



# Rochester Catholic Worker

A Publication of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, Rochester, NY  
Winter 2010–2011

## The Morality of Drones — Harry Murray

The fact that drone work is being performed in our diocese raises profound moral questions for all Rochester area Catholics and Christians. RIT recently received a \$2 million grant for research on drones. The location of a drone control facility in neighboring Syracuse adds to the urgency to address this issue locally.

The “signature” weapons of the “war on terror” of the past decade have been drones, improvised explosive devices, and suicide bombers. Many other horrific weapons have been employed, such as the white phosphorus used by the United States in Fallujah; however, the unholy trinity of drones, IEDs, and suicide bombers have become iconic in the minds of the public, both American and globally.

As a Christian who believes that the nonviolence of Jesus demands absolute pacifism, I have often been criticized for arguing that a particular war (for instance, the invasion and occupation of Iraq) or weapons (for instance, the nuclear bomb) is particularly reprehensible. Since I condemn all wars, I have no right to criticize any one war or weapon as being particularly diabolic. In response, I often argue that my position is like that of a district attorney who believes that all murders are evil, but that some murders are especially horrific and morally repulsive. Similarly, all wars are evil, but some are particularly horrific. The same applies to weapons.

In theory at least, the just war criteria that have been a part of Catholic tradition since the time of Augustine might be useful in deciding which wars and weapons are most heinous. However, attempting to apply just war principles to specific weapons reveals some of its weaknesses. The *Challenge of Peace* gives only two *jus in bello* (just means of wag-

ing war) criteria: proportionality (each weapon and action must be judged by whether the benefits outweigh the costs) and discrimination (non-combatants may not be targeted). These do not really cover the range of moral questions which should be raised when evaluating the horrors of specific weapons.

A comparison of drones and suicide bombing as tactics may show what I mean. Suicide bombers have been decried as immoral and cowardly in the American press, while drones have received little moral scrutiny.

It would seem that drone attacks would clearly meet the criterion of discriminating between combatants and non-combatants compared to suicide bombers since drones use high tech targeting systems, while suicide bombings are acts of terrorism designed to kill noncombatants. As one looks at the matter more deeply, however, the difference is not so clear cut. Although most suicide bombers target civilians,

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## *Clarification of Thought*

**Fridays, 7:00–8:45 pm, 402 South Ave.**

“What is the Catholic Worker For?”

All Are Welcome to This 3-Part Series

*hosted by St. Joe's & Fiacre Gardens*

*Peter Maurin Study Group*

Dec. 10 — Peter's Life Story

Jan. 14 — Peter's Vision

Feb. 11 — Dorothy: Living the Vision

*Ongoing discussion group on second Fridays.*

## The Morality of Drones (continued from page 1)

many choose military/security targets such as police recruitment centers or military checkpoints. Drones, on the other hand, even if they “target” combatants, result in numerous civilian casualties.

In terms of proportionality, again, drones would appear to have the moral edge. However, both drones and suicide bombers create terror by virtue of their ability to strike without warning. If one is liable to be killed over a case of mistaken identity from remote sensors, or because a Taliban suspect is in the neighborhood, or because a wedding party is mistaken for an “insurgent” gathering, then one lives in the same kind of terror as someone living in an area which is a potential target of suicide bombers.

Whether this terror is “intentional” on the part of those authorizing and controlling the drones is irrelevant. The drones, like suicide bombers, are weapons of terror.

Another pressing issue, not really covered by *jus in bello* principles, is whether striking from afar, from a position of nearly total safety, as drone operators do, is immoral. Does not the very notion of a “just war” imply that the battle is somehow “fair,” that each side in the combat burdens its share of risk? Can a war where one side can kill from the safety of thousands of miles away, where the killer can go home and watch his or her children’s soccer game after launching a drone strike, be considered moral in any sense?

We are quick to condemn those who recruit young suicide bombers and send them out on their missions, but how are such actors different from those who send out robotic drones to do their killing? Furthermore, if one considers Chalmers Johnson’s point that it is the very invulnerability of American military targets that is the reason that “terrorists” so often strike at civilian targets, then the use of killer drones is likely to spawn even more anti-American terrorists from those who live in terror of the unpre-

dictable attack from the sky, controlled by invulnerable operators.

Finally, at least one *jus ad bellum* criterion should be invoked in considering drone attacks in Pakistan and Yemen—“competent authority.” Since the United States has not declared war on either of these countries, is there any “competent authority” for launching military strikes on them via drones? As the number of drone attacks have multiplied (from 9 between 2004 and 2007, to 53 in 2009, to 103 so far in 2010 in Pakistan alone), the use of drones has moved well beyond “assassination” to a full scale military campaign, conducted in countries with which the United States is not at war, even by the incredibly loose standards of the post-Vietnam era.



In writing the above, I in no way mean to con-

done either suicide bombing, drones, or just war theory. What I am trying to say is that, first, we need to examine why Americans feel such repulsion at suicide bombing by “the terrorists,” but not at our own employment of drone terrorism, and that, second, even pacifists may need to employ some version of “just war” principles to decide which actions of our government, out of so many, call for the most committed resistance. ☞

### ☞ C A L E N D A R ☞

Nov 14	Foot & Hair Clinic
Nov 14	Pancake breakfast, 11:00 am
Nov 19–21	SOAWatch, Fort Benning, GA
Nov 21	House Mass: every Sunday thereafter at 11:00 am
Nov 25	Thanksgiving meal
Dec 10	Clarification of Thought, 7:00 pm
Dec 17	Restorative Circles, 7:00 pm
Dec 25	Christmas dinner
Jan 14	Clarification of Thought, 7:00 pm
Jan 21	Restorative Circles, 7:00 pm
Jan 23	Foot & Hair Clinic
Feb 11	Clarification of Thought, 7:00 pm

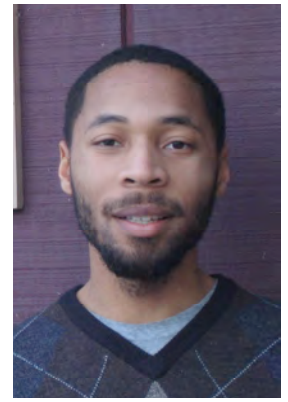
Being the only Muslim within the St. Joseph's community has brought on its fair share of challenges in regards to religious pluralism and coexistence. However, in my mind, these challenges are simply the natural consequence of our intentional contribution to the core of this community's existence—that beautiful spiritual communion that emanates from the universal love for justice, truth, and kindness. That is to say, any challenge in this regard is both inevitable and necessary in order for us to truly experience the spiritual beauty of the human race as a whole. I have experienced this blessed challenge throughout my eight months here at St. Joe's and can honestly say that I have only grown from the experience. With this blessing in mind, my intent in writing this article is to share a couple of the Islamic teachings at the center of my seemingly unorthodox choice to become a Catholic Worker, and to hopefully contribute my part to the positive development of our increasingly interfaith community for those future Catholic Workers, both Christian and non-Christian. To the surprise of many brothers and sisters outside of the Islamic tradition, respect for spiritual diversity and coexistence, monotheistic or not, is at the very center of the Islamic worldview. In fact, God states in the Holy Qur'an that:

*Not all of them are alike: Of the People of the Book (the Jews and Christians) are a portion that stand for right: They rehearse the Signs of Allah all night long, and they prostrate themselves in adoration. They believe in Allah and the Last Day; they enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong; and they hasten in emulation in all good works: They are in the ranks of the righteous. (3:113–114)*

Now, some of you may be thinking something to the effect of, "That's all well and good, but isn't Islam very different from the other Abrahamic traditions? And what about the worship aspect of it...is it even permissible for you to pray within a non-Muslim environment?" To answer these inquiries, I will simply cite the two primary sources of Islamic tradition, the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah of Muhammad (his ways, words, and advice as recorded in the collec-

tions of "Hadith"). The Divine words of inspiration relayed to Muhammad in regards to the universal unity of religion are clear as day:

*Say: 'We believe in Allah, and in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and in the Books given to Moses, Jesus, and the prophets, from their Lord: We make no distinction between one and another among them, and to Allah do we bow our will in Islam.' (3.84)*



Kevin

And in respect to the act of prayer, and whether or not it is permissible for me to pray within a traditionally Christian community, we only need to consider the historical account of Muhammad's relations with the Arabic-speaking Najran Christians during his lifetime. While in the midst of a series of treaty building missions, the head of the Najran people sent an envoy of over 60 well-educated religious men (including one bishop and 45 scholars) to visit Prophet Muhammad.

And when it finally came time for the Christian visitors to make congregational Sunday prayer, Muhammad did the unthinkable: he invited them to pray according to their Christian faith within his mosque, Masjid al-Nabawi ("The Prophet's Mosque"), the second-holiest site in Islam which still stands today in Medina, Arabia. It would have been one thing if Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, allowed them to hold prayer service elsewhere in the city, but his insistence on having them pray within the same house of worship speaks volumes to a modern world gone mad with religious pride and intolerance.

My point in relaying this message is this: our desire here at St. Joseph's to create a truly interfaith community that reaches far beyond mere "tolerance" is not, by any stretch of the imagination, impractical or

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## Haiti Food Program

Although we are still here in the United States enjoying and adjusting to our new life as parents, the food program in Haiti is going strong...still serving twice a week “legoum,” a veggie stew with crayfish, “boulyon,” a meat-based stew with root vegetables like taro root, yucca, and purple potatoes that taste sweet, or basic rice and beans with red sauce to the most vulnerable people in Borgne, Haiti.

Somane, Mariverge, and Marceline, the three women who run the program, are carrying on the works of mercy in our absence, providing a continuous



Catholic Worker base in Borgne. They not only cook and serve the meal, but provide community, entertainment, and advocacy for the elderly, the blind, and younger stroke victims in their community.

Volunteers, many of them young adults, assist with serving and planning activities. They even carry food to those who are too sick to attend the meal. We have a long-term dream of eventually purchasing a Catholic Worker “house” in Borgne.

Between the general donations for the Haiti program, the pancake breakfast last March, and the Assisi Peace Walk in May, we raised enough to continue the food program through November. We need your continued support to keep this program going into 2011!

With love and gratitude, Kevin and Sarah ☞

## Meet Our Newest Member, Kate Koval

I hail from the Southeast Side of Chicago. I have a bachelor’s degree in Sociology from Chicago State University and most of my work has been with inner city youth. I have been involved in activism and organizing in my community and within the greater city of Chicago. I have also been involved in urban community gardening.

I was drawn to the Catholic Worker movement after reading one of the newspapers when I was on a silent retreat at a Jesuit retreat house. I have often theorized about what it would look and feel like to build a community based off the principles of rejecting oppression and embracing love. I have been disillusioned by many of the nonprofit organizations I worked with and long ago lost hope in our failing political system. I felt what I needed was a good old-fashioned dose of radical, communal living.

I realize I do not want to separate my personal life from my professional life. Not to mention, I am not sure how to be a professional! So off to the Catholic Worker website I went. I stumbled upon St. Joe’s and everything seemed to fall into place organically. So I thought I should submit to the Universe and get to Rochester. Now that I have been here for two months I realize the Universe is quite the comedian and I am facing many challenges that were not part of any of my theories.

I have so much to learn and St. Joe’s seems like a great place to do some learning and growing. I hope that I too will bring energy to the community, which nurtures learning and growth. I am certain this opportunity is a very important part of my journey. I just have to remember to BREATHE! ☞

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### Kevin Marshall *(continued from page 3)*

idealistic. “Interfaith community,” “spiritual communion,” and all those other politically correct terms that we can conjure up, are simply our modern way of stating the obvious: that human spirituality is but from One source, and thus, pluralistic by nature. And as a Muslim I am convinced that, with the right amount of effort to meet somewhere in the spiritual center, St. Joseph’s can fully realize this pure and innate state of spiritual community. ☞

As the Microfarm system grows more stable and productive, the Catholic Worker Farm community continues to evolve. New possibilities arose quickly this summer. Here's a short summary.

1. St Joseph's House of Hospitality came forward with the proposal of a "Training Program" for men from the street in need of a work opportunity. Since then, Woody Flagler has become an invaluable member of the team.

2. Good news! The Microfarm's search for a larger piece of land has come to fruition! St. Fiacre Gardens will soon have a lease with Miller Farms, using 2 acres of retired dairy pasture. We look forward to better crop rotations, improved soil management, and less running around. Thanks to George Miller for working supportively as we craft the details.

3. The Microfarm's friends in Penfield at St. Joseph's Church and First Baptist Church have given a chance to get very concrete, with a large space dedicated completely to Gift Carrots, to be shared with the Penfield Food Shelf and Bethany House. Transfiguration Church in Pittsford ran with the gift garden concept and now bring produce to the Blessed Sacrament meal program. ☞



*Harvesting squash.*

## BREAD FOR ALL Rises Again!

The St. Joe's bakery project, Bread for All, is back in the swing. Last spring we began an experiment in creating a community-supported bakery (CSB), a subscription basis for the sale of wholesome bread coupled with a job-training program for a St. Joe's community member. All went well. The response of the community to the bread was enthusiastic. Over 30 subscribers received a loaf of organic, whole wheat bread each week. One trainee took part in the bread baking, and two local bakeries offered their support with on-site additional training.



We will begin again early in January, 2011. Give us a call: 232-3262. Become a subscriber. We will continue with our signature loaf: a 1 1/2 pound organic, whole wheat loaf with barley malt, oats, and sunflower seeds. Healthy, delicious. Great for slicing. With subscribers in place we are able to produce extra loaves for those who cannot afford a loaf.

Kate Koval from the St. Joe's community will coordinate the baking. Tim Sigrist will oversee bakery trainees. Bread For All is located in the former Savory Thyme kitchen at 220 Mt. Hope Avenue, not far from St. Joe's. Look for holiday sweet treats that Bread For All will prepare. ☞

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

When your publication comes, I stop everything. It is the first I read. Before the bills. Before the invitations to galas I don't want to attend. Before thank-yous from galas I have attended.

You remind me of what is important in life. It is loving the poor. When it is inconvenient. When I would rather clean-up my kitchen or weed the yard. It is taking myself out of the comfortable-ness of my day. It is reminding me of who God is. It reminds me what love is.

*Carol Crossed  
Rochester, New York*

## A Wonderful Collection of God-Lovers

— Rev. Chava Redonnet

People are sometimes surprised to learn that the community at St Joe's is not a Roman Catholic community. After all, we're called the Catholic Worker, right? We were begun by Roman Catholics, and over the years the greatest percentage of our volunteers, staff, and donors have been Catholic. But in the 23 years that I've been part of this community we have also always had a mix of faith traditions.

Besides a variety of Christian faiths, we have included among us Buddhists, Jews, Unitarians, Sufis, Quakers, lots of agnostics, and in this past year, a Muslim. Our Tuesday Ecumenical service reflects something of that variety. We have traditional Roman Catholic priests who come in, as well as non-traditional priests like me; Protestant ministers, street preachers, even New Age ministers. One day last spring our Tuesday service was led by a Buddhist nun.

So in the midst of all this diversity, what is a Radical Catholic priest called to serve this community as chaplain to do? How am I to minister to the spiritual needs of such a variety of people? Well, for one thing, in a variety of ways! We have morning prayer twice a week that is non-denominationally Christian; Mass once a week, to which all are welcome who find it spiritually life-giving; the prayer that opens our meetings speaks of no particular faith tradition and is hopefully accessible to all; and of course, our Tuesday Ecumenical service. For those under our roof who are not nurtured spiritually by any of those, well—love and support leap beyond religious boundaries.

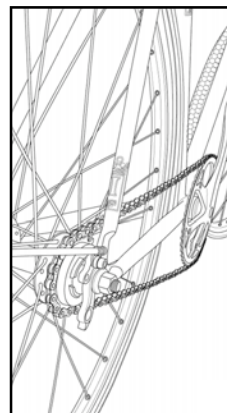
During the summer we had a retreat for the in-house community. Wanting to create a worship experience that would work for us all, I used a ritual that I learned working in the hospital. We had two glass bowls, one empty, one full of stones. Our ritual was simple: as we placed stones in the bowl, we named what we were lifting up in prayer. The act of choosing a stone, saying out loud what was on our hearts, then placing the stone in the glass bowl and hearing

the sound it made, was satisfying. Our prayer time went on and on, as we thought of more and more things we wanted to pray. After a while the bowl was quite full of stones, and we had shared our deeper selves together, without stumbling over the barriers of our different traditions.



As an inter-faith chaplain in the hospital, I sometimes found that my deepest connections were with people whose beliefs were different from mine. We didn't talk about our differences, but focused on our mutual love of God. We could talk and pray quite joyfully together, respecting our different traditions without letting them get in the way of our deeper communion.

One evening recently while eating supper with the community, the talk turned to spiritual things. Seekers all, it was clear that we were each walking our own path. This wonderful collection of God-lovers began to talk about how we might worship together, and a plan began to form. Now that I'm starting to offer Mass on Sunday mornings at 11:00 in the dining room, the community has decided that we don't need the little Mass we've been doing on Saturdays at 5:00 pm in the library upstairs, which means that time slot is open. We'll use that time for an inter-faith worship service, instead, finding the common ground from which we can worship together, leaping over our differences to find the place where we are One. ☪



During the summer months, R Community Bikes repair bikes on Wednesdays, 9 am–1 pm, at St. Joe's.

Donate a bike! Drop off bike donations at their headquarters at 226 Hudson Avenue.

[www.rcommunitybikes.net](http://www.rcommunitybikes.net)



# Thank You

Holiday times bring a special stirring in our hearts and spirits. We at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality Community want to express our profound gratitude to all those in our large extended family: our volunteers, our contributors, our benefactors, our guests, and our workers. We know that each of you contributes immeasurably to our ability to create hospitality and warmth both physically and spiritually.

We pledge to be good stewards of our resources. We take very seriously our mission of support for each individual who comes into the house. Whether the need is a physical one for food, clothing, or shelter; or if the need is for human, spiritual kindness, it is given freely to the best of our abilities.

Thank you for your help!

*Along with our thanks, we want to extend our wishes for a joyful Thanksgiving and a blessed Christmas.*

## Comings & Goings — Rev. Chava Redonnet

We have had so many people coming and going, lately, that I'm afraid I will forget someone! First, the goodbyes since the last newsletter: We said farewell to **Mirabai**, **Conner**, **Chicago**, **Arend**, and **Adriel**.

We have welcomed **Kate**, who comes to us from Chicago, along with her dog, Puja. **Eli** is with us from Michigan. **Brandon** spent two weeks with us, discerning his path. And **Austin**, who last year was over at Fiacre Farms with Chris, is here at St Joe's to work on shelter.

We are trying to re-institute the tradition of weekly community suppers. Plans fell through for the first one, which happened to be scheduled on my birthday, and we decided to go out for Asian food since the potluck wasn't happening. Over dinner I asked Brandon what brought him to St Joe's. He had been working in South Korea last year teaching English as a Second Language. I asked him, "What is the connection between teaching ESL in South Korea, and coming to the Catholic Worker?" His answer, "Empowerment."

The new little church that meets in our dining room has met twice now. We will meet again on November 21, at 11 am and weekly after that. If you are looking

for an intimate community, worshiping in the Catholic tradition, come and check us out at 11 am one of these Sundays!

**Joseph** who is still in limbo with Immigration, who wants to send him back to Liberia, is now dealing with health problems...his is bothering him such that he went to the doctor...found he has a heart problem too. **Mark** was in the hospital recently to implant a heart monitor device.

**Kevin** and some of his Muslim friends who have hosted pancake breakfasts at the House in the past plan to continue it with a, once a month on Sunday schedule into the new year...anyone wanting to join his crew should check with Kevin...breakfasts start at 11 am after prep and setup starting at 9 am. He looks for some great conversations.

**Vandy** who started out doing prep work for Chef Peg has now graduated to a full kitchen schedule...he also is now part of the transitional guys on the second floor...we are in the process of renovating the second floor to get more space for our men's clothing area...at the same time opening up a few more transitional rooms.

We finally filled in the holes and paved our parking lot.....next project is to get it striped for parking. ☪

## St. Joseph's House of Hospitality

Rochester Catholic Worker Community

*Some of us live in houses; some of us live on the street; some of us have a room of our own, or a bed and a place to keep; some of us have a cot or piece of a couch or patch of floor to return to each night; some hold special positions of power and roles with specific responsibilities, some do whatever they can. Our aim is to try each day to "build a new society in the shell of the old" as we practice the various works of mercy and labor with whatever resources, physical as well as spiritual, that we have been given at the time.*

George McVey — Editor	Matt Rieck — Layout
Tim Sigrist	Linda Condon
Tom Cleary	Eli Woodbeck
Harry Murray	James Arnold
Rev. Chava Redonnet	Kevin Ahimsa
Don Strickland	Sarah Ahimsa
Martin Linskey – Webmaster	Rich Behrend
Kevin Marshall	Tom Malthaner
Diana Nielsen	Mark Janeshek
Joseph Moore	Kate Koval

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### House Needs:

Prayers	Sugar	<b>BLEACH</b>	Hoodies	Athletic Socks
Butter	Boots/Sneakers	Toilet Paper	39-gal Trash Bags	Paper Towels
Laundry Soap Powder	Jeans/Cords	Coffee	<b>Razors</b>	<b>Toothbrushes/Paste</b>
Men's Underwear (32-44)	Jelly/Jam		<b>BATH TOWELS</b>	<b>Deodorants</b>

## Volunteer Opportunity

**Help Staff the Night Shelter.**

*Will Train.*

*Can Sleep on the Job!*

*Plenty of choice hours.*

*Good supervision.*

**Call Tom at 232-3262.**

### Celebrants for

**5:00 p.m. Tuesday Ecumenical Service**

*We suggest that you call the House in case the service time or celebrant has been changed.*

2010		2011	
Nov 16	Donna Eckert	Jan 4	Pastor Marc Edjugar
Nov 23	Fr. Larry Tracy	Jan 11	Rev. Chava Redonnet
Nov 30	Rev. Chava Redonnet	Jan 18	Sr. Grace Miller
Dec 7	Minister Sandy Whalen	Jan 25	Deacon Bill Coffey
Dec 14	Fr. Jim Callan	Feb 1	Rev L. Hargrave
Dec 21	Fr. Bill Donnelly	Feb 8	Fr. Bob Wirth
Dec 28	Minister Joann Kaizer	Feb 15	Deacon Tom Cleary
		Feb 22	T B A
		Mar 1	Tim McGowan