

## Fr. Carl Kabat Arrested at Colorado Missile Site

GREELEY, CO—Fr. Carl Kabat, OMI, 76, performed another “Plowshares” action in which he attempted to disarm the N8 missile silo in Weld County, near Greeley, Colorado. Kabat was arrested after cutting the fence, hanging banners, and then preparing to hammer on the silo’s lid.

His actions on August 6, 2009, mourned the Hiroshima bombing on that day. Kabat also chose the timing to observe his 50th anniversary as a priest and 25th anniversary of nuclear resistance.

Raised on a farm in southern Illinois, Father Kabat joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate order as a young man and became radicalized after missions in the Philippines and Brazil. But it was not until the late 1970s, after meeting Philip Berrigan that Father Kabat hurled himself into antinuclear weapons resistance.

Fr. Carl last did a plow-share action on Good Friday, April Fools Day, 2006 at a North Dakota silo and was sentenced to fifteen months for that action. He received an 18-year sentence for taking a jackhammer to a silo in 1984, but the sentence was reduced on appeal, and he served fewer than 10 years.

On November 6 there will be a pretrial conference. On November 10 there will be a readiness hearing, pretrial motions etc.

December 9 and 10 have been set aside for a jury trial. All of these court dates are set for Weld County Court-house.

Letters are welcomed and should be mailed to:

Carl Kabat, OMI  
Weld County Jail  
2110 O Street  
Greeley, CO 80631



Calling himself “a fool for Christ,” Fr. Carl Kabat wears a clown costume as he places the banner above (see insert) on the fence to Missile Base in Colorado.

Kabat is currently being held in the Weld County Jail, awaiting his trial that is tentatively set for December 9 and 10, 2009.

## Bridging the Gap to a Growing Community



by Justin Norman

In November of last year, I found myself shivering, hands in pockets, pressing against a fence just above the roar of interstate 80 in downtown Des Moines. Moments earlier, my brother Wesley had scaled the chain-link barrier and was somewhere just out of sight, snapping a photo beneath the Sixth Street bridge.

A few minutes ago we’d been in a lighthearted mood, garnering chuckles from the odd looks of passers-by as he awkwardly fell off the far side of the fence into the grass and I dangled the camera over to him. But now, as we both stared at the resultant image from this adventure, we both felt a bit unnerved. The glow of the camera’s backside monitor revealed a rocky ledge beneath the familiar bridge, littered with dirty blankets. So this is where Ryan slept.

For three weeks, a high school student from Des Moines had called this home. But the reason for my sudden change of mood wasn’t just because of the unpleasant living conditions shown in the photo. It’s because I’d been struck by the realization that I drove under this very same bridge quite frequently. This

is when Ryan became real to me.

This incident turned out to be the beginning of a pattern of realizations as I took on the role of art director for the book, *From a Growing Community, Iowa’s Homeless Youth* – a compilation of stories from nine homeless kids around Iowa, of which Ryan was one. Throughout the process, I learned many things. By the bridge, I realized that the problem of child homelessness was not something that existed in some other world, though it often seemed like that to me. No, it was right here, in familiar places all around me.

While I had volunteered to serve homeless adults on-and-off at Catholic Worker houses for a couple of years, a problem I’d always had when talking about homelessness to my friends is that almost none of them had ever even heard about the Catholic Worker. Nor did they want to. Suspicious glances and questions like, “Well, don’t those people want to be homeless?” were common fare.

In some ways, I can relate to their ignorance. While problems regarding homeless adults were familiar territory, I never had a clue as to the extent of the homeless youth issue until Danny Heggan moved in with me last year. Danny had recently returned from Australia, where he’d interviewed

women in a new prison and compiled them in the book, *Voices on the Inside: the Women of Boronia*. The book was published locally as a way of educating people about an alternative prison system that better prepares convicts for re-entering society.

Having arrived back in Iowa, Danny wanted to duplicate that process, but with an issue plaguing our home state. He explained to me that there were over 10,000 homeless children in Iowa last year, but only 735 shelter beds available for them.\* This was a complete shock to me. *Ten thousand homeless kids?* I’d had no clue. So I offered to help Danny spread that knowledge with the skill that I’d excelled at for years – graphic design.

The realizations I had during this work came as much from the new design and publishing concepts as the subject matter it supported. Graphic design did not have to be a process of slathering every product on an assembly line with a coat of gloss, as it had often been for me in the past. The book’s text consisted of letters straight from the mouths of the people affected by the problem, and the design could be a natural outgrowth of that.

Over the course of nine months, we traveled to the places the kids mentioned in their harrowing stories, pho-



tographed them, and bound them together in hopes of bringing their voices out of the muffled cracks they are so often confined to, and into a common medium where they can be amplified. They are not so distant – they are here in familiar places, like the sixth street bridge.

But the most freeing realization for me was not just learning of the problem itself. It was discovering that something could be done about it quite easily if even a small number of volunteers begin to prioritize people over profit. The four people who worked on the book all could have been making much more money working a typical 9-to-5 job for a year. But instead, by choosing to spend that time volunteering at shelters and taking a pay-

ment of 50 cents per book, we’ve been able to route the funds to those who need them *far* more than we do.

With each \$20 book sold, \$10 is raised for Youth and Shelter Services, and we have sold over 800 copies in the three months since its self-published release. The result is that in many ways—through knowledge, money, and direct action—the gap between the housed and the homeless is gradually being bridged.

Find out more at

[www.SowSomethingMeaningful.com](http://www.SowSomethingMeaningful.com)

\*Statistic from HomelessChildrenAmerica.org

Justin Norman is a frequent volunteer at the Des Moines Catholic Worker.