

Fall/Advent 2012

A note from Fr. Jack

In anticipation of the Prince of Peace!

Time moves quickly and there seems to never be time enough: time to heal the sick; time to listen to the cries of the poor; time to visit the imprisoned; time to clothe and house the needy; time to encourage the young to dream dreams and the old to share their visions.

At ADROP, we continue to value our time and to use it efficiently and effectively. As you will see in reading our Fall/Advent Newsletter, we have been busy with our International Peace Day, co-sponsoring a very successful conference on Restorative Justice, securing Tort protection for our professional volunteers at our health clinic, helping immigrants on their path to citizenship through our English as a Second Language (ESL) program, and expanding the horizons of our elementary school students through tutoring

and mentoring and programs in Art, Music and Distance Learning. All of this is made possible by you, our fellow Defenders of the Poor, through your generous donation of your time, talents and treasure. May God bless you!

As we approach Advent and recall once again the gift of God's Son for the redemption of all, I would have you reflect on the poverty of Jesus. He was born homeless, forced to immigrate to a foreign land, a victim of violence and hatred, without honor in His own community and subjected to an ignominious death by crucifixion. All this He did for us.

The face of Jesus is very present in our day. We need not look any farther than our neighbor. He/she struggles to find work, provide food, clothing and shelter for the family. Our neighbor searches for healing and reconciliation for acts of violence which have torn asunder the bonds of love and friendship. Our neighbor seeks education and skills to break the shackles of poverty. And we who have been blessed by God with health, education, family and love need to answer once and

Peace Day posters hanging on the communion rail at St. Augustine's

finally the question "who is my neighbor?" The answer is that my neighbor is everyone who has been created in the image of God.

As we continue to serve our neighbors through ADROP's programs, I would ask you to join with me in sharing your talents, time and treasure. As we strengthen and solidify our offerings, we are especially in need of your financial support. In this holiday season, I ask that you give as generously as you can to our various programs. You may do this electronically or send your donation by mail to me at the ADROP Office address. Whatever you can donate will be greatly appreciated!

On behalf of all of the generous staff and volunteers at ADROP, I want to wish you a prayerful Advent and a joyous and Peace-filled Christmas!

Peace,
Fr. Jack



ADROP welcomes you to enjoy our music ministry in ACTION!

Winter Solstice Performance: December 16 @ 2:00PM (St. Raphaela Retreat Center, Haverford, PA)



U.N. International Peace Day

Each year on September 21st, the United Nation's International Peace Day is observed in cities throughout the world. This year, ADROP and the Augustinian Office of Justice and Peace came together to observe the day. Throughout the week leading up to Peace Day, students from an Augustinian parish school were involved in a poster contest centered on the theme of peace. Students, grades 4-8, at St. Anthony of Padua Regional Catholic School (formerly St. Nicholas of Tolentine) were asked to create, individually, posters that reflected their ideas of peace. The results were many very creative posters that captured many different meanings of peace. The activity was a way to inspire the younger generation to live with peace in mind and to help continue to share and spread the ways of peace. Some of these posters were put on display during a peace themed Mass and reception sponsored by ADROP, the Justice and Peace Office, and the Augustinian Parishes of St. Augustine, St. Rita, and St. Nicholas of Tolentine, held at St. Augustine's Church. Fr. Paul Morrissey, O.S.A. was the celebrant and homilist of the Mass, which was celebrated on the Sunday following Peace Day. It was a great way to close Peace Week and help to continue to spread and share the ideals of peace.

from left: Katharine Winner, ADROP's Augustinian Volunteer, Anthony Melillo, winner of our poster contest, Susan DiPietro, runner up in our poster contest, and Andrew Slike, ADROP Program Coordinator.



ADROP's Unity Clinic & Programming News

This year we have been fortunate enough to acquire Tort protection under the HRSA's Federal Tort Claims Act. This allows both active and retired medical professionals to volunteer at the Unity Clinic without needing personal malpractice insurance. The Unity Clinic has been busy this calendar year averaging more than 30 patient visits per night.



ADROP's Katharine Winner helping St. Anthony of Padua student Gianna with her Math homework.

ADROP has also begun discussions with Villanova's School of Law, lawyers, and law firms to establish a volunteer model law clinic in which practicing lawyers supervise and assist law students in helping the immigrant population we serve by answering questions ranging from Landlord/Tenant issues to obtaining visas.

At our English as a Second Language (ESL) lab we have seen a sudden surge of students toward the end of October, which sheds light on the need for additional laptop computers and Rosetta Stone software to accommodate the increasing demand.

At the newly established St. Anthony of Padua (previously St. Nicholas of Tolentine) Regional Catholic School we are moving forward with exciting new classes brought to the school through Musicopia and Art Goes to School, as well as ballroom dancing, distance learning, and an educational field trip to the Philadelphia Zoo. *Thank you for your continued support!*

Restorative Justice in Action!

In September, ADROP participated in and co-sponsored the Restorative Justice Conference held at Villanova University on September 28th. Restorative Justice can most simply be defined as healing broken relationships. The conference began with Keynote Speaker, Janine Geske, a Law Professor at Marquette University and a former Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice, who discussed her history and involvement with restorative justice. Following Justice Geske, was a panel discussion made up of victims, offenders, and affected family members. Each panelist shared their stories and experiences and where they are now as a result of these events. In the afternoon, there were two breakout sessions where conference attendees could choose from six different programs and individuals who shared their involvement with restorative justice. Those in attendance and the topics of discussion were the Adeodatus Prison Ministry, which is a program of ADROP, the Federal Reentry Court, the Mural Arts Program, Inside Out, Victim Advocacy, and the Community College of Philadelphia. The conference concluded with a brief summary of the afternoon sessions and a call to action on the part of those in attendance. The conference, of over 300 attendees, provided a great opportunity to raise awareness to restorative justice and the strong, necessary role it plays throughout our society. It highlighted the importance of restorative justice in our community, in the criminal justice system, and in how offenders, victims, their families, and the rest of society can all live together more peacefully.

The Importance of Advent...

Katharine Winner, Augustinian Volunteer at ADROP

As we move towards the start of Advent, let us take some time to reflect on the meaning of the season. Advent is a time of preparation and awaiting the coming of Christ. It is a time of peace and joy as well as a time to reflect on the true meaning of Advent and Christmas. Advent can be a time where we can redirect our focus from the commercialization and the hustle and bustle of the holidays to the preparation of ourselves to receive Christ.

As radio stations change their playlists to 24/7 Christmas music, televisions advertise the must have holiday gifts, and department stores begin the countdown of how many shopping days are left before Christmas, it is easy to get swept away by the commercialization of the holidays. We start to believe that it is the presents and the extra time off from school and work that evokes the true spirit of Christmas and that Advent is just a span of time to help us count down the days to when Christmas finally arrives. However, it is important to remember the significance of Advent and how it prepares us for the true meaning of Christmas. Advent is a time to prepare ourselves spiritually for the coming of Christ and a time to reflect on the blessings we have in our lives as well as to find a way to share our blessings with others. With the lighting of another candle each week of Advent, the light of God burns brighter and brighter and guides us to Christ. Let Advent be the season to open our hearts and better see the true meaning of the holiday: the joyful coming of Christ, time spent with family and friends, and recognize the blessings we have.

As the holiday season comes upon us, and as we start buying the presents, decorating the house with lights, and trimming the tree, let us not forget the Advent wreath and its way of reminding us of the importance of Christmas. Let the flame of each Advent candle be a symbol of the love we have for Christ ignited in our hearts as we prepare and wait for His coming.



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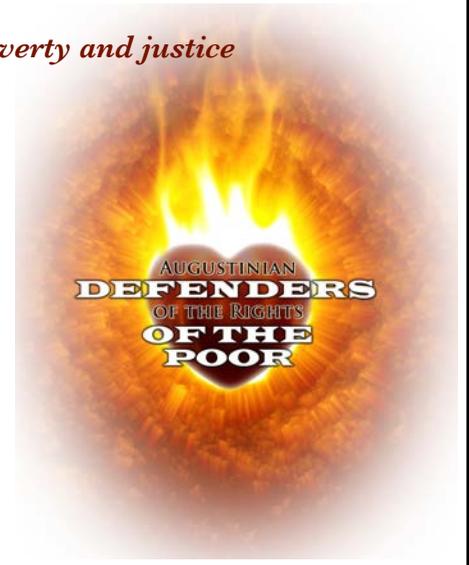
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ADROP Staff (from left): Fr. Jack Deegan, O.S.A., Executive Director, Andrew Slike, Program Coordinator, Katharine Winner, Augustinian Volunteer, Fr. Paul Morrissey, Restorative Justice Coordinator

"The superfluous goods of the rich are the necessary goods for the poor. The rich possess things which belong to others."

~ St. Augustine on poverty and justice



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