Eagle’s Wings

Fr. John T. Maher, C.M. ’76
Director, Campus Ministry
University Chaplain

“It Only Takes A Moment”

A warm welcome to all parents and family members visiting Niagara on Family Weekend. It’s great to have you here on Mont Eagle Ridge. October is a full month, we welcome home alumni, provide Open House to incoming students, and top it off with Family Weekend.

As some of our students know, I’m a bit of a movie fanatic. Film reviews pop up in my conversations, class, and even (gulp) homilies. Last summer, I was goaded into seeing a ‘kid’s film’ I thought would be a waste of time, but, lo and behold, it turned out to be a moving and thought-provoking experience.

WALL-E is an animated film about a robot on abandoned earth doing nothing but ‘waste management’. (His name means “Waste- Allocation- Load – Lifter-Earth Class”. ) His life is empty and sterile, save an occasional distraction from a cricket or an item he ferrets from the garbage. He repeatedly watches an old movie video of the musical “Hello Dolly”, and is fascinated by the characters dancing, holding hands, and singing “It Only Takes a Moment”. Their tenderness and touch give WALL-E a desire for similar contact.

Enter EVE (Extraterrestrial Vegetation Evaluator) who crashes to earth from another planet to sample any plant life left on the toxic planet (abandoned for 700 years!) WALL-E instantly falls for her and follows her from earth onto her spaceship to prove his love. With little dialogue, few ‘humans’, strange twists, the film is a modern day parable of life as it should be lived today.

Its message and symbolism are simple, yet profound. We all need to be connected to one another, to our environment, and to something greater than ourselves. In the film, the ‘humans’ on the spaceship (who are exiles of planet earth) live blithely and blindly in self-centered comfort, ignorant of anything other than their next meal or activity. But WALL-E and EVE risk learning what it means to be in relationship. Once ‘connected’, there is no going back to their mundane and meaningless existence of the past.

October is a special month of connection here at Niagara: whether you’re an alum, a prospective student, or a parent and family member, your presence with us is time we cherish. And our God is a God who seeks to connect with us fearlessly and faithfully. Whether in Sacred Scripture, the stories of God’s mighty deeds, or the Word Made Flesh, God’s Son, Jesus, we have a God who sifts through the wants of our hearts and the waste of our lives and tells us because we are his beloved sons and daughters, we are good. And he gives us His Son as our guide and model of how to live.

‘It only takes a moment’ to pause, reflect on God’s goodness to us, and to give thanks. Let this month- indeed this whole academic year- be one in which we connect more deeply with our God, with one another, and the beauty of the world around us. Once that happens, there is no going back to that humdrum past life.
Fr. Bruce Krause, C.M.
Campus Minister
“Your Vote, the Working Class and the Poor”

Are you wondering who you will vote for on November 4th? Chances are you have not made a decision. You are probably not alone either! There are several significant and complex issues impacting all of us this election year. Of course, the current economy is a concern to all of us, but most especially the working class who are either living in or on the verge of poverty.

The upcoming topic of Theology on Tap is “Your Vote, the Working Class and the Poor”. It will be held on Thursday, October 30th, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Commons on the Ridge. The purpose of the forum is not to tell you whom to vote for on November 4th. Rather the presenters/panel from NU (Dr. Kevin Blair, Ph.D., Fr. Joseph Hubbert, C.M., Ph.D., and Dr. Jim Kling, Ph.D.) and the Campus Ministry team want you to become better informed about the working class, and how many Americans still find themselves in poverty or tottering on the precipice of poverty even though they have jobs. Dr. Blair will give us a good overview of the significant struggles facing many in the working class, today, as they try to make ends meet. Dr. Blair will discuss issues of economic security, food security, health security and ways in which jobs, wages and total hours worked impact the working poor. In addition, he will address the ways in which support programs such as food stamps, school lunch programs, and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) effect the poor in the United States.

Fr. Joseph Hubbert, C.M., Ph.D. will outline the Catholic social teachings as these relate to workers. What principles of Catholic social teaching, for instance, shed light on the current issues impacting the working class in the United States? How might these principles give a new face and sympathetic understanding to workers who still live in the grip of poverty?

Dr. Jim Kling, Ph.D. will outline the two major candidates’ positions on a number of economic issues which directly effect the working class. For instance he will touch on taxes, health care, immigration, and other concerns as these relate to workers. His presentation is not an endorsement of either candidate.

After the presentations there will be plenty of opportunities for questions and answers and good, friendly discussion, but with none of the quick sound bites and familiar rhetoric we have often heard throughout the campaign season. The forum should be illuminating and informative.

There will be free pizza, wings and soft drinks for everyone. For those 21 years old or older (valid ID, such as a state driver’s license with picture, is required), there is a cash bar where you can purchase beer and wine. There is no admission charge.

Tell your friends, and be prepared to vote on November 4th!
B.A.S.I.C.
(Brothers And Sisters In Christ)

Campus Ministry invites you to apply for a BASIC service trip in the Germantown section of Philadelphia or the Bedford –Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn as an amazing way to live out the Vincentian spirit of serving the less fortunate. Mark your calendars for January 4-12, 2009 in order to experience a week that will certainly impact your college career at NU.

In Brooklyn, we will be hosted by Vincentians and Daughters of Charity at St. John the Baptist Parish Center. You will have the opportunity to work with children in the school and the after school program. Other opportunities include the parish soup kitchen, thrift store, youth group, and the adult literacy program. You will be engaged in the culture of the area and encounter Christ while hearing the stories of the urban poor.

In Philadelphia, as we serve the urban poor in the Germantown section of Philadelphia, St. Vincent De Paul Center, a center for young adult service experiences, will be our home that week. Service opportunities include: working with children in the classrooms, after school programs, nursing homes, soup kitchens. Learn about the economic, Vincentian, and diverse culture of the area. It promises to be a rewarding experience.

The cost is a mere all inclusive $85. Applications are available in the Campus Ministry Office. Questions may be addressed to Monica Saltarelli, Campus Minister at ms@niagara.edu. It will promises to be a week that you won’t regret!

St. Vincent De Paul Society…
Are you looking for a wonderful way to meet some really wonderful people? Have you put off getting your service hours completed? The St. Vincent de Paul Society offers a variety of fun service opportunities in which to get involved. All are invited to attend the next meeting on November 3rd at 7:30 p.m. “Under the Taps.” With the holidays fast approaching, your help would be greatly appreciated! If you have any questions, contact Monica Saltarelli at ms@niagara.edu.

Invisible Children…
What were you doing when you were nine years old? I am sure most of you were not worried about being captured to be a slave or forced into the military! Three college age American guys discovered on an adventure in Northern Uganda that many schools were closed due to civil unrest. Children were displaced and hiding from the military so that they would not be captured. The three Americans wanted to end this atrocity by starting the organization, “Invisible Children.” As a result of their efforts, schools have been reopened and many children have a bit safer life. Visit the website at www.invisiblechildren.com. Attend meetings on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at the back tables of Gallagher. Watch for dates and times for upcoming screenings for the updated documentary. Help make the children of Northern Uganda not so invisible at Niagara University.
Announcements for Alumni Chapel

**DAILY MASS IN ALUMNI CHAPEL**
Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 12:15 p.m. and on Tuesday and Thursday at 12:35 p.m.

**SUNDAY MASS FOR FAMILY WEEKEND**
We will have 11 am Mass & 10 pm Mass for Family Weekend (Oct 24-26,2008)

**SUNDAY MASS ALUMNI CHAPEL**
11:00 am Mass
4:30 pm Mass
10:00 pm Mass

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**Movie Night**
Looking for a good movie that is thought provoking? Pax Christi is sponsoring the movie, “The Visitor” which deals with the issue of immigration. Mark your calendars for Monday, October 27th at DePaul 126 at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome!

**Theology on Tap**
Your Vote, the Working Class and the Poor - Mark your calendar for Thursday, October 30, 2008 7 - 9 pm - The Commons on the Ridge, Clet Hall - Free Pizza, wings, soda ** Please join us for an evening of great conversation**

**B.A.S.I.C.**
January 4 –14, 2009 - Come by Campus Ministry to complete your applications!

**St. Vincent De Paul Society**
Next meeting Monday, November 3rd - 7:30pm - Under the Taps - Gallagher Center All are welcome to participate

**Invisible Children**
We meet every Wednesday @ 7pm - Back tables of Gallagher Center All are welcome to participate

**Bible Study**
Meets every Monday 7 - 8 pm, Alumni Chapel All are welcome to participate