



SOUNDINGS

December, 2015

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An Advent with Hearts Broken Open

by Matthew Whalen, Assistant

Current events have shaken our world lately. Our calendars tell us Advent, the season of peace and harmony, is among us, yet our hearts and eyes have seen something different. When we are supposed to be welcoming the non-violent Christ into our world, it seems we can only welcome more world violence. For this, I am grieving. I have taken the last few weeks particularly hard with the loss of our sisters and brothers in Beirut, the Central African Republic, and Paris. I am saddened by the violence we are imposing on our planet and each other. I feel the loss of 17 year old Laquan McDonald in Chicago. I recently spent a year living with, and working for, many young men of color in Chicago who fit a description and life story all too similar to Laquan's. I worry for these kids. So in a time when I am supposed to be celebrating, I am grieving and I am grateful that I am.

In L'Arche, it is often said that we were founded on suffering. Therefore I believe that we were also founded with an ever abundant capacity to grieve and heal. In a culture that so quickly looks for a resolution after tragedy, L'Arche waits at the center of tension. L'Arche knows that, before trying to make sense of it all, grief must have its proper time and space.

Last month, during a retreat for new assistants from the Northwest region, L'Arche let us grieve. Our first day of retreat fell on All Souls' Day, where we remembered our deceased loved ones by creating a prayer table filled with their pictures and articles. From 6:00 that night until morning, we remained silent. Some cried, others slept, but all of us sat with our losses at some point. In a place like L'Arche, where we celebrate ceaselessly, we cannot forget there is a great deal of loss as well. Assistants move on, core members pass away, and friendships are strained because of our commitment to community life. All of this creates suffering. If we stopped here though, we would just be a group of sad folks living together! So we grieve at L'Arche; individually, communally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. And because we allow ourselves time to grieve, we can move past

our season of pain into a season of gratitude. We can move into Advent with hearts broken open, instead of with broken hearts.



New assistants, Matt, Teresa, Marissa and Gretchen on retreat



The Face of Love, by Anthony Hayden, Jesuit Novice

A year ago, many of my second year novice brothers were coming home from their time at L'Arche. As they spoke about the graces and the struggles of their time away, I was creating a romantic idea of what L'Arche was - being with people who show you what love is, and who want you around all the time... people who are never upset or mad at you... You can imagine my surprise when I found myself crawling underneath the Farmhouse with Dave to retrieve a dead cat! While my time here has not been a "traditional" novice experience, it has been exactly what I needed.

I came here after a year of relative quiet - a lot of prayer and meditation, an ordered schedule and clear responsibilities. Then, on September 19th, I landed at Sea-Tac and my life changed. While I thought I was prepared for my time here, I was not. In the gospel, we often hear Christ acknowledge our need for security. He understands how we desire to be in control and prepared for all things. Many times these desires come from a place of fear; "Am I going to be okay?" During my transition into L'Arche, this was exactly what happened to me... "What about my needs? My comforts? My well-being?" I forgot the reason I was sent here - to serve.

When we allow this kind of fear to be present, we immediately turn inward and forget others. But soon after, we see a call to transition out of fear - a movement from ourselves to God. During my time here, I have had the opportunity to work with Dave Ronald, our maintenance man. It was Dave who helped me in my own transition, reminding me that my focus cannot be on myself. My time here is short, and I have much to learn. Our frequent conversations have allowed me to enter more fully into my time with the core members, and to move my comforts and fears aside in order to look toward others.

Even when He calls us to something more, Jesus understands us and gives us the means to fulfill our call... to leave fear behind and to fully live for God, trusting that our needs will be met. The interesting part about turning our focus to God is that our desires and needs shift, and we slowly detach from the things of this world. When we look eyes with God, we begin to see ourselves in the reflection. We glimpse how God sees us, how we are loved infinitely.

While at L'Arche, I have encountered a deep, profound, messy, but real love. Whether it's through Nancy, who is constantly throwing her love across the room (with her signing "I love you"), Kendyl, who shows her love by telling me I've had enough ice cream, Shann, who constantly finds joy in the simplest moments, or Doug, who is a man of service and joy, I have found that, unless I keep my gaze on the face of love, this life makes little sense. Now, a glimpse of love disrupts my soul, and sends my heart, joyfully, to even the darkest places with hope.



#GIVINGTUESDAY™
December 1st, 2015



**Second #GivingTuesday a Huge Success!
Thank You!**

We put out the call and you answered! #GivingTuesday, the philanthropic counterpart to Black Friday and Cyber Monday, was Tuesday, December 1. #GivingTuesday is a social media movement encouraging us to give back to the causes we care about by volunteering, donating, or spreading the word.

This was L'Arche Tahoma Hope's second year participating in #GivingTuesday and your response was contagious and inspiring! Our main goals for #GivingTuesday were threefold: to introduce new people to L'Arche Tahoma Hope by doubling our Facebook following; to raise funds to rebuild our original 30-year-old greenhouse, and to have some fun while we were at it, of course!

What an exciting way for you to promote the mission of L'Arche! You viewed and shared videos on Facebook featuring core members telling the story of L'Arche. Your efforts increased the community's Facebook following from 725 to 860 "likes." You supported the Farm financially, contributing \$5,067 toward the greenhouse, matched by \$2,500 for a grand total of \$7,567!. Your generosity will provide the L'Arche Farm and Gardens crew secure and productive work space for years to come.

It's never too late to share L'Arche's Facebook page and website with your friends and family. We encourage you to go to our website, www.larchetahomahope.org, and subscribe to our emails. Then, mark your calendars for Tuesday, December 6, 2016 and plan to join in the fun and excitement of #GivingTuesday, L'Arche style!

A Jesuit Novice's Cherished Memory

by Dzao Vu, Jesuit Novice

In the spirit of Thanksgiving and the season of Advent, a season of hope, I'm thankful for my time at L'Arche Tahoma Hope as a second year Jesuit novice. I've been a live-in assistant at Anawim for approximately two months, fulfilling my short "hospital" experiment that St. Ignatius of Loyola prescribed in the Constitution of the Society of Jesus for all men who want to undergo a Jesuit formation.

The first experiment for all Jesuits in formation is the Spiritual Exercises, where a person spends thirty days in silence with prayers and contemplation, as I did last fall. Then I was sent off to a second experiment last spring for a pilgrimage, with a one-way bus ticket and \$100 to return to the Novitiate in thirty days (non-negotiable!). I experienced God's providence through numerous acts of kindness of "strangers" on the bus and along my pilgrimage. After spending a week at Seattle Catholic Worker, I came down to Tacoma and encountered some of L'Arche's members including Les, Stacie, Cindy, Grace and former assistants Luc and Jonathan at a Tuesday dinner at the Catholic Worker house here in Tacoma. The meeting and interaction with these individuals gave me the impression that they live their lives free of worries, happily living in the present moment, caring for, and well connected with, others in the community. It is here that I've found and seen the "KIN"-dom of God established.

I believe it is only by God's providence that I've returned to Tacoma. Living at Anawim--the little ones (Hebrew)--the last two months taught me about the community life where despite our brokenness and vulnerability, people from many walks of life have gathered at L'Arche to find a sense of belonging by building friendship, care and love for one another. I've learned of your lasting relationship and friendship with each individual member of L'Arche Tahoma Hope, as well as those relationships the whole organization has established and maintained with local parishes and sister organizations such as Catholic Worker. You have shown me God's love amidst our fragile human lives by caring for one another with one hundred percent. I've learned from you, especially the co[eu]re members, that you set your hearts, not on wealth, but on a trusting relationship ("coeur" is the French word for heart). Truly, as Jesus says in the gospel: "Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on God's saving justice, and all these other things will be given you as well" (Mt 6: 33). For me, co[eu]re members, you are the "birds of the air" and beautiful "lilies of the field" as you live your lives happy and free of attachments, which embodies Jesus' message. As your long-time friend Jean Vanier has observed, "As we live truly from the heart, we live from where the Spirit is dwelling in us. We see people as God sees them; we see their wounds and their pain; we no longer see them as problems" (Community and Growth). My short period as a live-in assistant at Anawim has given me a glimpse of the general

daily life of L'Arche communities throughout the world. It's also a reminder for me to pay close attention to my little sisters and brothers and especially to "meet people where they're at" in the community and my future ministry.



Jesuits often refer to the two years of our novitiate program as the "school of the heart," in which we learn and have our hearts undergo various "stress tests" to strengthen us and best fit us for our future ministries to be men for others. I'm grateful and thankful for my time here. I hope many future Jesuits in-training, especially novices, will find a refuge at L'Arche Tahoma Hope, as have many generations of our Jesuit predecessors [thirty years thus far]. You have left an imprint and lasting friendship on us and our Jesuit training. We often tell and re-tell stories of our time at L'Arche, as I'm sure you do the same about us. We cherish the memory.



Memorial Contributions

We are grateful for the donations we have received in memory of the following people. They, along with their families and friends, are in our prayers.

Bob Armbruster	Bob Lamp
Bill Kerrigan	Molly McNerthney-Ross
Henryetta Kerrigan	Larry Schott
Jim Sherwood	

We are also thankful for the donations we received in honor of:

Pietro Boffeli	Barbara Gugger
Mark Drangstveit	David Rothrock



Ways to Support L'Arche

- **Annual Giving Appeal:** Your financial support to our operating budget is an enormous help to L'Arche. We need to raise 26% of our annual budget through donations. Please consider a monthly contribution.
- **Capital Campaign:** L'Arche Tahoma Hope is in the initial stage of a \$2.75 million campaign to build a Welcome Center to reach out into the local community and support more people with intellectual disabilities.
- **Amazon Smile and Fred Meyer Rewards:** Two ways your regular shopping can contribute to L'Arche at no additional expense to yourself.
- **Give the Gift of L'Arche:** Make your Christmas gift to a friend or loved one a gift to L'Arche Tahoma Hope and L'Arche will send a card to the person to tell them that you honored them and include their name in the spring newsletter.
- **Pray:** Join L'Arche Tahoma Hope in a prayer for hope and peace in our hearts and in our world.

Visit www.larchetahomahope.org/donate.html for details.

Year End Donation Recognition Policy



We appreciate the generosity of our donors at the end of the year. The L'Arche Tahoma Hope Board has adopted the following policy, based on tax law compliance and nonprofit accounting rules, with regard to recognition of year end donations.

If we receive your donation in the office on or before December 31, we will recognize your donation for 2015 and send you an acknowledgment letter in January 2016 to confirm. Our office is open 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM on December 31.

If we receive your donation in the L'Arche office AFTER December 31, no matter the date on the check or the date you mailed it, we will recognize your donation in 2016. You will receive a tax letter in January 2017 confirming your donation.

This will ensure that we are in compliance with current accounting and IRS rules.

While your check is welcome, you also have the option of making an online donation through our website. All online donations initiated online on or before December 31 will be recognized as received in 2015.

Thank you for your understanding. If you have any concerns or questions, please call the L'Arche office. Thanks for being an important part of our mission!

L'Arche Tahoma Hope's 22nd Annual

AUCTION

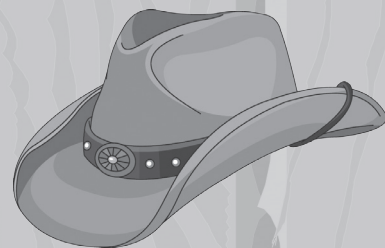
March 5th, 2016

Landmark Convention Center

Watch
your mailbox for
an invitation!
...or email/call Mary at the office to be
added to our invitation mailing list.



For more information, scan the QR code to the left,
or visit www.larchetahomahope.org/auction.html.



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