

Initiatives

In Support of Christians in the World

National Center for the Laity
PO Box 291102
Chicago, IL 60629
www.catholiclabor.org

Summer
2020
Number
252

Covid 19

To avert global crises “we must begin to see our fates as linked and make good on that insight,” write Leah Hunt Hendrix and Astra Taylor in *The New Republic* (1 Union Sq. #600, New York, NY 10003; 9/19). “The idea of solidarity describes the ways in which we are bound together and how we can act in concert to change our circumstances,” Hendrix and Taylor say. The corona virus provides graphic context for Hendrix and Taylor’s theme.

The two provide a history of solidarity—tracing it from finance law in the Roman Empire through the French Revolution and the labor movements of the 1800s. The concept gained an international dimension in the 1900s as groups in one place supported movements in another country.

Hendrix and Taylor explain that solidarity is not a feeling, just as charity is not momentary sympathy or an optional gesture. Likewise, solidarity is not reinforcement of identity among members of your own group. On these points they recommend *Winners Take All* by Anand Giridharadas (Knopf, 2018; \$16). Solidarity is action, they insist. It means “we must bail one another out.” And today the pronoun *we* includes the entire world’s populace.

Solidarity is a traditional and venerable Catholic social principle. It is implied in the New Testament, including *Acts of the Apostles* and in epistles like *Galatians* 5. The principle gained popularity with the papacy of St. John Paul II (1920-2005) and the Solidarnosc movement in his native Poland.

Solidarity is a major theme in John Paul II’s 1987 encyclical *On Social Concern*. Solidarity is based on “interdependence among individuals and nations.” It is the virtue of moral response to that reality, John Paul II continues. It is “not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress... It is a firm and preserving determination to commit oneself to the common good.”

From its beginning in 1980, John Paul II gave support to Solidarnosc, the independent union that eventually ended communism.

Solidarnosc was a positive movement among diverse interests, say Hendrix and Taylor. But soon enough international market forces pushed Solidarnosc into “a neoliberal approach” that ultimately “undermined the transformative potential of the movement.”

Gerald Beyer agrees. “With the birth of capitalism and democracy in Poland in 1989, solidarity died.” Freedom and solidarity can be compatible in a capitalist order, but only if individualism and market forces are balanced with the common good, he says. (*Recovering Solidarity*, University of Notre Dame Press [2010]; \$40)

Fr. Jozef Tischner (1931-2000), a chaplain to Solidarnosc, likewise contrasts the principle of solidarity with a market-only philosophy. Extreme capitalism puts workers in the same ledger column with cost of raw materials, cost of insurance, and cost of maintenance; one more expense item. By contrast, solidarity sees work “as a conversation,” “a social agreement,” “a conviction that work is something particularly valuable.” Using an intriguing phrase, Tischner says solidarity suggests “a grammar of relationships.” Work is reciprocity among people and reciprocity between people and God. (*The Spirit of Solidarity*, Harper Collins, 1982)

Amid Covid 19 “the whole culture of autonomy seems immature,” writes David Brooks. This is a moment of solidarity. That concept, which “grows out of Catholic social teaching...starts with a belief in the infinite dignity of each human person but sees people embedded in webs of mutual obligation,” he continues. “Solidarity is not a feeling; it’s an active virtue.” It is out of solidarity, not out of “normal utilitarian logic” that in the face of Covid 19 workers respond to their specific calling—as health care providers, in the pharmacy, in grocery stores, in labs, as reporters, as delivery drivers and postal carriers, in government departments and lots more. (*N.Y. Times*, 3/20/20)

Taking the Initiative

Assisting the Unemployed

Back in the day, our National Center for the Laity published several booklets in a *Spirituality of Work* series, each specific to an occupation. One of the titles was *Spirituality of Work: Unemployed Workers* by Joe Gosse. A reviewer at the time challenged the title: “The unemployed are not workers by definition.” NCL disagrees.

In a three-week period last March/April nearly 17million U.S. workers applied for unemployment benefits. Many more lost jobs due to Covid 19. Some are furloughed; others must find a new employer.

The Pastoral Center (1212 Versailles Ave., Alameda, CA 94501; <http://pastoralcenter/coronavirus.com>) has refashioned Gosse’s booklet into a six session guide for the unemployed of this difficult time. Titled *Spirituality of Work: Unemployed Together*, it is suitable for parish groups and others that assist the unemployed. The Center has several other offerings (some free downloads) related to the virus.

For months and years prior to Covid 19 we were already dangerously socially distant. *Physical distancing* is necessary but we need more *social connectivity*. INITIATIVES welcomes reports from your parish, community groups and family on how our social fabric is being woven back together. INITIATIVES will share those experiences.

Taking the Initiative

On Wages

What’s an understandable, accurate tool for assessing the justice of an economy? “A just wage is the concrete means of verifying the justice of the whole economic system and...of checking that it is functioning justly,” writes St. John Paul II (1920-2005). “It is not the only means of checking, but it is a particularly important one, [indeed it is] the key means.” Get wages right, get everything right. (*John Paul II’s Gospel of Work*, NCL, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$7.50)

The same applies to the virtue of a company. However, Catholicism knows that no employer can independently establish a wage structure. Each business must consider its competitors, the prices set by its suppliers, the longer term stability of the company and more.

What is a just wage? Unite Here (275 Seventh Ave. #1600, New York, NY 10001; www.unitehere.org) has a slogan: “One Job Should Be Enough.” That’s also the Catholic principle of *family wage*. A worker (male or female) should be able to support her or his family with a singular job. Other family members might supplement the household income.

How can a just wage be achieved? First note that all strategies are imperfect; that all have some unintended side effects; that cooperative strategies are necessary. Also note that wage increases by themselves do not reduce inequality. As wages go up, the cost of a McRib likely goes up. Plus, especially in the post-pandemic months, those invested in the market will become wealthier while those who lack investments will lose wealth.

#1. Raise the federal minimum wage, currently at \$7.25. This strategy takes the burden off any single employer or sector.

Restaurant Opportunities Center (275 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10001; www.rocunited.org) with its nine local chapters and with other organizations wants to end federal sub-minimum wage provisions. This longstanding exception to labor law is hinged to the custom of an expected tip.

#2. A negotiated contract with a wage provision accords with the Catholic principle of *participation*. However, as the 2005 Catholic *Compendium of the Social Doctrine* explains, the negotiated wage must be at or above the level of a family wage. The good intentions of an employer (a Catholic pastor, let’s say) and dedicated employees (his grammar school teachers) are irrelevant. The criterion for justice is objective.

Likewise, what in Ireland is called a *zero-hour contract* is unjust, says Catholicism. In the U.S. this is an on-call arrangement in which a 40-hour job has a guarantee of maybe 25 hours because the worker can be sent home during a slow period, but must be available if the store gets busy in late afternoon.

#3. Many states and some cities have a minimum wage that exceeds the federal minimum. Additionally, some municipalities pass a *living wage* ordinance that covers its own employees, maybe the employees of its vendors, and maybe other categories of workers. This strategy began in 1993 with the advocacy of BUILD (2439 Maryland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218; www.buildiaf.org). The limitations of this strategy have been studied and publicized. A

thorough longitudinal *Seattle Wage Study* finds that a living wage campaign benefits many workers and those workers not covered by the ordinance are no worse off. (Jacob Vigdor, University of Washington, Evans School #Parrington 324, Seattle, WA 98195; www.uw.edu)

#4. A final strategy is to pressure an employer to raise wages and then do the same with other employers in that service sector. This is the strategy of Fight for \$15 (www.fightfor15.org).

A creative twist on this strategy comes from Tompkins County Worker's Center (115 E. Martin Luther King St., Ithaca, NY 14850; www.tcworkerscenter.org). The Center asks economists at nearby Cornell University to specify a healthy wage for their town, including rent, transportation, food, some savings and more. The current amount is \$15.37. No one cares to dispute Cornell.

The Center then approaches employers, offering good publicity, a decal in the window and more customer traffic to those who join the Employer Living Wage Certification. Over 125 businesses now participate, including many shops, several churches, Catholic Charities and other service agencies, some nearby municipalities and more. No government meddling; only consumer support or presumably consumer pressure.

Taking the Initiative *Regarding Cookies*

About ten blocks south of INITIATIVES' attic office sits a facility that everyone in the neighborhood calls "the Nabisco plant." At one time it employed 4,000. The aroma of cookies and other baked goods still permeates the air but not so many work there now. The building's sign says Mondelez International (3 Parkway N. #300, Deerfield, IL 60015), an eight-year old company.

Candidate Donald Trump caught INITIATIVES' ear in 2016 when he said "I'm not eating Oreos anymore [because] Nabisco is closing their plant, a big plant in Chicago, and they're moving it to Mexico." Trump's rhetoric about U.S. companies moving production overseas has merit. Indeed, Mondelez laid off 600 at our Nabisco in 2016. For a gripping account of how NAFTA and outsourcing hurts both U.S. and Mexican workers, get *Boom, Bust, Exodus* by Chad Boughton (Oxford U. Press

[2015]; \$21.95). Unfortunately, Trump's promise to bring jobs back to INITIATIVES' neighborhood has changed nothing.

Stephen Franklin has followed this story for several years. Just prior to the layoffs the Nabisco workers, through their Bakery, Confectionary Union (10401 Connecticut Ave. #400, Kensington, MD 20895; www.bctgm.org), were told that the plant would get \$130million in upgrades to solidify its future. However, the union would have to accept \$46 million annual wage and benefit cuts. The workers rejected that deal. Despite a boycott, a workers' public relations campaign, some early talks and Trump's comments, "Mondelez and BCTGM remain in stalemate over lost jobs and a lost pension plan," Franklin writes. (*In These Times* [2/20], 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647)

Meanwhile Mondelez' shareholders want a different pay arrangement for company officers. Its CEO got \$15million in 2018. More performance-based compensation is in process. (*Chicago Tribune*, 5/1/19) For more Nabisco background, get *Breaking Faith*, a 12-page free download from Interfaith Worker Justice (www.iwj.org).

The Nabisco saga is one more example of difficulties facing families. Without steady working class jobs in manufacturing and transportation our cities cannot thrive. (See, *The New Urban Crisis* by Richard Florida, Basic Books [2017]; \$17.99 and *Only One Thing Can Save Us* by Tom Geoghegan, NCL, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$8.)

Taking the Initiative *With Seafood*

Since 2014 INITIATIVES has encouraged readers not to buy shrimp from Thailand because of inhumane working conditions there, including slavery. The boycott is succeeding somewhat. The International Labor Organization (4 Route des Morillons, CH 1211, Geneva 22 Switzerland; www.ilo.org), now in its 101st year, says that government oversight is improving conditions in Thailand. However, slavery is still practiced. According to its January 2020 report, *Forced Labor in the Thai Seafood Industry*, on a given day about 14% of fishermen and 7% of processing workers there are slaves.

International Labor Rights Forum (1634 I St. NW#1000, Washington, DC 20006; <https://laborrights.org>), has a Seafood

Workers' Rights Campaign. It gave a presentation at the annual Seafood Summit in Bangkok, pushing for better labor laws. ILRF also presses the Marine Stewardship Council (1255 23rd St. NW #275, Washington, DC 20037; www.msc.org) on corporate accountability standards. ILRF is in dialogue with Fishers' Rights Network in Thailand (c/o International Transport Workers, 49-60 Bourough Rd., London SE1 1DR England; www.itfglobal.org).

There is a new ILRF publication, *Time for a Sea Change*. It recommends a union for migrants in Thailand as a strong anti-slavery tool.

INITIATIVES is still boycotting Thai shrimp. However, INITIATIVES does not feel deprived because with a little effort alternative shrimp are available.

First, the grocers in INITIATIVES' neighborhood often have Gulf shrimp. They are either labeled as such or the grocer needs to be asked. American Shrimp Processors (PO Box 4867, Biloxi, MS 39535; www.americanshrimp.com), to mention one example, directs consumers in its region to groceries that feature Gulf shrimp.

Second, there are shrimp from U.S. farms. Tru Shrimp (330 Third St., Balaton, MN 56115; www.trushrimpcompany.com) has successfully raised and marketed them for a few years. It is expanding to a harbor complex in Madison, SD and then perhaps elsewhere. The new facility will have a hatchery focused on genetics and reproductive tech plus a water reclamation system.

Shrimp farming is difficult. Water temps are constantly watched; plus monitoring amounts of acidity, nitrates and ammonia. Then there is the amount and type of feed—soy, corn and fish meal or other products. Additionally, the U.S. farms must convince consumers that the price of domestic shrimp is a better bargain than frozen, slavery-tainted seafood from Thailand.

Taking the Initiative *Among Farmers*

Family Farm Defenders (PO Box 1772, Madison, WI 53701; www.familyfarmers.org) is a 25-year old education/lobby group of farmers and shoppers that supports consumer health, sustainable agriculture, workers rights, humane treatment of animals and more.

FFD also has a Save Our Great Lakes campaign and it currently backs a Farmers Bill of Rights. Although supermarkets have “thousands of brands on the shelf, the reality is most are owned by a handful of corporations,” explain Anthony Pahnke of FFD and Jim Goodman, a dairy farmer. Big corporations are a fact of life, but farmers need open markets where their sale prices are not arbitrarily kept low by mega-businesses. The proposed Bill of Rights also seeks standard labeling for food marketed as organic or as U.S. grown/produced. It also wants “reasonable environmental standards.” (*Chicago Tribune*, 8/26/19)

FFD wants to establish a fair trade certification for U.S. farms. Many churches sell coffee, chocolate, olive oil and more to benefit farmers in Africa, India and Central America who adhere to just practices. With the exception of some soup mix, the church products are not domestic. For now, FFD sells a fair trade holiday cheese box through its website.

Catholic Rural Life now has its office at University of St. Thomas (2155 Summit Ave. #4080, St. Paul, MN 55105; www.catholicrurallife.org). CRL advocates for family farmers. It assists the training of seminarians and resources priests in rural areas. CRL recently published a 29-page booklet, *Vocation of the Agricultural Leader*. It is a companion to *Vocation of the Business Leader*. Both publications from National Center for the Laity (PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629; \$2 each, specify title).

Taking the Initiative *Against Trafficking*

Trafficking began on our shores in 1619 when slaves were first brought to Jamestown, VA. *White Devil's Daughters* by Julia Flynn Siler (Knopf [2019]; \$28.95) tells about trafficking of Chinese women to San Francisco in the early 1900s to supply the sex industry, apparel sweatshops and more.

In recent years, however, only some U.S. specialists (police, a few journalists and some social workers) gave much attention to trafficking. Thanks to women religious and many others awareness of trafficking has ginned up in this century. Many parishes now have an anti-trafficking committee, either as part of a domestic violence ministry or as a separate effort. Students in many schools get presentations on the topic. Some major

businesses are taking anti-trafficking measures. (*The Evangelist* of Albany, 3/5/20)

Thanks to the Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph (www.cssjfed.org) and others, hotel chains are signing onto anti-trafficking procedures. Hilton (7930 Jones Branch Dr., McLean, VA 22102; www.hilton.com), as one example, has a 2019 “Slavery and Trafficking Statement.” Employees are trained to spot and report suspicious activity. Hotel guests are routinely given Hilton’s “Commitment to Human Rights.” The flyer provides a hotline number (888 373 7888) that provides immediate help and referrals to anyone who knows of trafficking, not only in hotels/motels but in retail, restaurants and construction. The Federation, by the way, has a page on its website regarding trafficking with ten links to more information.

SOAP (PO Box 645, Worthington, OH 43085; www.soaproject.org) arranges for hotels to obtain bars of soap whose labels contain anti-trafficking information.

Women religious have, as they do with all their involvements, taken their anti-trafficking awareness and lobbying campaign to a sophisticated level. They have a national network, U.S. Sisters Against Human Trafficking (2039 N. Geyer Rd., St. Louis, MO 63131; www.sistersagainstrafficking.org). The group publishes a newsletter, *Stop Trafficking*.

Some people, like a *Chicago Tribune* columnist, excuse some aspects trafficking, as for example in the case of Robert Kraft’s shameful behavior. (*N.Y. Times*, 3/3/19)

Tom Dart, sheriff in INITIATIVES’ county, spoke at INITIATIVES’ parish. His office received a tip about dog fighting and a small betting ring. The police rescued nearly all of the animals. Dart then held a press conference, warning the public about this illegal activity. The department was flooded with praise from rightly appalled animal lovers and responsible citizens.

Not long after the department got a tip about suspected prostitution at a motel. The police went there and caught several people. Again, Dart held a press conference. This time he received little praise. However, lots of reactions against the police came his way. This is a matter of free will between consenting adults, Dart was told.

“No it isn’t,” Dart says. First, “one of the girls was 14, another 15; not adults.” Second, it is “not consensual.” Girls and women are systematically trafficked into prostitution with

psychological and physical coercion, Dart explains.

The contrast between the two reactions says to Dart that “society allows trafficking.” The public, Dart insists, has to be more aware that trafficking “is wrong.” It is not confined to Thailand. It can gain hold within a local high school, it can grow within a nearby mall and it is routinely facilitated through the internet.

“St. Josephine Bakhita (1869-1947), pray for us.”

125+ Years *Of Catholic Social Thought*

The title of this recurring column is calculated from Pope Leo XIII’s (1810-1903) encyclical of May 1891, *On the Condition of Labor*. The notion of modern Catholic social thought and action traditionally starts from that date. Next year INITIATIVES will title the column “130 Years.”

Modern social doctrine, however, predates Leo XIII. Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) issued their *Communist Manifesto* in 1848. That same year Bishop Wilhelm Emmanuel von Ketteler (1811-1877) of Mainz gave six Advent sermons on poverty and inequality (two related but separate issues). Von Ketteler, member of an aristocratic family, opposed communism but was deeply troubled by the harsh effects of capitalism. Von Ketteler thought some state regulation plus action by labor and charitable groups could temper extreme capitalism.

Von Ketteler advocated for the end of child labor, for limiting hours in a factory, for Sunday as a true day of rest, for disability insurance and temporary unemployment insurance, for state health and safety inspectors and for more coops. The key to a better capitalism was to break the belief that an individual is “the absolute master of things that he [or she] owns,” he preached.

Catholicism says private property is a right. But drawing upon St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), von Ketteler explained that only God has “full and genuine property rights... When making use of his [or her] property a person has the duty to bow to the God-given order of things.” It “is a perpetual sin against nature [to hold] the false doctrine that property confers strict rights. Catholicism protects property,” von Ketteler said, “but wealth must be distributed...for the sake of the general welfare.”

In highlighting concepts like the common good, stakeholders and solidarity, von Ketteler was an outstanding social, political and spiritual leader of the 19th century. He laid the groundwork for a mature Catholic reflection on modernity.

Into the 20th century Catholic social thought sketched a middle way between market-motivated individualism and communism or any other state centered system.

Fr. Heinrich Pesch, SJ (1854-1926), who like von Ketteler served in Mainz, was a leading proponent of the Christian *solidarist school* of thought. Both ruthless atomistic individualism and forceful statist systems damage “the natural communities of family and people,” he writes. The alternative is a “return to a genuine community,” one characterized by mutuality and reciprocity. The social realm stands between the ragged individual and the state or other large entities. Society is “an organized community, a permanent association of persons...with mutual rights and duties...who through common aims are obligated to community action.”

Fr. Oswald von Nell Breuning (1890-1991), also of the solidarist school, used a Catholic social principle, *subsidiarity*, to guide middle range communities. Von Nell Breuning

helped Pope Pius XI (1857-1939) write his 1931 encyclical *Reconstructing the Social Order* in which subsidiarity is called “a fundamental principle” of life.

Subsidiarity affirms the necessary role of government, including federal government. But subsidiarity highlights intermediate groups that allow a person to exercise agency, what Catholicism calls the principle of *participation*—groups like family, churches, unions, professional associations, citizens’ organizations, small business associations and more.

Subsidiarity assumes that people actualize in society; that no one is born independent; that no one is self-made. Subsidiarity insists on *freedom for* and opposes libertarian *freedom from*. True economic prosperity plus wholeness or holiness grows because of healthy face-to-face groups, everything from companies to soccer leagues; those that foster mutual support and responsibility.

A vibrant society, von Nell Breuning concludes, must bring out “the social characteristics of economic life, social justice and the common good” and thereby build a world that has proper regard for the dignity of working families.

Happenings & Resources

Orthodox Christianity is not known for its social doctrine, writes Fr. John Chryssavgis in *Commonweal* (475 Riverside Dr. #405, New York, NY 10115; 4/20). Instead, “matters of personal maturity and spiritual integrity became the principal interest and mystical investment of Eastern Christianity.” Over time “Orthodox Christianity has either abandoned or failed to develop a clear social vision.”

However, a new document signals a change. In 2017 Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew appointed a commission to address “vital issues and challenges in the world today in ways that are consistent with living as Orthodox Christians.” Both clergy and laity served the commission; Chryssavgis became its chair. With Bartholomew’s blessing, the commission released a document, *For the Life of the World: towards a Social Ethos*, during Lent 2020. It is a free download from Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (www.goarch.org).

Spiritual lives cannot fail to be social lives, says *For the Life of the World*. The document is not a dogmatic decree but is a call for Orthodox Christians and others to reflect on their faith in the context of the modern world; acknowledging the world’s defects but not retreating to a supposed world apart.

For the Life of the World begins with a theological foundation for Christians encounter with the world. It treats church/state relations. It affirms the dignity of each life “from the womb to the grave, addressing all manner of both enduring and uniquely contemporary issue facing the faithful.” The issues are race, abortion, refugees and more. “No offense against God is worse than is the sexual abuse of children, and none more intolerable to the conscience of the church,” says the document. Finally, *For the Life of the World* asserts that Christianity “celebrates the sciences and arts, while cautioning discernment regarding the integration of technology into human life.” The document also champions a devout care of the earth in all its dimensions.

Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment (1216 NE 65th St., Seattle, WA 98115; www.ipjc.org) completes 25 years of lobbying corporate boards on behalf of stakeholders. NWCRI, in cooperation with similar efforts, uses stocks from 22 religious communities to get the attention of a corporate board. It has influenced Wal-Mart on responsible gun use, Exxon Mobil on climate issues, CVS on tobacco sales and more.

NWCRI's parent organization, Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center, publishes a glossy magazine, *A Matter of Spirit*. Each issue has original reporting, reflection pieces and reports on Center activities. IPJC also has a five session booklet, *Just Economics* (free download), for small group discussion in a parish or school. Its appendix has five short essays on the topic plus an extensive glossary and a page of additional resources. A similar booklet, *Climate Change: Our Call to Conversion* (\$5), is designed for four sessions.

As we loosen the disciplines of *physical distancing*, might we improve the disciplines of *social connection*? Can we together craft what Pope Francis calls a *culture of encounter*?

One resource for connectivity might be the soft arts of organizing as practiced in the 1960s and 1970s. This is not necessarily to reassert the issues of those days or to redeploy old tactics. Maybe though there is something to learn from the experience of that time about connecting people, particularly across congregations and familiar settings.

There is a Community Organizing Archive at Brown University (10 Prospect St., Providence, RI 02912; https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/collections/id_783/). Don Elmer and others conducted over 100 oral interviews with community organizers throughout the U. S. who were involved in all aspects of organizing during the 1960s and 1970s--in neighborhood organizations, labor unions, civil rights movements, human rights groups and religious communities. Their reflections on lessons learned about group dynamics, institutional renewal and adult formation are available through the website. The archive plans a conference in 2021.

Similar reflections are packed into a 350-page *People Power: the Community Organizing Tradition* edited by Mike Miller and Aaron Schutz (Vanderbilt Press [2015]; \$39.95).

Our National Center for the Laity (PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629) distributes some books and booklets on the arts of organizing. They include the new *Reveille for a New Generation* (\$20) edited by former NCL president Greg Pierce. It is 400 pages of essays by community organizers arranged historically—from those prior to 1940s, those active in 1940s through 1990s and finally those currently in the field. Other titles through NCL include *Power of Relational Action* (\$5.75) by Ed Chambers (1930-2015), *Public Friendship* by Bill Droel (\$5.75) and *Activism that Makes Sense* (\$9) by Greg Pierce.

Finally, many blessings for Fr. Anthony Shonis in retirement. He is from Scranton but spent a seminary year doing missionary activity in Kentucky. He was so taken by the experience that he was eventually ordained for the Owensboro diocese. Along the way he developed a remarkable pastoral habit. "I have visited over 500 parishioners in their workbench," he tells INITIATIVES. A short synopsis of these visits would regularly appear in the bulletin. "I found that grace is in the workplace. God moves through secondary situations."

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Published for 42 years by National Center for the Laity, PO Box 291102, Chicago, IL 60629

Editor: Bill Droel (wdroel@cs.com). For a cyber-version of INITIATIVES, go to www.catholiclabor.org. On the site's heading go to "Library."

NCL is an independent 501-C-3 Catholic organization with an Illinois charter. NCL's board includes Charles DiSalvo, Ambrose Donnelly, Tom Donnelly, Bill Droel, Adam Fitzpatrick, John Hazard and Lauren Sukal.

Etty Hillesum (1914-1943), a Jew from Netherlands, was murdered in an extermination camp in occupied Poland. For the last three years of her life she kept a diary, *An Interrupted Life* (Picador; \$23). One of its last entries reads: "Ultimately, we have just one moral duty: to reclaim large areas of peace in ourselves, more and more peace, and to reflect it toward others. And the more peace there is in us, the more peace there also will be in our troubled world."