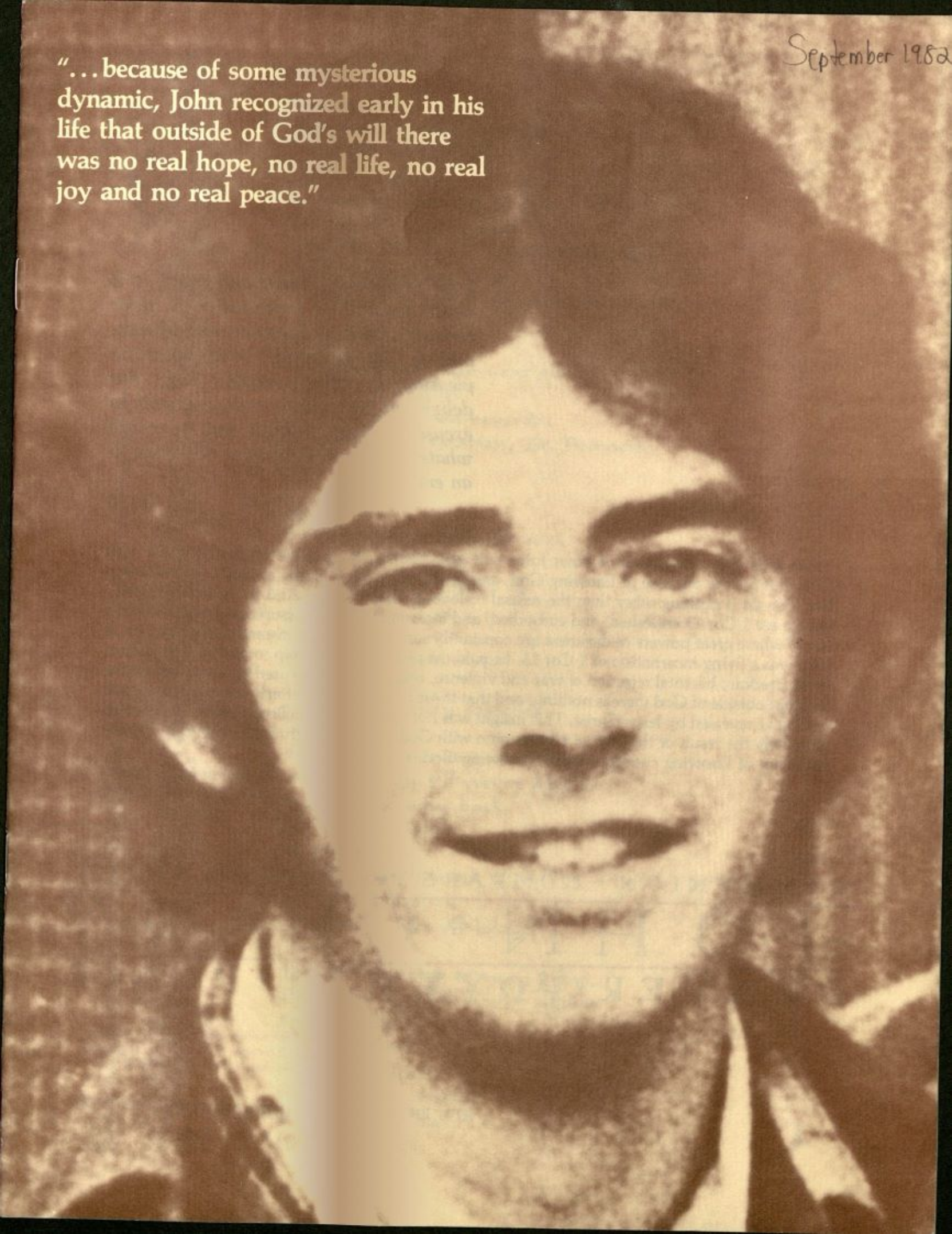


September 1982

"...because of some mysterious dynamic, John recognized early in his life that outside of God's will there was no real hope, no real life, no real joy and no real peace."





Love is always patient and kind; it is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish. It does not take offense, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins, but delights in the truth. It is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope and to endure whatever comes. Love does not come to an end.

1 Cor 13

Thousands upon thousands of times John said this, not for the purpose of gaining merit with God, but for the purpose of knowing God, and for the purpose of living as God wanted him to live. For sin is nothing other than the refusal to love as Christ loved. And so, to know John... was to see 1 Cor 13 enfleshed, and embodied, and incarnated. But be assured, we are living in a world where great powers of darkness are constantly surrounding us, constantly assaulting us. If John was a living incarnation of 1 Cor 13, he paid the price of discipleship to be that. His choice, in his freedom, his total rejection of war and violence, regardless of who used it, was based on the fact that outside of God there is nothing, and that those activities were utterly contrary to the will of God as revealed by Jesus Christ. This insight was not the result of intellectual reflection; it was ultimately the result of the fruit of communion with God, established through prayer. It was the result not of knowing concepts, but of knowing God.

Homily at John's funeral  
Fr. Charles McCarthy

COMMUNION + COMPASSION + COMMUNITY  
JOHN + LEARY  
PRAYER + POVERTY + PEACE

So much has been written spoken, remembered about John—and it will continue to be so. This newsletter is an attempt to share a few of these reflections with you.

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY DAVID MANZO

"Soliloquy on Sorrow" - for John Leary

by Suzanne Belote



You're gone  
my twenty-four year old  
beautiful brother  
gone gone  
to join the martyrs of El Salvador  
for whom you prayed  
Dorothy Kazel Maura Clarke  
gone to join the dead  
martyrs of all the centuries

You're gone  
my twenty-four year old  
beautiful brother  
to join those you revered:  
Franz Jaggerstatter, St. Francis  
Dorothy Day

gone  
to Filaritga's tortured son  
John the Baptist,  
Mary, the Mother of  
Jesus.

You are bathed now  
in the light  
you so sleeplessly sought.

It is all revealed to you, John,  
even though I'll never again  
see your sturdy back  
bent over dishes  
at any sink,  
touch your hand,  
feel the promise  
of your near embrace.

It is all revealed to you, John,  
even though I'll never again  
test the depth  
of your eyes  
that said more  
than your mouth  
now folded shut  
like a flower.



I saw John first, today, in the kitchen of Haley House. Cheerful, as he has always been in the few days I've known him, he informed someone he had to leave in a few minutes for work. I said I might go with him to Cambridge. Walking down the stairs, he generously, concernedly, un-complicatedly asked if I could use a few bucks "to get around". In his room I asked if he were walking or taking the T; "taking the T because of an early meeting" at Pax Christie. I said the ride would give opportunity to talk more.

We walked mostly silently to the T entrance at Copley Square and as we approached the turnstyle he handed me a token.

Finally, somewhere enroute, we began talking. Today would be the first day in a while when everyone would be together at the office, a chance for a meeting. I talked more about the issues, perspectives on the arms race I had written about and yesterday given him to read, about which he had responded with interest, suggesting I read Merton's introduction to "Gandhi on Non-Violence". As the T slowed at Central Square, something personal I was poised to say, not yet out, motivated me to get off with him there rather than continuing on to Harvard Square. We walked and talked more on the way to the white house, #5, about my views and perspectives, mostly I talking, he listening.

I ventured that the disarmament might best be attacked as in a Pinzer movement, his grass roots approach, another of a political nature directed at the top levels of power. In response, he clarified his perspective, which he said he was still struggling with. He said it was a little like the scripture about the seven devils. "You get rid of one; seven return." He illustrated with the case of the B-1 bomber. "Good, diligent work had achieved, under the Carter administration, the cancellation of the B-1 program. Soon it was replaced by the Cruise and the Pershing AND the B-1. So he was directing his energies towards the root cause, in people's hearts...this was his vocation." I expressed that the concept of vocation troubled me in that it implied a whole lifetime; "Suppose it all explodes in a few years?" He kind of shrugged, with a slight smile, "if we really believe in a God..."

I am not trying to relate all that was said, rather trying to describe the state of John's relationship to life, his work, his faith, as seen by a relative stranger.

He thanked me, as we parted, for having walked with him, gotten off at Central Square -a thank you which felt gracious, or humble, or generous under the circumstances -definitely genuine.

I returned to the white house, #5, of Pax Christie in the afternoon for a place to make telephone calls exploring non-defense-related employment alternatives. He was in a meeting, occasionally glancing out at me. At one point he came out briefly, said Jim and Louise were coming by, we might get a ride back to Haley House. My telephone calls delayed somewhat Jim's departure; John had asked him to wait for me. As we started to leave, John spoke to me from the room where the meeting was still in progress: "going to stick around till the meeting was over, then jog home," he explained with a smile. We left; he was working.

*Memories of John Timothy Leary jotted down on the evening of Tuesday, August 31, 1982, A.D. by the man that had slept in his room the night before.*

Dear John,

*My prayers and love go out to you!*

*I hope you can hear me speak  
Everybody is missing your comforting face  
I'll miss you and I'm sure everyone you  
came in contact with, will too!*

*Even though I hardly knew you,  
Your presence has surrounded my heart  
and feelings towards you.*

*I talked with Beth last night,  
and told her about our discussion  
Monday night about weapons  
and violence. I now can understand  
Where your views were coming from.*

*I hope that in some way your spirit  
will shine through in me, to help me  
find a true and desirable life.*

*Valery, a guest staying at  
Haley House at the time of  
John's death*



miserere

Lord,  
welcome this instrument of your peace.  
Where there was hatred, indeed he showed love.  
He suffered injury, and pardoned.  
There is no doubting his faith.  
He was our light,  
our joy,  
the best among us, and we  
had hoped...

But today, Lord, we despair.  
We are drowning in a flood  
of dark sadness bursting from within;  
a darkness  
and a sadness  
that will not yield to consolation  
and cannot be understood.  
And we, not understanding,  
are inconsolable.

We loved him! love him still  
and long to find his face again,  
to touch,  
to kiss...

Yes,  
we remember too well  
how we have been loved,  
and in what ways  
and at which fondly recollected moments  
of these past times  
in this brief, brief season of John's life

Oh Divine Master! Grant us!  
We seek so much to be consoled!

But your mystery presses hard upon our brittle souls,  
too accustomed to his love,  
And our wretched minds and shattered spirits  
cannot bear not hearing your beloved  
"pardon"  
from his lips.

So, pardon us again  
if we seem to say that, Lord,

if you had been here,  
our brother would not have died.

Forgive us our grief, since  
it seems to us that death makes sense  
only to an Infinite Mind.

Bless us who mourn,  
though we know our mourning will last  
just until the moment we ourselves  
put aside our own mortality for ever,  
and not a moment longer. And still we mourn.

For it is in grieving that we receive  
the balm that will heal our hearts,  
now broken  
with his.

And it is in dying  
because we were not the ones  
to die, because this death has torn from us the one  
who really was alive, because

We are in anguish that  
this chosen man who  
without dying  
is dead  
and lives invisibly among us,  
that this chosen one lives  
a hidden existence  
our faithless eyes refuse to disclose  
to mortal sight,

It is in this dying we now must endure that  
we may have hope  
one day,  
some time  
to be born  
to eternal  
and undying  
love.

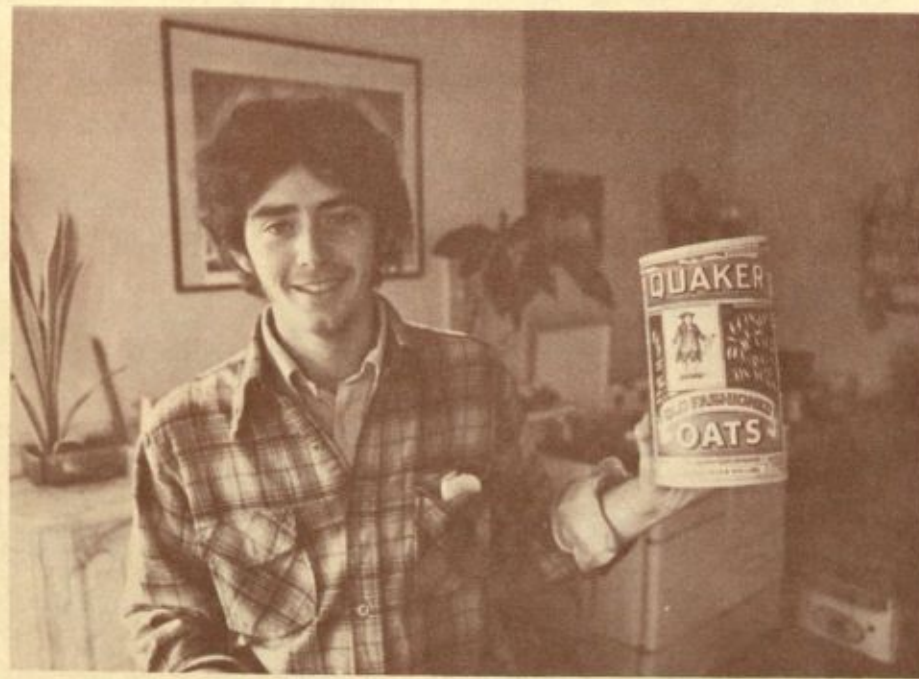
Lord, for our sakes, please  
Welcome this instrument of your Peace.

Lord  
Jesus Christ  
Son  
of the Living God,  
have mercy  
on me  
a sinner.

In the memory of the love of John Leary,  
born to eternal life August 31, 1982

Calligraphy by Beth Ingham

from John Bolean



9 September, 1981

All my thinking and praying about John today focused on his Christ-like commonness: his common heart, his commitment to the common promise, the way he approached all of us as a common man. His life was common in the extreme, and so exquisite for the selflessness that made it so. The power of his love is forever at work in all of us who knew him and loved him.

Godspeed—

Michael Downing '80

To be a **WITNESS** does not consist in engaging in propaganda nor even in scolding people up but in being a **LIVING MYSTERY**. It means to live in such a way that one's life would not make sense if **GOD** did not **EXIST**.  
Cardinal Scharb

## "John"

Why should I write an elegy to you  
who would have seen in dying not disaster  
but arrival

why should I mourn you  
who must now be in God's joyous care  
like you told me was there

why should I weep for you  
who lived fully awake, and for others, and free;  
human - nothing more nor less would do -  
your vision grown so clear so fast.

Your death like some Zen story  
pointless, mundane: jogging, a death  
spiced by jewels of wisdom, stones of truth,  
the fragrance of abruptly deepened community.  
a shattered alabaster jar. a buried seed,  
hints and markings of God.

Are you remonstrating now about the work still to be done?

No, I can't help thinking you'd died simply because  
whatever that one necessity is,  
you'd somehow done it  
and God didn't wait  
nor did you, when the moment arrived  
neither of you could hesitate  
any more than lightning flash  
ripe fruit falling from the tree  
the moth in the candle ablaze.

Why should I write an elegy to you  
your life like a smokeless fire  
my love for you like a brother I'd always known  
the hole in the universe like a cyclone  
You who must have died with your inner eye calm  
and twinkling at some secret between you.

by Joel Nigg • September 3, 1982

"He became in his short life the complete and total man for others, and those who knew and loved him testify to the love of Christ that shone in and through him..."

September 26, 1982  
Harvard University  
Memorial Church



"I am proud to say that I was one of his teachers here, but John Timothy Leary of the class of 1981, taught me more than I taught him, and thus I mourned with hundreds of others when this ordinary boy of extraordinary grace and courage died of a heart attack at the age of twenty-four just before the fall term began. In the crowd that populates Harvard College and Harvard Square, John Leary did not stand out; he had neither wings nor halo. But the difference with John was that he discovered that life had no purpose, no meaning, no direction, and no focus apart from the purpose and focus of God. And for an attractive, able, secular to discover that in the 20th century is a minor miracle. The major miracle is that he oriented his life to act upon that discovery. He became in his short life the complete total man for others, and those who knew and loved him testify to the love of Christ that shone in and through him and illuminated the prisons where he worked as a P.B.H. volunteer, the street hostels in the South End, the derelicts to whom he gave shelter and support, his fellow activists in the peace movement, to whom he gave moral courage, and even those who disagreed with his conscientious support of the life of the unborn. And when this working class Irish Catholic boy of no profession or fame died, hundreds of us filled a great church in Jamaica Plain to thank God that in this fellow we had seen something of the light of the world."

Excerpt from a sermon:  
The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost  
By The Reverend Peter J. Gomes

## WEEK BY WEEK

Cold mornings have reappeared even during this Indian Summer. The line outside the storefront before breakfast is growing as it has every fall for the past sixteen years. Younger, more disturbed men come and we struggle with ways to respond to their sometimes overwhelming needs.

Our friends John Belmont and Alice Carter now have a building on Mass Ave where they make their home and are creating permanent housing for homeless families. The house has eight units — financially precarious as they attempt to rent most apartments low enough for poor families while renting others at "market" value so bills can be paid.

The elderly men and women join us for dinner Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays at 5 P.M. When we began this effort five years ago, four or five guests were regulars; now thirty-five come. Wednesdays we host the elderly women, the women and children from John and Alice's, interested visitors, and both the "live-in" and "extended" community of Haley House. It has become truly a family dinner.

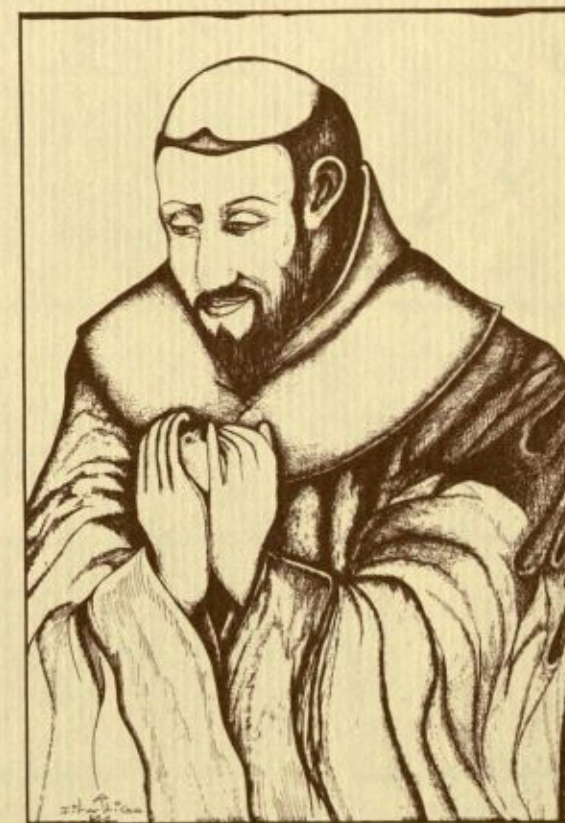
Kathy Graunke has been living in Haley House since 1977. Besides completing her residency in pediatrics at City Hospital and working at the House in a variety of capacities, Kathy has made two extended trips to Haiti, volunteering her medical talents. This year she is attending Harvard's School of Public Health and, to ensure her studying, has moved across the street to the McKenna's.

Bill Brennan has relinquished his quarters at No. 54 and has again joined the live-in community. Billy's experience with the men and his carpentry skills are welcomed, but his depth and solid common sense are even more appreciated.

Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, all at a personal sacrifice, is at the core of the Catholic Worker tradition—so too, standing for the works of peace rather than the works of war.

Paul Hood and Jim Levinson returned from 30 days and 7 days respectively in Billerica House of Correction for passing out a card with a quote from Anne Frank inside Draper Laboratories. They are members of Ailanthus, a non-violent peace witness group which meets at 7:30 P.M. every Sunday night at Haley House.

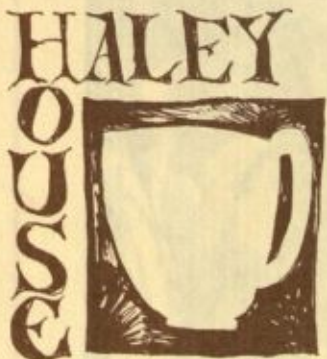
Stone Soup is back for the third year, busy making and transporting their nourishing brew to the parks and alleys of the city, where the hungry seek respite from the cold and violence of the streets.



St. Francis  
by Joel Filartiga

Dr. Joel Filartiga, a Catholic and native of Paraguay, founded the Sanatorio La Esperanza health clinic which provides the only health care available for a population of over 40,000 subsistence farmers in an impoverished valley outside the capital city of Asuncion. Dr. Filartiga visited Haley House in January of 1982 sharing with us his reflections on the suffering in his country and his efforts at a compassionate response. On view for purchase were some of his internationally renowned pen and ink drawings which he sells to support the works of his clinic. St. Francis of Assisi now hangs in our living room and was very special to John.

a baby is God's opinion that the world should go on  
and I should be



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