

## Non-Violence August 2009

Living in the recession of our country, the violence and crime that is generated, the growing numbers of unemployed, the fear and worry accompanying such realities are expressed in the midst of competing points of view regarding how best to deal with and to diffuse the sobering realities that form the ambiance in which we live. It is the "stuff" of diverse political party lines and ideologies that we read of in *The Wall Street Journal* or *The New York Times* and diverse views of world events as presented and viewed by ABC, CNN or Fox News.



Indeed, to live without violent thoughts is a major challenge to those of us who would like to make a difference. *How* we hear the news, *internalize* the challenges, and live them out confront us every day.

Two very different realities about non-violence both challenged and spoke deeply to me this past week - and on the same day. Along with other mail, the August 7 issue of *The Michigan Catholic* and a 5x7-inch flyer entitled *Help is here for you* caught my attention. The Vatican announced the theme for World Peace Day in 2010, "*If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Safeguard Creation.*" The message will build on Pope Benedict's encyclical "*Caritas in Veritate*" (Charity and Truth), where the connection between environmental protection and peace was strongly stated. "*The stockpiling of natural resources, which in many cases are found in the poor countries themselves, gives rise to exploitation and frequent conflicts between and within nations. These conflicts are often fought on the soil of those same countries, with a heavy toll of death, destruction and further decay.*"

On the flyer I read:

*Help is here for you.*

Do you need someone to...  
drive you somewhere?  
help you rearrange your furniture?  
help you move heavy objects?  
pick up or deliver a package?  
haul something?  
do miscellaneous work?

*My name is Doug. I'm a longtime Farmington Hills resident living at 14 and Drake. I'm a laid off automobile business worker in my late 50s with a family to support. Call any time.*

Is there not a connection?  
Margaret Brennan, IHM