

Schedule of Events:

Please consider joining us for the following

Daily— Dinner is served most days around 6pm— feel free to drop in.

Weekly—

Day Labor Breakfast, Wed., 8am,

@ Carrollton Home Depot

Prayer, Friday 8:30am

@ St. Thomas House

July:

16, Clarification of Thought (Film:

Coming Home, with Sam Jackson)

Gather at 6:30pm, film and discus-

sion at 7:00pm

21, Green Revolution Mtg. at 7pm

August:

18, Green Revolution Mtg. at 7pm

20, Clarification of Thought (Aaron

Viles of the Gulf Restoration

Network) Gather at 6:30pm,

discussion at 7:00pm

September:

14, Bible Study: God's Kin-dom in

Acts and at Hand, 7:00pm

17, Clarification of Thought (Tba)

Gather at 6:30pm, discussion at

7:00pm

22, Green Revolution Mtg. at 7pm

28, Bible Study: God's Kin-dom in

Acts and at Hand, 7:00pm



Peter Maurin

proposed a transformation of industrial society in the direction of greener, more sustainable living. Join us to discuss how we can become free from dependence on crude oil and more in touch with the Earth.

Wednesday, July 21 at 7pm

Big Thanks

to our friends near and far, great and small, who have supported us in prayer, word, and deed. We are grateful for your kindness and generosity. Our prayers are with you.

Groups organizing around the oil disaster include

Crescent City Antiauthoritarians: every Thu. at the Iron Rail Bookstore (511 Marigny St.) at 8pm
Gulf Emergency Summit: every Tue. at Unitarian Universalist Church (2903 Jefferson Ave.) at 7pm

RAISING MASS CONSCIOUSNESS ABOUT OUR DEPENDENCE ON OIL

By Dan Thelen

When I think about the oil spill hitting our state and our wetlands just fifty or so miles south of our city, there are many images that come to mind. There are families mourning the deaths of 11 people and hundreds of people getting sick in the process of cleaning up the oil, many after losing their jobs as fishermen. Countless animals and habitats are being slowly swallowed up by oil. So little is being done, so little is known about what to do. As of June 23, The oil continues to spill out every day at rates of up to 100,000 barrels a day for a total of up to 145 million gallons along 174 (and counting) miles of the Gulf Coast. To put that into perspective, the Exxon Valdez spilled 11 million gallons of oil off the coast of Alaska in 1989. The devastating effects only continue to grow more and more.



An oil-covered pelican off the Louisiana coast. (news agency photo)

As oil seeps closer and closer to home, it's important to remember that we are not alone – the world has been suffering the effects of oil spills over and over and over again since massive oil production began. In Nigeria, the utter negligence regarded the oil industry has led to poor statistics of the devastation wrought by oil production, nevertheless, a low estimate of 546 million gallons of oil has poured into the Niger Delta since 1960. It is no accident that most oil drilling occurs in more impoverished areas of the world, for the consequences of drilling are inevitably environmental degradation, pollution and disease for the majority of those in its proximity.

So who's responsible for this global crisis? Is it

BP or Exxon? Is it the Bush administration, or the Obama Administration? Is it Iraq, Iran or North Korea? Is it those who drive Hummers or those who live in big mansions and fly private jets?

There are many groups to whom we can point the finger. But, truth is, we're all responsible, to some degree or another.

"Hello, my name is Dan Thelen, and I am an oil addict. I've been addicted to oil from a very young age. I drive cars, I fly planes. I use appliances like driers and air conditioners. I own clothes made of oil, use plastic bags at grocery stores, buy plastic products every week, almost every day. Actually, even when I don't directly use oil, I eat food and buy things transported by oil. Once, I even fertilized my garden with an oil called MiracleGro."

Though raised a good Catholic, I'm not simply guilt-tripping here. Paul says in Romans, "the truth shall set you free." So, in the same vein, I celebrate my truth that I have made great leaps to overcome my addiction to oil. I bike almost everywhere I need to go to replace car usage, I now hang my clothes in my backyard to dry, I bring my own bags to the supermarket (most of the time), and I even use compost instead of MiracleGro, to name a few things. Are these actions going to save our world? The truth is, they're a step in the right direction.

However, we need much more than individual change. We need a transformation in the mass consciousness of our world about how to live our lives in sustainable and healthy ways. I repeat: "the truth shall set you free." We need to leave denial at the door and fully understand how oil production is destroying our bodies and our environment. We need to educate ourselves and each other about every alternative there is to a life dependent upon this system of destruction. And then we need to live it, hard as it is, and continue to build an ever wider community of people who live and model and spread this transformative way of living oil-conscious lives. We can rail about how omnipresent and indestructible the oil powers of the world are, but I ask – who makes these powers so, well, powerful? *The people who are dependent upon the products that they produce.*

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Around the House

By Joe Heeren-Mueller

Our small community is growing slowly and steadily. Spring brought a number of friends and family to visit with us. For my part, it was nice to welcome my brothers and parents over Easter. Around that same time high school students from Baltimore spent three days helping us paint the windows and trim around the house.

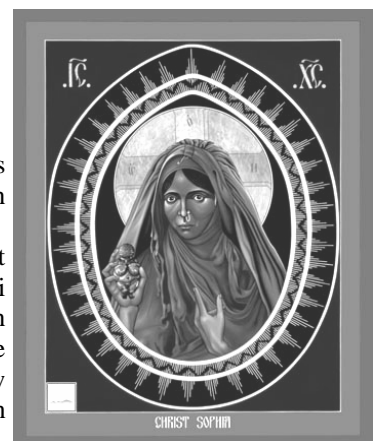
Our gardens are producing beans, hot peppers, tomatoes, and blackberries. We hope to expand our gardening to include raised beds in the driveway of St. Thomas House. Let us know if you want to help with this project.

Our clarifications of thought continue. The Schriener family stayed a week with us in April and Joe presented about his campaign for president, the month before Marie-Isabelle Pautz led a lively discussion on the practice of restorative justice. In May, Vicki Judice from UNITY, presented a real, but optimistic look at what is

being done to address street homelessness in New Orleans.

Just last month, Endesha Juakali led us in reflecting on the struggle for justice in housing here in New Orleans. We have been happy to support Survivors' Village and other

former residents of public housing who are still trying to return to their homes and neighborhoods despite the roadblocks erected by housing developers and authorities. Because most efforts to develop people forced to leave by the federal floodwaters have focused on home-



Art by Robert Lentz

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NEW ORLEANS CATHOLIC WORKER
ST. THOMAS HOUSE OF HOSPITALITY

1910 Constance St.
New Orleans, LA
70130

Phone: 504-527-5363
Email: cw@nolacatholicworker.org

**Help us transform one of our driveways
into a vegetable garden...**

**We need help constructing raised beds,
putting down soil, and designing the beds
Let us know if you would like to help us grow.**

Reflections on a Bicycle

By Katy Heeren-Mueller

About two and a half years ago, I decided to make a life style change: I sold my car and purchased a bike. I wanted to actually live out my ideal of a simpler life style by being liberated from car and insurance payments and have a smaller carbon footprint on the earth. I have taken advantage of the opportunity to physically slow down my travel and reflect upon life while on my bike to and from one destination to the other.

Here are a few good reasons to travel on two wheels:

1. New Orleans is flat and compact which makes it a great city to begin your quest for biking!
2. Saying good morning and hello to folks that are on their porch or walking along the road is my new radio station.
3. Being a biker means you always have front row parking at any store, festival, or protest.
4. It is efficient to get your exercise while you are commuting from here or there...maybe you could even stop paying for the gym membership!
5. You will receive a very rewarding feeling when you pass a traffic jam

- full of folks wasting their gas, sitting in a line, going nowhere.
6. Biking helps you feel alive and connected to the life around you. Whether it's smelling the sweet olive blossom, the poboys cooking, or hearing the jazz oozing out of the bars, you're right there in it all!
 7. To know the thrill of inner city biking, you just gotta go out there and try it, even if people think you're crazy!
 8. At the end of the day, you are ONE LESS CAR consuming gas and oil.



Tips for riding a bike in the city:

1. Bring a change of clothing in your bag, for you may either get soaked from sweat or soaked from a rainstorm.

2. Always have a good patch kit and tire pump handy.
3. Picking up a free RTA bike pass to put your bike on the bus, if you have an emergency, is always a good idea. You can get this at the RTA main station, on Canal St. near Broad.
3. Wear your helmet and have a bike lock ready for use.
4. A basket or bike rack can be usefully for outings at the store or farmers market.
5. For night riding, purchase some bright lights for the front and back of your bike.
6. Remember that traffic laws still exist and should be followed to your discretion. However, riding on the right side of the road allowing enough space for car doors to open and cars to pass is important.

So, I encourage you to get on your bike and become that change you wish to see! Ride to the farmers market, grocery store, church, library, or even work. Take up the challenge and you will feel the reward both in your bank account and your personal wellness. Have fun and be safe! Ω

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We need to continue to awaken ourselves and others out of this oil sleep by continuing to raise a holy stink about the real consequences in how we conduct our day-to-day lives. Mother Nature has already been making a holy stink of her woes for quite some time. We at the Catholic Worker are committed to modeling a new way and joining with likeminded people to explore, encourage and spread this way. Learning to fall in love again with our Mother Earth and how to really care for her in all our actions can indeed be a joyful and life giving process. Let us leave our destructive ways to the past. It is in our hands to create a more sustainable, equitable and healthy planet to leave our children and generations of life forms to come.

Some Suggestions to Jump Start your oil-conscious life:

- Research , read and distribute literature on ways to live sustainable and less oil-dependent lives
- Join the monthly Critical Mass Bike Rides in your area. If there's not one, start one! If you're not familiar with them, you can check them out at <http://critical-mass.info/>
- Start a monthly meeting group of people encouraging one in another in green ways of living (one of which will be beginning here at the Catholic Worker!)
- Simplify your life, go out in nature, and do whatever is tugging at your heart to show your love for Mother Earth.Ω



(COMMUNITY, Continued from page 1)

owners, there remains an acute need for support to those who by choice or necessity rent their homes. Nearly 30,000 families are on the waiting list for housing assistance in New Orleans and many more would be still, if the lists were reopened. Yet many existing public housing units remain vacant in efforts to further deteriorate the existing public housing stock before turning it over for private development.

In light of the general antipathy toward the poor, it comes as no surprise that Orleans Parish Sheriff is attempting to expand the prison from 1 bed per 90 individuals in the parish to 1 per 60 – five times the rate of the county with the next largest incarceration rate in the country. We find this to be a gross injustice.

Donnell joined our community in late March; he's a great cook and a thoughtful listener. We missed him during the first half of May when he was locked up on fraudulent trespassing charges while walking on a public street and we're glad he's back now. John has come and gone, but we enjoyed his good humor and quiet temperament. Isaac has left New Orleans and will spend the summer visiting family, volunteering, and exploring various artistic endeavors. We wish him well and hope his path leads him back to Louisiana. In the last two months we have had more than a half dozen short-term guests. Each brought their own gifts, and we are grateful for what they've shared.

We're hoping to fill the house with new guests and community members soon and would also welcome a commitment from one or two other people as live-in volunteers. Please continue to pray for us as we discern the Spirit's call particularly in regards to extending our hospitality in other forms.Ω