mrs. William F. Kempton
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Kirk

Mr. & Mrs. Bill Kirvan
Robert M. Klinges
Lorraine Knight
Ms. Elizabeth Knox
John Kuhn
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Kuttruff
Sister Catherine Lafferty, SND
Bob Lagonegro
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Landin
Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Laplaca
Mr. & Mrs. Ian Larkin
Lawrence V. Lauth
Dr. & Mrs. Michael A. Lemp
Dick Lerch
Julia Lowell
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Lucey
Dan Lundy
Dr. John J. Lynch
James MacDonald
Suzanne W. MacDougall
James F. Malone
Mr. & Mrs. James Mannix
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Marhoefer
Lenore Martinez
Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus
Julianne Mattimore
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry May
Blaise C. Mazzella
Thomas P. McCarthy
Crystal A. McDonald
Mr. & Mrs. John McGee
Myrtle McGrath
J. Kevin McKay
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald McKenna
Mary Lou McKenna
Bob McLaughlin
Francis McLaughlin
Mr. & Mrs. Gregory McLaughlin
Mr. & Mrs. John McLaughlin
Rev. Frank McNamara, S.J.
Philip L. Meddleton
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Meehan
Anthony J. Meyer
Donald J. Millus
Mr. John Mitchell
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Monahan
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Monahan
Mr. & Mrs. James G. Monahan
Jane Monahan
Kathryn Monahan
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Mullee
John P. Muller
George Murphy
Catherine Murphy-Holden
Rev. Leo Murray, S.J.
Nancy Murrin
John Muth
Nativity Jesuit Community
Maureen Nichols
Mr. & Mrs. William J. Nickerson
Dr. & Mrs. Arthur S. O'Brien
Rev. Frank O'Connor, S.J.
Mr. & Mrs. Neil O'Donnell
John O'Hagan
Mr. & Mrs. Brian D. O'Neill
Mr. & Mrs. John O'Rourke
Selette H. Pearce
Mr. & Mrs. Robert G. Perriello

Bill Pohlhaus
Blaise Pope
Richard Porter
Ed Prendergast
Mrs. Pauline Price
Vinnie Quayle
Richard Quigley
Steve Quigley
Mr. & Mrs. James L. Quinn
Mr. Miguel Quintos
William J. Ray
Dr. Charles Reed
Mr. & Mrs. John Reid
Richard Reilly
Mr. & Mrs. Donald B. Remmey
Rev. Dick Rice, S.J.
Helene Rickard
Gregory Rinn
Mary Ryan
Irene Sailer
San Diego Catholic Workers
Louise Sandberg
Dr. & Mrs. Henry S. Sawin
Jim Scheibel
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Schwer
Sharon Scibek
Kay Sempel
Kathleen Shea
Jim Sheridan
Mr. & Mrs. Herbert H. Silvestri
Frances Skinner
Ed Slunt
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Smith
James M. Somerville
Kathleen M. Spreen
St. Ignatius Jesuit Community
Eric Stewart
Dr. & Mrs. Stephen P. Stowe
Mr. & Mrs. David Sullivan
Mary Anne Sullivan
Mr. & Mrs. Roger C. Sullivan, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Sutter
Chris Swift
Helen Taney
Francis Tannian
Ed Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Tilford
Hon. & Mrs. Robert J. Timlin
Diane Tollick
Vincent J. Tomlinson
Jose E. Torres
Dr. Joan Turkus
Charles J. Tydlacka
John Vanier
Mary Ellen & Jerry Vasile
Marie Vasile
Dr. & Mrs. Joseph C. Veith, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Philip L. Verveer
Joseph G. Vrindten
Mr. & Mrs. Andy Wagner
David J. Walsh
John A. Walsh
K.C. Waters
Robert Waters
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas F. Welch
Mr. Joe F. Weller
Mary Ann Wilding
Mr. & Mrs. Charles M. Williams

Mr. & Mrs. Charles J. Wolf II
Mr. & Mrs. Robert M. Yahn
Pamela Zahra
Kathleen Zeifang

The following gifts were given in honor of:
Brittnay

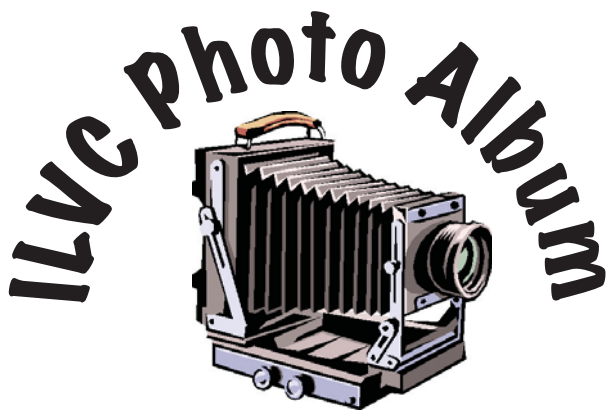
Joseph G. Vrindten
Eileen Capshaw
Cathy Borer
James R. Conroy, S.J.
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Adams
Mr. & Mrs. John G. Gent
Mr. & Mrs. John McLaughlin
Charlie Costello, S.J.
Roseanne Casey
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Clark
Dr. & Mrs. Cornelius J. Feehley
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Fleming
Margaret Fleming
Natalie Ganley
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Gray
Mr. & Mrs. William F. Kempton
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry May
Mr. & Mrs. Gene Monahan
Jane Monahan
Kathryn Monahan
Sharon Scibek
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Smith
Helen Taney
Zoe Forbes
Dr. Joan Turkus
Dick Gallagher, S.J.
Jose E. Torres
Gilbert Gentile, S.J.
Kathleen M. Spreen
God's Kingdom in heaven and on earth
Philip L. Meddleton
H.F.C.
Gerald Coppola
Nancy Johns
Roseanne Casey
Jack and Cathy McGoldrick
Catherine Dawson
Pat and Gene Monahan
Mr. & Mrs. James G. Monahan
The St. Paul ILVC
Dick Rice, S.J.
The Society of Jesus
Philip L. Meddleton

The following gifts were given in memory of:

All deceased members of the military services
Irene Sailer
Edmund Anabell, S.J.
William J. Ray
Kathleen Anne Beard
Charles A. Beard, III
Joseph A. Burke, S.J.
Thomas P. McCarthy
Fred Capshaw
Eileen Capshaw
J. Donald Clark, S.J.
Donald J. Millus
Margaret W. Cook
Frank Cook

Joseph Costello
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dougherty
Mr. & Mrs. John McGee
Mr. & Mrs. Robert G. Perriello
Laurie Anne Cotter
Tom Cotter
Alice Dineen
Maureen Dineen
Rev. Joseph Doty, formerly S.J.
Joseph B. Doty
Harold Dougherty
Dorothy L. Dougherty
Winifred Duross
Sr. Bernadette Duross, RSM
Jay Allan Evans
Thomas W. Hardy
Stanley Fafinski
Rosemary Fafinski
Eugene Finnegan, S.J.
Dr. Donald J. Curran
James J. Galla
Marion Galla
Lucy Gerard
Crystal A. McDonald
Harry Herald
Alice S. Herald
Ivar T. Jorstad
Maria Jorstad-Perger
Frank Keever
David J. Walsh
Louis B. Kines, S.J.
William J. Ray
Dorothy Klinges
Robert M. Klinges
Isabel G. Lynch
Dr. John J. Lynch
Helen M. McDermott
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Kuttruff
Sharon Mendelson
Mary Ellen & Jerry Vasile
Dell Murphy
Mr. & Mrs. John Friderichs
John Murrin, IV
Nancy Murrin
Our Parents
Mr. & Mrs. William B. Grogan
Clem Petrik, S.J.
Mr. & Mrs. Daniel J. Callahan III
Dr. & Mrs. Stephen P. Stowe
Jesuit Community of Western North Carolina
Joseph Riccobene
Mr. & Mrs. John Geaney
Roger & Dorothy Rinn
Gregory Rinn
Marie and Walter Schwer
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Schwer
Joe Simmons, S.J.
John Culkin
Harold J. Spreen
Mr. & Mrs. John Friderichs
Roger C. Sullivan, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Roger C. Sullivan, Jr.
Sr. Francis Regis Trojano, CSJ
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Guerra
Joseph Wagner
Mr. & Mrs. Richard J. Evans

ILVC photo Album




ILVC volunteers in San Diego California visit with ILVC executive director Suzanne Geaney (1st row, 5th from the left, sitting) and ILVC San Diego regional director Kathleen Spreen (1st row, 1st from left).



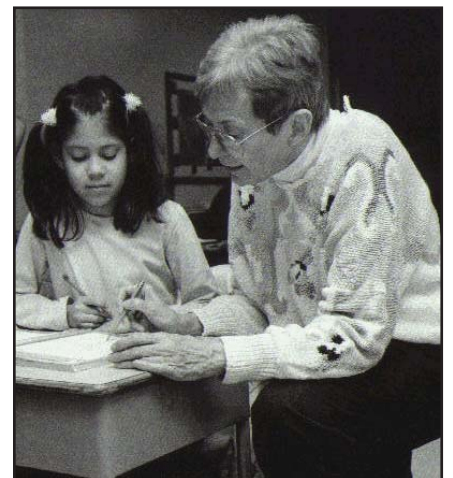
ILVC volunteers Ann Wagner, Ginny Novak, and Helen Taney help Fr. Charlie Costello celebrate his 75th birthday.



Cordie Kelly with a resident of Holy Family Home in West Philadelphia.



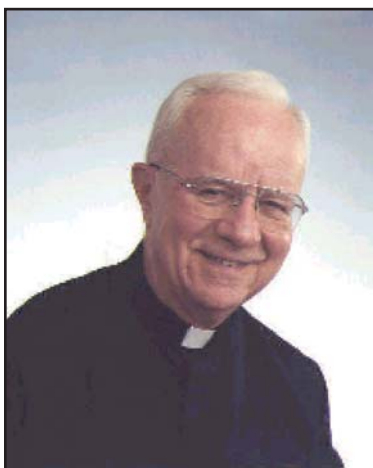
Suzanne Elsser, ILVC Regional Director for Metropolitan New York chats with Father Avery Dulles, S.J. at the New York Province's Jesuit Dinner.



ILVC member Mary Ryan works with one of her students at Growing Together in Washington, DC.

Ignatian “Indifference”

by Francis M. O’Conner, S.J.



Francis M. O’Conner, S.J.

During the summer of 2001, Victor Gbem, a Nigerian Jesuit novice, 27 years old, was diagnosed with liver cancer and was told by his Jesuit superior that the doctors were certain that his illness was terminal. On hearing this dramatic piece of news, Victor responded with profound serenity: “Well, during

my long retreat, I prayed that I would be willing to accept either a short life or a long life. Now my prayer has been answered.” The Jesuit superior was unable to hold back his tears evoked by the young Jesuit’s remarkable reaction to the doctors’ prognosis. Victor Gbem died two months later in September, 2001.

Earlier that year, Victor had made what is often labeled a “long retreat,” a silent retreat of 30 days’ duration that all Jesuit novices make early in their Jesuit life. I was privileged to have guided him during his 30-day retreat at the Jesuit novitiate in Benin City, Nigeria. It was for me a deeply moving experience.

What was Victor referring to in praying to accept a short life or a long life during his retreat? His acceptance of his terminal illness was in the spirit the “Principle and Foundation” of Ignatius’ Spiritual Exercises. The “Principle and Foundation” is a statement that contains within itself principles that are expounded later in detail in the exercises; it is the foundation on which the entire body of the Spiritual Exercises – indeed, the whole of the spiritual life – rests. So it is basic to Ignatian spirituality.

Part of the “Principle and Foundation” is an invitation to what Ignatius called “indifference.” By that he meant an interior freedom so that important decisions and choices in a person’s life are not made under the sway of disordered inclinations or perhaps minor addictions. Rather, the indifferent person is a free person who makes significant decisions for good reasons – reasons that are blessed by God. Such a person is open to whatever God might have in the divine creative design.

St. Ignatius offers several examples of indifference in the “Principle and Foundation,” including “not preferring a long life rather than a short life.” Victor Gbem had prayed during his long retreat to be open to, and accepting of, a long life or a short one. He was an indifferent – that is, a free – person, open to whatever God might have in store for him. In Victor’s case, God’s mysterious ways included a short life rather than a long one. Victor’s response to that inevitability was “Amen, so be it.” During the next two months before he died, Victor remained indifferent (free) and open to God’s plan for him. Those of us who lived with him during his final suffering knew that we were in the presence of an extraordinary young man.

All of us are invited to become indifferent or interiorly free so that our personal choices might be made for good, holy reasons. Whether these choices be somewhat life-changing, such as moving from one city to another, joining the ILVC, or adding one more year to my ILVC commitment, or whether the choices be of lesser significance such as whether to participate in an earlier Mass rather than a later one, we pray to make our choices in interior freedom and for reasons that are seen to fit comfortably into God’s plan for us. Then, we ourselves, like our brother, Victor Gbem, can be called truly indifferent, truly free.

San Diego ILVC Volunteer Peter Kopkowski celebrates the completion of "Corazon De Maria"

In 1997, when mother Teresa of Calcutta visited San Diego, she asked Madre Antonia Brenner to consider expanding her ministry to prisoners to also include persons with terminal cases of AIDS and cancer as well as their families. While Madre Antonia agreed to do this, it took two years to find a building in Tijuana that, with renovations, could house the sisters who would take on this ministry.

That's when ILVC volunteer Peter Kopkowski became involved. Peter was a member of St. James Mission Circle, a group which decided to help Madre Antonia by renovating the old house. Peter was named "project manager," but had no idea the extent of the renovations that would be necessary. Major work had to be done to the electrical system, the water pipes, and the structure of the building to make it safe and liveable. After an effort that extended over more



Corazon De Maria sitting room window

than three years, and with thousands of dollars of contributions, the house is finally finished. It has been named Corazon De Maria.

Now begins the "new" dream for Mother Antonia, that of the ministry to the many people in the Tijuana area who have no where to turn when affected by AIDS or cancer.

The completion of Corazon De Maria will assure that this ministry will continue even when she is no longer able to personally direct it.

Peter Kopkowski planned, organized and supervised the entire project and worked at the site every Wednesday and Saturday, most times with volunteers, sometimes alone. He has made it possible for care to be given to the sick and needy where it would not have been available. We all celebrate this wonderful project and congratulate Peter and all the people who worked with him to make it a reality.

The Trinity

God the Father is
The Essence of my life

God the Son is
The Love of my life

God the Holy Spirit is
The Thrill of my life

*Tom Marcinek
ILVC Member
Farmingville, NY*

ILVC Volunteer Helen Taney receives Order of Merit Award

ILVC volunteer Helen Taney was among those honored with the Order of Merit Award by Cardinal Theodore McCarrick recognizing her for service to her parish and the Archdiocese of Washington. Helen, a nurse, is a long-time ILVC volunteer who works at the Center for Employment Training in DC teaching in the nursing assistant program. Congratulations Helen for a well-deserved honor!

An Interview with Fr. Charlie, S.J.



Charlie P. Costello, S.J.

We all bring who we are to our experience with the Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps. All we are is enough. An important part of our program's roots relate to our co-founder, Charlie Costello, S.J., who recently celebrated his 75th birthday with some ILVC volunteers, reflectors, and board members. Here are some of Charlie's reflections about his own roots.

Tell us a little about your family, your siblings and parents.

My mother and father were both born in Ireland and lived only 40 miles from one another there, but did not meet until they were both here in the United States. They married and had five children, three of whom are still living. My oldest sister, Anna Marie, died when she was nine years old from Scarlet Fever, which I contracted as well. And my older brother Joe, passed away a few years ago. I am the next to youngest. My sister Peg is older and Alice is younger. Today I am blessed to have 21 nieces and nephews and 45 grandnieces and grandnephews. For 18 years, beginning in the 1980's, I hosted wonderful family reunions at the retreat house in Wernersville.

What were you like as a child, Charlie?

I loved all sports and used to play football and basketball in the neighborhood with friends. That was great fun. I also biked and hiked and even went horseback riding once. I'd never done that before and didn't know that loafers were probably not the best footwear for riding a horse. So I wound up losing

both of my shoes before the ride was over! I also had a lot of summer jobs – I worked at a miniature golf course and laughingly called myself the “pro” for the course! I also was a dishwasher at a hotel in Ocean City, NJ, a soda jerk, and a locker boy at the Philadelphia Country Club among other things.

Charlie, you have deep Irish roots. What was it like being raised an Irish Catholic in Philadelphia?

Oh yes, it is one of the things that brings me great joy. As a family, you know, we used to say the daily rosary. My parents had really strong Irish accents, accents that we children were so used to that we didn't even hear them. But friends would come over and always comment on how strong the accents were. I have 25 to 30 first cousins living in Ireland. One of the highlights of my Irish experience was meeting them when I went to Ireland in 1980. It was sheer joy feeling that close to people I had never met before. I've been back since on several trips, one with my brother Joe to celebrate my 50th anniversary in the Jesuits.

When did you enter the Jesuits? What influenced you to do so?

I can't say exactly when I knew I wanted to be a priest. I went to St. Joe's Prep, and in my graduating class 19 young men went into the priesthood. I didn't. I didn't want to do it because everyone else was doing it. It was only after two years at St. Joseph University that I decided to enter – that was in 1948.

I'll bet your parents were delighted with your decision, were they?

They were, but initially my mother wanted me to become a priest of the diocese so I would be close to home. I was sure I wanted to be a Jesuit though. My only worry about the Jesuits was that I thought I might have to teach!

Love in Deeds of Service

Ignatian Lay Volunteer Corps

801 St. Paul Street

Baltimore, MD 21202

Nonprofit Organization

US Postage

PAID

Baltimore, Maryland

Permit No. 7512

ILVC Reflector Mary Lou Miller receives Religious Educational Excellence Award

Mary Lou Miller, director of religious education at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Falls Church, Virginia and ILVC Reflector, is a recipient of the 2003-2004 Religious Educational Excellence Award for the South region. The award, which is sponsored by the National Association of Parish Catechetical Directors, will be presented in Boston during the 12th annual NPCD convocation, April 13-16, 2004.

Mary Lou, who has worked with ILVC for several years, heads a religious education program at St. Anthony's that numbers 1,175 students with classes offered in English, Spanish and bilingual sessions.

For those whose parishes include cultural and language differences, Mary Lou suggests, "Be present at all functions. Smile and listen even if you don't fully understand the language; hospitality is the key. Be patient and positive and don't get discouraged. Paramount is the focus on Christ, prayer and the invitation to get to know him better. Find the wisdom in those we serve, appreciate their strong faith and help them articulate and express it."

Congratulations on this wonderful award, Mary Lou! ILVC is blessed to have you guiding our volunteers as they discover the Lord and his kingdom in the work they do.