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## ***Do-gooder or 'Devil'? A Friar's Work Divides a Venezuelan Village***

"They are a curse that has befallen us. They live like kings while people eat crap. As a Christian, I can't accept this inconsistency." That's how Capuchin friar Nelson Sandoval describes Nicolás Maduro, president of Venezuela and his administration.



*Friar Nelson Sandoval*

Sandoval is well known among Socialist officials in Venezuela. In El Tukuko, his small community of around 3,500 residents, he is "the Devil." But those who support him, he's a redeemer. Sandoval has spent 15 years trying to improve education and health care in the community.

If you follow Sandoval as he walks through his village, you'll hear some of his supporters shout *Capuchino patume* in the local Yukpa language. Translation: "Capuchins are good."

Sandoval's ministry includes supplies of medicine from the United Nations and from Caritas. And when flash floods hit the village several months ago, Sandoval provided emergency kits to families, in spite of the government's banning of humanitarian agencies from participating in relief efforts.

But even among his ardent supporters, Friar Nelson (as he's called in the village) has a reputation for being a "know-it-all," and that paternalistic attitude can be irritating, say some of his parishioners.

[Information for the above was culled from an article appearing in The New York Times (1/3/20). The story can be accessed here: <https://nyti.ms/37yZKz6>

## ***Black Catholics in Milwaukee***

The history of the Catholic Church ministering to black Catholics in Milwaukee is, to say the least, inconsistent. A recent article in the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* noted that in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when blacks attended Mass at Marquette's Gesu Church, they were told to sit only in the balcony. Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, The Capuchins began ministry to the black community just blocks from the Marquette campus when they opened St. Benedict the Moor Mission. Eventually, St. Ben's opened a school and a hospital.



*St. Benedict the Moor Parish*

Milwaukee, however, has a long history of discrimination and segregation. According to the *J-S* article, in the 1940s the archdiocese "relocated many black Catholics to an

abandoned church, which — under Capuchin leadership — was fixed up and named Blessed Martin de Porres. A thriving set of programs was established.”

Two parishes with the highest numbers of blacks are St. Martin de Porres (formerly the Capuchin parish called St. Elizabeth) and St. Francis of Assisi. Mass attendance at St. Martin de Porres has seen a steep decline, while only St. Francis of Assisi has had an increase: up 37%.

In addition to a vibrant ministry at St. Francis Church, the Capuchins in Milwaukee continue their outreach to the black community at St. Benedict the Moor Parish where hot meals are served six evenings a week, and where guests can access a number of resources, including health care and legal assistance. A long-standing Capuchin ministry at The House of Peace provides direct services and counseling.

“Today, the black Catholic community [in Milwaukee] as a whole faces issues that have been festering for decades,” noted the *J-S* article. “The population is aging and dwindling, and the parishes work with few resources.” The Capuchins and their partners-in ministry continue their commitment to serving Milwaukee’s central city population.

## *Rosa Parks Peace Camp Builds Relationships, Community, and Nonviolence*

*By Parina Davis-Usher*

*Staff member, Rosa Parks Peace Camp*

*Ed note: Every summer the Capuchin Soup Kitchen in Detroit hosts a Peace Camp where children and youth are invited to come and learn about nonviolent conflict resolution, expressing their feelings through art and dance, plus other creative outlets like videography. This empowers and inspires these children to become peacemakers in their community.*

The Rosa Parks Children and Youth Program Peace Camp is a beautiful experience, where participants interact, create, and learn about and from others. The theme for Peace Camp is, of course, peace; but our camp centers around relationships: relationships with ourselves, between ourselves and others, and between ourselves and the world. Peace Camp also focuses on how we relate to the world and nature, and how we can help the earth. For three weeks, children and youth engage with music, art, dance, and conflict resolution.



*Parina Davis-Usher tutors with the Rosa Parks Program*

Through music, participants learn songs to uplift and motivate themselves and others through lyrics and music history. Children and youth are encouraged to remix music to make it their own, expressing their voice through music. Participants also learned about movement, control, emotion, and creativity through Praise and Hip-Hop dance.

Through art, children and youth created projects centered on self-confidence, self-esteem, and healthy interaction with friends, family, neighbors, and the community. In the morning group, ages six through nine, children learned healthy ways to release anger and calm themselves through games, meditation, and yoga.

The afternoon group, ages 10 through 12, created short films using a skill called stop motion animation. Stop motion animation, also called “stop frame animation,” captures one frame at a time, with physical objects

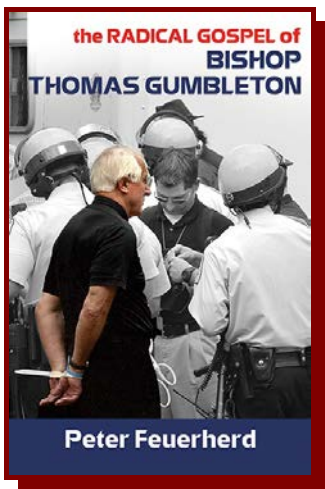
moved in-between frames. When the sequence of images is played back rapidly, it creates the illusion of movement. The youth wrote skits and created characters describing healthy ways to manage conflict.

Every summer, our younger and older groups take field trips. This year, the younger group visited the Impression 5 science museum in Lansing. At the museum, children ran a science experiment and learned about dental hygiene, healthy eating habits, and electricity. The older group learned the history of electricity, as well as what life was like without the technologies that we appreciate today. The camp ended with the Peace Camp Grammys, where each group displays their talents and what they have learned. The children and youth, as well as our staff and volunteers, enjoyed every moment we spent with one another. We ended our summer just as it began, with excitement!



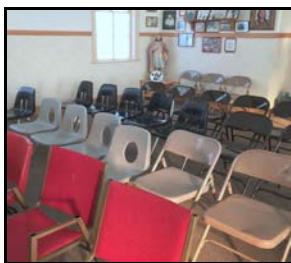
## Quick Review

by Richard Hart



Peter Feuerherd's *The Radical Gospel of Bishop Thomas Gumbleton* models what authentic religious authority is when carried out in a courageous and humble way. Gumbleton gradually became an advocate for marginalized groups, and Daniel Berrigan was instrumental in encouraging him to become more involved in social issues. Gumbleton is a tireless and prophetic inspiration for all those trying to follow the Gospel call to non-violence, justice, peace, the homeless, victims of sex abuse, welcoming LGBTQ people, especially once he found out that his own brother was gay, and his mother asking him if his brother was going to hell. He became a founding president of Pax Christi USA and helped draft the U.S. bishops' historic pastoral letter on nuclear war, and was an opponent of the Vietnam War, plus an ambassador for peace. He faced many criticisms from fellow bishops. Even the *New Oxford Review* wrote that "He practices what he preaches and is very generous to the poor, a heart of gold to a fault."

## New Pews and Restored Floor!



Before

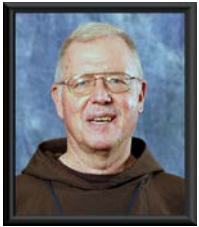


After

Mark Joseph Costello (local minister, Montana) recently designed pews for St. Xavier Church, and uncovered the wood floor. "What struck me when parishioners saw the restored original rustic fir floor," said Mark Joseph, "was the comment that 'my grandparents used to walk on this floor' and other comments about faithful ancestors that came to the church. Actually, the floor has always been there, though covered with layers of tile and carpet, but the idea of uncovering a closer connection to the

ancestor's world was not the reaction I was expecting – in fact I wasn't sure how the people would feel. As the parishioners piled in with the snow swirling and the mud forming on the outside steps, I saw some real efforts to use the mats to clean their shoes! My fear that I was imposing a 'white guy's' taste has given way to the realization that this 1888 church is a rekindled source of pride for the people here."






Our brother, David Zywiec, died on 5 January at the age of 73. David was born in 1947 in East Chicago, Illinois, the son of Albin and Lillian Zywiec. He was a parishioner and altar server at St. Mary's Parish in East Chicago, and attended the parochial school there.

David attended St. Lawrence Seminary High School in Mt. Calvary WI. He was invested with the Capuchins in 1965 and perpetually professed in 1971. In 1974 he was ordained a priest at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Milwaukee. David was named auxiliary bishop of the Vicariate Apostolic of Bluefields, Nicaragua on September 13, 2002. In 2017, when the Diocese of Siuna, Nicaragua was created, David was appointed as its first ordinary. He was installed as bishop of Siuna on January 13, 2018. Funeral services were held on Thursday, January 9 in Siuna, Nicaragua.

During his 50<sup>th</sup> jubilee, he wrote: "These 50 years of Capuchin life have been a journey of faith... I am grateful to God and to the brothers for the experiences of fraternity and service to the poor."

- Joan Cook, sister of Oliver Bambenek, died recently after a long illness.
- David Hirt who had surgery recently for a "tear in his right eye retina."
- David Heffron was hospitalized recently for sepsis.
- Linda Koenig, sister-in-law of Paul Koenig, continues chemotherapy for cancer.

**JANUARYE**



14-16 ..... Pro Council, Detroit

15 ..... Liturgical Commission Video Conf

16 ..... **Otto Bucher (N)**  
National Religious Freedom Day

17 ..... **Paul Hanisko (B)**

20 ..... Preaching Commission Video Conf

21 ..... **William Frigo (B)**  
Martin Luther King Day

23 ..... **Ben Markwell (B)**

26 ..... **Marge Elkins (B)**  
Republic Day (India)

27 ..... Holocaust Remembrance Day

28 ..... **Walter Kasuboski (B)**  
**Thomas Zelinski (N)**  
**Neal Plale (B)**

30 ..... Season of Nonviolence Begins

31 ..... **Ana Martinez (B)**


- The family of William Hartman expresses deep appreciation and gratitude for the many messages of condolence and prayer at the death of our family member. Your words and prayers were a great consolation to all of us. ~ Ben Markwell

***A Holy Revolution***  
by Mark Lecuona

The injustice  
either hardens or breaks the human mind  
The mind  
must choose how to fight against the injustice  
The choice  
of non-violence is not a sign of weakness  
The knowledge  
of why you fight is more important than the fight  
The strength  
to suffer is the time between despair and triumph



The ability  
to turn the other cheek is the holiest weapon  
The act  
of vengeance is the weakness of a human being  
The love  
for the wounded is the reason they follow you  
The memory  
of the dead is the passion to believe in the vision  
The revolution  
in you ends when you no longer hate a stranger



GANDHI-KING-GYATSO

SEASON FOR NONVIOLENCE

"Carry the Vision"

January 30 - April 4

