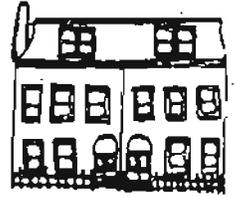


FROM LITTLE HOUSE

by Mary Ann McGivern, S.L.



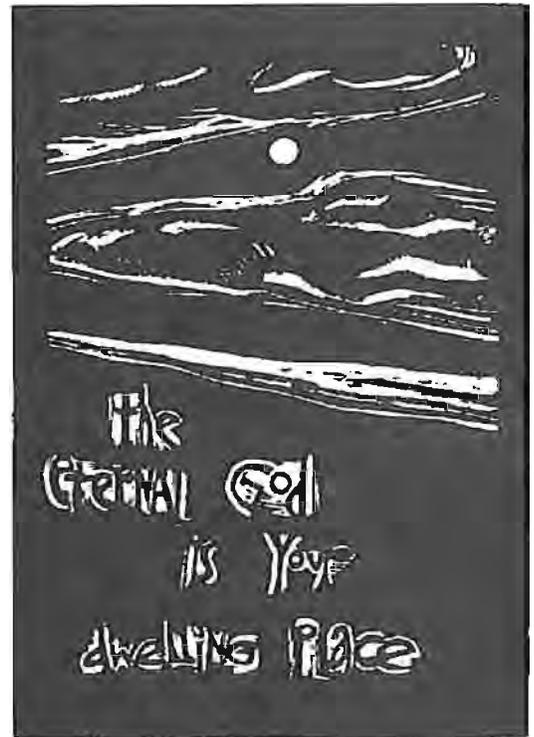
For a person who has a vow of poverty and lives at the Catholic Worker, I spend a lot of my time thinking about money. First, as part of my job at the Economic Conversion Project, I'm forever counting the seven billion dollars that the Pentagon is spending here in St. Louis. People ask me how much a Cruise Missile costs, or an F-15 — and I know! \$1.3 million and \$50 million. How many jobs does a billion dollars generate? It used to be 30,000. Now the bureau of Labor Statistics says 25,000; but a billion dollars in the arms industry may not generate more than 10,000 or 15,000 jobs because weapon production is capital intensive.

So much for discussion of the big bucks. At the other end of the spectrum, I just bought three gallons of a discontinued line of outdoor paint at Central Hardware that almost matches our back porch for \$5. a gallon. Elijah's getting married and I wanted him to buy a good sports jacket instead of renting a tuxedo; but Tim Dunn's advice was that spending money on a wedding helps to "make it take", helps the newlyweds view marriage more seriously. But Joan, the bride's mother, and I are counting our pennies, cooking all the food ourselves for the rehearsal dinner and reception. And on yet another home front, users on Lorraine's and my extensions have made \$5. worth of 1-411 calls and the two of us are out to get those information-seekers and make them pay their .45 per call.

The house needs some small repairs, like fixing storm windows; but we are waiting to see if the Missouri Supreme Court says the passage of the St. Louis School Bond Issue for \$100 million by 61% was legal, which would give the school board money to build the new school on our property. There's a case of not knowing what to pray for. Actually, we're praying the site be moved to Pruitt Igoe, and I heard a rumor today (in March) that that's what will happen.

I used some Christmas donation money to take the six children in Paul's extended family shopping for clothes at New Hope, a used goods store about a block from us. Four adults went with the children and we

bought three pairs of jeans for each kid, shirts, dresses for the girls, two winter jackets, boots and shoes, pajamas and nightgowns — 56 items of clothing for \$75. The two girls knew what they wanted and we had to do a little negotiating to get dresses that they liked and would be useful. The two older boys needed a little time to get the hang of shopping, but they caught on. The toddlers docilely let everyone try clothes on them.



Melnard Craighead

Mary Ann McGivern, SL, is alive and well and "Living in St. Louis" on Monday mornings on KWMU.

The Worker always needs money, (We have a big plumbing bill coming up.) and we spend carefully; but people always respond generously to our requests for help with immediate needs. It is harder to raise money for long-range social change like economic conversion. We send out mailings, make phone calls, visit people, hold concerts (Jim Ford's group will sing for us in June), and sell calendars. My latest embryonic idea is to hold an afternoon of writing letters to Congress this summer and get sponsors for all the letter-writers. So instead of paying fifty cents for every mile walked, a sponsor would pay fifty cents for every letter written.

Funding proposals is another kettle of fish. I've received grants from the Peace Research Lab and the Sisters of Loretto, but generally foundations don't seem to be supporting economic conversion. I helped write the St. Louis County proposal to the Department of Defense for a conversion planning grant and I helped

write proposals to the Missouri Arts Council to underwrite production of new plays by local playwrights. It was incredibly easier to get \$100,000 from the DOD than \$3000 from MAC.

Finally, in March I wrote an essay about local sports for the program for the Leukemia Association big fundraiser: Breakfast of Champions. BJ, who lived at the Little House for about 5 years, was one of the first children to recover from leukemia. The breakfast was attended by upper middle class sports fans, but it was not a project of the super rich. Comfortable Americans joined to fight a terrible disease. The breakfast happened to be held on the anniversary of my brother Frank's death from AIDS, another disease with no money for research or prevention or care. I cried that morning on the way to the breakfast, for lack of money for so many people I care about, and for how we as a nation spend the money we have. +

FROM KAREN HOUSE

by Tim Pekarek



It is not easy for me to describe how life has been lately at Karen House. I think that life in wartime has been difficult for all of us to handle. I recall that we were just gathering for our community meeting on that evening in early January when the U.S. and allies began bombing Baghdad. During the weeks to follow several community members would be spending time at vigils and demonstrations against the war. Shortly after the war began Mark and Teka were arrested with twenty others while blocking the entrance to the main federal building in downtown St. Louis. Currently there is news of a cease-fire and talks to end the war.

Throughout these weeks we have all managed pretty well with the rest of our lives. It has been fun for all of us to watch both of the Catholic Worker babies growing up – Ben born to Katrina and Jim back in September, and Terri born to Sharon in December. Sen-

nora has volunteered to be a support person for one of our guests who is due to have her child in a few days.

Jim, Katrina, and I, along with a group of friends of the community, are planning a garden on an empty piece of land on our block. With good weather we should be started soon (crocuses and snow drops are already blooming in the yard at Karen House!).

Mark and I have escaped the city for a hike in the woods once in a while. I'll not soon forget our trip to Hawn State Park on New Year's Day . . . with several inches of ice on the ground and us sliding around like penguins!

Virginia has been doing a bit of traveling and in fact made it up to Syracuse to see Pat and Karin.

I would like to end with a thank you to all for your constant support. +

Tim Pekarek rejoined the St. Louis Catholic Worker community last June after spending a few years in Chicago. He is a creative cook, a vegetarian, and an avid gardener.