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**Open Door: A Prophetic Discipleship Community Honoring The Black Jesus, Dorothy Day and Martin Luther King Jr.**

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Brian Kavanagh

## Sexuality at the Center of the Christmas Story

**By Nibs Stroupe**

As we move to the edge of the Advent and Christmas seasons, I've been wondering what Courageous Mary (also known in the church as the Virgin Mary) thought about the Senate confirmation hearing of September 27, where Dr. Christine Blasey Ford gave powerful testimony about being sexually assaulted by Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh. I was struck by the fact that so many commentators thought that she made a credible and compelling case — what did they expect her to do? It sounds as if the underlying assumption was that she would not be credible, and she amazed people when she was. So we should pause right here to emphasize the context in which she testified: The assumption is that women will not make credible witnesses when they give such testimony. That is a sad but true fact that the Trump era understands better than we progressives do: women will not be believed. I give thanks to Dr. Ford, whose testimony was so powerful even the white, male patriarchal Republicans were afraid of her! That's why Kavanaugh was so vociferous in his testimony. Patriarchy had been exposed, and he (and we white males) are not accustomed to being held accountable by women and people of color.

In the birth stories surrounding Jesus, sexuality is at the center. We often skip over that part, but in both Matthew and Luke, sexual behavior takes center stage. The young Mary faces difficult choices. She already belongs to Joseph as his property. Then, a male angel named Gabriel appears to her and asks (demands?) that she allow herself to become

impregnated with the Messiah, become impregnated by the male God named Yahweh. Right away, we are in scary territory. A new male being wants in her ear (the Word?) or in her vagina to create a baby. If she says no, will God destroy her? If she says yes, then she faces the death penalty. The decisions over how to be sexual in a patriarchal society are always difficult for women, as we see in these Gospel stories about the conception and birth of Jesus. Mary chooses to allow herself to become pregnant by Yahweh, and in one way, it is a slap at toxic masculinity. As Sojourner Truth put it so well 160 years ago, "Where did your Christ come from? God and a woman — man had nothing to do with it." Yet, it is like "Sophie's Choice" — no real way out for Mary. She still belongs to patriarchy, and it is no wonder that Margaret Atwood chose Mary's words in Luke 1:38 ("I am the handmaiden of the Lord") as the title for her book *The Handmaid's Tale*, about the total patriarchal world that Trump/Grasley/Graham/Cruz/Kavanaugh, et al, would like to see re-established.

In Luke's account, Joseph is a non-actor in this sexual story until the second chapter. After Mary agrees to become pregnant via God, she doesn't go to Joseph; rather, she goes to the sisterhood, to the community, for support. She goes to her cousin Elizabeth, miraculously pregnant with John the Baptizer. I say "miraculously" because in a patriarchal society, her lack of children is blamed on her, not on her husband Zechariah. Her value in the patriarchal world, as in *The Handmaid's Tale*, has gone up because she is pregnant.

**Sexuality at the Center** *continued on page 7*

## Back to Basics Mark 10:2-16

**By Andrew Foster Connors**

*This sermon was delivered on Sunday, October 7, 2018 at Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, Maryland.*

We are carrying so much in this congregation at this moment in history. So much that I consider it a risk to say much of anything this morning at a time when we may be better off making space for listening. I felt this acutely coming out of worship last week. And then I turned to the lectionary, looking for wisdom, and saw that Jesus was teaching against divorce. After a few expletives, I held my nose and dove into what is likely no one's favorite text, and saw again that Jesus is not really teaching against divorce. He is teaching *against* patriarchy and *for* a different kind of relationship between human beings — one marked by mutual accountability, care and justice. I share that on the front end this morning, destroying any hope of narrative surprise, which is much more entertaining but only when people feel safe; safe that words that they hear from people on elevated pulpits — especially men on elevated pulpits — are not going to be used to hurt or harm. Hear now the good news from Mark's Gospel.

<sup>2</sup>Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" <sup>3</sup>He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" <sup>4</sup>They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her." <sup>5</sup>But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. <sup>6</sup>But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female. <sup>7</sup>For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, <sup>8</sup>and the two shall become one flesh.' <sup>9</sup>So they are no longer two, but one flesh. <sup>10</sup>Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

<sup>10</sup>Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. <sup>11</sup>He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; <sup>12</sup>and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

<sup>13</sup>People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. <sup>14</sup>But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. <sup>15</sup>Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." <sup>16</sup>And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

**Back to Basics** *continued on page 6*

# Vulnerable Strength

By Joyce Hollyday

We gathered, a circle of sisters, because we needed to be together. It was four days after the shameful debacle of Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh's hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee, one day before the president publicly mocked the brave testimony of Christine Blasey Ford at a political rally in Mississippi. One in our circle who works with elders in a retirement center shared that a woman in her late 80s had confided in her on the day of the hearing, "I've never told anyone this, not even my husband" — and then spilled a story of sexual assault that she had suffered six decades before.

It seemed impossible in the days surrounding the hearing not to think about the things that had been done to us, the words used to blame us for our own victimization, the ways we had been dismissed or disbelieved, or the shame and embarrassment that had rendered us unable to tell anyone at all. Any woman who has ever suffered sexual harassment or assault (which is pretty much all of us) — and every enlightened man who knows such a woman — understands why so many of us remain silent. To talk is to suffer a version — less pressured and public, but no less frightening or humiliating — of what Dr. Blasey Ford had to endure. The men wondering why women don't come forward are exactly the reason so many don't.

We gathered that night around a fire, poised between the Jewish festival of Sukkot and the ancient Celtic celebration of Samhain. Sukkot recalls the forty years that the Jews spent wandering in the wilderness after God released them from slavery in Egypt, when they lived in transitory shelters and ate manna that rained down from heaven. I first learned of it while I was in seminary

in Atlanta in the 1990s, when for a week in mid-September my Jewish neighbors hosted backyard parties in shelters they had temporarily created out of sheets of plywood and tree branches.

Rabbi Arthur Waskow says of the tradition:

*During the Jewish harvest festival of Sukkot, we build a sukkah — a fragile hut with a leafy roof, the most vulnerable of houses. Vulnerable in time, since it lasts for only a week each year. Vulnerable in space, since its roof must be not only leafy but leaky enough to let in the starlight and gusts of wind and rain. ... We are in truth all vulnerable. We all live in a sukkah. Even the widest oceans, the mightiest buildings, the wealthiest balance sheets, the most powerful weapons cannot shield us. There are only wispy walls and leaky roofs between us.*

Those of us in the circle felt our vulnerability as we fed the fire that night. We placed into the flames bundled twigs, flower petals, grains of rice, wisps of rosemary, symbols of things we wanted to release or gestate during the darker, colder days to come. Then each of us set a small votive candle into the gourd, turnip, squash or sweet potato we had hollowed out and brought with us. We lit a taper from the fire and passed it around the circle, lighting each of our candles from the communal flame.

During the ancient ritual of Samhain, which was celebrated in late October to mark the transition from harvest to winter, village squares were the sites of large bonfires. Each family arrived with a hollow winter vegetable, into which they placed an ember



Jimenez Mribe

from the communal fire. They carried these embers home to light their own hearth fires as winter began to close in.

This ritual is likely the root of our tradition of making jack-o-lanterns. During Samhain — as during Halloween, All Saints Day and the Mexican Day of the Dead celebrated at the same time of year — the veil between the living and the dead is believed to be at its thinnest. This is a season for remembering our interconnectedness with one another here and with those who have gone before us. "There are only wispy walls and leaky roofs between us."

This year, I give thanks in particular for all the women who have spoken their truth, who have courageously exposed what we

know to be an epidemic scourge of patriarchal control and violence in our nation and our world. In this season of vulnerability and diminishing light, the votive candle that glows in my hollow acorn squash reminds me of the strength of sisterhood and community. Like the early observers of Samhain, I cling to the memory of the communal bonfire, which warms both heart and hearth. ☘

*Joyce Hollyday is an author and pastor serving undocumented immigrant women in the mountains of western North Carolina. She has been a friend of the Open Door for four decades. Her blog can be found at [www.joycehollyday.com](http://www.joycehollyday.com).*

## HOSPITALITY

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Welcome Table Guest  
10/24/18

Photograph by  
Eduard Loring



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Please join us on **Facebook** for the continuing journey of the **Open Door Community in Baltimore**. Thank you. David, Eduard and Murphy.



# Immigration and the Jewish Call for Justice

By Milton Tambor

*This sermon was delivered on July 14, 2018 at Temple Sinai in Sandy Springs, Georgia*

I prepared these remarks shortly after a zero-tolerance policy was announced and the criminal prosecution of immigrants attempting to enter the U.S. illegally was put into effect by the Trump administration. As a result, children were being separated from their families at the border. I looked at the Torah portion of the week which describes how the Hebrews were preparing to enter the promised land after a 40-year trek in the desert. Could these events be connected? If so, how?

Regarding the policy of separating children from their parents, this much was clear. In implementing this new policy, 2,300 children were separated from their families and taken into custody. We know enough about childhood development to recognize that childhood separation from parents and families can be traumatic, potentially leading to life-long injuries to one's physical and mental health. I then came across a newspaper article entitled "Sermons oppose separation of immigrants from kids." One response took hold of me. Rabbi Asher Knight of Temple Beth El in Charlotte spoke as follows: "We are also a people of immigrants and a people who held high the value of intact families. This is not an abstract matter for us. Our Jewish story is fundamentally an immigrant story. We know too well what it was like for our children to be ripped from our hands and put into camps. No matter how many generations we have been here, no matter how many thousands of years ago the Exodus took place, the timeless call to care for the stranger still compels us. We have a choice of how we want to be remembered. Do we want to stand at the border, rip children from their parents and tell the families to turn around and go into a burning building? Or do we want to value people as humans, reject the hostile attitude in which one generation of immigrants would slam the door securely shut behind themselves and from behind that closed door make self-righteous and hateful pronouncements about what America stands for?"

What about the other side of the debate? These undocumented immigrants knew they were breaking the law. Our government's strict enforcement of this policy was made known to them. We have to protect our borders and these immigrants must suffer the consequences for their illegal actions. They must own up for what they did and take responsibility for using such poor judgment.

The basic question, then, is how should we judge these immigrants? What moral and ethical standards should we apply? Should they be judged harshly or with compassion? In studying the Ethics of Our Fathers [Forebearers], we can find the answer. Don't judge your fellow man until you can place yourself in his place or stand in his shoes. How do we do that? How can we know what these immigrants are feeling or experiencing? Well, as Jews, we do some serious practicing each and every year to understand the plight of these migrants. We do so when we recite from the Hagaddah the story of the exodus from Egypt. The aim of the seder is very clear: to bring the events surrounding the outgoing from Egypt into present immediacy so that we can experience ourselves what it means to be liberated. And it is through that lens we can know what it means not only to be a slave but what it feels like to be an outsider, a stranger or a migrant. For that reason, the language in Leviticus is most demanding: "When a stranger sojourns in your land, you shall do him no wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you. And you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."

This week's portion of the week gives us a fuller sense of what liberation from slavery entailed for the Israelites —

being cast in the wilderness and forced on a long and arduous journey until they arrived at the border of the promised land. And even at the border there were no assurances that the transition would be easy. How would the inhabitants of the lands welcome them? What danger and perils might lie ahead? Despite the obstacles and hardships they might face, these Hebrew migrants had faith and hope that a safer and fuller life would be possible in this new land. For the migrants at the U.S. border today, there is scant reason for any such faith and hope. That was not always so. In 1987, that faith and hope was restored when a bill was enacted providing a path to citizenship for four million of the undocumented. If done then, why not now?

Besides the story of the Exodus, there have been other times in Jewish history where we were in a similar situation to the one facing current immigrants as they try to enter our country. All we need to do is look at Eastern European Jewish emigration to the U.S. Between 1882 and 1924, more than two million Jews came to our shores. They were fleeing pogroms and persecution in Russia and Poland. In the Pale of Settlement where Jews were forced to live and restricted in the work that they could do, they suffered economic hardship.

Their journey was long and difficult — from village to train to ship. In Russia, Jews had to get past border guards by any means available including bribes in order to get to port cities in Germany and Italy. Most immigrants bound for America sailed in storage, an area exceedingly crowded with inadequate sanitation, no ventilation, noxious smells where the roar of the engine was loudest and the rocking of the ship was most intense. Besides experiencing sea sickness, many arrived at Ellis Island weak and malnourished.

My own family history in the U.S. begins when my father's oldest brother came over first from Hungary and earned enough money as a barber in New York City to send for the rest of the family. My father-in-law's story is quite different. Because of World War I, he, as a young boy with his family, left Russia, taking the eastern route to Siberia and China before arriving in Vancouver, Canada. The family crossed the Canadian border to visit relatives in the U.S. They planned to stay in the U.S. even though they had no papers. They lived in the shadows until my father-in-law married and became a naturalized citizen. As an undocumented immigrant, he could have been deported and the family as we know it would not exist.

The Exodus story and the Eastern Jewish European narrative share much in common with the experience of Mexican and Central American immigrants fleeing poverty and gang violence. But it is not enough for us to feel compassion and empathy. We have to do more. And that involves Tikkun Olam — repairing the world. Yes, we need to do good deeds and acts of charity. But under the prescription of Tikkun Olam it is the responsibility of Jews to go further — to the root causes of injustice at the cultural, social and economic levels. That means going beyond the Jewish people and the particular to the world and the universal.

How do we do that? Where do we start? Let's begin by treating these immigrants as human beings deserving of dignity. Referring to them as illegal aliens is dehumanizing. Actions may be illegal, but no person is illegal. The term *alien*



Cerezo Barredo

suggests something strange and unnatural, akin to an invader from outer space. The French seem to have it right. They simply refer to people with papers and to people without papers.

In regard to repairing the world, there is a long tradition of American Jewish social activism. If we look at the history of social movements in this country we can see the important role that Jews played. In the labor movement it was Jews who organized craft unions, the needle trades and textile industry through the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union with such leaders as Sidney Hillman and Samuel Gompers. If we turn to the women's movement, we can note the contributions of Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem and Bella Abzug and witness the revolutionary change in synagogue leadership with women serving as rabbis and cantors. And then the civil rights movement — Schwerner and Goodman — giving their lives up for the cause and the disproportionate number of Jews who came to Mississippi in voter registration drives and served as civil rights attorneys. What can we learn from these Jewish social justice activists? Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel said it best: "Morally speaking, there is no limit to the concern one must feel for the suffering of human beings." Or as Rabbi Prinz, who spoke before MLK at the 1963 March on Washington, said, "I learned many things. . . . Bigotry and hatred are not the most important problems. The most shameful and the most tragic problem is silence."

For me, I drew inspiration from a New Jersey retired Rabbi whom I came to know — Israel Dresner — with the title of most-arrested rabbi in America. He was a freedom rider in the summers of 1961 through 1964. When asked why he engaged in civil disobedience, he explained, "Judaism teaches the oneness of mankind and it's Jewish tradition to help the poor and the afflicted. I went because I'm Jewish. I didn't see an alternative."

So how do we make our voice heard? We can do what Rabbi Heschel advised. Praying with our feet — joining in marches and demonstrations. Or do at work what 100 workers at Microsoft did by posting a notice to the CEO asking that the software maker stop working with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency. Or lobby our elected representatives or engage in civil discourse with family, neighbors and friends. But let us be sure to speak out.

I end with the injunction from the book of Exodus, "Justice Justice shall you pursue." Justice is mentioned twice for emphasis and importance. To pursue means a commitment to chase after — no matter how elusive or difficult the struggle to achieve justice may be. ♦

*Milton Tambor is one of the great Elders in the Atlanta Peace and Justice movement. He was Chair of the Metro Atlanta Democratic Socialists of America for 10 years. Milt revitalized the Metro Democratic Socialists of America into one of the most vital Democratic Socialists of America Chapters in the United States of America today. Milt is a mentor to Ed Loring and nurtured Ed back to his Marxist and Socialist roots of the Social Gospel and the Eugene Debs vision of the Beloved Community.*

# With Ashes and Sackcloth: I Am Unable....

By Eduard Loring

At the end of my *Hospitality* article last month I wrote that this month I would write “A New Vision for the Palestinians and Israelis.” With the horror in Israel and the daily killings of Palestinians and the horror in the U.S. and the continued killings, I have little to suggest.

Like all States for which equality among citizens is normative, the new state must be secular. Perhaps the name of the new country could be Canaan. A name shared by both Israelis and Palestinians.

I suggest that the National Anthem be John Lennon’s “Imagine.” An atheist anthem for a secular nation.

Imagine there’s no heaven  
It’s easy if you try  
No hell below us  
Above us only sky  
Imagine all the people living for today

Imagine there’s no countries  
It isn’t hard to do  
Nothing to kill or die for  
And no religion too  
Imagine all the people living life in peace, you

You may say I’m a dreamer  
But I’m not the only one  
I hope someday you’ll join us  
And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions  
I wonder if you can  
No need for greed or hunger  
A brotherhood of man [Neighbors hand-in-hand]  
Imagine all the people sharing all the world, you

You may say I’m a dreamer  
But I’m not the only one  
I hope some day you’ll join us  
And the world will be as one

And then and now there is White Christian America. A place that I have hardly known in my white flesh and my darkness of having been formed theologically by a southern protestant theology rooted in proslavery blasphemy. There is no such discipline as proslavery theology. Just white racist worker exploitation by White people using God and Jesus Christ to proclaim divine sanction for white superiority, for racial slavery as God’s preferred labor system for Africans, and for the God-given exceptionalism and Empire of the morally superior, as a bible-based nation, as a city on a hill for the whole world to emulate. That is a world order subjected to white superiority.

I confess. I have given little attention in my life to the world significance or any significance much to the lynching of Leo Frank in 1915. I have worshipped a number of times in the synagogue where Mr. Frank was a member: The Temple in Atlanta, Georgia. Growing up in the South during Jim Crow there was little ethnic, religious or racial diversity. Though the U.S. motto and the Christian Confession alike call for a diversity and unity among all. Many whites today flee to the sea or mountain tops to be only among white people like themselves. I simply have not cared that much about the Jewish experience in the United States of America. There were very few Jews at Myers Park High School in Charlotte in North Carolina 60 years ago when I completed my studies and wasteful life there. I am sorry. Very sorry. As a Liberation Theologian and a disrupting street activist for peace and justice, I have forsaken God’s people. I confess, I repent, but I want no assurance of pardon until I have produced fruit worthy of repentance. Such pardon is cheap grace.



Brian Kavanagh

My primary care doctor is Jewish. I have spoken to her about my sorrow and grief around the Pittsburgh Massacre. I have stopped several Jewish folks on the street, complete strangers, and shared words of lament and hopefully a tiny seed of comfort. I will continue my journey and I will stick to my path, but the place of the experience of American Jewry will now be a subject of concern and action. Shalom my friends, Shalom.

A light of hope shining through the carnage and white rage from Pittsburgh: many American Jews are finding themselves at odds with Israeli Jews. The role of welcoming the stranger and helping the immigrants is strong in this country in Jewish communities. These beloved people see the relationship between the white Christian Nationalism in the U.S. and the terror and murder of the Palestinians in the Middle East. May we be formed by the power and greatness of the American Jews who love and welcome the stranger within our gates. See the article in this issue by the Jewish leader of Democratic Socialists of America in Atlanta, Milt Tambor: “Immigration and the Jewish Call for Justice.”

A starting point for roots and branches of Jewish American History is “The Re-emergence of American Anti-Semitism” at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/30/podcasts/the-daily/american-anti-semitism-shooting-synagogue.html>. “For many who hoped that hostility toward Jews had faded into

the past, the mass shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue was a devastating shock.” ♦

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## What If?

By Ed Crouch and Catherine Alder

What if the United States was designated by the United Nations as the place for hundreds of thousands of people being persecuted in Europe to come? The world is told, “America is a land without a people for a people without a land.” Though we citizens know this is not true, we agree to share our ample land.

What if the “new people” come with guns and run out three-fourths of the Americans, brutally expelling us into refugee camps? Many thousands of Americans are killed, cities and towns destroyed. We call this “The Catastrophe.”

What if the new people form a new country, taking 87 percent of our former land, constantly stealing more of our land? The new people bulldoze many thousands of existing homes, putting untold generations of former American citizens out on the street with no compensation. The United Nations and Amnesty International say these demolitions constitute a war crime and will be taken to the International Criminal Courts, but nothing stops them.

What if lovely new-people towns are built on hilltops looking down on us, their sewage running down on our land? Miles of a 25-foot-high wall are built, partitioning the new country, blocking us. “New People Only” roads are built for those with special license plates to get to those communities.

What if original Americans are limited to a few hours of electricity per day? Eighty percent of all water in the United States is stolen, then 20 percent is sold back to us at high rates. Minerals are mined and natural gas drilled off the coasts by the new people, severely curtailing American fishing livelihoods. Transportation and essential supplies are cut off to Americans by the new people who now control the Canadian and Mexican borders, and access by air and sea.

What if we lived under 40 years of military occupation? New-country soldiers can do anything to American citizens, even though illegal under international law. When the new people harass our communities or burn our crops, the soldiers of the new country protect them, not us. Through 600 fixed and moving checkpoints, their soldiers greatly delay us getting to and from family, jobs, hospitals and schools.

What if American children as young as six are arrested in the middle of the night and taken to prisons, held in detention without access to parents or a lawyer, sometimes without trial, often tortured and forced to sign confessions in a foreign language — all in clear violation of international law? They

are told they will not go home without signing this confession.

What if we hold an April-May 2018 protest on the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Catastrophe down by the ocean behind a fence where they keep thousands of us locked in? One hundred sharpshooters face us, killing over 127 unarmed protesters, including children and medics, injuring over 14,700 with exploding bullets meant to shred flesh!

What if on July 19, 2018, the new country’s government voted itself a “nation-state” only for its own people — legally taking away most of original Americans’ remaining rights, including making English no longer our country’s language?

Sadly, what is described here as the United States actually has happened to Palestine. Why does the U.S. give Israel \$3.8 billion per year in financial aid to support this deadly racism, far worse in some respects than in South Africa? ♦

Rev. Catherine Alder, UCC Oregon Pastor, LCSW, has traveled repeatedly to Palestine/Israel, and seeks to raise awareness of issues there. Ed Crouch, MSW, retired Seattle social worker, seeks justice for Palestinians and writes a monthly blog. He organized Occupation-Free Seattle to persuade the city to stop investing in three American corporations that engage in gross human rights violations in the Occupied Palestine Territories (Caterpillar; Hewlett-Packard and Motorola). ([edcrouch@earthlink.net](mailto:edcrouch@earthlink.net))

# The Handcuffs of Gentrification

By Peter Gathje

A guest approached me the other morning at Manna House with disturbing news. “I was handcuffed by the police yesterday.”

This is a guest who carries with him a well-worn Bible that he frequently and devoutly reads. We often talk together about “the Word of the Day,” finding some phrase or story that connects with our lives. Other guests often ask him to pray for them, and he does, right away. He puts his hand on the person’s shoulder, bows his head and prays. He is in many ways a pastor for people on the streets. He is always ready to listen, to offer an encouraging word and to share a passage from the Scriptures that might inspire. His Christian faith reminds me of St. Francis, a wandering ascetic whose love for others was always readily apparent.

“Why would the police handcuff you?” I asked, stunned that he would be subject to any police suspicion.

“I was sitting on the steps of a building with another guy. He doesn’t come here, but he’s a good guy. We were just sitting there. I had used a water tap to wash my face cloth. It was a hot day, and I needed a cool cloth. But the cops came up and grabbed us. They said we had broken into the building. They pointed to a window that was open.”

“Did they arrest you?”

“No. But we were in handcuffs for two hours.”

“Two hours? Did you at least get to sit in an air-conditioned police car?”

“No. We were in the sun the whole time. They called the owner of the building and it took him an hour to get there. He knows me, and he immediately told the police they had the wrong guys, they should let me and the other guy go. The funny thing is that the window the police pointed to was the one I had told the building manager about last week. He told the police all that and then left.”

“And they still held you for another hour?”

“Yup. And threatened us, saying they could still arrest us for criminal trespass, and that we shouldn’t be in this neighborhood. I guess they didn’t like being shown up by the building owner or something.”

I thought of an article I read recently about the criminal justice system and systemic racism. Systemic racism, the author wrote, “means that we have systems and institutions *that produce racially disparate outcomes*, regardless of the intentions of the people who work within them. When you consider that much of the criminal-justice system was built, honed and firmly established during the Jim Crow era — an era almost everyone, conservatives included, will concede is rife with racism — this is pretty intuitive. The modern criminal-justice system helped preserve racial order — it kept Black people in their place. For much of the early 20th century, in some parts of the country, that was its *primary* function. That it might retain some of those proclivities today shouldn’t be all that surprising.” (See [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/opinions/wp/2018/09/18/theres-overwhelming-evidence-that-the-criminal-justice-system-is-racist-heres-the-proof/?utm\\_term=.31621d6b3822](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/opinions/wp/2018/09/18/theres-overwhelming-evidence-that-the-criminal-justice-system-is-racist-heres-the-proof/?utm_term=.31621d6b3822))

Keeping Black people in their place, like telling them they “shouldn’t be in this neighborhood.” Did I mention that this guest and his friend are both African American? And yes, it is not only about race, it is also about class. Systemic classism tells poor people that they are not welcome in certain areas.

What “Word of the Day” might speak of what this guest experienced in being handcuffed? Micah the prophet saw this oppression of the poor, and connected it to denying people housing: “But you rise up against my people as an enemy; you strip the robe from the peaceful, from those who pass by trustingly with no thought of war. The women of my people you drive out from their pleasant houses.” (Micah 2:8-9)

This guest was handcuffed in the area now being called “The Medical District.” The plan is to make this area around the UT Medical School, the Southern College of Optometry, Region One [the Med] and Le Bonheur more attractive for wealthier people to move into. You can’t have poor people in such an area, and certainly not homeless Black men. This is how gentrification works.

While I was talking with the guest who was handcuffed, another guest arrived. He had on a t-shirt that said, “Dixie Homes Reunion.” Dixie Homes was a large public housing project near Le Bonheur that was torn down back in 2005. This guest, I found out, had grown up there. We talked about the reunion.

“Where are the people from Dixie Homes now?”

“All over the city.”

“Any live in the houses that were built on the old Dixie Homes property?”

“Oh hell no!” he said, “Nobody could afford to live in those.”

So, a little more from Micah to chew on in these days. God sees the injustice that is going on. “Alas for those who devise wickedness and evil deeds on their beds! When the morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in their power. They covet fields, and seize them; houses, and take them away; they oppress householder and house, people and their inheritance.” (Micah 2:1-2) ✠

*Peter Gathje is Vice President for Academic Affairs/Dean of Memphis Theological Seminary, and a founder of Manna House, a place of hospitality in Memphis. He wrote Sharing the Bread of Life: Hospitality and Resistance at the Open Door Community (2006) and edited A Work of Hospitality: The Open Door Reader 1982 – 2002.*

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# Another Scandal in the All-Male Priesthood

By Roy Bourgeois

As a Catholic priest, I did the unspeakable. I called for the ordination of women in the Church. The Vatican was swift in its response. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith informed me that I was “causing grave scandal” in the Church and that I had 30 days to recant my public support for the ordination of women or I would be expelled from the priesthood.

I told the Vatican that this was not possible. Believing that women and men are created of equal worth and dignity and that both are called by an all-loving God to serve as priests, my conscience would not allow me to recant. In my response, I felt it was also important to make clear that when Catholics hear the word “scandal,” they think about the thousands of children who have been raped and abused by Catholic priests — not the ordination of women.

In 2010, the Vatican called the ordination of women as priests a crime comparable to that of the sexual abuse of children. Judging from its actions, however, it would appear that the Vatican views women’s ordination as a crime substantially more serious than child abuse. Among the thousands of priests who raped and sexually abused children, the vast majority were not expelled from the priesthood or excommunicated. Every woman, however, who has been ordained to the Catholic priesthood has been excommunicated by the Vatican.

And in 2012, after serving as a Catholic priest with the Maryknoll Missionary Order for 40 years, I was expelled from the priesthood for refusing to recant my public support for the ordination of women.

Today, once again, scandal is rocking the Catholic Church. This time, it’s six Catholic dioceses in Pennsylvania. According to a grand jury report, beginning in the 1950s, more than 300 “predator priests” sexually abused more than 1,000 children.

The 1,400-page report, written by 23 grand jurors over the course of two years stated that “Priests were raping little boys and girls, and the men of God who were responsible for them not only did nothing; they hid it all. For decades.” Among the horrific crimes committed by Catholic priests:

- In Erie, a 7-year-old boy was sexually abused by a priest who told him he should go to confession and confess his “sins” to that same priest.
- In the Pittsburgh diocese, “a ring of predatory priests shared information regarding victims, as well as exchanging the victims amongst themselves. The ring manufactured child pornography and used whips, violence and sadism in raping the victims.”
- One priest abused five sisters in the same family, including one girl beginning when she was 18 months old.
- Another priest was allowed to stay in ministry after impregnating a young girl and arranging for her to have an abortion.

• A priest raped a 7-year-old girl in her hospital room after a tonsillectomy. What was his punishment? The Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith decided, after reviewing his crime, that he should remain a priest and “live a life of prayer and penance.”

The Pennsylvania grand jury report concluded that the Catholic hierarchy “protected the institution at all cost and maintained strategies to avoid scandal.” Priests who got into trouble in one diocese were shuffled to another diocese where more children were abused. The FBI determined that Church officials followed a “playbook for concealing the truth,” minimizing the abuse by using words like “inappropriate contact” or “boundary issues” instead of “rape.”

I am convinced that if the Catholic Church had women priests, the Church would not be in the crisis it is in today. I am equally confident that if the Catholic Church does not dismantle its corrupt all-male priesthood and welcome women as equals, it will continue to drift into irrelevance. ✠

*Roy Bourgeois is a Vietnam veteran and Purple Heart recipient, a Nobel Peace Prize nominee and the founder of the School of the Americas Watch Movement. In 2012, he was expelled from the Catholic priesthood for his public support of women’s ordination. His story is the subject of the book, Disturbing the Peace: The Story of Father Roy Bourgeois and the Movement to Close the School of the Americas (Orbis Books, 2004).*

## Back to Basics: Mark 10:2-16 *continued from page 1*

There was no general rule in the first century outlining the rules under which someone could obtain a divorce,<sup>1</sup> which is probably why the Pharisees asked Jesus about it. It was a contested question, the kind the rabbis specialized in debating. During Jesus' lifetime, different schools of rabbis answered this question in many different ways.<sup>2</sup> So it's not surprising that Jesus would have been asked about it. What's surprising is the approach Jesus takes in answering it. Rather than sticking with the Mosaic law of Deuteronomy 24, he turns back to Genesis and quotes a text that is less about the law and more about the basics of intimate human relationship. A man shall leave his family house, severing connections with his own patriarchal household, and the two persons shall become one flesh. Elizabeth Fiorenza says that when you translate the text with the wider context in mind, a better translation is "the two persons — man and woman — enter into a common human life and social relationship because they are created as equals."<sup>3</sup>

In other words, to a question about a man's right to divorce his wife, stated in those terms — a *man's right* — Jesus responds with a text exposing the hierarchical assumptions of this reading of the law. He offers instead a different vision — rooted just as deeply in the Jewish tradition of interpretation — a vision of how God intended relationships from the beginning. He goes back to basics — the basic notion that human beings were not designed to wield power over and against one another. We were not designed to see one gender, or one race, or any other distinction of people as better than another. We were designed to love one another. And love between people presumes an equal footing, a standard respect, rooted in the reality that you are a child of God. I am a child of God. We are children of God together. Jesus takes us back to basics.

This equality by virtue of God's image imprinted on each of us, is reinforced to the disciples when Jesus insists that it is just as possible for a woman to divorce her husband as for a man to divorce his wife, a radical, if not novel approach during Jesus' lifetime. Divorce, then, is not just a matter of legal rules and norms, as anyone who has actually been through a divorce knows. It is a profound tragedy, a tearing of a relationship that leaves both parties wounded. And yet, divorce must be an option, Jesus acknowledges, for a marriage that has already died.<sup>4</sup>

Even so, the wounds that we create when our most sacred relationships are torn cannot completely be left behind, as Jesus makes clear with his pronouncement about adultery. Some Christian traditions have turned this particular pronouncement into a legal prohibition against remarriage for those who are divorced. But to make this into another kind of "law" would go against the legalistic control that Jesus warns against. It could lead, in fact has led, to cruel judgment of people who have been through divorce instead of the very respect, care and love that Jesus says all people deserve. Or it has been leveled as a weapon in other ways, to exclude same-gender relationships, ignoring the fact that the center point of Jesus' argument is that in the most intimate of relationships, responsibilities for care and respect and love and grace are the same for everyone.

Go back to basics, he tells us, and see that the relationships that we have with each other are what's most important. The equality of all souls before God. The prerequisite for respect for each person that grows this central theological conviction. The belief that the laws and rules we create to govern these relationships must reflect this basic conviction.

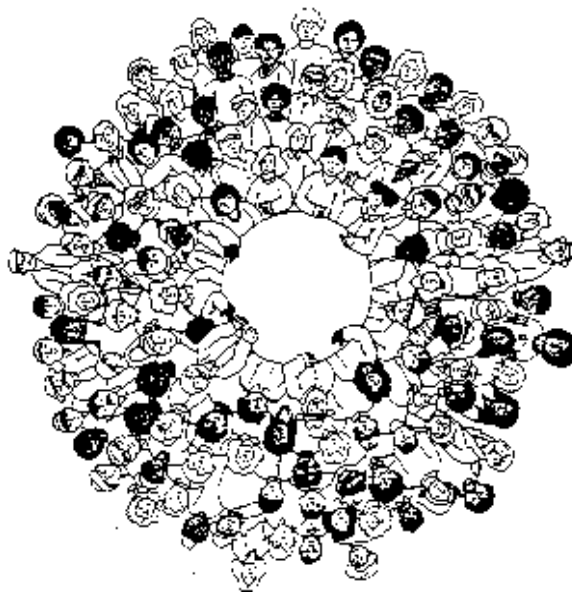
Sometimes we need to go back to basics. This is one of those times. In a nation where one in six Americans is a victim of attempted or actual rape — 90 percent of those survivors being women — we need to go back to basics and be held accountable to relationships of respect that human dignity requires.<sup>5</sup> In a nation where the leader of the free world ridicules a survivor of assault who had nothing to gain by tes-

tifying before a committee of mostly men, elevated above her, we need to be held accountable to the basic aspect of human relationships of respect.<sup>6</sup> We need to be held accountable for the conflicting messages that we send to young men about what it means to be men. We need to go back to basics.

And that's true for more than just this immediate, political moment that we are in. It's true for the church's internal relationships — internal to this congregation, but also internal for the global church. Decades ago, the church of the West started to come to grips with its own paternalistic, Eurocentric way of doing mission around the world. The way the church had confused the Gospel with Western culture and the destruction that has wrought on people around the world. We are a global church now. We seek to relate to people around the world not as "less developed" or "third world," but as siblings in the faith who know their own lands, their own people, their own struggles much better than we do. We're trying to get back to basics.

Getting back to basics is difficult, in part, because we all have to deal with the painful realities of where we stand in the structures and hierarchies that Jesus is dismantling on so many different levels. We have to deal with the gaps between the promises of the kin-dom that Jesus is inaugurating and the

**We were not designed to see one gender, or one race, or any other distinction of people as better than another. We were designed to love one another.**



way we actually live our lives. It's painful to recognize that none of our congregation's international relationships can be completely horizontal because churches in North America have so much comparative wealth even with the troubles of the church. It's painful to recognize that the cherished notions of due process that Senator Collins appealed to so eloquently but incompletely haven't worked well for women who are survivors of assault, just as they haven't worked well for Black people in their encounters with the criminal justice system.<sup>7</sup> It's painful to acknowledge that those ideals that we all want work better for white people on the whole than for people of color; work better for men than for women; work better for American citizens than many others around the world. There are huge gaps between the kin-dom that Jesus promises and where we find ourselves in our families, our workplaces, our segregated communities.

I think this is why Jesus turns to children, for the second time in Mark's Gospel, to try to teach the disciples that getting back to basics is not something that you can will yourself into, it's not something that you create and control; it's something that you have to receive as a gift — a gift that God wants to give to you, that God is ready to give to us. A gift that comes when we relinquish our fears of losing control, our worry there is not enough to go around, our doubt that the world that Jesus has promised is getting closer or is even obtainable.

But that gift also comes with a warning to those who aren't interested in that gift; a warning to those who don't want

to give up control, who only know unilateral, divisive power over others, to those who have sat so long at elevated tables that they resent the idea of coming down below; a warning that while the world seems to give its gifts to those who do control, and do master, and do dominate and do disrespect — that world is passing away. God is upending it in favor of those who have been silenced, in favor of those who have been rejected, in favor of the least of these — a position occupied by children in the first-century Greco-Roman world. They are the ones most able to easily receive this gift. We're invited to get back to basics and align ourselves with them.

True solidarity, after all, is only learned through action.<sup>8</sup> And solidarity has become a subversive act at a time in our nation's history where we are encouraged to make enemies of those who are struggling instead of allies. Instead of tending to the real wounds of our sisters, men like me are encouraged to fear for our own futures. Instead of tending to the real wounds of people of color, white people are encouraged to protect our disproportionate slices of the pie. Instead of recognizing that protections for queer siblings don't take anything away from families like mine, heterosexual people like me are encouraged to somehow see ourselves as victims. Don't be fooled. This is the oldest trick in humanity's book. You can

see this all through this section of Mark. Jesus speaks of the need to take up the cross and the disciples argue over who is the greatest. Jesus speaks of the healing that he is ushering in for all people and the disciples tell Jesus that they stopped someone from healing in Jesus' name because the healer wasn't working under the control of the disciples.

There is a better way. A much older way, from a different kind of book, rooted in the knowledge that each and every human being is made in the image of God. We were given a vocation: to tend the land in partnership with each other. It's an old vocation that we can remember, that we can find again. It's time to go back to basics. ✠

<sup>1</sup> Amy-Jill Levine, *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus*, 141.

<sup>2</sup> Amy-Jill Levine, in an essential article entitled "Jesus, Divorce, and Sexuality: A Jewish Critique" argues against the anti-Jewish attitudes present in much Christian feminist literature that incorrectly concludes that "Judean divorce practices were particularly unfair to women." She cautions against reading some of the Rabbis' claims as indicative of social fact. There is evidence that women in Jesus' time had the power to divorce, they were not completely dependent on men in all circumstances, and the Jewish world had already developed innovations like the *ketubah* — a signed contract designed specifically to protect women's economic needs in the case of divorce. She also warns against taking Jesus' "egalitarian move" in "placing women and men in the same position" as a move against the Jewish tradition, but rather a move that grows out of it. Levin, "Jesus, Divorce, and Sexuality: A Jewish Critique" in B. Lebeau, L. Greenspoon, and D. Hamm (eds.), *The Historical Jesus Through Catholic and Jewish Eyes*, (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International 2000), pp. 113-130.

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origin*, (New York: Crossroad), 1985, p. 143 quoted in Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man*, (Orbis), 1988, p. 265.

<sup>4</sup> See Myers, *Binding*, p. 266.

<sup>5</sup> RAINN (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network), <https://www.rainn.org/>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/02/us/politics/trump-me-too.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.vox.com/2018/10/5/17943276/susan-collins-speech-transcript-full-text-kavanaugh-vote>

<sup>8</sup> Thanks to community organizer Kathleen O'Toole for reminding me of this truth.

*Andrew Foster Connors is Senior Pastor of Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, Maryland. Andrew and his wife, Kate Foster Connors, were volunteers at the Open Door during their years as students at Columbia Theological Seminary (andrew@browndowntown.org)*



Sexuality at the Center of the Christmas Story *continued from page 1*

Yet for all the toxic masculinity flowing through this story, the real miracle is that Mary finds strength with her sister, finds strength to be at the margins. She has been at the margins all her life as a woman in a male-dominated world, but now she begins to perceive the possibility of life there. She even praises life at the margins in a way that should shock all of us in middle- and upper-middle-class American life: “The Mighty One has done great things for me. . . . God has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; God has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.” (Luke 1:49-53) Right away we see what kinds of things that Mary will be teaching her son. Black Jesus’ emphasis on God’s preference for the poor and marginalized came via his momma, who came to be called the Virgin Mary, but should be called the Courageous Mary. But at this point in the story, it is not clear if Mary will have an opportunity to teach anything to her baby — she still faces the death penalty for becoming pregnant by someone other than her fiancé.

We do not have a Biblical account of Mary’s telling Joseph about her being pregnant by someone other than him, and that someone is not a human being. Here, Joseph enters the story, though not in Luke, interestingly enough. For Joseph’s point of view, we must turn to Matthew’s Gospel. Matthew has given us a clue that he may not be totally bound to male domination, because in his genealogy of Jesus, he breaks with patriarchy and lists five women in the genealogy. And, from the patriarchal point of view, these five women are troublesome: a woman who learns how to survive in the patriarchal world (Tamar), an enterprising and independent businesswoman (Rahab), a foreign immigrant (Ruth), a woman forced to commit adultery by King David (unnamed in Matthew but called “the wife of Uriah” — Bathsheba was her name), and this young, courageous woman named Mary.

Joseph comes to present his case, as did Brett Kavanaugh. Whereas Kavanaugh brought all the signs of toxic masculinity to the table — belligerence, accusations, resentment, threats — Joseph does not. Make no mistake; Joseph belongs to patriarchy, but his momma and his daddy have taught him a different slant. Rather than putting his male resentment at the center, as is his right under patriarchy, he chooses not to call Mary before the elders in order to stone her to death. He decides to divorce her and “dismiss her quietly.”

“Dismiss her quietly” is the liberal term for the death penalty in slow motion — Mary, disgraced because she sought a bit of control over her sexuality, will likely hit the streets and earn money any way that she can.

In Matthew’s account, Joseph is able to present authentic masculinity, not toxic masculinity, to Courageous Mary. He is able to do this because he was open to perceiving God’s vision for him and for Courageous Mary and for the baby he would claim as his own, Black Jesus. An angel appears to him in a dream and tells him that rather than dismissing Mary quietly in the realm of toxic masculinity, he should move from the center of life to the margins of life to join Courageous Mary and his child-to-be. Joseph is a dreamer — he’ll have two more life-saving visions in Matthew (sounding like another dreamer named Joseph in the Hebrew Scriptures). Perhaps this search for visions is what saves him from the

toxic masculinity of Brett Kavanaugh and many others; he could “see” further and deeper than many of us. So he takes a chance on love and says yes to Courageous Mary and to God. He moves with Mary to the margins, and he uses his masculine power to protect her, not attack her. Protect her from the elders, protect her from the death penalty, protect her from the government soldiers who search for her baby to kill him. Wonder where Black Jesus got his authentic, non-toxic masculinity? From Courageous Mary, and now from Courageous Joseph. Sexuality is at the center of the Christmas story. May we drink deeply from its well. ✦

*Nibs Stroupe, longtime friend of The Open Door, is a retired pastor and author of the recently published Deeper Waters: Sermons for a New Vision. He also writes a weekly blog at [www.nibsnotes.blogspot.com](http://www.nibsnotes.blogspot.com). ([nibs.stroupe@gmail.com](mailto:nibs.stroupe@gmail.com))*

poetry corner



Julie Lonneman

Maximum Security

They lean on their cars; they stand in the halls,  
the women who wait for husbands and sons.

Men in their towers, holding their guns,  
men with keys to the gate, they also wait.

Women stand in the sun, rocking foot to foot,  
and sit in their cars, their radios on,  
while a preacher preaches, and songs are sung.

The uniformed men smoke, share a joke,  
hoping for boredom, daily trip home,  
while the women lean against cinder-block walls.

The children wait with no place to go,  
or a grandmother keeps them long into night.

The guards also have daughters and sons  
who wonder at sunsets and ponder the guns.

Women stare at steel doors, a stale clock on the wall.

Someone has planted flowers outside—  
pansies or jump-ups inside the gate—

no one knows why. Someone somewhere  
thought it nice on a sun-summer day.

Standing in groups, women whisper and watch.

Inside their cells men stare at the walls,  
and talk of something or nothing at all,

or read, pray, play cards or give way  
to the madness of dogs in a cage,

while women wait, and stare by the gate.

—J. Stephen Rhodes

*Steve Rhodes is a poet, scholar and essayist who lives in Charleston, South Carolina. His collections of poems, The Time I Didn’t Know What to Do Next and What Might Not Be, are available from bookstores and Amazon. His web site is: [www.jstephenrhodes.com](http://www.jstephenrhodes.com).*

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# Grace and Peaces of Mail

Hello Rev. Ed and Mrs. Murphy!

We just came off lockdown a couple of days ago. Some gang member of the group called the Bloods walked into another dorm and stabbed and killed a guy. The police were here and everything. They just now are slowly moving us around like cattle in stages. I'm fine myself; heard it was all about drugs and cell phones. I'm so glad I don't do or use anything like that. Keeps me out of harm's way to a degree, plus I pray and have you all praying for me, so I'm covered. Just a short note this time, will write more later. God loves you all, take care and I love you too!

Love,  
A prisoner  
USA

Dear Open Door friends,

Thank you always for holding out the light of the Black Jesus in this dark time. I join you in prayers for the nurture of the world's soul in love and justice.

Sandra John  
Chico, California

Eduard,

I loved your piece on your mom and dad in the September 2018 *Hospitality*. You have come a long way, dear brother, thanks be to God.

Wes Howard-Brook  
Seattle, Washington

Dear, dear friends,

Back from a weekend in Selma and Montgomery with a local Just Faith group. That memorial is stunning and all the museums were horrifying and well done. I was *all* shook up.

What pleased me most was seeing all the many families, Black and white, bringing history to the children. The things we saw were not taught in my New England school, or my kids' and grandkids' South Carolina schools. Parents brave enough to face their children's questions are a strong example of courage.

I'm reminded of the t-shirt: "The Truth Will Set You Free ... First it will make you miserable, *then* it will set you free."

Be free! Be you!

Love,  
Nikki Day  
Greenville, South Carolina

Love your newspaper! Thanks so much for the work you do.

Gail Hegarty  
St. Augustine, Florida

Greetings! In the name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, aka the Black Jesus. Bless all of you at *Hospitality* and the Open Door Community. My name is Terome Porter and I'm a Puerto Rican and Black mixed prisoner in the state of Oklahoma at the Davis Correctional Facility (CCA) Core Civic, formerly Corrections Corporation of America.

I'm a recently confirmed Roman Catholic, baptized and confirmed on September 6, 2018 by Bishop David A. Konderla, according to the Rite of the Roman Catholic Church. That was a very big day for me and it's still very special. I'm a firm believer that our Lord has a plan for us, even if we don't totally understand it. (Jeremiah 29:11)

Let me tell you how I heard about you. The day after my confirmation, I unexpectedly was sent to the Segregated Housing Unit. After a few weeks of being there with no misconducts or rule violations, I received a random cellmate. Initially, I felt that there would be an altercation of some sort, but instead of acting on impulse, I meditated on the Rosary. After that, the guy offered me his copy of *Hospitality* from August 2018. Upon reading it, I gave thanks and knew right then that I'd received a blessing. Glory be to God!

I'm enclosing \$10 for a year's subscription. Please add me to your mailing list. Your articles and poetry, well the whole publication is so indepth and captivating to me.

Can I please have a copy of *The Cry of the Poor*? I enjoy reading that type of realism to keep my mind's eye open to the reality and relevancy of it all.

Sincerely,  
Terome Porter  
Holdenville, Oklahoma

Ed,

Just finished reading "The Welcome Table," front page of September 2018 *Hospitality*. Thank you. How hospitality and resistance emerge in our lives is something of genetics, faith, mystery, and maybe even some providence. I am glad you did not spring from Strom Thurmond or I might still be stuck in an academic life devoid of connection with people on the streets, prisoners, African Americans, gays and lesbians and transgendered, and an occasional organic farmer.

Much love to you,  
Pete Gathje  
Memphis, Tennessee

Hello Murphy,

I just read your article on Separation of Families in the August 2018 *Hospitality*, and it is powerful. Thanks so much for it and for your fine insights!

Thanks and peace,  
Nibs Stroupe  
Atlanta, Georgia



*Father Hunger*



*Location*

## ODC/Baltimore Photographs by Eduard Loring



*Three Recent Shootings, One Death*

## Open Door Community Needs:

- ☐ Coffee
- ☐ Extra Large Socks (especially)
- ☐ Belts
- ☐ Granola bars
- ☐ 2% milk: gallon size for coffee, pint size for children.

Please send in the boxes that do not need refrigeration before opening.

- ☐ Stamps to write prisoners
- ☐ The Hardwick Prison Trip: hosts, drivers, cars and vans in Atlanta area.

If you'd like to help us gather materials, please see our Amazon wish-list:  
<http://www.amazon.com/registry/wishlist/1Q9TWJ0HZPJAX>.

Murphy, David and Ed thank you for all you are/do/give/support, for we have another world in view.