Deacon’s family reflects the world

By Mary Stamp

Immigration has made the family of Gonzalo (Chalo) Martinez, a deacon in the Catholic Diocese of Spokane, a reflection of the world.

When he spoke several years ago at a national deacons event in Spokane on diversity in the church, he said, “There are many faces in God’s house.”

Then he showed a picture of his family and said, “There are many faces in Chalo’s house.”

Chalo, whose family came from Mexico to Texas in the early 1900s, and his wife, Laura, who is first-generation Filipino, have two sons and three daughters. Their 14 grandchildren are a mix of African American, Native American, Irish and Italian heritages, as well as Filipino and Mexican backgrounds.

“We get along. It’s not just because of blood. Skin color has no significance,” Chalo said, challenging how society often makes skin color and immigration status divisive.

“We need to open people’s eyes to accept those who come to the U.S., because diversity enriches our society,” he said. “We are all God’s children.”

For Chalo, “all” includes immigrants, prisoners, parolees, homeless and parishioners.

Donna Simanton has advocated for peace through her 95 years

From growing up with Swedish Lutheran and Czech Bohemian Catholic parents on a farm near Lansing, Mich., to living in Spokane, Donna Simanton’s commitment to advocate for peace and justice has woven throughout her 95 years.

In the Qualchan Hills neighborhood she and her late husband, Jim’s intersected with the times in which they lived. Jim, who had served in the Signal Corps and helped rebuild communications facilities at air bases in Germany and France after World War II, returned from seeing the destruction saying, “Never again!”

“I was glad he felt the same as I did,” she said.

Influenced to live frugally by growing up in the Great Depression and World War II, and by their modest incomes, Donna and Jim gave gifts of $20 to $50 to groups promoting equal rights, peace and environmentalism.

Then, after they received a settlement for royalties from television manufacturers for Jim’s development of stereophonic sound, they created the James R. and Donna H. Simanton Foundation in 1988.

They decided to use the funds to support global, national and local groups that promote education, medical health, mental health, hunger relief, housing, peace and justice, including KSPS, KPLU, Doctors without Borders, Habitat for Humanity, Johns Hopkins University, Michigan State University, the Salvation Army Spokane, the Southern Poverty Law Center, UNICEF and the Taos Music School for latchkey children.

Donna mentioned some other favorite beneficiaries, and told of some peace and justice actions she joined in.

• Another Mother for Peace, founded in 1967, educates for end...Continued on page 8

Workshop starts census outreach through faiths

As an initial part of The Fig Tree’s outreach to congregations to be involved in the 2020 Census, Jim CastroLang, pastor of Colville First Congregational United Church of Christ and member of the Faith Action Network Board, led a workshop at the Eastern Washington Legislative Conference.

“Involvement of faith communities in the census is one way to work for justice,” he said, “because so much is at stake in representation in government and funding programs serving the vulnerable.”

He is program coordinator for The Fig Tree’s effort to have congregations invite hard-to-reach communities to participate.

As part of the workshop, Alex Panagiotacos, Spokane County Census Committee coordinator at Innovia Foundation, spoke of the importance of a fair and accurate count. The Constitution mandates a count of the population every 10 years.

In 2010, the Census Bureau hired 200 people to do partner work for justice,” he said, “because so much is at stake in representation in government and funding programs serving the vulnerable.”

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**Program delivers meals, opens Silver Café**

In 2020, Habitat for Humanity-Spokane is acquiring blighted, abandoned homes—known as zombie houses—for rehabilitation and community restoration projects. That protects power, privilege and profits for the elites, said Janet Girardot.

Funded in part by City of Spokane Community Development Block Grants, the Derelict Housing Acquisition and Homeownership Program purchases such homes, partnering with low-to-moderate income homeowners, who earn 25 to 80 percent of the area median income. Applicants, who complete its requirements of “sweat equity,” or volunteer work, will be able to apply for closing costs, paying a mortgage at 30 percent of their income. The program will also help the community by transforming neglected, unsafe, unhealthy houses into safe, affordable homes and by providing more affordable housing for tax-paying homeowners.

“Hayes is a housing crisis with demand outstripping supply, and families are pushed into bedrooms,” she said. “We need someone to help and that’s what our goal is.”

The program relies on skilled and volunteer labor and donations and cash donations.

Several rehab projects are underway in the West Central Neighborhood, where some houses were magnets for criminal activity.

“Homes are sold at fair market value,” Michelle said. “Our challenge is to find empty units that won’t price out a family. Today even homes needing attention sell for over the appraised value and then sit empty for months or years.”

“Affordable homeownership helps families achieve the stability and self-reliance they need to build a better life. It also stabilizes neighborhoods,” she said.

For information, call 534-2552 or visit habitat-spokean.org.

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**Habitat-Spokane will restore ‘zombie’ houses**

Each day, Greater Spokane County Meals on Wheels (GSC-MOW) makes 1,000 meals in its kitchen for home-bound seniors and Silver Café participants.

While drivers deliver meals on 44 routes over 1,800 square miles of Spokane County, some mobile seniors go out to socialize and eat a hot, nutritious meal at a Silver Café, one of the 12 congregate sites GSC-MOW operates Monday through Friday.

On Jan. 31, GSC-MOW opened a new Silver Café at St. Mary of the Presentation, 602 E. 6th St. in Deer Park. Previously Deer Park’s Silver Café was in the lower level of City Hall, but stairs made it difficult for many people to come, said Janet Dixon, director of development and communication. The new location is accessible by wheelchair and walkers. For 40 years, GSC Meals on Wheels has fought senior hunger and isolation with its programs.

“Those threats jeopardize the health and well-being of older adults, especially those with limited means,” said Janet. “Social interaction is vital for keeping seniors active, healthy and connected to their community. Silver Cafés include speakers, games and education.”

For information, call 924-6976 or email gscmeals@spokean-wheels.org.

**Religious Ecumenical & Interfaith News**

The Fig Tree celebrates its 36th year of publishing at its 2020 Benefit Lunch on Friday, March 6, and Benefit Breakfast on Monday, March 9, in Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University.

Addressing the theme, “Connects People, Inspires Action,” speakers will relate how The Fig Tree fosters an understanding of news of people who are making a difference because of their faith. The theme is reflected in the annual Resource Directory connects people in the caring community and is used by people in need to improve their lives.

Lunch speakers are Margo Hill, Eastern Washington University associate professor; Mark Finney of World Relief; Linda Hunt of the Krista Foundation, and Jeanette Laster of the Human Rights Education Institute in Coeur d’Alene.

Breakfast speakers are Joe Ador of Family Promise; David Millican of the Hurton Settlement; Dianne Stroh of the Center for Justice, and Suzi Hokonson, social justice advocate.

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Habitat’s Women Build is March 4 to 7
Habitat for Humanity-Spokane’s annual Women Build event, “Building Strong Women and Strong Communities,” from March 4 to 7, encourages women to help build houses in West Central Spokane. Participants who also donate receive a $50 donation to support Habitat legos.

Women Build brings communities together to address Spokane’s housing crisis. It empowers women as they help other women find strength, stability and self-reliance through home ownership, said Michelle Girardot, executive director. Women Build is an affordable, affordable homes for low-income, hardworking families, they challenge stereotypes, learn home-building skills and have fun making a difference. For information, call 534-252-252 or visit habitat-spokane.org/wb2020.

PJALS features Zach Norris as conference keynote
Zach Norris, executive director of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights and co-founder of Restore Oakland, will speak at the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane (PJALS) event and spring benefit is “Believing in the Yet to Be.” Zach brings a restorative and racial justice lens to criminal justice issues and reform. A Harvard graduate and New York University-educated attorney, Zach is a founder of We Keep Us Safe Building Secure, Just and Inclusive Communities. He is a co-founder of Justice for Families, which works to reduce youth incarceration. For information, call 838-7870 or visit pjals.org.

LCSNW seeks more foster families for children
To meet the growing needs, Lutheran Community Services Northwest in Spokane seeks foster parents for children from birth to 17. In 2019, it received 111 referrals from Washington’s Department of Children, Youth and Families to place children, but lacked homes to place any. LCS had an average of eight referrals a week for unaccompanied refugee minors, but placed only eight youth in the year. In December 2019, LCSNW had 31 youth in care. For information, call 747-8224.

Gonzaga is one of 50 sites for Holocaust exhibit
Gonzaga University is one of 50 sites for an exhibit of the American Holocaust Museum and the American Library Association, “Americans and the Holocaust,” from March 16 to April 27 in its Foley Library Rare Books Room. Gonzaga’s Institute for Hate Studies, its Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the Spokane County Human Rights Task Force are planning three public events.
• An opening reception and panel on “Hate Reflections and Action” is at 7 p.m., Sunday, March 17, in Hemmingson Auditorium.
• Holocaust survivors Cora de Koorckian and Carla Peperzak will share their insights in a “story court” at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 31, in Hemmingson Ballroom.
• A panel from the consortium academic centers for the study of hate will discuss “Hate: Documenting It, Understanding It and Counting It” from 7 to 8:30 p.m., Monday, April 22, in Cataldo Hall. For information, visit www.gonzaga.edu/holocaustexhibit.

Whitworth offers several March lectures
• For Whitworth’s fourth Bioethics Symposium, Tripp Parker, a machine learning leader at Amazon and founding member of AI and Faith, will speak on “Artificial Intelligence: Hope for the Future or Ethical Nightmare?” at 7 p.m., Thursday, March 12, at Weyerhaeuser Hall.
• Jemar Tisby, president of The Witness, a Black Christian Coalition, will discuss “What Is the Color of Compromise: The Role of Race in the Church Today” at 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 17, in Weyerhaeuser Hall.
• Eric Metaxas, bestselling author of If You Can Keep It, will speak at 7 p.m., Wednesday, March 18, at Cowles Auditorium. For information, call 777-1000 or visit whitworth.edu/calendar.

Presentation shares census information
Continued from page 1
March 12 to 20, inviting people to do the survey online, which may be a barrier to some, but paper forms are available, too. In May, there will be home visits to encourage participation.

For Washington, $13.7 billion is at stake, and $640 billion nationally, Alex said. That includes funds for Section 8 Housing, Head Start, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and more.

The count determines the number of representatives in Congress, state legislatures and city councils, and has impact on school district lines.

In Eastern Washington, $3,000 per person is at stake to fund schools, roads, hospitals and publishing,” Alex said. “Everyone counts.”

She said Title 13 protects people’s data. The law prevents the Census Bureau from sharing information with anyone, she said. They cannot share with Home Security, ICE, landlords or any other entity. Census area employees take an oath to protect the information. Once received, personal identity and demographic information are separated.

Communities that are hard to count include low income, racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ, non-English speakers, persons experiencing homelessness, undocumented immigrants, people who distrust the government, young children, mobile persons, persons with mental or physical disabilities, people not in traditional housing and people living in rural communities.

The Fig Tree is developing strategies to relate locations of faith communities with hard-to-count areas, Jim said.

Panelists from hard-to-count groups shared their insights:
• Sarah Dixit, senior field organizer with Planned Parenthood of Greater Washington and Northern Idaho (PPGWI), talked of studen
tutors reaching peers on college campuses.
• Lucas Leek, who is transgender health and community coordinator at PPGWI, told of fear of discrimination and difficulty filling out the form, which gives only two options for sex, M or F. While F is on Lucas’ birth certificate, M is on Lucas’ driver’s license.

Alex said that the Census Bureau will not compare responses, but “it’s an understandable fear.”

“There is a $100 fine if we do not fill out a survey, $500 for falsifying information and $5,000 for misrepresenting information,” Lucas said.

Fernanda Mazof, who organizes with the Latino community with Raiz of PPGWI, said 2.7 million African Americans and Latinos were undercounted in the 2010 census, resulting in many distrust the government.

Kimball Bighouse of the Kootenai Nation, employed by the Coeur d’Alena tribe, said tribes also distrust the government because of broken treaties and subsidies.

Because letters go to people with an address, not a PO box, it leaves out homeless people and people on reservations who do not have a street address, he said. Even when census volunteers go door to door, they may miss people who are away.

Catholic Charities is helping count people in its housing projects.

“Faith communities may sign up to help count people in their neighborhoods and people receiving their services,” Jim said. “We need to build trust, so we have an accurate count to make sure there are resources for everyone.”

For information on the faith community outreach project, call Jim at 998-4203. To learn about the census, visit spokanecensus.org.

Gonzaga involves campus in Northeast Spokane
Gonzaga University is launching Opportunity Northeast to improve lives of individuals, youth and families in Northeast Spokane and offer economic, educational and health challenges. Data gathered in 2017 found a median household income of $33,171, 39 percent of children living at or below the poverty line, 77 to 94 percent of children living at or below the poverty line, 77 to 94 percent of children living at or below the poverty line, 77 to 94 percent of children living at or below the poverty line, 77 to 94 percent of children living at or below the poverty line.

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For information, visit www.gonzaga.edu/ONE.

BJC presents spring Benefit Lunch
Benefit Lunch, Friday, March 6
Buffet begins 11:30 a.m. • Program 12:1-1 p.m.

Benefit Breakfast
Monday, March 9
Buffet begins 7:00 a.m. • Program 7:30-8:00 a.m.

Both are at Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University
The breakfast and luncheon are complimentary. Guests will be invited to donate to support The Fig Tree.

TO RSVP, CALL 535-4112 or 535-1813
email event@thetigertree.org
The Fig Tree, 1323 S. Perry St., Spokane WA 99202

RSVP now to assure seating
Deacon says Hispanic involvement is rising

Continued from page 1

famines, disease and ecological disasters like drought. They come for a better life.

His family settled in Dallas-Fort Worth as migrant workers. They traveled in caravans to do field work on farms in Indiana, Ohio and Illinois.

After Chalo’s grandfather abandoned the family, his father—the oldest—went to work. His sisters and nieces called him “Papa.” After his siblings married, he married Chalo’s mother, who was 13 years younger.

As children, Chalo’s older siblings worked in the fields and did odd jobs until his father found a permanent job at a Fort Worth meat packing plant, where his co-workers were African Americans and Mexicans.

Chalo grew up in a neighborhood with black, white and Hispanic workers.

“There was no prejudice,” he said.

Chalo spent four years in high school in a seminary in California with the Claretian Fathers. After studying philosophy at Loyola Marymount, he realized when he graduated in 1966 that the priesthood was not his calling.

“With faith, I see good in people. Just as the juveniles’ parents, I had hopes for them. The youth would open up about what was going on inside, about their dreams and hopes. Most accepted responsibility for what they did. I saw how many change their lives,” he said.

Chalo worked with offenders even as they violated parole, went back to prison and forgave them.

For 23 years, he did lay ministry. The priest at Sacred Heart Parish in Lacey, where he helped with liturgy for Spanish services, encouraged him to become a deacon.

During the Archdiocese of Seattle’s four-year diocesan program, he moved to Spokane Valley, was a lay leader at St. Mary, and was ordained a deacon 25 years ago in 1994. In May 2004, he earned a master’s degree in pastoral ministry at Gonzaga University and retired as U.S. parole officer.

Chalo has served as a deacon at St. Mary in the Valley, the Cathedral of Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Joseph in Spokane, and at St. Rose of Lima in Cheney.

For 25 years, he has served intermittently with the Hispanic ministry at St. Joseph’s on Dean. Along with being a deacon, he has been involved with immigration issues, people in the criminal justice system and as a Hospice of Spokane chaplain.

Before Lutheran pastor John Olson—who founded Nightwalk Ministry in downtown Spokane—retired in 1999, Chalo joined that ministry of presence on streets and in bars, listening to people’s needs. With Deacon Kelly Stewart of Assumption parish, he is reviving Nightwalk.

He encourages parishioners at Assumption, St. Joseph’s in Otis Orchards and St. Rose of Lima to bring food and clothing to homeless people.

“In Nightwalk, I don’t know what I will encounter. I meet rough looking guys who ask to talk with me. They share how they messed up or lost parole. I listen to them and pray with them,” he said.

Chalo has also been involved with the national V Encuentro program, engaging Catholic leaders to reach out to Hispanic Catholics who are on the peripheries of the church and society—those not actively involved in a faith community or living in at-risk situations. It started in the early 1960s, to develop liturgies in Spanish and reflect Hispanic culture and traditions.

In the 1990s, attendance at St. Joseph’s on Dean was low because many Hispanics had left. Now, he said, it is “packed and active” with prayer groups and Bible studies.

In January 2018, 300 attended the diocesan V Encuentro in Othello.

In the Spokane Diocese, St. Patrick’s in Tri Cities, the largest parish, is more than 50 percent Hispanic. Other parishes with Hispanics are Sacred Heart in Brewster, St. Patrick in Walla Walla, St. Vincent in Connell, and Sacred Heart in Othello.

At St. Joseph’s on Dean, parish leaders encourage Spanish and English-speaking members to mingle at events to break down barriers “and remind them we are many faces of God in God’s house,” Chalo said.

“We help parishioners accept their differences and feel comfortable when they are together,” he said. “We help them be conscious that we all are God’s children.”

For information, call 263-9553. gmartinez@dioceseofspokane.org.
The opening session of the 2020 Eastern Washington Legislative Conference brought calls to challenge unjust housing policies that leave tenants fearing they will lose their homes, and for the city to address both improving tenant-landlord relations and increasing affordable housing.

Terri Anderson, executive director of the Tenants Union of Washington in Spokane, and Breen Beggs, City Council president, spoke of the increasing rents and eviction policies increase homelessness.

The tenants union offers four workshops in tenants’ clinics a month in Spokane to help renters improve their living conditions and organize.

Terri’s presentation outlined several problems and priorities:

• One is expanding housing choice vouchers so people pay no more than 30 percent of income on rent. Funds cover only 26 percent of people in need nationally and just 12 percent in Spokane.
• Another is a cap on the rate of increase in rents. Some report rents rising from $550 to $750 in one month. The state has no rent control law, no City or county can establish one.
• A third is to require longer notice for all rent increases and to allow tenants to pay up-front costs in six monthly installments.
• Fourth, the city tenant protection proposals could also require landlords to possess a business license, require limited inspection on certain rental properties and require landlords provide tenant information and voter registration material when the tenant moves in.

“Currently a landlord can give notice on the 10th, after rent is paid, and the tenant has to be out in 20 days,” Terri said. “Rarely are damage fees returned.

She suggests the city adopt a Cause Ordinance that will require landlords to provide cause in order to terminate a tenancy and another to protect tenants to organize in their buildings free from retaliation.

Terri said Spokane is the largest city in Washington with no tenant protections beyond the Landlord-Tenant Act. Tenants lacking resources may lose housing. She also suggests Spokane adopt a prepaid tenants’ relocation fund if the property is condemned. The city could pay the tenant to sue the landlord to recoup the funds.

The City Council will consider tenant protection ordinances in March.

Breen said policies are often set to benefit people with money and power, but when people organize, they can make changes.

There need to be critical mass coming together to influence issues such as housing,” he said. “I’ve been a social worker, lawyer, city council member and a street protestor. There are all sorts of ways to work for social change.

“We have to figure which tool works when and who will do it.”

“Our community is housing burdened with many paying more than 30 percent of their incomes for rent. We are in a housing crisis because there are not enough units. Half the population, who are homeowners, don’t understand the thousands of rental increases on month-to-month leases,” he said. “We need people to understand so we can lift the entire community.”

He suggests expanding affordable housing and keeping mixed neighborhoods. One idea is to change the law that limits use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to infrastructure improvements and let it be used for building affordable housing, such as in West Central Spokane.

Breen said the city continues to improve landlord-tenant ordinances, adding to one passed two years ago creating loans for deposits and relocation assistance.

He said there is also need for new options, like single-room occupancy and cooperative ownership buildings.

“Clearly, there are some bad landlords and some bad tenants, but most are good,” he said. “The ultimate empowerment is to have affordable housing and adequate pay.”

Paul Warfield of the Mayor’s office spoke briefly, saying the mayor seeks to meet people where they are and move forward, collaborating to communicate on issues, which she recognizes are about the price and number of housing units. She plans to work with the Council on addressing the affordable housing shortage.

For information, contact terri@tenantsunion.org, breezebegg@gmail.com or pwarfield@spokane.org.
Workshop identifies dynamics of racism, supremacy

Gen Heywood of Faith Leaders and Leaders of Conscience, Walter Kendricks, pastor of Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, and John Smith, a former state senator, led an interactive workshop at the recent Legislative Conference on “Faithfully Facing Racism: Confronting White Supremacy.”

Gen said it’s essential to challenge racism and white supremacy, name the behaviors, say “Stop,” and not wait for perfection.

John, who grew up in a white supremacist family in Stevens County, shares about his experiences. He believes from his scripture and faith that people of faith have an obligation to speak out, both to defend the rights of the vulnerable and to restore those transgressing. However, he called for acting with care to avoid making “an oppressor feel oppressed because that spreads white supremacy.” The goal is to restore people. That’s how to overcome racism. Walter invited people to share their experiences of white supremacy and what it was like to be in that moment. He listed three examples: 1) being put on a corner, 2) saying, “I’m not racist. I’m color blind,” and 3) ignoring inequities of the criminal justice system. “I used to deal with racism by avoiding places where I was not welcome,” said Walter, who now seeks to educate people.

Gen suggested an approach that uses two hands: holding a hand out to say “stop” while reaching out with the other hand to say, “I’ll meet you in our common humanity.” He said, “Stop may include a spectrum of responses to hearing a racist comment—from calling it out to calling the police or taking a video.

“When a person says they don’t see color, we can point out they do and offer the second hand offering to meet in our common humanity, which means recognizing we all can have differences, but see who people are,” he said. “We need to create empathy. Part of racism is projecting fears on others.

“If a woman is a victim of sexual assault, it’s not because all men are bad. Black people have experienced harm from some white people, but not all white people are bad,” said John.

Kurtis invited people to join efforts by attending NACCP third Monday meetings, the Spokane Coalition Against Racism or a “Why Race Matters” workshop. “Come and see how you can engage with the community and understand how internalized racism is,” he said.

For information, call 408-593-9556, 724-0301 or 209-2425.

Taizé prayer service

Thursday from 4:15 to 5 PM (No charge)

ALL ARE WELCOME!

“Keeping a Holy Lent” Sat. March 14 Retreat facilitated by Sr. Patricia Novak, OSF

10 AM to 3 PM, $30 suggested donation.

Coffee tea, and simple soup lunch provided. RSVP by 3-10-20 to provak.sfjc@gmail.com or 509-241-3180

Spirituality 101 Seminars with Kathy Finley

March 16 to April 20, Mondays from 11 AM to 12:30 PM.

Six seminars for $70, individual sessions $15.

Limited scholarships available.

To register, email kathy484@gmail.com

All events are held at The Ministry Institute (TMI) chapel at 405 E. Sinto

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For more information, contact Shonna Bartlett at 313-5765 or bartletts@gonzaga.edu.

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Eastern Washington Legislative Conference

Panel focus on need for relationships and systemic compassion for homeless

Joe Adler of Family Promise, Alan Eschenbacher of All Saints Lutheran Church, and Megan Chandler and Renee Norris, both of Catholic Charities, called for “Understanding Homelessness: Compassionate Communication towards Those in Need” in a workshop for the Eastern Washington Legislative Conference.

Compassion includes engaging someone experiencing homelessness with greetings and eye contact before offering help, as well as the “systemic” compassion of shelters that receive homeless families and individuals having a coordinated entry plan.

When people go to Homeless Families Coordinated Assessment Program, ease workers first establish a relationship, then gather information to understand their eligibility for programs, said Megan. The information is entered in a database agencies access to decide the best place to refer the people, rather than having them enter shelters on a first-come-first-served basis.

Renee said because those in trauma are vulnerable and find it hard to navigate the system, she offers a copy of The Fig Trec’s Resource Directory as a self-help tool. SNAP also has a pocket guide to shelters and food banks. She said anyone—after making eye contact—can give the guides to people experiencing homelessness.

Fourteen years ago, All Saints Lutheran saw many homeless people across the street in Coeur d’Alene Park. So the church started a Tuesday evening dinner for about 70. Now 120 to 150 come—200 in the summer. About 80 percent of them are homeless. Other churches send volunteers to help set up, cook and clean up. The church’s food bank gives out 3,000 pounds of food a week.

The church also has a mental health chaplaincy that has trained 35 companions to work with homeless people.


“Programs do not change people. Relationships do,” said Joe. “There will never be enough pastors or social workers to relate to the people with no homes. The faith community can befriend people and advocate for housing, social services and opportunities.

For information, call 747-5487 or 525-3005 or visit familypromise.org, cceasternwa.org/homeless-resources or allsaints.org.

Limited to 10 people ● All Faiths Welcome ● Fee assistance available

Begin 7 p.m., Friday to 1 p.m., Sunday at Innaminate Heart Retreat Center ● RSVP by March 16

Sponsored by The Little Portion—a ministry of the Sisters of St. Francis

Women’s Cancer Survivor Retreat ● March 27-29, 2020

Facilitator: Patricia Novak, OSF

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Limited to 10 people ● All Faiths Welcome ● Fee assistance available

Begin 7 p.m., Friday to 1 p.m., Sunday at Innaminate Heart Retreat Center ● RSVP by March 16

Sponsored by The Little Portion—a ministry of the Sisters of St. Francis

For more information, visit our website at www.aspectfoundation.org

Questions? Call our local coordinator at 509-892-6809
Faith entities aid people in having a voice on bills

Paul Benz of the Faith Action Network, Mario Villanueva of the Washington State Catholic Conference and Jacob Schmidt of Earth Ministry each offered an overview of bills being proposed for the 2020 session of the Washington State Legislature during its second week. They are among the faith groups that meet with legislators to lobby on issues that matter to their values.

“Our voice matters,” Paul said. “There’s a hotline anyone can use and people could participate digitally in the Feb. 6 Advocacy Day. By calling 800-562-6000, people can offer their views on bills and have messages go to their state legislators and the governor. Residents can also call their legislators’ offices directly.” FANWA has information at fanwa.org to help people find their legislators’ offices. They have also urged airlines to train workers to identify human trafficking.

Sr. Pat described some efforts:
• Nora Nash OSF challenges Wells Fargo, which bought the bank the community used in Philadelphia. Through shareholding stock, she pushed the bank to make changes after some ethical lapses. Nora has also addressed abuses of other corporations.
• Judy Byron SP works with NWCR, a coalition of religious communities IPIC formed in 1994. Through NWCR, they bought stock in gun companies to have a voice. They have also had impact on gun sales policies at several major retailers.
• Sometimes large groups influence companies by not buying their products, Sr. Pat said. “We also urged airlines to train workers to identify human trafficking.”

More than 1,750 bills passed out of committee by the first cutoff on Feb. 7. By Feb 11, bills passed out of fiscal committees on Feb. 11. By Feb 11, bills passed out of fiscal committees before moving to the floor of the Senate and House. Bills must pass out of the first committee in the opposite chamber by Feb. 28 and the second budget committee by March 2. Bills that don’t pass by midnight March 12 are dead.

For information, call 206-625-9790 or visit fanwa.org, wacatholic.org or earthministry.org.
Donna’s commitment to peace has been influenced by her faith and life.

United Church of Christ.

in Westminster Congregational
Lutheran pastor in an Episcopal
churches, and what she called a
terian, Methodist, nondenomina-
tion with Baptist, Presby-
terian, Quaker, and Jewish people.

march. The City of Seattle conducted a Climate Action Survey during March.

Peace pole in park with prayer for peace to prevail in Japanese
dog paw prints, left. Donna Simanton in her home, right.

Peace pole in park with prayer for peace to prevail in Japanese
dog paw prints, left. Donna Simanton in her home, right.

For information, call 448-7680
or email dmsimanton@aol.com.

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COUNT ME IN!

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• 4/21/19 9:49AM VOLUNTEERS MADE 51 MILES IMPACT
After she left. Suzi and Eric Henphone communication with Suzi and are currently in detention in Guan men. Alberto and his uncle worked with asylum seekers. Attorneys. For seven weeks, she year ago to volunteer with asylum seekers. to Spokane, gives insights into story. The English-speaking are 30 after the colonial powers left, 1960s, Cameroon was divided seeking asylum. returned to Spokane, put together story of Lewis Gwegeh and freed, he went to Las Vegas, where he has a childhood friend. Lester told Suzi of a friend in Alaska, Lewis. So, when Lewis called Lester at Suzi’s phone number, she knew who he was and learned more of his situation. Suzi and Eric were corre spo nding with Lewis, and Eric offered to be his sponsor. Eric and Suzi flew to Los Angeles for Lewis’ bond hearing. “It was of value for us to go and show our white faces,” said Eric. Lewis was granted release on bond for $25,000. Eric and Suzi returned to Spokane, put together the funds and drove to Tacoma to pay Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE). Lewis called Suzi on Monday, Dec. 16, to tell of his release. He arrived Dec. 19, and lives with Eric. Lewis shared his journey into seeking asylum. From colonial times until the 1960s, Cameroon was divided into French and English sections. After the colonial powers left, the people were divided by the cultures from their colonial history. The English-speaking are 30 percent of the population, and the French-speaking—70 percent—run the government and economy. “Grievances and discrimination arose from uneven government representation and economic development,” Lewis said. In 2016, Eric Henningsen, Lewis Gwegeh Nuah and Suzi Hoksonon there was open violence between the English-speaking people and the French-speaking government. The government tried to quell the uprisings, which are still going on, and the government has responded with brutality.” Lewis earned a college degree in political science in 2014 at Cameroon University in Buea. “I hoped to serve in the national or local government to make changes,” he said, “but I learned that serving in the government is about who you know.” “Most allegiance to the govern ment is out of fear, not love,” Lewis said. In 2016, he opened a small grocery store. He ran it until govern ment forces burned it down in September 2018, because he spoke out against government brutality on the civilian population. He fled because the government threat ened his life because he stands in solidarity with English-speaking Cameroonians. He left three sib lings, a girlfriend and his son. “I crossed into Nigeria, but they have an extradition agree ment with Cameroon, so I did not feel safe. Many from Cameroon go to Ecuador, which offers a visa to Cameroonians. I arrived in Ecuador Feb. 8, and at the hotel, I met two others from Cameroon and two from India. We shared our stories. They were heading to the U.S. for political asylum, so I decided to join them.” “Trucking and traveling by bus, they crossed Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico. It took four months to reach Tijuana on May 3, 2019. Mexican immigration authori ties had Lewis and 20 others cross to San Ysidro, Calif., where they were taken to the ICE detention center near the port of entry. He spent eight days there and was in San Luis, Ariz., 10 days before go ing to Adelanto Detention Center near San Bernadino, where he was in detention for seven months. “Arroute and in detention, I learned that people in every country face unique threats, and every country has different ways of treating immigrants. When we arrived in Colombia, we found our own accommodation and applied for a transit permit,” he said. “Some had fingers chopped off. Some were fleeing gang violence. Those from India were fleeing religious violence and discrimination.” Just as detainees’ stories varied, so did ICE officers varied. Some were compassionate, but followed professional rules to avoid becoming close. Some were heartless, said Lewis. Until his asylum hearing Dec. 15, 2021, Lewis must wear an ankle monitor. He is eligible for a work permit in six months. Lewis has started a six-week Microsoft class and will In San Ysidro, he was locked in a 10-by-24-foot room with 20 others for 10 days, and just let out for meals. He slept on the floor in a foil paper “blanket” to keep warm. In Adelanto, he met other de tainees and learned why they fled. He befriended Lester and Alberto, playing soccer in the two-hour exercise time four days a week. “I learned what was happening around the world, hearing scary stories of others fleeing from po litical violence,” said Lewis who learned Spanish enroute, adding to speaking French, English, Vengo and Lamasso. “Some people lost their entire families. The family of one was in prison. Some could not account for their children. Like me, they were heading to the U.S. to escape imminent danger,” Lewis said. “Some had bullet wounds. Some had fingers chopped off. Some were fleeing gang violence. Those from India were fleeing religious violence and discrimination.” As just as detainees’ stories varied, so did ICE officers, said Lewis. Some were compassionate, but followed professional rules to avoid becoming close. Some were heartless, said Lewis. Until his asylum hearing Dec. 15, 2021, Lewis must wear an ankle monitor. He is eligible for a work permit in six months. Lewis has started a six-week Microsoft class and will spend some time volunteering. He is already helping at the Martin Luther King Jr. Center and at the Lands Council. Lewis, who feels warmly wel come in Spokane, seeks invita tions to share his story of fleeing and immigrating with faith com munities and community groups. Lewis, who stays with Eric, is grateful for all Eric and Suzi do for him and other asylum seekers. “Many are sympathetic and are praying that my asylum will be granted so he can be a legal resident,” he said. Eric, whose grandparents immi grated from Denmark, said that immigrants come to find safety and freedom. “We need to figure out how to solve our immigration situation,” said Eric, who retired eight years ago and volunteers with Vinalant and the Fox Theater. In 2016 and 2017, he and Suzi volunteered, taking five trips over nine weeks to participate in the Standing Rock Water Protectors protest of construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. Lewis, who grew up Catholic, shares with churches his belief that this is God’s world. “It is very difficult to be a white person in this society. Life is not a bed of roses. There are ups and downs. When I feel down, I know trials strength en us,” Lewis said. “I appreciate what I had, have and will be. My faith keeps me resolute for whatever life brings.” For Suzi, the experiences with Lewis and at Standing Rock are ways to “live God’s love in the world.” Once he is granted asylum, Lewis wants to do post graduate studies in environmental science. In March, he will speak on “One Year: An Asylum Journey from Cameroon to Spokane” at 1 p.m., Saturday, March 14, at South Hill Library; 11:45 a.m., Saturday, March 21, at Argonne Library, and 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, at North Spokane Library. For information, call 808-1255 or email suzihoksonon@yahoo.com. N-SID-SEN-Camp & Retreat Center A year-round retreat center for your youth group, church gathering, workshop or meeting space. With 200 acres of forest and trail system, we welcome you to the eastern shores of Lake Coeur d’Alene. www.n-sid-sen.org • 208-689-3489 36395 S Highway 97, Harrison, Idaho 83833 WHAT IS THE KIP OF COMPROMISE: THE ROLE OF RACE IN THE CHURCH TODAY TUESDAY, MARCH 17 7 P.M. WEYERHAEUSER HALL, ROBINSON TEACHING THEATRE A Staley Distinguished Christian Scholar Lecture by JEMAR TISBY Jemar Tisby, M.Div., is president of the Black Church Matter collective. He is the author of The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church’s Complicity in Racism. For more information: dsoden@whitworth.edu March 2020 - The Fig Tree - Page 9 Couple welcome asylum seeker into their lives, help him share his story
Environmentalists offer ways to challenge climate change, forest fires

In a recent column in the New York Times, Brian Hennings has argued that current levels of economic productivity, social equality, social trust and personal happiness in the United States and Europe are already too low. He attributes their living quality to their "generations of phenomenal educational policy," seeing education as "Bildung," a German word he says reflects a complete moral, emotional, intellectual and civic transformation of the person through lifelong learning.

Rather than just teaching skills, Bildung helps people understand systems and relationships like warming shelters, to bring homeless pollution are the most affected and have resettled more than 10,000 refugees. It admits less than one percent of word "Bildung" being "formative" in shaping how people can care and seek justice for everyone. When people feel they do not have a voice, their perspectives, insights and persistence have grown. The Beyond the video clips on value from The Fig Tree, we will include more of their comments on what they do online.

In the midst of the competition schools are intensifying their work for social justice; they are extending their work to the community, sharing their food, language, and immigrant climate. Teachers and the Department of Natural Resources have joined forces to keep 80 percent of reserves in carbon-based fossil fuels in ground per systemic changes, including:

1) to go to 100 percent renewable energy processes are better for forest health and 2) to keep 80 percent of reserves in carbon-based fossil fuels in ground per systemic changes, including:

1) to go to 100 percent renewable energy processes are better for forest health and 2) to keep 80 percent of reserves in carbon-based fossil fuels in ground per systemic changes, including:
Mar 4-12 • Haven of Grace: “Journeying Toward Home,” Jerry Graham SJ and Tom Lavelle SJ, St. Aloysius Catholic, 330 E. Boone, 313-6896

Mar 5 • Peace and Justice Action Committee, 35W. Main, 5:30 p.m., 838-7870

• Water Resources in Washington: Are We Getting Thirstier?” Nick Bond, Washington State climatologist, Jepson Center, Gonzaga University, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Mar 6 • The Fig Tree Benefit Lunch, Cattalo Hall at Gonzaga, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., 335-1813

• March for Meals, on Wheels Greater Spokane County, Spokane Valley Mall and Newman Hall, 8:34-876, gmsocialservice.org/events

• Winter Waters,” Patsy Clark Manson, 2208 W. 2nd Ave., 6 to 9 p.m., 271-6845, walesot2@gmail.com

Mar 7 • The Continuity of Life: Religion in African Traditional Philosophy, Rev. Patricia Novak OSF, reception 6:30 p.m., panel 7 to 8:30 p.m., 313-5931 or 313-3665, pnovak.sjfc@whitworth.edu

• International Women’s Day Celebration featuring Pastor Marie Mwange, originally from The Congo, Fowler United Methodist Church, 3529 N. Howard, 5 p.m., 325-3242, fweurers@dпочтать.com

Mar 8 • The Continuity of Life: Religion in African Traditional Philosophy, Rev. Patricia Novak OSF, reception 6:30 p.m., panel 7 to 8:30 p.m., 313-5931 or 313-3665, pnovak.sjfc@whitworth.edu

• Artistic Intelligence: Hope for the Future or Ethical Nightmare?” Bioethics Symposium, Tripp Parker, of the consortium AI and Faith, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth, 7 p.m., 777-3433, dosen@whitworth.edu

Mar 9 • The Fig Tree Benefit Breakfast, Cattalo Hall at Gonzaga, 7:30 to 9:30 a.m., 335-1813

• Is Buddhism a Religion?” Rev. Melissa Opel, Spokane Buddhist Temple, South Hill Library, 6:30 p.m., gonzy@uc.net


• Truthful Tuesday, Leader of Conciliation Award to Sandy Williams of The Black Lens, Venida United Church of Christ, 611 N. Progress, 5 p.m., gheynrey@live.net

Mar 11 • Spokane Regional Law and Justice Council, Spokane Regional Health District, 1101 W. Colega Ave, noon to 1:30 p.m.

Mar 12 • Artificial Intelligence: Hope for the Future or Ethical Nightmare?” Bioethics Symposium, Tripp Parker, of the consortium AI and Faith, Weyerhaeuser Hall, Whitworth, 7 p.m., 777-3433, dosen@whitworth.edu

• Special Refugee Shabbat Service and Light Reception for Americans and the Holocaust Exhibit, Hemmingson Center, 702 E. Desmet, 7 p.m.

Mar 13 • Hawaii’s 50th Annual Luau, Whitworth Fieldhouse Gym, 5 p.m., 777-3746, koorput20@my.whitworth.edu

• Reflection Seminar and Light Reception for Americans and the Holocaust Exhibit, Hemmingson Center Room 110, Gonzaga, noon, environmentalstudies@gonzaga.edu

• “Angels: The Real Beauty of the Universe” by J.B. Hoover, Gonzaga’s Religious Studies and Philosophy Department, Jepson Center, Gonzaga, 6 p.m.

Mar 14 • “Keeping a Holy Lent,” Patricia Novak OSF, Jepson Center, Gonzaga, 10:30 a.m., crosstranslationals@gmail.com

• “Reclaiming the Color of Compromise: The Role of Race in the Church Today,” Jemar Tisby, Union Gospel Mission, 6:30 p.m.

Mar 15 • National Black History Month Membership Meeting, Hemmingson Center, 702 E. Desmet, 7 p.m.

Mar 16-30 • Traveling Library of Congress Exhibit, the Special Collections Center, Chastek Law Library at Gonzaga

Mar 16-20 • Spirituality 101 Seminars, Kathy Finley, The Ministry Institute, 405 E. Sinto, register: kathy484@gmail.com

Mar 17 • Hate Reactions and Action,” Opening Event for Americans and the Holocaust Exhibit, Pastor George Chithake, Michael Deland and Shannon Dunn, Hemmingson Auditorium, reception 6:30 p.m., panel 7 to 8:30 p.m., 313-3665, douglas@whitworth.edu

• What is the Color of Compromise: Role of Race in the Church Today, Jemar Tisby, Weyerhaeuser Hall, 7 p.m., dosen@whitworth.edu

Mar 18 • Women Lead Spokane Conference, Hemmingson Center, Gonzaga, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Gonzaga.edu/womenslead, register by Feb. 29

• “Bridging the Gap by the Judicial Institute,” Latinx Association of Washington Lawyers, 4:30 to 5 p.m.

• Prayer Vigil for Immigrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, St. Ann’s Church, 2116 E. 1st, Advocacy Committees of St. Ann’s and St. Aloysius, 468-9941

• Eric Metaxas, author of If You Can Keep It, Coles Auditorsium, Whitworth, 7 p.m.

Mar 19 • “US-Mexican Border: Humanitarian Consequences of Shifting Immigration Law and Policy,” panel, Battier Courtoom, Gonzaga School of Law, 4:30 p.m.

• April 19-26 • “Americans and the Holocaust Exhibit,” Foley Library, Coles Rare Reading Room, Gonzaga University, mathies@gonzaga.edu

Mar 20 • An Evening with Zach Norris, “We Keep Us Safe: Building Secure, Just and Inclusive Communities,” United University Women’s Center of Spokane, 4340 W. F. Wright Dr., 6 p.m., 838-7870

Mar 21 • Peace and Justice Action Conference, “Believing in the Yet to Be,” Untarian Universalist Church of Spokane, 4340 W. F. Wright Dr., 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m., 838-7870

• “Vedic Philosophy of Hinduism,” Himani Agrawal of the Spokane Hindu Temple and Cultural Center, South Hill Library, 11 a.m.

• “What It Means to be an American,” Inland Northwest Freethought Society, South Hill Library, 2 p.m.

Mar 22 • Beethoven’s 250th Birthday, Faculty Cellos Recital, Kevin Hakenstarn, Myrtle Wilsson Performing Arts Center at Gonzaga, 4:30-5 p.m.

• Catholicism in Modern Society,” Anastasia Windemier of the Gonzaga University Religious Studies Department, South Hill Library, 6:30 p.m.

Mar 23 • Women’s Activism and the Legacy of Progressivism, Veta Schlimog of the department of history, Jepson Center at Gonzaga, 7 p.m.

Mar 25 • Women’s Suffrage Parade, “Steps From Suffrage to Solidarity,” Gonzaga University, 12:15 p.m., suffrageparade@gonzaga.edu

• “Letters from a Dachau Liberator,” Carole Wilsey, South Hill Library, 6:30 p.m.

• “Now See This! How the Suffragists used banners, textiles and fashion for protest,” Lena Lopez Schindler, Gonzaga art department, Junct Art Center Room 110, Gonzaga, 7 p.m.

• “Refugees: Bridging the Gap,” by the Judicial Institute,” Latinx Association of Washington Lawyers, 4:30 to 5 p.m.

Mar 26 • “(Re)Thinking Conservation,” Clarice Lopez Schindler, Gonzaga art department, Junct Art Center Room 110, Gonzaga, 7 p.m.

Mar 27 • “Refugees: Bridging the Gap,” by the Judicial Institute,” Latinx Association of Washington Lawyers, 4:30 to 5 p.m.

Mar 28-29 • “Spiritual Writing: In Search of the Human Spirit,” Himani Agrawal of the Gonzaga University Religious Studies Department, South Hill Library, 6:30 p.m.

Mar 29 • “What We Need Feeding,” One Peace One Plate, South Hill Library 5 p.m.

Mar 30 • “What Is the Color of Compromise: Role of Race in the Church Today,” Jemar Tisby, Weyerhaeuser Hall, 7 p.m., dosen@whitworth.edu

Mar 31 • “Inspiration for Today From Holocaust Survivors,” Carla Peperzak and Cora Der Ghose, Gonzaga University, mathies@gonzaga.edu

Apr 1 • Fig Tree dinner, St. Mark’s Lutheran, 316 E. 6th Ave., 6 to 9 p.m., 241-3180, rsvp 3/10, 241-3180

Apr 2 • Fig Tree Benefit and Board, 631 S. Richard Ave., noon benefit, 1 p.m. board, 535-1813
St. Vincent de Paul envisions scaling its services to the county’s growth.

By Kaye Hult

As a newspaper publisher, Larry Riley used to “sell words for a living.” Since he became executive director of St Vincent de Paul North Idaho (SVDP) in May 2019, he said he now “sells hope for people in need.”

Larry came to SVDP after 36 years in the newspaper business, last as publisher at the Hagadone Corporation in Coeur d’Alene.

His vision for SVDP is as a community center that “provides direction and services supporting individuals and families in North Idaho needing assistance to enrich, fortify and rebuild their lives with dignity,” he said.

The program includes the main office of the H.E.L.P. Center—Helping Empower Local People.

“We don’t want to be an enabler;” he continued. “We want to be a hand up. We want people to invest in getting back on their feet.”

As an example, he cited the Christmas Village. In 2018, they provided parents ‘blind gifts’ that they wrapped—already wrapped with tags specifying age and gender.

In 2019, none of the gifts were wrapped. Gif ds had point values. Parents were given 80 points to spend, so they could learn about making choices and budgeting. They wrapped the gifts. In 2020, SVDP will launch Christmas in July. Visitors can build points to use next Christmas at the Christmas Village.

For example, a father earned points for painting the H.E.L.P. Center kitchenette. Larry said that’s to teach people to invest in their future.

Several agencies have space in the H.E.L.P. Center.

• ICARE helps mothers and fathers develop parenting skills as their families grow.

• Veterans’ Services assists those who served in the armed forces and their families.

• Payee Services helps clients keep track of their finances.

• First Impressions helps those seeking jobs present themselves well when going for interviews.

Larry said they have more than 300 units of affordable housing for low-income people.

Among the housing programs, a Women’s Shelter has space for 12 women and their children, but SVDP never turns a woman away. A Men’s Emergency Shelter houses up to 12 men. Both accept people for up to 90 days.

Father Bill’s Kitchen serves up to 100 meals a day, seating 60 per setting, from 5 to 6:30 p.m., Mondays through Fridays.

The Warming Center in Post Falls is open when temperatures go below 28 degrees. The temperature chosen is based on funding. The shelter is funded by benefits and donations.

St. Vincent de Paul was founded in 1833 by a college student in France, Larry said. It is one of the world’s oldest nonprofits.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul National Council makes sure their brand means a lot. They help across every line of our business—programs, stores and new ideas for expansion,” he said.

Locally, St. Thomas Catholic Church founded SVDP in Coeur d’Alene in 1946. It is now one of the largest SVDP chapters—or conferences—in the nation.

“Being large means we require more resources to do the job,” he said. “Last year, we provided more than 6,000 unduplicated services for people in need.”

Larry seeks to provide resources people need, while providing vision and perspective. He is the face of SVDP in interactions with government agencies, coalitions and congregations.

With Kootenai County one of the top five growing areas of the nation, the board of directors seeks to scale their growth with the county’s growth.

“We’ll grow because the county is growing,” he said. “We may not add more programs, but we will do things well to address the area’s social service needs.”

Three entities fund the ministry. First are three thrift stores in Coeur d’Alene, Post Falls and Osburn in the Silver Valley.

Second are government grants, which are restricted to ensure funds go directly to beneficiaries.

Third are local benefactors.

“The community’s generosity is breathtaking,” he said. “We are good stewards of their treasure. The flow-through of the funds we receive is 90 to 95 percent, in line with government standards. Administration cannot exceed five to 10 percent, so 90 to 95 percent goes to recipients.”

SVDP serves all people regardless of faith. Many denominations help. St. Thomas Catholic Church continues to provide direct support to SVDP.

The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints community regularly asks what projects need their help. Faith organizations help because they know what St. Vincent de Paul is about.

Larry and his older brother Chuck are sons of Korean War veterans who were stationed in San Diego. Their father was in the Marines, and their mother was in the Navy. She divorced because of domestic violence when Larry was one and Charles was two.

When Larry was six, she broke her hip in a car accident. The year she was in traction and a rehabilitation home, the boys were in a Catholic orphanage, where they met boys with no parents.

Larry was unaware they lived in poverty. His mother was never on government support. She worked hard and sacrificed. He often went to his Catholic schools and pulled weeds. At 16, he learned he did it to help pay for his tuition, and realized he lived in poverty.

A cradle Catholic, he credits his mother, who died when he was 24, with the work ethic and faith that have guided him.

He paid his way through San Diego State University. After 10 years he earned a bachelor’s in business in 1991 when he was 31.

Larry and his wife Linda give back and have taught this ethic to their son, Sean, a Gonzaga University graduate who will earn a law degree in May from the University of Oregon.

He began in the newspaper business at the San Diego Union-Tribune. He also worked at the Los Angeles Times, the Orange County Register, the New York Times in Florida and Gatehouse Media/Gannett before coming to Hagadone Newspapers.

“Being in the social service industry is rewarding. Skills I built 35 years in the news business translate to social services,” he said.

“When I left a paper on the East Coast, my boss called me a servant leader. My life path molded me for this job. A servant leader is needed to run organizations like this.

“People can say they want to end homelessness. I don’t believe that’s possible. It is practical that we can solve many homeless issues,” he said.

For information, call 208-664-3905, or email larry@stvincent-depauleida.org.