

The ADVOCATE

Queen of Peace Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2023



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Editor's Note: In the Spring issue of *The Advocate*, we pay tribute to Tom Donahue, an OLQP parishioner who was a major figure in the U.S. labor movement and lived his faith as he fought for workers' rights. Also featured: the life and legacy of Fr. David Ray, C.S.Sp., pastor of OLQP from 1958 to 1983. Known for his commitment to help the poor and homeless, Fr. Ray's social outreach also extended to the larger community, including the Matt. 25 thrift shop and the Family Activities Center, (now Father Ray Hall). Other articles spotlight the Knitting Circle; a new restorative justice ministry; a Black History Month article on the role of the church in the Black Resistance movement; examination of new U.S policies for Haitian immigrants and refugees; and Tom Donahue's support for Medor.

Paula Cruickshank
Editor, The Advocate

The Labor Team Gives Thanks for Tom Donahue's Life

By Laura Bandini

The Labor Team mourns the loss of our kind, funny, brilliant, and humble brother and fellow teammate, Tom Donahue. Tom was a legend in the labor movement who served as the AFL-CIO's long-time Secretary-Treasurer and briefly as its Interim President.

Tom began his career in the labor movement by working with Local 32B of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). He served as the Undersecretary of Labor at the Department of Labor before returning to SEIU and then working as the top aide to AFL-CIO President George Meany. In 1979, Tom was elected as the AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer, where he fought valiantly (albeit unsuccessfully) as labor's chief spokesperson to block NAFTA's passage and attempted to organize new workers by exploring new organizing methods, including by supporting the creation of the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute.

When AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland resigned, Tom served as the interim president. In the 1995 election, Tom lost the AFL-CIO presidency to John Sweeney which, in the words of labor historian Joe McCartin,

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Growing A New Ministry: Restorative Justice

By Aleta Embrey

The term restorative justice may call to mind a person harmed and the person who caused the harm brought together to seek understanding and forgiveness. While that is one example of restorative justice, there are many other applications and those applications are currently under consideration on ways to use them at OLQP.

The seed was planted with Sally Diaz-Wells' attendance at a Catholic Mobilizing Network event on restorative justice. Are family members of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated persons suffering silently in the pews from shame or embarrassment? *How could restorative practices be used in circles of communication that allow a safe space of compassionate listening rather than judgment?* A respectful place where people can speak without interruption and be truly heard?

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Tom Donahue

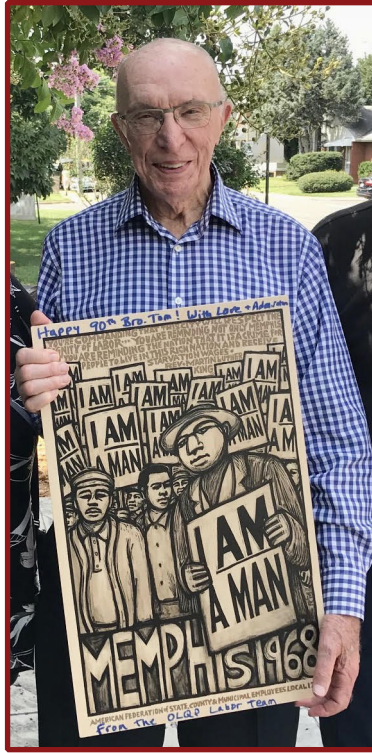
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“effectively halt[ed] the rise of a man who many believed was the most talented union leader of his generation, one who had been poised to lead organized labor into the 21st century.” Tom remained active on labor, democratic, and human rights causes including serving on the Board of Directors of the Catholic Labor Network and leading a call for unions to boycott apartheid-era South Africa.

Marking Tom’s passing, the AFL-CIO called him “an innovator, intellectual, and a visionary labor leader,” and he was that for our Labor Team, too. Tom strongly supported the Labor Team’s effort to establish the parish’s special annual 11 am Labor Day Mass, serving as a lector at our inaugural Mass. It was his idea for the team to reach out to the labor community to invite them to the Mass, following the Labor Day Mass tradition begun by his friend, Monsignor Higgins. The Mass is currently continued at St. Patrick’s Cathedral and locally by labor priest, Father Jordan at Saint Camillus Church. The yearly commemoration is especially geared towards working people and their unions.

Tom also had the vision to grow the OLQP Labor Day Mass to draw more Catholics from throughout the diocese. When the Labor Team wanted to honor Tom on his 90th birthday, it was a natural decision for us to surprise him with a gift at the end of the Labor Day Mass that year.

Tom also helped get the Labor Team on the map at OLQP. In 2015, he launched our Team by kicking off what became our Team’s annual May Day/ Feast of



*Tom Donahue receives gift by
OLQP Labor Team in
celebration of his 90th birthday.*

St. Joseph the Worker speaker series, giving a presentation on “Labor’s Roots in Catholic Doctrine” before a packed Founder’s Room. He discussed his own roots in the Bronx, his Catholic school education, his strong Catholic faith, and love for Catholic Social Teaching, including *Rerum Novarum*. He touchingly noted that witnessing his father’s treatment and low pay as a janitor shaped his world view and encouraged him to dedicate his life to standing on the side of the working class.

Tom’s immense national and international contributions to the labor movement improved the lives of countless working people. His work at the parish — both through his love for the Haiti Committee and the people of Medor — and his support for the Labor Team, strengthened our commitment to our parish mission

statement and the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

On a personal level, Tom was beloved by everyone — not just for all that he did with his life, but for who he was. He embodied the famous Mother Theresa quote: “Let no one ever come to you **without leaving better** and happier. Be the living expression of God’s kindness. . .” Our prayers go out to his beloved spouse, Rachelle Horowitz, and the rest of his family and friends. We know that Tom is with God and his friend, Ken Moffett, interceding so that all workers may have living wages, union representation, and safe and fair working conditions.

Laura Bandini heads the Labor & Income Inequality Team.

Restorative Justice

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Catholic Mobilizing Network explains what restorative practices look like in parish life:

- **Inclusive Processes**—Restorative discernment processes include the voices of all those impacted by a change or decision.
- **Building Community**—Community building strengthens relationships and creates safe spaces for addressing challenging issues when they arise.
- **Addressing Conflict**—Conflict and transition are never easy. Parishes can use restorative practices to approach these challenges in transparent and healing ways.
- **Spaces for Healing**—When harm occurs, people often turn to their faith communities first. Parishes can create safe spaces to process and heal from harm, trauma or loss.
- **Support for Those Impacted by Crime**—Creating

welcoming spaces for individuals impacted by crime can help foster healing and reintegration.

Sally, Bill Casey, and a working group of six members will determine the next steps to present to the parish. Bill noted, “There are so many ministries in our parish. Is there a way to use restorative justice circles for ministry leaders to see a new way to look at things? Restorative justice circles could also be used for parish-wide discussions on specific topics or incidents such as clergy abuse or the future direction of *OLQP*. It can be used for important conversations aimed at restoration of interpersonal relationships and understanding.”

The working group hopes to introduce the budding ministry’s concept to the parish after Easter. Watch for future notices in the church bulletin as the seeds of restorative justice processes begin to bloom.

For more information, contact Bill Casey:
b13909@comcast.net, 703-568-3438.

Black History Month: Black Resistance — The Church

By Veronica Dabney

The Black History Month bulletin series for 2023 focused on the theme, “Black Resistance.” It referenced the part Arlington’s Lomax AME Zion Church and OLQP played in inviting Dr. Martin Luther King to Arlington the day before the Great March on August 28, 1963. Two articles dealt with resistance by Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), other colleges and universities, and resistance by sports figures, respectively. The final article on the role of the church in the Movement is featured below. It was written by Advocate staff member, Veronica Dabney.

“Black churches have long played prominent roles in African American communities, offering services such as job training programs...and many of their pastors have advocated for racial equality.” Overall, a majority of Black adults who attend religious services do so at Black congregations...” Most of the congregations are Protestant, with only 6% Catholic and another 6% identifying with other Christian or non-Christian faiths.¹

“There is an enduring myth that African-American Catholics were largely absent from the freedom struggles of the 1950s and 1960s, which resulted in the legal demise of Jim Crow segregation. Some have even

¹<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/02/19/three-quarters-of-black-americans-say-black-churches-have-helped-promote-racial-equality/>

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Black Resistance

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pointed to a 1961 observation that there was no Catholic equivalent of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. as an indication of black Catholic complacency during the monumental era,” according to an article by Shannen Dee Williams in the Catholic News Service.²

This is absolutely not true. There are countless examples of Catholics joining the fight for freedom, especially in the well documented days of the 1950s and 60s civil rights movement. Catholics of all races, clergy, and laity joined in marches and protests by the thousands....

At that time, Virginia was one of the most segregated states in the union. It was among the last to integrate its schools and businesses and to allow interracial marriage. However, Bishop Peter Ireton of the Richmond Diocese (OLQP’s diocese at that time), was the first to integrate Catholic schools, following the passage of *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 and to ban all forms of racism in churches. This resistance was noteworthy in a state that had seen an entire county school system (Prince Edward County) shut down in defiance of the law.

Prior to that, in 1945, the audacity that led 13 Black families, OLQP’s founders, to petition Bishop Ireton for their own church, was a major act of resistance. When you consider the fact that the request was



Then-Mercy Sister Martin de Porres Grey consults with a priest in an undated photo at the National Black Sisters’ Conference headquarters in Washington, D.C. During the 1950s and 1960s, scores of young black Catholics desegregated the nation’s all-white seminaries and convents. (CNS photo/courtesy National Black Sisters’ Conference)

made at the height of segregation and discrimination during World War II, [it] makes both the petition and its approval even more remarkable.

The children of those Founders and elders—the earliest members, became the first in line to challenge traditions and integrate Catholic elementary, junior, and high schools in Arlington and Alexandria. Catholic schools were integrated a full decade before Arlington County public schools.

When Fr. David Ray, C.S. Sp., came to OLQP in the late 1950s, he kicked church activism up a notch. He actively promoted the inclusion of other races at OLQP. Among other initiatives, he helped form a chapter

of the Catholic Interracial Council in Arlington (pictured above). He not only helped bring Dr. King to our community, but he also chartered a bus for a contingent of OLQP members to join the March on Washington the next day, August 28, 1963. Father Ray wasn’t alone, dozens of Catholic churches and schools displayed banners and placards from all over the country that day.

In subsequent years, with various pastors, including Father Hickey, C.S.Sp., members have joined in protests against discrimination and advocated for voting rights, criminal justice reform, and other issues, such as unemployment and jobs. We are known as the most activist church in Arlington. And while many of

²<https://catholicphilly.com/2018/11/catholic-spirituality/black-catholics-were-at-the-forefront-of-the-american-civil-rights-movement/>

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Black Resistance

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issues transcend race, in the end what affects one group, eventually affects us all.

The National Black Catholic Congress

As noted, only 6% of Catholics are Black, and Blacks are far less likely to remain Catholic than any other group. To address this dilemma, "...in 1987 a group of Black organizations: the [National Association of Black Catholic Administrators](#) (NABCA), the [National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus](#) (NBCCC), and the [National Black Sisters Conference](#) (NBSC), collaborated to found the National Black Catholic Congress (NBCC). "It is a [Black Catholic](#) advocacy group and quinquennial conference in the United States. It is a spiritual successor to [Daniel Rudd's Colored Catholic Congress](#) movement of the late 19th and early 20th century.

Its mission is to improve and enrich the lives of [African-American Catholics](#), operating in close cooperation and coordination with the Black Bishops of the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) (USCCB) and receiving funding from the [Black and Indian Mission Collection](#)."³

Six NBCC congresses have been held as of 2021, occurring every five years (though delayed one year recently, to 2023, due to the COVID-19 pandemic). The Congress will convene on July 20-23, 2023, at the Gaylord Hotel at the Inner Harbor. All attendees must register. For more information visit the NBCC website: <https://nbccongress.org/>

³https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Black_Catholic_Congress#:~:text=The%20National%20Black%20Catholic%20Congress,19th%20and%20early%2020th%20century.



*No. Va. Chapter of the Catholic Interracial Council, Circa 1965.
Fr. David Ray C.S.Sp. in black Cassock & Biretta*

By Jack Sullivan

The year 2023 marks the 110th anniversary of the birth of the Father David Ray, C.S.Sp., pastor of OLQP from 1958 until 1982. It also marks the 40th anniversary of his death. The anniversaries are a fitting time to remember the life and legacy of this extraordinary Spiritan priest whom so many current parishioners unfortunately never had the opportunity to know.

Born in Massachusetts in 1913, as a young priest Father Ray was thrust into World War II as an Army chaplain, witnessing some of the bloodiest warfare of that conflict when he was attached to the Fifth Army Corp commanded by Gen. Mark Clark. That unit fought a series of costly battles up the Italian peninsula, including Anzio Beach where U.S. forces suffered an estimated 7,000 killed and 36,000 wounded or missing. The objective was Rome and Father Ray was in the city the day it fell to Allied forces. Today (Chaplain) Major David Ray is buried on Chaplain's Hill at Arlington Cemetery.

Following the war Father Ray was assigned to a largely African-American Spiritan parish in inner city Detroit, according to his nephew, Mike Ray, an active OLQP parishioner. From Detroit the priest was transferred for a time to another parish in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the city of a 1921 race massacre. From there, in 1958, Fr. Ray was sent as pastor to a Black mission parish in Arlington, Virginia. It would be his home for the next quarter century.

The fit of priest and parish was immediate. What ensued was a whirlwind of action: The opening of Matt. 25 as a thrift shop; the Queen of Peace Credit Union; and numerous parish ministries. A major project was the construction of what Father Ray called "The Family Activities Center," (now Father Ray Hall). The center — complete with kitchen — housed a day care program and Montessori School.

In September 1978, the *Washington Post* wrote a story taking note of all that had occurred in the 20 years with Father Ray as pastor. Parishioner Dan Morrissey told the reporter: "I don't know how you separate Father Ray from the things that go on here." Another commented: "He's the yeast that makes the bread in the parish." The Post article also quoted then provincial of the Spiritans, the Rev. Phillip Hagerty, who told a gathering held to honor the priest's 20th anniversary: "He's a one of a kind; You'll never be able to clone him. Because he puts the stamp of his personality on the parish, it's a unique parish."

Perhaps Father Ray's greatest accomplishment was working with the Bishop of Richmond to transition OLQP from a mission church to a neighborhood parish with boundaries. In turn, for Catholics who lived within the new boundaries, but preferred to continue worshipping at St. Thomas More, the Cathedral arranged for a bus to pick them up and return them to OLQP once every Sunday, an activity that terminated after several years.

In the four years that followed that celebration, in addition to fulfilling such pastoral duties as finding housing for the homeless and visiting the sick in area hospitals, Father Ray was active in securing land near Fredericksburg, Virginia, from the diocese for a summer camp and gardens he called "Our Acres." It was returning from there on October 31 (All Souls Day) in 1983 that he was killed in an auto accident. Parishioners wept openly at the news.

A final story is from the Rev. Percival Fernandez, an Indian priest whom Father Ray harbored while he pursued a graduate degree in Washington. Now Auxiliary Bishop of Mumbai, Father Percy, as he was known here,

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Father Ray

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related that at Sunday mealtime at the rectory, an aged Black American woman would come to the door, begging. Rather than giving her money and sending her on her way, Father Ray always invited her in and set her a place at the table. "After my

initial surprise, I realized that was exactly what Jesus would have done." said Father Percy. Father Ray, the future bishop added, understood the essence of Christianity.

OLQP Knitting Ministry Expands Its Circle

By Allison Shely

For more than a decade, the OLQP Knitting Ministry has brought handmade comfort to those in need. Marilena Amoni began the ministry, originally called "Scarves for the Homeless," by making crochet scarves to accompany her shoebox for the Shoebox the Homeless Ministry. Working with the Shoebox Ministry's leadership and the Arlington Street People's Assistance Network (A-SPAN), Amoni put out a call for interested crafters to join the effort to make more scarves for shoebox recipients. "[The] rest is history." Says Amoni. Almost forty volunteers participate in the Knitting Ministry, which also welcomes crocheters.

Over time, other crafters approached Amoni with other items they wanted to find a home for, including hats, baby blankets, and prayer shawls. "My view was I'll find a home for whatever you make," she recalls. To reflect the expanding scope of the crafters' contributions, the group's name was changed to the more universal "Knitting Ministry." Today, the Knitting Ministry provides items to a half-dozen other parish ministries: Afghan refugee family outreach, the Baptism Ministry, Comfort Cases, Feast on the Streets, Project Gabriel, and the Visitation Ministry. Outside of the parish, Knitting Ministry items find their way to Doorways for Women and Families, a domestic violence resource center and shelter.



A selection of finished knitting products made by OLQP Knitters

When asked what led volunteers to become involved, reasons varied but all had common ground: to help those in need. Patricia Albert, who both knits and crochets baby and toddler blankets for Comfort Cases explained, "When Covid hit and affected my ability to help with other ministries at OLQP, I contacted Marilena and she briefed me on the various help organizations that could use knitted items for their clients. "

Perhaps the most touching answer was from Matilde Pinto, a volunteer who takes each blanket donation to heart. "Before I start knitting, I hold in prayer the baby who will receive that little blanket, her or his mother and the caregivers. A baby in foster care has a difficult start in life, to say the least, and I believe that a hand knitted item carries love and a personal [warmth] to their challenging circumstances."

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Knitting Ministry

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Just as a home can be found for every item, so to it seems that there is a place for almost everyone in the Knitting Ministry. Amoni points to one member who can no longer knit or crochet and so cuts scarves from fleece fabric. When Genie Flahie could no longer actively participate in the ministry, she donated supplies, including her grandmother's knitting bag. "I like to think a part of my grandmother lives on through the scarves that are knitted by the recipient of her knitting bag," Flahie says.

Recognizing that most people prefer to craft at their own pace, the Knitting Ministry does not have regular meetings, which Amoni calls a "unique aspect" of the

ministry. The Knitting Ministry always accepts donations of gallon Ziplock bags, new or gently used medium gift bags, and—of course—yarn. Simpler yarn is preferred to more expensive yarn, which tends to have lower durability. Donations may be left in the Knitters Closet in the Library in Fr. Ray Hall.



Volunteers wrap finished knitting projects pre-pandemic

Amoni is currently looking for "an understudy" to assist her in organizing the group. Moving forward, she hopes to restore the pre-pandemic practice of breakfast in Fr. Ray Hall following the 9:30 Sunday Mass.

Anyone interested in the Knitting Ministry should contact Marilena Amoni at mamoni530@gmail.com.

New Policies for Haitian Migrants to the US

By Kathy Desmond

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Matt 25:40

We encounter Christ when we welcome immigrants, migrants, and refugees – all of whom are our sisters and brothers. This Biblical mandate underlies the teaching of the Catholic church, the policy of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and the mission of OLQP.

OLQP ministries carry out this mission through both advocacy and service. This article focuses on the new U.S. policies for Haitian immigrants and refugees. The Haiti ministry's interest is clear: these are our friends and relatives. Several OLQP parishioners and Haiti Committee members who lived and worked in Haiti shared their perspectives on these policies for Haitian immigrants: Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Humanitarian Parole.

Alexandra Sperling arrived in the U.S. in 1992. With fluent French and a law degree from a Haitian university, she obtained employment with the World Bank and a G-4 visa. Her parents also arrived in 1992, sponsored

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Haitian Migrants

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by her mother's brother who was a naturalized citizen.

Edy Lesperance arrived in 1982, after graduating from St. Thomas High school in Port-au-Prince. His father came to the U.S. in 1976 and sponsored his wife and children who arrived in 1978, 1979, and 1982.

Chris Palmer worked for the State Department in Haiti from 1996-1998.

Cecilia Lopez, now OLQP's Faith Formation Director, moved to Haiti in 2008 with her husband, who worked for the State Department. She volunteered at a Petionville orphanage and with a non-profit working to empower women. She lived through the devastating 2010 earthquake.

Temporary Protected Status

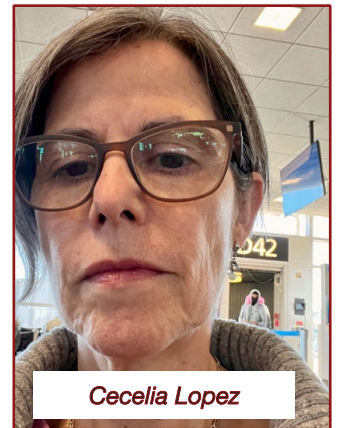
Receiving TPS enables migrants and refugees living in this country to come out of the shadows: they can live here legally; apply for a work permit; and obtain a driver's license, although just for the short time allowed. Approximately 155,000 Haitians were eligible for "relief from removal" by a 2021 extension. On December 5, 2022, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the extension of TPS for Haitians for an additional 18 months, from February 4, 2023, through August 3, 2024. In addition, Haitian nationals residing in the United States as of November 6, 2022, could apply for TPS through August 3, 2024, because of the "extraordinary and temporary conditions in Haiti."

Humanitarian Parole

On January 6, 2023, DHS announced a new process for Cubans, Haitians, and Nicaraguans with U.S. based supporters to fly to the US, temporarily remain, and get work permits. Once here, they can apply for permanent status, including asylum or a green card. This safe way to immigrate aims to discourage people from trying to arrive by sea or cross the southern border. Up to 30,000 migrants from these four countries can come to the U.S. each month through the new parole program. But there are tight limits: applicants need a sponsor in the US willing to provide them financial and other support for two years; they need a passport; they must apply online before arriving; and they need a plane ticket to the U.S. So far, the program has greatly reduced the numbers arriving at the border. DHS approved about 2,000 Haitians in January (CNN 1.27.23).

The Biden Administration also announced that it would turn back Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans at the southern border through an expansion of public-health related Title 42, a Covid-justified restriction, and it would enforce other strict measures. For example, these nationalities cannot apply for asylum at U.S. ports of entry. These measures anger advocates. The USCCB supports humanitarian parole and opposes Title 42 ([USCCB.org](https://www.usccb.org)). The Biden

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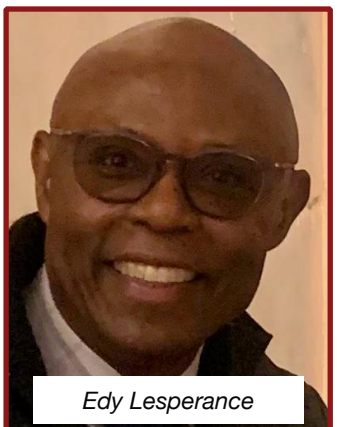
Cecelia Lopez



Christopher Palmer



Alexandra Sperling



Edy Lesperance

Haitian Migrants

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administration announced Title 42 would end on May 11. The new parole policy aims to reduce the crisis at the U.S.-Mexican border.

Our four parishioners agreed that humanitarian parole is a positive change but is not a permanent solution. Like TPS, humanitarian parole is temporary, and it means living in limbo.

Cecilia observes: "How can you send people back to Haiti after their time is up? What is going to happen if they are forced to return to such a devastated country where there is no future for them? If people have a job, what is the need to send them back to Haiti? "

Alexandra says: "It is better than nothing, but the people who need it the most won't be able to find a sponsor. We have a cousin in Haiti, a doctor in charge of a hospital who has someone to sponsor him. This contributes to the brain drain of professionals from Haiti. What is good about the policy is that it is quick, but the two-year cap is the worst part."

Eddy notes: "TPS and the new parole policy will help some people if they have the integrity to return to Haiti if TPS or parole is not renewed."

Our parishioners shared what they would like to say to the OLQP community about Haitians and Immigration policy:

Eddy: "The reason why so many Haitians go to Brazil, Chile, and other countries to walk to the Texas border

via dangerous roads is because U.S. policy has supported a corrupt government in Haiti for over a century. Allies of corrupt leaders and the elite enrich themselves by importing goods from the U.S. to invade the market in Haiti, which prevents local farmers from selling their own products. This made Haiti more of a consumption than a production country. They also import thousands of machine guns made in the U.S. for their gangs to control territory. Let Haiti develop — support Haitian led solutions — and people won't want to emigrate."

Alexandra: "Long-term programs like ours (OLQP support of education and agroforestry programs in Medor) are more useful than short-term immigration policy. The help that we are giving is going to have long lasting effect in Haiti's communities."

Chris adds: "Without stability, including security, illegal immigration will continue. People are fleeing dire poverty and gang violence. American leaders need to listen to Haitians and heed their concerns."

What must we do to welcome the stranger, as Christ commanded? Educate ourselves, support OLQP's advocacy, Haiti ministry, and service programs.

USCCB/MRS has created a resource in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#) discussing the new parole process for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans.

Remembering Tom Donahue

By Sue Carlson, M.D.

Tom Donahue, a parishioner of OLQP, went to his heavenly reward on February 18, 2023. Tom was well known for his tireless advocacy for the rights of working people and his commitment in the labor movement.

Tom's commitment to the people in our sister parish, St. Joseph in Medor, Haiti, is less widely recognized, but has had a tremendous impact on so many of our sisters and brothers who live there. Tom's compassion for our Medor demonstrates his persistence in working to improve their lives.

In 2009, Tom was named the executor of his brother's will. He learned that his brother had left a sizable donation to Food for the Poor. Learning that Food for the Poor had a substantial presence in Haiti, Tom

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Remembering Tom Donahue

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thought that a portion of his brother's donation should be restricted toward work in Medor. Tom set up an appointment with Robin Mahfood, Food for the Poor's President/CEO at the time, and flew to its headquarters in Florida to request that some of his brother's gift be given to the OLQP Haiti Ministry. The appointment was on January 12, 2010, the date of the earthquake that killed about 220,000 Haitians. Tom and Robin were meeting when news came in about the quake. Because of the dire news, Tom's discussion about his brother's funds was postponed for some months.

During that time, we learned that the earthquake destroyed Medor's primary school buildings and that the children were attending classes outside.



Students love their new school buildings!

Tom's request to Food for the Poor became more specific: please use a portion of my brother's money to rebuild the primary school in Medor or give OLQP the funds to arrange for the reconstruction.



Tom Donahue attending a Haiti Committee meeting at OLQP

Food for the Poor sent representatives to Medor to assess the situation. They determined that they could not head up the reconstruction due to its remote location. However, after Tom made many phone calls, sent many emails, and made at least

one more trip to Florida, he persuaded Robin to contribute \$170,000 toward the construction of a new primary school. Tom's persistence resulted in the construction of beautiful earthquake-resistant buildings that now educate over 800 primary school students annually.

Without Tom, the OLQP Haiti Committee may still be fundraising for construction of the school and students might still be attending class in makeshift open-air classrooms.

Tom also attended our monthly Haiti Committee meetings for years. He volunteered to sell Haiti Christmas cards, standing in the cold after Sunday Masses, even when he wasn't feeling well.

Tom's impact in Medor is larger than life. Father Frantz Aime, the pastor of St. Joseph parish and all the people of Medor are mourning his loss and praying for him and his family. Our Haiti Committee is mourning too. We are privileged to have known Tom Donahue. He was a giant among men.

Haiti: Environment Programs

by Sue Carlson, M.D.

In September 2022 an Environmental Education Program (EEP) was established in Medor's primary and secondary schools. Smallholder Farmers Alliance, the organization which implements St. Joseph parish's agro-forestry program, organized the EEP and is teaching the children about the many aspects of environmental preservation, including the importance of trees in slowing climate change, protecting water sources, preventing floods and mudslides, and encouraging biodiversity.

The goal of the program is for the students to become Medor's eco-citizens, converting their knowledge into positive actions in their community.

Father Frantz, the pastor of St. Joseph of Medor parish, wrote that the environmental program is a welcome addition to the school curriculum. The students eagerly await each class and love the tree-planting activities. He reminds students to share their environmental knowledge with their parents and others, increasing its impact.



St. Joseph Primary School students raised papaya seedlings, which they will transplant and care for in their family's gardens. They also help transplant tree seedlings in the newly purchased land that is being converted into a forest.



Our Lady of Medor's Secondary School students learn about the environment

Thank you to OLQP for funding this program, to Smallholder Farmers Alliance for implementing it, and to the students for embracing it.

"Men anpil, chay pa lou"
(*"Many hands make the load lighter"*)
Haitian Creole proverb

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