PESTIVAL OF FAITHS MANY FAITHS, ONE HEART COMMON ACTION.

Light of Compassion

SACRED

FAITH IN ACTION TOOL KIT • VOLUME 4

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Introduction

To know ourselves, we must give thought to compassion, which we become conscious of by the light of sacred fire. This is the light that leads to gratitude as opposed to greed, and ultimately to the eternal fire of peace, according to Sarah Elizabeth Burkey, who speaks out of the Indigenous tradition. It is clear from her essay that sacred fire illuminates and encourages penetrating thought. By its light, we experience our most intense moments of consciousness, and in these moments, we are able to catch glimpses of our true selves.

This notion is beautifully set forth in Dr. Sam Rangaswamy's essay on Hinduism. He explains that the spiritual significance of the feast of Diwali is to make oneself aware of the "Light Within" that is eternal, pure and infinite. This "Light Within" is the supreme knowledge that helps dispel the ignorance that conceals one's true nature.

Keith Runyon approaches the subject of the "Light Within" in an article that brilliantly sweeps through history, noting prominent periods and moments of insight into truth that have provided an enduring legacy of enlightenment for succeeding generations.

By Kathleen Lyons

Bert Hornback's essay on Charles Dickens, written in observance of the 200th anniversary of the novelist's birth, notes that no writer was more horrified by the ugliness of hardheartedness or thrilled by the beauty of a compassionate heart than was Dickens.

Dickens' knowledge of the human heart is well known. Yet, it is startling to see how precisely his compassionate characters, such as Peggotty, portray what scientists today have discovered. They report — with all the assurance of empirical proof — that our strongest emotion is sympathy, and it is expressed through touch.

The first essay in this booklet, by Elaine Prevallet, SL, alludes to this science in a reference to "mirror neurons," which account for our reflexive reaction to the pain of others. A newspaper photograph of someone in pain, for example, is enough to stimulate a mirror reaction on our part. The scientific conclusion is that "we are *wired* for cooperative, compassionate behavior."

Our natural inclination is to reach out — to touch — in an effort to heal. Noting this, Dacher Keltner of the University of California at Berkeley, speaks of the process of human evolution as "the survival of the kindest." Our good health and welfare demand that we be treated with compassion and that we treat others in like manner.

It is not simply science that urges us to compassion. The diverse religions of the world have always done so. One of the pillars of Islam is "concern for and almsgiving to the needy." The Jewish experience as strangers in Egypt has ever been a foundation for kindness to those who are suffering. A more recent expression of this compassion grows out of another incident of great suffering, the Holocaust. Jews proclaimed, "Never again," not with respect to Jews alone but in relationship to the human race.

"Never again" is a pledge to stand in defense of any group threatened by hatred. Such a pledge demands a willingness to suffer along with the persons who are being defended.

Charles Brown provides such an example in his essay about Jesus, who sympathized with the leper and expressed his sympathy by touching him. According to the law of the land, Jesus contaminated himself by touching the leper, and this exposed him to the threat of exile. Yet, Jesus followed his heart rather than his own self interest, which compassion often demands.

The essay on homelessness acknowledges another challenge to the exercise of compassion. A problem can be so large that it seems hopeless. Homelessness may seem to be such a problem in Louisville, a city that endeavors to feed and shelter the needy every day, and in Kentucky, a state that has long struggled with poverty-related issues.

Yet, these problems did not deter Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer from committing the city to a 10-year Campaign for Compassion, and to becoming "the most compassionate city in the nation."

Embodied in this vision is an end to homelessness. With that goal in mind, the 2012 Festival of Faiths is inviting the interfaith community to join in long-term common action to end homelessness.

Another grave world issue that must be considered along with our theme, Sacred Fire: Light of Compassion, is the danger of nuclear weapons.

In Ambassador Thomas Graham's essay, we see that

the external changes needed to rid the world of dangerous weapons must be preceded by internal changes. Compassion can and indeed should be "the fire this time," as opposed to the consuming nuclear fire that is an increasing threat in our world.

The saving power of fire, as opposed to the threat, is apparent in the celebrated work of James Baldwin, to which Graham alludes. It is also apparent in the work of Stephen Powell, a glass artist whose fascination with fire is the subject of his essay. Cecily Jones' poem expresses admiration, not so much for the fire as for the artist who starts and maintains the fire.

The essays in this booklet approach the subject of fire, the light of compassion, from a variety of viewpoints. However, they share the common thread that all human beings are compassionate by nature. Because of this, as HH the Dalai Lama has said, compassion makes us happy, and it is the means by which we make others happy as well.

Kathleen Lyons is executive director of the Festival of Faiths and professor emerita at Bellarmine University. Center for Interfaith Relations



undertakings.

A Hindu priest performs a religious Ganga Aarti ritual (fire puja) at Dashashwamedh Ghat on April 23, 2011 in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, Central India.

SACRED FINDER The Flame of Spirituality

Wired for Compassion: Humans Hold the Spark to Save Earth and Humankind By Elaine Prevallet, S.C.

The only hope, or else despair Lies in the choice of pyre or pyre – To be redeemed from fire by fire.

Those words of T.S. Eliot in "Four Quartets" come back to me sometimes when I reflect on the condition of our world. We humans stand on a cusp of choice.

A nuclear fire, or any number of catastrophic events or failures, can destroy life as we know it on Earth.

Or: a fire of compassion in our hearts can spark a universal compassion that draws us together into a new creation to face the future. Whether or not we are aware, we are, right now, in the process of choosing: fire or fire.

Over these past decades, humans have begun to understand and to speak of ourselves as one human family, related to all species that have preceded us on the planet and beyond. But what is the role of the human species? If we look closely at our own biological history, we can't escape an intricate and interdependent connection with the whole of creation. Each of us is participating in an ongoing, emergent creation, part of a process so enormous that we cannot grasp it. We are inescapably participants in a Larger Life.

Evolution shows us that the human brain has developed to include capacities of our ancestors the reptiles and mammals, and, in the neocortex, a new capacity for rationality and language, creativity and compassion.

We are gifted with **mirror neurons**: even to see a picture of someone in pain triggers an automatic resonance of pain within us. We are *wired for* cooperative, compassionate behavior. Feeling the pain of others sparks us to do something, to heal, to assuage and to remedy.

Why are we gifted with this capacity? And why aren't we falling off our chairs in amazement? Why are we not stunned, overcome with reverence and gratitude for this miracle that has been worked within us?

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Compassion is a central motif of all religious traditions. According to the Dalai Lama, there is a Tibetan word which translated means "the inability to bear the sight of another's suffering." Observing that suffering, Jesus preached that it's our responsibility to care for the poor, the orphans, the prostitutes, the outcast and disenfranchised.

"As often as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me," Jesus said.

Compassion compels us to actions of healing, of

justice and peace-making. Perhaps the cutting edge of human evolutionary development lies at this moment in time. The human species MUST claim responsibility to be healers, reconcilers, vehicles of peace and justice on the planet.

It is our duty to let our hearts be broken open — for this we were created. And this responsibility extends beyond the tribe. It may well be that our present planetary crisis is not just inviting, but requiring that we open our hearts in compassion for all living creatures. The stakes are high: the choice between pyre and pyre. Currently, technology — satellites, television, the Internet, Twitter and the like — has given birth to a "global brain." We cannot be unaware of climate change, water shortage, escalating violence, social breakdown and gross economic disparity. But we know also that there is an emerging voice of nonviolence, the "green" movement, a worldwide press for democratic reform. We have to internalize how deeply we depend upon each other and develop a sense of common good.

Earth's humanity is drawn together in networks that span the globe. Still, technology may connect us, but it cannot unite us. Now, we desperately need to match the global brain with a global heart.

As Jesuit priest and French philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin wrote in *The Phenomenon of Man*, "Love alone is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete and fulfill them ... for it alone takes them and joins them by what is deepest in themselves."

We face an entirely new context, a *kairos*, a most opportune moment for the human species and Earth. No one has been here before. We are charting new territory. As the species that embodies the capacity for compassionate concern for the whole planet, we can act or not act; we decide when we will act on compassionate cues and when we will choose to selfishly serve our own egos. We choose between fire and fire.

Sister Elaine Prevallet, a writer and speaker, has been a Sister of Loretto for more than 50 years. She taught high school and college before serving as director of Knobs Haven Retreat Center in Nerinx, Ky., where she currently lives at the Loretto Motherhouse.

Love alone is capable of uniting living beings in such a way as to complete and fulfill them ... for it alone takes them and joins them by what is deepest in themselves.

 \sim Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Fire and Hinduism

"thamaso ma jyothirgamaya mrthyorma amrtham gamaya"

Lead me from darkness to light. Lead me from death to immortality.

(Brhadaranyaka Upanishad — I.iii.28)

Fire holds a special place in Hinduism.

In Rigveda, an ancient collection of sacred Sanskrit hymns, the Hindu deity, Agni, the God of Fire, is a powerful and important deity. Of the 1,028 hymns, more than 200 are dedicated to Him.

The first mantra of Rigveda states, "agnimiÃe purohitam," signifying Agni as a sacred symbol of God. Under control, He is a creative force; uncontrolled, He is a fierce, destructive force. Hence, Agni may be called a good servant and a bad master.

The universe exists by the grace of Agni, the Sun, without which our planet and its occupants would disintegrate.

By I. Rangaswamy

In Hindu festivities and celebrations, fire and light play important roles. The festival, Deepavali (also called Diwali and commonly known as "Festival of Lights") features rows of small clay lamps filled with oil. They are lit to celebrate the triumph of good over evil.

During Diwali festivities, fireworks are displayed to symbolically bury the dark past and welcome a bright future. The spiritual meaning of Diwali is to make oneself aware of the "Light Within" that is eternal, pure and infinite. This "Light Within" is the supreme knowledge that helps to dispel all ignorance that conceals one's true nature.

Rituals celebrating birth, marriage and death all involve fire. When a child is born, he or she is considered as the gift to light the family's future. Marriages take place before a fire, and rituals to absolve bad Karma are performed with fire as the witness. Every worship service begins with the lighting of lamps, even though modern bright electric lamps may adorn the altar. At the end of life, a funeral pyre transforms the body to a formless state and carries the soul to wherever it needs to go.



The most sacred color in Hinduism is saffron, symbolizing the color of Agni or Fire. As the sages move from one Ashram to another, they carry fire with them. Even today, they carry a saffron flag to signify symbolically carrying fire.

With the power of Agni, everything impure can become clean. Agni also has the power to change matter from one state to another. Offerings to dead ancestors are accomplished through Yajna, a ritual that involves the sacrifice of herbs and other items to the fire as Vedic priests sing and chant.

Walking on a bed of hot wood-burnt coal is practiced in certain parts of Hindu society, especially in Tamil Nadu and by the Tamil diasporas settled in Malaysia, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Singapore. This ritual is carried out by devotees to ascertain the purity of their resolve. Some devotees take a vow to walk on fire in exchange for a certain wish or blessing granted by the Deity. The general belief is that if the devotee completes the walk unscathed, he or she is pure, honest and a true devotee of the Deity.

Another popular Hindu festival of lights is Karthikai Deepam, which takes place in the state of Tamil Nadu. Rows of oil-filled clay lamps are lit in every house. They signify waving off darkness and the bringing of light. The lamps are believed to destroy evil spirits and usher in prosperity and joy. While the lighted lamp is important for all Hindu rituals and festivals, it is indispensable for Karthikai'.

> "Om Shanthi! Shanthi!! Shanthi!!!" Universal Peace! Peace!! Peace!!!

T. Rangaswamy, Ph.D., of Louisville, is president and principal engineer of Rangaswamy & Associates, Inc., a Consulting Structural Engineering Firm.



Sacred Fire Blazes for Peace

By Sarah Elizabeth Burkey

All of us are Indigenous People, indigenous to different places on Earth but sharing the same mother—Mother Earth.

Some people have held close to the way of the Circle of Universal Truths, while others have sought a different path and ventured far from their original connection to the mother who has given them a home and nourished them. The elements of Mother Earth hold ancient truths and medicine. This wisdom is just as important to us today as it was to our ancestors.

Come stand beside me and face the rising Sun. We stand with hearts full of gratitude for the beauty of this new day as we feel the warmth of the Sun on our face. The Sacred Fire of the Sun sustains Life. The Plants turn with us to face the Sun with renewed hope and strength. Our lives are a circle, a sacred hoop, and because we are all traveling in a circle around the Sun, at every moment somewhere on Earth the Sacred Fire of the Sun is giving warmth and light.

No one can own the Sun. No one can own Fire. This is a perfect example of walking the path of gratitude over

greed. This ancient truth can build a foundation to bring our relationships with each other and our Mother Earth back into balance.

We have gathered in a circle around the Fire. There is room for you. Come sit by the Fire as the Sun sets, feel the light and warmth this Fire gives. Be fully present in the moment and know it is Sacred.

The sacred pipe, shared in a prayerful way, is a symbol of peace, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Fire is communal and unifying. It is a symbol of Hope. It brings people together to prepare food. Fire cleanses, purifies and protects. Fire also teaches us to let go. When fire moves through a forest, all that has grown goes up in smoke, just as who we are within our Soul is revealed more clearly when the "heat" of illness, loss, disappointment, betrayal, death and pain burns a path through our life.

Long ago, words were given to the Anishinaabe. These words are known as the Seven Fires Prophecy. The first six prophecies have been fulfilled. The Seventh Fire Prophecy says there will come a time when the waters have been so poisoned that the animals and plants will sicken and die. The forests and prairies will disappear so the air will lose the power of life.

In this time there will be a new people who will emerge from the clouds of illusion. They will retrace their steps to find the treasures that had been left by the trail. The stories that had been lost will be returned to them. They will remember the Original Instructions and find strength in the way of the Circle. If the People will find trust in the way of all things, in the Circle, they will no longer need the selfish voice of the ego, and they can begin to trust their inner voice.

The People will be given a choice between two paths. The path of greed is full of destruction and suffering. But if they choose the right path, the path of the Original Instructions, and walk in balance on the spiritual path, the Seventh Fire will light the eternal Fire of peace.

Kentucky songwriter and musician, Sarah Elizabeth Burkey serves on the Kentucky Native American Heritage Commission. She also was honored with a grant from the Kentucky Foundation for Women to pursue her work composing songs based on the wisdom and life experiences of members of the International Council of Indigenous Grandmothers.





A Meditation on the Element of Fire

By Jo Ann Gates

The 2012 Festival of Faiths, with its theme of Sacred Fire, invites us to meditate on this element, which is both exterior and interior to us.

We will endeavor to relieve ourselves of all distraction, focusing our complete attention on fire.

We will begin our meditation by recalling the role of fire in creation, from the emergence of the universe more than 13 billion years ago to the present. We will continue with a recollection of internal fire and conclude with an attempt to become conscious of our identity, having taken our place in the evolutionary path initiated by fire, the source and the enlightenment of our being, but separate and distinct from our being.

The fire element outside of us is the raw physical energy in the universe. From what scientists know now, the universe began as an infinitely hot singularity, and alternately heated up and cooled down, as it continues to do, creating the universe as we know it on this nano-second of a day in time. From the nuclear fusion in the heart of the sun, to the crackle of lightning in storm clouds, we shudder at the wild and uncontrollable nature of this element.

We warm ourselves directly in the rays of the sun, or through burning fossil fuels that grew in the sunlight of ages past. Fire is daylight; it is the energy that becomes the plants that nourish and beautify our lives. Fire softens us, unites us, nourishes us in campfire embers, candle light, starlight, in cooked foods, baked goods, and warm drinks.

In raging forest blazes, protest demonstrations, indigenous ritual ... fire sobers, destroys, emboldens.

Within us, the fire element can be described as intricate metabolism. It is everything energetic; it is every ounce of vitality. Experience the steady temperature of the body, feel the heart pumping, and call to mind the myriad chemical combustions taking place at the cellular level. Lift a finger, take a look, have an idea, give a hoot ... and then bow before the sparks of electricity in your muscles, nerves and brain. Tap into your passion, grieve your heart out, laugh until you cry ... and then lie prostrate before the energy that is fire within you. Within you, yes, but *not* you, for our ability to live, move, eat, choose, offer, serve and feel is completely dependent on that which fires within us and which is outside of our control. We must keep replenishing the body's fuel, because the fire element is forever cycling through us. We take in the sun as plants or, for some of us, the flesh of animals, and then it radiates from our skin, wafts away on our exhaled air, is spent on our working and living and loving.

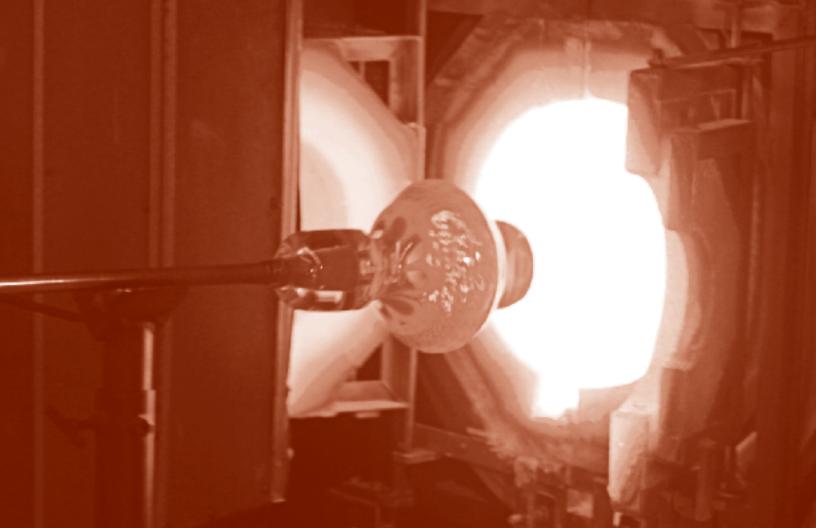
Like the other elements, the fire element simply flows through us. All of this energy, this life force within our bodies, is not ours at all. It is borrowed for awhile from the outside world. We cannot create it, cannot contain it. It is a river of energy, passing through this form that we call body. It is not us. It never was. At the **very basis** of things—not just spiritually or metaphorically speaking, but at the most basic level of our physical existence—**our lives are not our own**.

JoAnn Gates resides at the Loretto Motherhouse, where she is director of Knobs Haven Retreat Center. She is grateful for the influence of Wildmind Buddhist Meditation and Sister Elaine Prevallet in leading her to a better understanding of the interdependence of all creatures.



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SACRED FIRE

The Flame of Imagination

Fire's First Sparks

When did humans first use fire?

- A million years ago, according to an international research team that recently discovered ashes, animal bones and stone tools in a South African cave.
- The plant material, ashes and bones were found inside Wonderwerk Cave, which led scientists to believe that the fire could not have been caused by lightning.
- The discovery indicates that our ancestors cooked with fire long before scientists had thought. Previous evidence dated human cooking back 400,000 years.
- Cooking with fire, socializing around a fire and controlling fire are key elements of human evolution.

Source: nature.com





Obsession with Fire

My obsession with fire may have been set early in life as I was born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama, which lies under the watchful eye of the world's largest cast-iron sculpture (56 feet tall) of Vulcan, the Roman god of both beneficial and destructive fire.

Another strong impression from growing up in Birmingham was the Ku Klux Klan marching with their torches and burning crosses in yards of liberal-minded professors like my father who supported the Civil Rights Movement. I understood the power of all kinds of fire at an early age.

When I left Alabama and came to Kentucky to study at Centre College, I began to understand that I had this weird calling to make art, whatever that is. I am still struggling to define art for my students and myself. Anyway, I knew that I had to make objects that gave me a sense of fulfillment and that seemed meaningful to other people in some way. I started with painting but was never happy creating illusions of reality or abstractions. Rather, I wanted to create self-contained objects that had direct relationships with the viewer.

By Stephen Rolfe Powell

This moved me on to ceramics, where I started having a real connection with fire. The common denominator in my work has always been color. Ceramics furnished surfaces, through fire, that enriched color beyond anything that paint could do.

I first was drawn to working with porcelain, which furnished incredibly rich colors, thanks to the super-hot kiln. While I was certainly fascinated by the traditional firing processes of porcelain and stoneware, I sought a more direct connection to the fire. I found this as I explored the raku process, where I could enter the kiln at peak temperature and remove the pieces, setting them in combustible materials to have one more experience with fire before the pieces were finished.

At my farm just outside of Danville, we were notorious for having huge bonfires and fireworks displays on the 4th of July and New Year's Eve. We put great effort into having the biggest bonfires possible and the largest fireworks we could get, legally and not.



Just down the road from my farm, we built an excuse for an even more remarkable fire, a 40-foot-long anagama wood-fired kiln. The anagama kiln brought

people in from all over Kentucky and beyond to participate in the five-day wood stoking to over 2,300 degrees. It was quite an event of offering wood to this beautiful fiery dragon. People came together from far and wide, mesmerized by the power of the inferno, hoping that their pots would receive the blessing of the kiln. With glass, it was love at first sight. That first moment I saw people working with hot glass I knew it was for me.

It was more cathartic than even raku or the anagama kiln. The closeness to the flames, the intensity of the process, the element of danger — all fed the concentration I needed to enter the creative zone, or what one onlooker has called the "trance of creation." This zone or trance is the time when the universe makes the most sense to me. There is a slow motion, almost a stoppage of time, when I experience a feeling of ecstasy or rapture.

After the piece of molten glass is finished and put away in a cooling oven, I start to lose my way again and immediately begin planning the next piece. There is a longing to be reconnected to the fire of the furnace and the magic of the molten glass, a feeling of warmth from the furnace that travels through the pipe to my hands and reminds me of the awesome power before me.

The glass furnace is the soul of my whole existence as a glassmaker. Besides providing the magic of beautiful glass, it is also the common bond that connects my past and current assistants, students and fellow glass artists. We all know that the glass we create depends on the mood of the furnace and how we have prepared for our interaction with it. This "sacred fire" of the glass furnace is shared by all glassmakers. When I walk around Murano, the "glass" island of Venice, there is an ethereal feeling of mystery and connectedness to the glowing furnaces that burn throughout the night. The furnaces in Venice, somehow, seem to have been ignited by the same fire that glows in my furnace in Danville. We share a sense of the strength and transformative possibility that is signified by the roar of the furnace — the good side of Vulcan. Yet, it is a strength tempered with the fragile nature of flames that can be snuffed out at any moment.

Stephen Powell is a professor of art at Centre College in Danville, Ky. He indulges his pyromania at his Danville farm, where he blows glass vessels and creates intricate, multi-colored patterns using thousands of colored glass beads and bars and a team of artists. His art pieces are held by private collectors and museums and sold in major galleries around the world.



The Fire of the Mind

When many of us were young, history books referred to the time between the fall of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance as "the Dark Ages." Indeed, William Manchester's 1992 history of that period was titled *A World Lit Only By Fire*.

Yet, by candlelight and torches, and in the light of their minds and faiths, people were exchanging ideas and, particularly in monasteries, temples and mosques, were creating a light of their own: the fire of the mind.

Sacred fire burns in many ways. Like the burning bush, it can bring knowledge, and it can illuminate. It can also burn so brightly that it inspires and enlightens others. One such instance occurred in Louisville on March 18, 1958, when Thomas Merton, the Trappist monk from the Abbey of Gethsemani, had a brilliant awakening, a true blaze of the mind,

By Keith Runyon

while he stood at the busy corner of Fourth and Walnut Street, now Muhammad Ali Boulevard. As he wrote in his journal:

"[I] suddenly realized that I loved all the people and that none of them were, or could, be totally alien to me. As if waking from a dream — the dream of separateness, of the 'special' vocation to be different. My vocation does not really make me different from the rest of men or put me in a special category except artificially. ... I am still a member of the human race — and what more glorious destiny is there for man, since the Word was made flesh and became, too, a member of the Human Race!

"Thank God! Thank God! I am only another member of the human race, like all the rest of them. I have the immense joy of being a man!"

Sometimes the fire of the mind burns internally, and the glow warms the heart and prepares a person to commune not just with other humans, but with nature, too. Kentucky poet Wendell Berry described just such a sacred fire of the soul in his poem, "The Peace of Wild Things."

When despair grows in me

and I wake in the middle of the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water. And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting for their light. For a time

I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

The fire of the mind begins with the human brain. Neurons spark the brain's activity, sending electrical impulses throughout the complex web of the brain. Not surprisingly, cartoonists have used the image of a light bulb to symbolize a character's spark of a "bright idea."

Ralph Waldo Emerson understood this fire of the mind, as expressed in this 1838 address to the Harvard Divinity School: "But when the mind opens, and reveals the laws which traverse the universe, and make things what they are, then shrinks the great world at once into a mere illustration and fable of this mind. What am I? and What is? ask the human spirit with a curiosity new-kindled, but never to be quenched. Behold these outrunning laws, which our imperfect apprehension can see tend this way and that, but not come full circle. Behold these infinite relations, so like, so unlike; many, yet one. I would study, I would know, I would admire forever. These works of thought have been the entertainment of the human spirit in all ages."

The fire of the mind can ignite not only the heart, but also inspire humans to seek to do the best, to provide enlightened leadership, and to encourage others to do the same. In his inaugural address in 1961, President John F. Kennedy offered such a challenge. "In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility — I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it — and the glow from that fire can truly light the world."

It is in such a light that many will come together in the 2012 Festival of Faiths to explore the mysteries and the challenges of Sacred Fire. Our hope is that the glow from that experience in the Festival will also "truly light the world."

Louisville native Keith L. Runyon worked 43 years at The Courier-Journal before his retirement in April as the newspaper's editor of editorial pages and book editor. His numerous honors include being named the 2012 recipient of the Society of Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi's award for editorial writing. The day will come when after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love. Then for the second time in the history of the world, [humankind] will have discovered fire.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Jesuit priest and French philosopher in "The Divine Milieu."



For a Builder of Fires

By Cecily Jones, SL.

I didn't realize the care required to build a fire. It takes quiet, for one should gather wood almost as a ceremony, choosing some for instant flaming and some for fragrance and some for size, gently handling grey and broken bark and putting by some logs for later on. It takes knowing trees, of course, and naming them with affection and with awe: conifer and Missouri oak and blue spruce and the willow and maple and the linden and that flaming sumac in the yard. For only forest-lovers have a right to gather wood. It takes precision—rather, carefulness to place each layer so, rolled paper, twig bits, here to fit a cedar bough, there a knotted log,

knowing that a bit more kindling here would catch, assessing smoke and drafts and, watchfully, the sparks. It takes patience—not sheer endurance, but an active gentleness of waiting, a whispering the embers into life, and the paradox of solitude within a crowded room as one tends and coaxes, keeping vigil at the hearth. I didn't realize the care required to build a fire until I'd experienced (how many times?) flames, song, laughter, the spit of embers, intensity of talk, silence, crack of shifting logs; until I'd watched fire-circle create another circle as natural and warm as life... and you, wood-gatherer, tree-lover, gentle coaxer of the flames, fire-builder, you, my friend, standing in a shadow,

Cecily Jones, a Sister of Loretto, a former English teacher at Webster College (now University), St. Louis, and former communications director of her order, now resides at Loretto Motherhouse. Her poems have appeared in several periodicals and books, including *The Merton Seasonal, America, The Bible Today, JustWomen* (Disciples of Christ), *Water: Its Spiritual Significance* and *Hidden in the Same Mystery: Thomas Merton and Loretto* (both published by Fons Vitae).

waiting.



SACRED FIRE

The Flame of Compassion

Louisville : A City of Compassion

By Mayor Greg Fischer

Louisville has some of the world's best festivals every year — whether we're celebrating horses, international cultures, music, ideas ... or faith. I've been involved in the Festival of Faiths since its start 17 years ago. I've seen this festival grow from its roots in the renovated Cathedral to the premier, global event that it is today.

This Festival is quintessentially Louisville — it draws on a rich local tradition of faith, peacemaking and tolerance.

It was near where the Festival meets today that Thomas Merton, the Trappist monk,

had his famous epiphany in 1958. Merton looked at the hustling, bustling shopping district and was overcome with a realization that is still being discussed and celebrated all over the world. He suddenly felt like he could see the people around him the way God sees them. "If only we could see each other that way all the time," he said, "there would be no more war, no more hatred, no more cruelty, and no more greed." He wanted to tell everyone, but realized: "It cannot be explained. There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around, shining like the sun."

I included a reference to that epiphany in my inaugural address because it fit so closely with the way I view Louisville — we are one city, one community, one family. We are all one!

In that speech, I outlined three community priorities for us to grow and thrive — and I've talked about them every day since.

- We must continue down the path of lifelong learning.
- ♦ We need to become a healthier city.
- And we need to become an even more compassionate city.

It's that third goal that surprises people. My background is business — manufacturing and investing. So people expect me to talk about creating a fit and educated workforce. But compassion? That surprises them! But "people helping people" has been a driving force for me throughout my life. It's something I learned from my parents and have passed on to my children. I entered public service for this very reason — because I believe that working together we can make a difference in the lives of our neighbors. I see public service as an opportunity to awaken each citizen's awareness that he or she could make the world a better place by helping our humanity shine every day.

At first, I struggled how to put this into words — how to talk about this sort of service without sounding preachy or corny. I clearly remember discussing the problem I was having with Christy Brown, a good friend

of mine and also the driving force behind much of the Festival. Anyone who knows Christy knows she is full of good ideas!

"Compassion!" she said. "It's all about compassion!"





In that way, Christy was responsible for helping me articulate that vital third goal for our community — one that has paid off for the city in many ways. It dovetailed nicely with the Charter for Compassion movement that was launched in 2008 — Louisville became the largest and one of the earliest cities to officially join this movement. And this past spring, we won the 2012 International Model City award, because we modeled compassion in a way from which they believe cities from every continent and every culture could learn.

We launched the "Partnership for a Compassionate City," a group dedicated to helping Louisville accelerate its journey of compassion and service. And we celebrated a successful "Give a Day" week in April, with over 100,000 volunteers and acts of compassion. After that week, I proclaimed Louisville the most compassionate city in the world.

Of course, we know that compassion isn't new to Louisville. Christy may have helped me find the perfect word to encapsulate its many forms, but compassion has always been at the heart of who we are. From the Festival of Faiths, to the outreach work of the Muhammad Ali Center to the headquarters of the Presbyterian Church (USA), from our beautiful cathedrals, temples and mosques, we are a city of faith, tolerance and love.

Our fantastic congressman, John Yarmuth, says one role of government is to organize our citizens' responsibilities to each other. I'd like to add that government should also be an enabler for citizens to continually advance toward their human potential, to provide a platform of respect and dignity, whether through education, social services, infrastructure or economic development. It is the collective pursuit of our full humanity that creates the opportunities for us to flourish and make our cities, countries and our world a better place.

Thank you for participating in the Festival. Let's keep spreading the word!

Louisville native and entrepreneur, Greg Fischer is in his second year as Louisville's 50th mayor. In addition to his focus on adding jobs and strengthening the city's economy, the mayor's goals include using technology and innovation to deliver city services, solving budget issues and investing in people and neighborhoods to advance Louisville's "Quality of Place."

Spring Ignites Compassion in Louisville

Springtime in Louisville is magical. Redbuds and dogwoods dapple the landscape while daffodils and tulips add bright pops of color everywhere. It's a time when residents of all ages spruce up and reach out to others as they join a citywide effort to make Louisville a better city.

This year's Give a Day week of service, held in April, scored large numbers. More than 100,000 people participated in caring activities that included reading to homeless children, writing letters to troops, donating food and shoes to the needy and cleaning neighborhoods and parks.

The number exceeded the 55,000 volunteer goal set by Mayor Greg Fischer for the city. The volunteers included 48,000 Jefferson County Public School students and teachers.

"With those numbers, and a little mayoral latitude, I proclaim Louisville to be the most compassionate city in the world," Mayor Fischer said at the conclusion of the service week.

Next year's Give A Day event is scheduled for April 13-21, the week before Thunder Over Louisville, to help launch the 2013 Kentucky Derby Festival.





Fischer said Give A Day would not have been possible without the support and coordination of Metro United Way, which matched volunteers with needy projects and organizations through the website, mygiveaday.com.

"We're proud to serve as the leader in volunteer engagement for Give a Day week it takes all of us working together to have strong communities and stable, independent families," said Joe Tolan, president and CEO of Metro United Way. "Through Metro United Way, we've seen others all across our community join together to help make a difference that lifts us all. and this is at the heart of what we're about, and what it means to Live United."





- **33,570** Meals packaged for children and families around the world by the Louisville chapter of Kids Against Hunger
 - 9,000 Brightside volunteers (new record) who helped clean up Louisville
 - 8,753 Pairs of shoes donated to Edge Outreach, an organization that provides safe drinking water to poor communities around the world
 - 3,209 Books for summer reading material for area schoolchildren
 - 950 Blood donations to the American Red Cross
 - 200 Trees planted in more than two dozen city parks
 - 7 Tons of medical supplies and equipment sorted by volunteers at Supplies Over Seas and delivered to a Mexican community to establish the town's first medical facility

A Reflection on Compassion

In 2009, the Catholic Church canonized St. Damien of Moloka'i. He had been a priest who served in Hawaii with the people of the leper colony of Moloka'i from 1863 until his death in 1889.

During Father Damien's lifetime, those affected by leprosy (now known as Hansen's disease) made up a small community that was forced to live in isolation. The members of this community were outcasts from society, not so different from lepers in the time of Jesus.

Father Damien at times found the infection, stench and disfigurement that resulted from the disease physically repulsive; yet, he found the strength to carry out his priestly ministry through prayer and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. He managed to serve the people with dignity and love, dramatically improving their living conditions and building two orphanages in the process. His work imposed great

By Charles Brown

risk to his own health, and in 1884, he became a leper himself.

Father Damien and all of us have the best model of compassion in the person of Jesus. This is especially apparent in St. Mark's gospel account of the curing of the leper. This account takes us back to the time of Jesus when persons with leprosy were required to call out, "Unclean! Unclean!" Imagine the desperation of the man who knelt before the feet of Jesus, begging him for healing. Jesus reached out and touched the man.

> This touch required great compassion on the part of Jesus, for according to the Jewish law, those who touched the "unclean" became outcasts themselves, required to live in "deserted places."

Jesus' action no doubt inspired Damien to touch and care as he did. In Jesus' saving ministry, there were no outcasts except those who chose to remove themselves from his saving presence.



Each of us at certain times in our lives experiences isolation and alienation from loved ones and God, like that of the leper. Outcasts are those we have cast out; they may be members of the other political party, another religion, a foreign culture, even members of our own families.

Compassion makes no distinction between the deserving and undeserving. It requires remarkable patience and perseverance. Let us do some soul searching. We in North America do not often see "lepers," but we do have people who are often considered "unclean" or "unworthy." Perhaps we might even consider ourselves "unclean" at times. As a society we do not always offer compassion to those in need. Reaching out to the outcasts of our own time is a lifelong challenge of the gospel.

As much as the story of our human condition is the story of conflict and division, it is equally the story of joy and redemption. In the aftermath of the attack on the World Trade Center, thousands of unsung heroes came forth to offer food and support to the rescuers, comfort and aid to the bereaved. As Helen Keller once said, "Although the world is full of suffering; it is also full of overcoming it." Compassion does not claim to be a quick fix for the age-old causes of suffering, but it is our commitment to compassion and our willingness to nurture it that gives meaning to life. This life of meaning is one transformed by grace, which fuels acts of compassion. Such acts inevitably require our touching others, as Jesus touched the leper.

We learn from Mark's gospel that there is healing in such touching, while there is also exposure to suffering on the part of the one who reaches out. Both the healing and the exposure define compassion, which means "suffering with" someone in order to bring comfort. The healing cannot happen without the exposure; compassion demands both.

The end result of compassion is happiness for the persons who are afflicted and for those who have reached out to them. The Dalai Lama, who has written much about compassion, summed up this observation in a quote that has become well known: "If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion."

Charles Brown is a retired civil engineer and ordained deacon of the Catholic Archdiocese of Louisville, serving at Immaculate Conception Church in LaGrange, Ky.



Without a Hearth: Homelessness in Louisville and Beyond By Kathleen Lyons and Natalie Harris

The notion of home is so idealized in our society that it fuels dreams of utter contentment. Home is one's "castle." Regardless of how humble, "there's no place like home." In the end, we look forward to "goin' home" to live happily ever after.

This idealization of home is often mocked by the reality of dysfunctional or broken homes. And in the experience of homeless persons, it is a constant irritant to painful wounds.

The sad reality of homelessness affects everyone. By nature, human beings are compassionate enough to desire adequate housing for all, but homelessness presents a problem so vast that most feel there is little they can do about it.

This feeling of helplessness comes at a time when the threat of homelessness haunts more and more people who realize they could be one serious illness or one job loss away from this condition. Many are beginning to see in homeless persons their own fate, "but for the grace of God."

At the present time, thousands of homeless people of all ages roam the streets of every large city in the United States. In Louisville, 9,130 men, women and children were homeless in Louisville during 2010, according to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

> This number, however, tells only part of the story. It includes only those who were served in some capacity through shelters or other agencies; it does not include an even larger segment of homeless persons who have moved in with friends or relatives after having lost their own homes. A new phrase has been coined to describe this group. They are "couch-surfers."



As they wear out their welcome in one place, they move to another, living as nomads.

A report by the Jefferson County Public School district (JCPS) brings one closer to realizing the total number of homeless persons locally. JCPS reported that there were **10,161 homeless students enrolled during the 2010-2011 school year**, representing 9.6 percent of the total enrollment at that time. **Including the families of these children brings the total local count to about 30,000 persons**.

In its report, JCPS followed the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Education rather than those of HUD. Given this startling figure of local homeless persons, it is not surprising that Kentucky ranks 49th in child homelessness in the nation and 36th in poverty and general homelessness.

Homelessness places a merciless burden on school-aged children. These children might be enrolled in five different schools during the course of an academic year, making success in the classroom less likely than dropping out of school before graduating from high school.

While failure to complete high school has many social consequences, the economic cost can, perhaps, be more readily reported. The Coalition for the Homeless reports that an annual earnings gap of \$10,000 exists between high-school graduates and dropouts. Moreover, according to data supplied by Louisville's Coalition for the Homeless, dropouts from a single year in Kentucky will cost the state \$4.2 million, largely in services provided by sheltering, medical and correctional agencies.

The causes of homelessness include personal circumstances and systemic issues in society. Excluding sudden events such as a tornado or a Hurricane Katrina, no one becomes homeless because of a single factor. When a person's struggle with substance abuse, job loss, poor money management, mental and other health issues collides with systems that contribute to their vulnerability, he or she is likely to become homeless.

Chief among these systems is a lack of affordable housing, but they also include jobs that do not pay a living wage and inaccessible health care. Current data show that in Louisville, more than 25 percent of adults in transitional and permanent housing programs are employed, and many more are in educational or job-training programs; yet, their incomes are not sufficient to meet the expense of independent living.

HUD defines a fair market rate for a two-bedroom apartment in Louisville, including rent and utilities, at \$694 per month. Over three-fourths of the homeless who are working earn under \$10 an hour. At current rates, they would be required to spend about 42 percent of their income on rent alone, an unsustainable amount, instead of the 30 percent that HUD recommends.

Affordable housing, quite simply, is the key to eliminating homelessness.

In 1978, HUD's budget for affordable housing was over \$83 billion; the current HUD budget is \$29 billion, a loss of \$54 billion. An allocation of \$1.4 billion has currently been made for housing the homeless, but this amount does not go far in compensating for the loss of \$54 billion. Ironically, failing to provide housing is more costly than housing itself would be.

A 2006 University of Louisville study revealed that housing 7,000 homeless persons in their own apartments versus the existing costs to the community of shelter, jails, hospitals and mental health services would save the community \$3.1 million per year.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness claims that eliminating homelessness "is well within the nation's



grasp." For this to happen, money will have to be allocated more wisely than it now is. That is to say, affordable housing needs to be provided to those who need it, not only for their benefit, but to avoid the greater costs to the community of services that come with homelessness.

There is no doubt that society wants to eliminate homelessness. We care about homeless persons, for the same reasons that we care about the victims of tornados, floods and other disasters. Our local Coalition for the Homeless follows a program entitled "Reducing and Ending Homelessness: A Blueprint for the Future." The Blueprint can point the way to ending homelessness, but success requires the participation of "**every** sector in the community" [emphasis theirs].

We do not need to feel helpless to address the problem of homelessness. We need to do our part, which is holding community agencies and organizations accountable for following the Blueprint to eliminate homelessness.

Kathleen Lyons is the executive director of the Festival of Faiths. Natalie Harris is executive director of the Coalition for the Homeless in Louisville. To learn more about ending homelessness and the Blueprint for the Future, go to louhomeless.org.



The Problem of Homelessness can be Solved

Eight cities in the United States — Columbus, Ohio; the District of Columbia; Fort Worth, Texas; Hartford, Conn.; Pittsburgh; Omaha, Neb.; Shreveport, La.; and Tulsa, Okla. — are on a path to end homelessness in the not too distant future, according to Roseanne Haggerty, founder and director of the nonprofit Common Ground, one of the most highly regarded organizations dealing with homelessness.

For more information about efforts to end homelessness, go to governing.com.



Homelessness: Facts and Factors By the Numbers:

The estimated homeless population of Louisville in 2012 is about 30,000 people, based on guidelines followed by the U.S. Department of Education.*

- Single women with children and young adults are the fastest growing segment of the homeless.
- ♦ 28 percent of students in Kentucky do not graduate from high school.
- ♦ 41 percent of African-American students in Kentucky do not graduate from high school.
- ♦ 45 percent of Hispanic students in Kentucky do not graduate from high school.
- High school dropouts qualify for only 8 percent of jobs in Kentucky.
- ♦ A 2006 University of Louisville study shows that housing 7,000 homeless persons in their own apartments versus the existing costs to the community of shelter, jails, hospitals and mental health services would save the community \$3.1 million per year.

- ♦ In Louisville, over 25 precent of adults in transitional and permanent housing programs are employed.
- ♦ At the current minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour, a person would have to work 77 hours per week to afford to rent a two-bedroom apartment in Louisville at the fair market price of \$694 per month (rent and utilities) set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). A person needs to make approximately \$14 an hour to afford a market-rate unit.
- The top-earning 1 precent of households in America gained about 275 precent after federal taxes and income transfers over a period between 1979 and 2007. The lower-earning 80 precent of American households now have less than half of the share of total income in America, according to a 2011 study by the Congressional Budget Office.

*Note: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development counts a person as homeless if he or she has received a service from an organization serving the homeless. The U.S. Department of Education counts as homeless all students and their families who do not have a home of their own, but may be living with friends or relatives. Using those guidelines, the Jefferson County Public Schools estimated there are 10,000 homeless students enrolled during the current school year. Using that number, the Coalition for the Homeless estimated that there are about 30,000 homeless people in Louisville. This includes the short-term homeless, who have lost their homes because of a job loss, illness or other reasons; veterans; young people who have aged out of foster care; and the chronic homeless, who may have addiction problems or mental health issues.



Homeless Numbers Declined in 20-1-1

A federal report found that the number of homeless people declined 2.1 percent to 636,017 in 2011.

The number is based on counts of the homeless populations in more than 3,000 locales during a single night in January 2010 and again in January 2011.

In addition to the overall decline, the number of homeless people in every category in the study also fell, including homeless veterans, homeless families and chronically homeless people. Since 2007, the homeless population has declined by 5.3 percent.

Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan attributed the positive numbers to the Obama administration's efforts, and in particular HUD's \$1.5 billion Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program, which was developed as part of the 2009 stimulus package.

Source: governing.com

What You Can Do to Eliminate Homelessness in Louisville

Learn More. Take the time to review the materials you acquired at the 2012 Festival of Faiths. These include videos, links and printed materials that can be used in a variety of settings.

Know that Homelessness Can Be Ended in Louisville. Rosanne Haggerty, an expert on homelessness and founder and director of Common Ground, reports that Columbus, Ohio; the District of Columbia; Fort Worth, Texas; Hartford, Conn.; Pittsburgh; Omaha, Neb.; Shreveport, La.; and Tulsa, Okla. are all approaching an end to homelessness. Louisville can follow their example.

Support Compassionate Louisville. Mayor Fischer has signed the Charter for Compassion and has vowed to make Louisville the most compassionate city in the nation. Support this cause by insisting in thought, word and action that homelessness has no place in such a city. *Counteract Stereotypes.* Share your materials with a group, and challenge each person present to speak to three other people about what she/he has learned. This could prove effective in ending stereotyping and other forms of misinformation pertaining to poverty and homelessness.

Help Create the Political Will to End Homelessness. A large barrier to ending homelessness is the widespread belief that it is not possible. Becoming a member of a group dedicated to ending homelessness will help overcome and eliminate this barrier. Join the Coalition for the Homeless; the Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky; and/or the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Take Action. Choose a policy issue that is important to you or to your group. As an individual or as a spokesperson for your group write or call your council member, state senator or congressman to urge support for your cause.



Volunteer. Urge your group to commit to provide volunteer hours for a local homeless service agency. You can find an agency of your choice at the member list at **louhomeless.org**.

Give. Commit to give as generously as you or your group can, either to your local community ministry or to a local homeless service agency. Community ministries work to keep families from becoming homeless. You can find a list of these ministries at **louisvilleministries.org/members.php**.

Join the "Carry the Torch" Network. Go to the Festival of Faith's website: festivaloffaiths.org, click on *Carry the Torch* under "Festival Resources," and record your accomplishments to give evidence of our city's pathway to ending homelessness.

Help Young People. Go to trueuplouisville.com to see how you can help children 18 years of age, who are aging out of foster care.



A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

-Margaret Mead



The Compassion of Charles Dickens

By Bert Hornback



In honor of the 200th birthday of the English writer

For Charles Dickens, Christmas wasn't just a religious holiday or holy day. Christmas was what should be our way of life. "When we learn to keep our Christmas the whole year through, we shall make this earth a very different place," Dickens wrote.

His first novel, *Pickwick Papers*, began as a comic story about a 65-year-old man. It opens with a meeting of the Pickwick Club, and the reading of a resolution praising Samuel Pickwick, Esq., the founder and General Chairman of the club, for his research and scholarship, and endorsing his generous proposal to "enlarge his sphere of observation" by traveling with three friends.

But Mr. Pickwick is neither a careful observer nor a scholar. He is a kind, silly, presumptuous, self-important man who has, as he says, "Spent most of his life in the pursuit of wealth." Dickens often refers to Mr. Pickwick as "benevolent," and notes that "general benevolence was one of the leading features of the Pickwickian theory." But young Dickens is being ironic: when Mr. Pickwick is benevolent he is usually drunk and sentimental.

His adventures are comical, if we keep our perspective limited and ignore that he is a rich man at his leisure, observing the world at a safe distance from its troubles. On various occasions he gives away small amounts of money, and he is generous to his friends.

When he loses an absurd breach-of-promise suit, rather than pay up, he goes to debtors' prison—"on principle." But because he has money, he can rent a private room in the debtors' prison, bring his servant with him, hire silver and china, order good food and drink fine wine. When his servant takes him to see how the *real* debtors live, he is horrified. "Henceforth," he says, "I will be a prisoner in my own room." So much for Pickwickian benevolence—or "enlarging his sphere of observation." And we are just more than half-way through the novel.

Dickens—25 years old now—has by this time started a new novel, called *Oliver Twist*. Oliver is born in a parish

workhouse—worse even than a debtor's prison. Eventually he is rescued by another "benevolent" gentleman. But Mr. Brownlow cares nothing for the poor and understands nothing of their plight. Dickens pretends that Mr. Brownlow is a good man because he saves one boy, Oliver: not because Oliver deserves or needs saving, but because Oliver reminds him of someone he once loved. And Dickens ends up trusting God to take care of everybody else.

Neither Mr. Pickwick nor Mr. Brownlow is a seriously compassionate man. But in Dickens's next novel, *Nicholas Nickleby*, he creates a pair of brothers—Charles and Edwin (Ned) Cheeryble—who are indeed benevolent and act out their benevolence. They actively seek people who need help, and help them. They have both worked, and they expect those whom they help to work. They are the first genuinely compassionate characters Dickens creates.

Compassion is a word for "feeling with" someone else. It involves *active sympathy*. It does not condescend, and is not conditional. *Understanding* is an active word, one that signifies involvement in someone else's life. And from *Nicholas Nickleby* on—through 12 more novels, written over a period of 30 years—Dickens seeks, in his characters, *compassion* and *understanding*.

David Copperfield, arguably Dickens's most important novel both for himself and for us, contains two brilliant images of compassion. Peggotty, the servant in the Copperfield house, loves young David. And when she shows her love by hugging him, she squeezes him so hard the buttons down the back of her dress fly off. At one point when he is being sent away, she hugs him so hard that she leaves him "without a solitary button on her gown."

When David's mother dies, Peggotty is the one who tells him about her death. She tells him "all that she had to tell" not all that she knew, but all that she was required to tell. Her compassion for David shows as she tells her story. First, she tells David that his mother "never changed to her foolish Peggotty." We know that she did change, for the worse.

"Here Peggotty stopped, and softly beat upon my hand a little while." Peggotty won't say the negative thing, but she tells David without saying it. And when she tells David that, just before she died, Clara Copperfield asked Peggotty to tell her "dearest boy... that his mother, when she lay here, blessed him not once, but a thousand times," David, the narrator writes: "Another silence followed this, and another gentle beating on [his] hand." Clara Copperfield's blessings for her son are not worth nearly as much as Peggotty's strong love is.

Compassion is honorable sympathy. It doesn't lie.

Compassion is active and involved. When Jo, the poor crossing sweeper, dies in *Bleak House*—of hunger and disease and criminal neglect—the narrator explodes, rhetorically:

Dead, your Majesty. Dead, my lords and gentlemen. Dead, Right Reverends and Wrong Reverends of every order. Dead. Men and women, born with Heavenly compassion in your hearts. And dying thus around us every day.

I could go on: to Sydney Carton in *A Tale of Two Cities*, to Pip wonderfully "compassionating" Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations*, to Lizzy Hexam and the Boffins and Mr. Sloppy in *Our Mutual Friend*.

But I will stop here. Dickens was a serious believer in compassion. Of course art is most always compassionate—by definition. Dickens's great contemporary, Mary Ann Evans who wrote her fiction as George Eliot—proposed that "If Art does not enlarge men's sympathies, it does nothing morally."

And in *Middlemarch*, the great novel published the year after Dickens's death, her main character, a young woman named Dorothea Brooke, says to several supposedly wise men who want to rein in her compassion, "What do we live for if it is not to make life less difficult to each other?"

Great art teaches us to revere and desire and delight in compassionate existence. If we let art direct us, instead of commercial and competitive and frequently empty religious "ideals," we might make this world a very different place—as Charles Dickens asked us to do.

Kentucky native Bert G. Hornback is a Dickens scholar and University of Michigan Professor Emeritus of English. He is the author of several books about Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy and George Eliot. His primary enthusiasm is reading from Dickens works and performing as Dickens. He wrote, hosted and acted in a 10-part series about Dickens produced for the University of Michigan Television Center.

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SACRED FINAL STRUCTION The Flame of Destruction

Fires in the United States During 20-10

- 1,331,500 fires were reported in the U.S. during 2010.
- down 1 percent from 2009
- ♦ 3,120 civilian fire deaths
- ♦ 17,720 civilian fire injuries
- \$11.6 billion in property damage
- 72 firefighter deaths Firefighter deaths are not restricted to fires.

482,000 structure fires occurred in the U.S. during 2010.

- Less than 1 percent increase from 2009
- ♦ 2,755 civilian fire deaths
- 15,420 civilian fire injuries
- \$9.7 billion in property damage

Note: 2010 statistics were the most recent national numbers available at the time of publication.

Outside and Other Fires 48% Structure Fires 36%

Vehicle Fires 16%



- **215,500 vehicle fires** occurred in the U.S. during 2010.
- down 1 percent from 2009
- ♦ 310 civilian fire deaths
- ♦ 1,590 civilian fire injuries
- \$1.4 billion in property damage





634,000 outside and other fires

occurred in the U.S. during 2010.

- down 2 percent from 2009
- ♦ 55 civilian fire deaths
- ♦ 710 civilian fire injuries
- ♦ \$501 million in property damage



Source: National Fire Protection Association

Fire Safety Tips

- Install working smoke detectors in your home. If you
 need help, your fire department will assist you with this.
- *2.* Eliminate smoking in the home. Smoking has been the leading cause of home fire deaths for decades.
- *3.* Never leave cooking unattended. 41 percent of injuries and 15 percent of fatalities are related to unattended cooking.
- 4. Exercise extreme caution when using space heating equipment – especially portable heaters and woodburning stoves. 21 percent of fire deaths and 13 percent of injuries are due to heating equipment. Keep combustibles away from heat sources. Service furnaces and heating equipment annually.

5. Be careful with candles and lamps. Don't leave matches, lighters or candles within reach of children. Teach them that these are tools, not playthings. Make sure children know how to "Stop, Drop and Roll." Candles were the fourth leading cause of home fire injuries. Children under five are eight times more likely than older children to die in fires caused by playing with lighters or matches.



By Mike Gramig

7. Establish a home emergency exit plan and practice it with the entire family.

Mike Gramig is a retired former district chief of the Louisville Fire Department. In his 30-year career, he witnessed significant improvements in equipment that protects firefighters. When he began, firefighters wore canvas gear and helmets made of leather and metal. Not all firefighters had air tanks. Now firefighters wear fire-resistant materials and impact-resistant helmets. They are equipped with high-tech, personal air-equipment, safety alarms and cameras capable of seeing through walls and smoke.

Louisville Fires

	2011	2010
Total fire runs	28,106	27,199
Structure fires	486	578
Auto fires	252	300
False alarms	3,973	3,890
Fire deaths	4	2
Fire injuries (including firefighters)	112	132
Property damage	\$9.13 million	\$10.36 million
Arson investigations	617	598
Criminal arrests	129	151
Home inspections	705	1,375
Building and business inspections	7,266	5,756
Smoke detector installations	1,098	572

Source: Louisville Fire & Rescue Statistical Summary

Causes of Home Fires and Home-Fire Deaths

- Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home-fire injuries. (Frying is the No. 1 cooking activity associated with cooking fires.)
- ♦ Smoking has been the No. 1 cause of home fire deaths for decades.
- ♦ 68 percent of home fires related to smoking materials began in upholstered furniture or mattresses and bedding.
- ♦ 7 percent of fatal home smoking fire victims were using medical oxygen.

ONE OF THE DEADLIEST FIRES in U.S. history happened in Kentucky.

On Memorial Day weekend in 1977, a fire swept through the Beverly Hills Supper Club in Southgate, Ky., killing 165 people and injuring more than 200.

After an extensive investigation into the nightclub fire, experts pinned the cause on faulty electrical wiring. Numerous other factors contributed to the disaster, including overcrowding, inadequate fire exits, poor construction, lack of fire walls, no sprinkler system or audible fire alarms and inadequate oversight by fire officials.

The Louisville Courier-Journal's reporting about the fire and the causes earned the newspaper and its reporter, Richard Whitt, a 1978 Pulitzer Prize.

BEVERLY HILLS SUPPER CLUB FIRE

Site of Beverly Hills Supper Club, popular aight spot from 1950s-70s, barnt May 28, 1977 killing 185. Third worst nightclub fire in US: changed building-code enforcement. First disaster case tried as class action suit, merging 300 claims, Landmark litigation lasted years. Settlements of sume 530 million. First mass tort action in USA.

The Fire This Time

The world changed in 1945 with the advent of the atomic bomb. For the first time, humankind possessed a weapon with which it could destroy itself. In his Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*, Richard Rhodes describes the use of a small, early version of this weapon in the attack on Hiroshima at the close of World War II.

August 6, 1945, began as a beautiful summer day in Hiroshima. The director of the Hiroshima Communications Hospital began his diary entry of the morning: "The hour was early, the morning still warm, and beautiful ... shimmering leaves, reflecting sunlight from a cloudless sky, By Ambassador Ihomas Graham, Jr.

made a pleasant contrast with shadows in my garden." During the night, some 1,000 miles away, on the island of Tinian, an atomic bomb, named "Little Boy" by its designers, carrying a potential explosive power equivalent to 12,500 tons of TNT, had been loaded onto an American B-29 bomber. Accompanied by escort planes, the American plane left Tinian at 3:00 a.m., and was just a few miles from Hiroshima by eight o'clock that morning. As the American B-29 crossed over the Inland Sea and approached Hiroshima, a few ships could be seen in the harbor. The bombardier selected as his aim point the Aioi Bridge, a T-shaped bridge spanning the Ota River in central Hiroshima.



Little Boy exploded at 8:16 a.m. Hiroshima time, 1,900 feet above the courtyard of Shima Hospital, and 550 feet southeast of the Aioi Bridge. As one crew member described it, "Where we had seen a clear city two minutes before, we could no longer see the city. We could see smoke and fire creeping up the sides of the mountains." In the words of another crew member, the city looked like "a pot of boiling black oil." Still another said, "The mushroom was a spectacular sight, a bubbling mass of purple-gray smoke, and you could see it had a red core in it and everything was burning inside."

Rhodes explains that an authoritative Japanese study concluded that the temperature at the explosion site had reached 5,400° F, and that people within half a mile were burned to bundles of black char in a fraction of a second.

The Japanese study explained that it was not just human beings that died at Hiroshima:

In the case of an atomic bombing ... a community does not merely receive an impact; the community itself is destroyed. Within two kilometers of the atomic bomb's hypocenter, all life and property were shattered, burned and buried under ashes. The visible forms of the city where people once carried on their daily lives vanished without a trace. ... The atomic bomb had blasted and burned hospitals, schools, city offices, police stations and every other kind of human organization.

"The whole of society," concluded the Japanese study, "was laid waste to its foundations."

Soon after 1945, a vast nuclear arms race was underway; the Soviet Union built in the range of 55,000 nuclear weapons, the United States more than 70,000. At one time, the U.S. had over 30,000 in its arsenal. Soon, nuclear weapons were measured in terms of millions of tons of TNT equivalent, not thousands as with the Hiroshima bomb. This effort eventually bankrupted the Soviet Union and cost the United States in excess of \$5.5 trillion in 2004 dollars. Disarmament efforts gradually gained momentum and over time, a web of international treaties and agreements was constructed which limited weapon development and inhibited the spread of nuclear weapons. There is no question that these efforts changed the course of history, but much more must be accomplished.



President John F. Kennedy truly believed that there was a serious risk that nuclear weapons were destined to sweep all over the world. In March of 1963, he said, "Personally, I am haunted by the feeling that by 1970 ... there may be 10 nuclear powers instead of 4 and by 1975, 15 or 20 ... I would regard that as the greatest possible danger and hazard." He spent much of his presidency pursuing the cause of nuclear weapon nonproliferation.

If such anticipated proliferation had in fact happened, there could be significantly more than two dozen nuclear weapon states in the world today, with nuclear weapons integrated into their national arsenals. Mohamed El Baradei, the former Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, expressed this concern in 2004 when in a speech in Washington, D.C., he said, "The danger is so imminent ... not only with regard to countries acquiring nuclear weapons but also terrorists getting their hands on some of these nuclear materials — uranium or plutonium." Director General El Baradei said in another speech around the same time that more than 40 countries then had the capability to build nuclear weapons. Thus, with that many nuclear weapon states in existence, potentially every significant conflict could have brought with it the risk of going nuclear, and, having become so widespread, nuclear weapons could more readily fall into the hands of terrorist organizations. The principal reason that this did not happen was the negotiation of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (the NPT) of 1970 and its strengthening by associated arms limitation agreements over the ensuing decades. But today, the NPT is in trouble. Nuclear weapon states are slow to limit their weapons, and North Korea and Iran, as well as perhaps others, are pursuing the bomb.

In a January 2007 article published in the Wall Street Journal by George Schultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn (and signed by a number of other former senior officials), the authors contended that reliance on nuclear weapons for deterrence "is becoming increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective."

Noting that President Ronald Reagan had called for the abolishment of "all nuclear weapons," which he considered "totally irrational, totally inhumane, good for nothing but killing, possibly destructive of life on earth and civilization," and that General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev shared this vision, the authors called for "reassertion of the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and practical measures toward achieving that goal."

Since the mid-twentieth century, almost all American presidents have placed nuclear disarmament policy high on their agendas, and progress has been made. But no President has spoken out more eloquently and in such a comprehensive way as did President Obama in Prague in April 2009. Among other things, he called for the strengthening of the NPT and confirmed his support for a process leading to a nuclear weapon-free world.

Great damage to the disarmament process has been sustained in recent years, and the proliferation crises seem to grow steadily more dangerous. But while the hour is growing late, it is not too late. Success remains possible; that safer and more secure world that all of us want can still be built. We must not give up.

One of the best known books of American writer, James Baldwin is *The Fire Next Time*, published in 1963. The title is from a black spiritual entitled "Mary Don't You Weep," the relevant line being, "God gave Noah the rainbow sign, no more water the fire next time." The line from the spiritual and Baldwin refer to a possible cataclysm in the future. Among the horrendous calamities that could face humankind one day is, as we have seen above, the destruction of a major city by a nuclear weapon, either perpetrated by terrorists or the result of nuclear proliferation in an unstable region. This would be the fire this time.

But it need not happen. This proliferation can be prevented, nuclear weapon stockpiles can be eliminated and, as President Reagan advocated and President Obama supports, nuclear weapons can be safely eliminated from the face of this earth.

As proposed by HH the Dalai Lama and many others, compassion rather than nuclear destruction could be the fire this time. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, the great Catholic philosopher, said on this that if we "harness for God the energies of love," for the second time fire will have been discovered by humanity.

But how can this happen? How can the fire this time be that of compassion and peace, not of destruction?

For one thing, we have to care about this subject, not just talk about it. We should pray for progress in our places of worship, our churches, synagogues, mosques, temples and shrines. We must live it and believe it, we must advocate it. And we must advocate it publicly.



We live in a democratic country, but the American people have almost never held elected representatives to any kind of standard to support nuclear non-proliferation, arms limitation, disarmament and peace; if anything, it is the opposite. "Waving the bloody shirt" is often a formula for getting votes. War, not peace, sometimes seems more popular until the consequences of war become clear.

In 1999, the U.S. Senate voted down the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. According to opinion polls at the time, the American people overwhelmingly opposed what the Senate had done, but only a minority said it would affect their vote for their Senator in the next election. This double standard has to end if peace and security are to be obtained, rather than war, nuclear weapons and insecurity. The public must demand it of their representatives — and that means all of us.

Thomas Merton, the author of *Seven Storey Mountain*, was a Trappist monk who lived at the Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani near Bardstown, Kentucky. In 1962, he completed a book entitled *Peace in the Post-Christian Era*. Publication of the book, however, was blocked by his superiors in Rome, but he was able to get out mimeographed copies to his friends. Though written in 1962 and not published until 2004, it speaks to us as though written yesterday.

In his book, Merton asserts that peace is a religious responsibility. He notes that if "disarmament were taken seriously, instead of being used as a pawn in the game of power politics, we could arrive at a workable agreement for the gradual reduction of arms which would be safer, saner and more realistic than war, whether limited or total."

He writes that all nuclear war, meaning any use of nuclear weapons, and the "massive destruction of cities, populations, nations and cultures by any means whatever is a most serious crime which is forbidden to us not only by Christian ethics but by every sane and serious moral code." Therefore, he declares himself a supporter of "a strong, positive and uncompromising policy of multilateral disarmament."

He calls for "unremitting study, meditation, prayer and every form of spiritual and intellectual discipline" to prepare to follow such a serious course of action. We must be aware of the "poisonous effect of the mass media that keeps violence, cruelty and sadism constantly present," recognize that "the economic life of the more highly developed nations is in large part centered on the production of weapons" and understand that "hate propaganda" directed by governments toward each other will "inevitably lead to violent conflict."

Merton charged us that "It is no longer reasonable or right to leave all decisions to largely anonymous power elite that are driving us all, in our passivity, toward ruin. We have to make ourselves heard." Merton knew in 1962 what we all must do; let us at long last in 2012 and beyond follow his lead.

Thomas Graham, Jr. is a former senior-level diplomat and expert on international arms control. He is the author of numerous books and publications on nuclear weapon proliferation. His government service has included Acting Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and general counsel to the ACDA for 15 years. He was involved in major arms-control agreements from 1970-1997, including SALT and the ABM Treaty. Graham, who earned a law degree from Harvard University and a bachelor's degree from Princeton, is currently executive chairman of Lightbridge Corp. of McLean, Va. How many nuclear weapons are there and what countries have them?

The exact number of nuclear weapons is not certain because countries guard that knowledge as top secret. However, experts with the Federation of American Scientists estimate there are 19,500 nuclear weapons worldwide.

Scientists estimate that Russia has an arsenal of 10,000; the U.S. has 8,500; France has 300; China, 240; the United Kingdom, 225; Pakistan, 90-110; Israel and India, 60-80 each; and North Korea, less than 10.

Source: Ploughshares Fund



A Model of Compassion

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was a Lutheran theologian who, despite his pacifism, participated in a World War II plot to assassinate Adolf Hitler.

He was deeply influenced by the Sermon on the Mount, which demanded, according to Bonhoeffer, that believers render compassionate service to others even when it required heroic courage. This was the basis of his resistance against Hitler's treatment of Jewish people. He was arrested by the Gestapo and executed by hanging in April 1945.

Martin Doblmeier's documentary about Bonhoeffer's life is the featured film for the 2012 Festival of Faiths, the theme for which is Sacred Fire: Light of Compassion.

Discussion Questions Prompted by the "Bonhoeffer" Documentary

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was born in Berlin, observed the effect of WWI on religion, which was largely Christian in the Europe of his day. Every nation, the victors and vanquished alike, claimed God was on its side. Theologian Karl Barth called this nationalization of religion a catastrophe for Christianity. Discuss how the nationalization of religion affects the value that is placed on compassion as a means of living up to human and spiritual demands.

 As a theology student at the University of Berlin in the 1920s, Bonhoeffer came to the conclusion that believers had



to be compassionate. His justification was the Sermon on the Mount, which indicated that to do the right thing one must stand with the poor, the persecuted, the victims of injustice. Should religious leaders encourage compassionate activism among their followers?

- Bonhoeffer was favorably impressed with the black churches of America, particularly the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem. The spirituals acknowledged suffering, but the sermons delivered a message of grace and divine love. These are the attributes of compassion, which heals the wounds of suffering through comfort. Do you agree with Bonhoeffer that compassion is the foundation for a life of faith?
- On April 1, 1933, Hitler's government called for a boycott of Jewish merchants. Bonhoeffer's mother chose not to honor the boycott, but it was forcefully imposed by the army. Speculate on what may have happened if an army of believers had stood by the Jewish merchants in 1933.
- What did Bonhoeffer mean when he said that only those who spoke out for the Jews had the right to sing Gregorian Chant?
- Sonhoeffer could have escaped harm and continued a life of teaching and scholarship if he had remained in New York City in 1945. He chose to return to Germany because many people, mainly Jews, were being killed. What do you think about his decision?

- Bonhoeffer had been a pacifist since WWI. He had planned to travel to India and study nonviolent resistance under Gandhi. Instead, he stayed in Germany to address compelling issues. Several years later, he participated in an assassination plot against Hitler. Why do you think Bonhoeffer joined in this plot? Were his actions moral and justified? Why or why not?
- Considering Bonhoeffer's deeds and teachings as presented in the documentary and the challenges in your own life, how do you define compassion, and how do you express it?



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SACRED

Resources

Sacred Fire Bibliography

Publications by Festival of Faiths Participants

REV. CANON SALLY BINGHAM

Love God; Heal Earth (21 Leading Religious Voices Speak Out On Our Sacred Duty to Protect Our Environment)

SARAH ELIZABETH BURKEY

- Western Kentucky: Lost & Forgotten, Found & Remembered (co-author Ron Whitehead)
- Music: Don't Die Yet, When the Redbuds Bloom, Honeysuckle Vine
- barefootsongbird.com

REV. JOAN BROWN CAMPBELL

Living into Hope: A Call to Spiritual Action For Such a Time as This

How to be a Perfect Stranger: A Guide to Etiquette in Other People's Religious Ceremonies (co-authors Arthur J. Magida and Stuart M. Matlins) Audio Lectures: So Great a Cloud of Witnesses, The Leap of Faith, The Women's Global Peace Initiative

THOMAS GRAHAM, JR.

- Common Sense on Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Cornerstones of Security: Arms Control and International Law in a Nuclear Era (co-author Damien La Vera)
- Disarmament Sketches: Three Decades of Arms Control and International Law
- Spy Satellites and Other Technologies that Have Changed the Course of History (co-author Keith Hansen)

Unending Crises

BERT G. HORNBACK

Great Expectations: A Novel of Friendship
 The Hero of My Life: Essays on Dickens
 Middlemarch: A Novel of Reform

CECILY JONES, SISTER OF LORETTO

- Poetry: The Others in the Kingdom, Wildflowers in the Dining Room, Cockleburs and Shrapnel: the Hands of Women
- Poems published in The Merton Seasonal, America, The Bible Today, Just Women

STEPHEN POWELL

Stephen Rolfe Powell: Glassmaker stephenrolfepowell.com

ELAINE PREVALLET, SISTER OF LORETTO

- Toward a Spirituality for Global Justice: A Call to Kinship
- Making the Shift: Seeing Faith through a New Lens
- ♦ Interconnections



LARRY L. RASMUSSEN

- ♦ Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Reality and Resistance
- ◊ Reinhold Niebuhr: Theologian of Public Life (Making of Modern Theology)
- ♦ A Greener Faith: Religious Environmentalism and Our Planet's Future
- ♦ Earth Community, Earth Ethics, Earth Habitat
- Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response
- Ethics for a Small Planet: New Horizons on Population, Consumption, and Ecology (co-author Daniel C. Maguire)

Books related to Festival of Faiths theme of compassion

- The Age of Empathy by Frans de Waal
 Angels and Ages: A Short Book About Darwin, Lincoln and Modern Life by
- Adam Gopnik A Woman of Courage and Compassion: Conversations with Rev. Joan Brown Campbell by Judy Lawrence
- ♦ The Better Angels of Our Nature by Steven Pinker
- Sorn to Be Good, The Science of a Meaningful Life by Dacher Keltner
- ♦ A Call to Compassion by Karen Armstrong
- ♦ The Compassionate Classroom by Jane Dalton and Lyn Fairchild
- The Compassionate Instinct: The Science of Human Goodness by Dacher Keltner, Jason Marsh and Jeremy Adam Smith

Connected by Nicholas A. Christakis and James H. Folwer

- ♦ Dalai Lama's Little Book of Compassion: Essential Teachings by The Dalai Lama
- ◊ Do Unto Others by Samuel P. Oliner
- ♦ Emotional Awareness by The Dalai Lama and Paul Ekman
- ♦ The Empathic Civilization by Jeremy Rifkin
- The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck
- ♦ The Hand of Compassion by Kristen Renwick Monroe
- *♦ Lift* by Kelly Corrigan
- Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens
- ♦ On the Street by Marianne Novak Houston
- *◊ Our Inner Ape* by Frans de Waal
- Raising Happiness: 10 Simple Steps for More Joyful Kids and Happier Parents by Christine Carter



- ♦ Rachel and Her Children: Homeless Families in America by Jonathan Kozol
- *♦ Roots of Empathy* by Mary Gordon
- ♦ To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
- *♦ Our Town* by Thornton Wilder
- Tivelve Steps to a Compassionate Life (audio CD) by Karen Armstrong
- ♦ What are People For? by Wendell Berry
- Why Good Things Happen to Good People by Stephen Post and Jill Neimark

Other Publications

- ♦ Claiming Earth as Common Ground by Rabbi Andrea Cohen-Kiener
- ♦ A Climate for Change: Global Warming Facts for Faith-Based Decisions by Katherine Hayhoe and Andrew Farley

- ♦ The Green Bible by Harper One
- ♦ Natural Saints: How People of Faith are Working to Save God's Earth by Mallory McDuff
- * "The Precious Necessity of Compassion" by Joan Halifax, *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*, Vol. 41, Iss. 1

Books for Children

- ♦ The Can Man by Laura E. Williams
- The Dandelion Seed by Joseph P. Anthony
- The Family Under the Bridge by Natalie Savage Carlson
- Honi the Circlemaker: Eco-Fables from Ancient Israel by Barry Schwartz
- Keepers of the Faith: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children by Michael Caduto and Joseph Bruchac

- Kindness: A Treasury of Buddhist Wisdom for Children and Parents by Sarah Conover
- ♦ Koi and the Kola Nuts: A Tale from Liberia by Verna Aardema
- ♦ The Land of Curiosities by Deanna Neil
- *♦ Monkey Island* by Paula Fox
- The North Pole is Sinking! A Tale about Global Warming by Ethan Khiem Matasuda and Michael Matasuda
- *♦ Old Turtle* by Douglas Wood
- The Quiltmaker's Gift by Jeff Brumbeau
- Play Lightly on the Earth: Nature Activities for Children 3-9 by Jacqueline Horsfall
- Street Family by Adrienne Jones
- ♦ Your Will Be Done on Earth: Eco-Spiritual Activities for 12-15-Year-Olds by Christie L. Jenkins



A Dozen Suggested Works on Compassion by Kentucky Authors

- *♦ Band of Angels* by Robert Penn Warren
- Blessed are the Peacemakers: Christ's Teachings about Love, Compassion and Forgiveness by Wendell Berry
- ♦ The Compassionate Community by Jonathan Miller
- ♦ Four Spirits by Sena Jeter Naslund
- Hannah Coulter by Wendell Berry
- ♦ Mirel's Daughter by Kay Gill
- ♦ A Parchment of Leaves by Silas House
- Poetry and Compassion by Frederick Smock
- ♦ The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver
- River of Earth by James Still
- The Seven Storey Mountain by Thomas Merton
- ♦ With a Hammer for My Heart by George Ella Lyon

Homelessness Resources

- The Center for Women and Families thecenteronline.org
- The Coalition for the Homeless louhomeless.org
- Family Scholar House familyscholarhouse.org
- Father Maloney's Boys and Girls Haven boyshaven.org
- **The Healing Place** thehealingplace.org
- The Home of the Innocents homeoftheinnocents.com
- The House of Ruth, Inc. houseofruth.net
- Jefferson Street Baptist Center jeffersonstreet.org
- National Alliance to End Homelessness endhomelessness.org
- National Coalition for Homeless Veterans nchv.org
- New Beginnings for Women 1261 S. Brook St., 502-634-4252
- Operation Care, Inc. operationcareky.org
- Passages to Recovery 1230 Logan St., 502-356-9490

- Phoenix Health Center fhclouisville.org/phoenix/htm
- Salvation Army Louisville and Southern Indiana salvationarmy.org/louisville and

salvationarmyindiana.org

- St. John Center for Homeless Men stjohncenter.org
- St. Vincent de Paul of Louisville svdplou.org
- Volunteers of America voaky.org
- Wayside Christian Mission waysidechristianmission.org
- YMCA of Louisville Chestnut St. ymcalouisville.org
- YMCA Safe Place Service safeplaceservices.org

Other Helpful Websites

- Bioneers bioneers.org
- The Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education ccare.stanford.edu
- Greater Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life greatergood.berkeley.edu

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Interfaith Power & Light interfaithpowerandlight.org

- National Fire Protection Association nfpa.org
- The Regeneration Project theregenerationproject.org
 Safe Kids Inc. safekids.org
- U.S. Fire Administration usfa.fema.gov/kids/

Curriculum Links

- Education World, Fire Safety: Activities to Spark Learning educationworld.com
- National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences niehs.nih.gov
- Online lesson plans for teachers about homelessness dpi.state.nd.us/title1/ homeless/resources/onlinplan.pdf
- ♦ Teachers First teachersfirst.com
- For a list of books for schoolchildren about homelessness homelessed.net/schools/booklist.htm

For lesson plans and other resources that teach compassion, philanthropy and civic engagement learningtogive.org nomoreturningaway.org

Movies of Compassion

♦ Bonhoeffer (2003) ♦ Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace (2000) ♦ Children of Heaven ♦ Dead Man Walking ♦ The Elephant Man ♦ The Gods Must Be Crazy ♦ Monsters Inc. ♦ Hotel Rwanda ♦ One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest ◊ Philadelphia ♦ Saving Pvt. Ryan ♦ Schindler's List ♦ To Kill a Mockingbird Toy Story movies

SACRED FIRE Faith in Action Tool Kit · Vol. 4

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Religious communities are, without question, the largest and best organized civil institutions in the world today, claiming the allegiance of billions of believers and bridging the divides of race, class, and nationality. They are uniquely equipped to meet the challenges of our time: resolving conflicts, caring for the earth, the sick and needy, and promoting peaceful co-existence among all people.

 \sim Religions for Peace