

# Fools Fables

Anniversary Edition 2008/2009

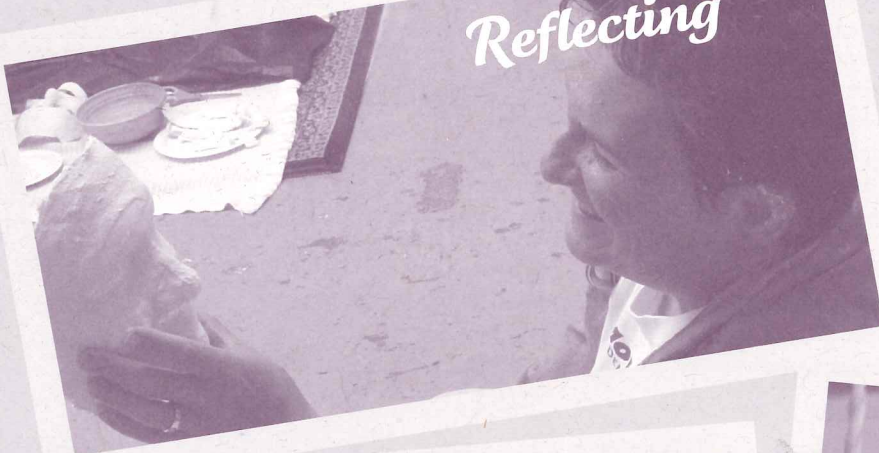
Faithful Fools



STREET MINISTRY

## We Are...

*Reflecting*

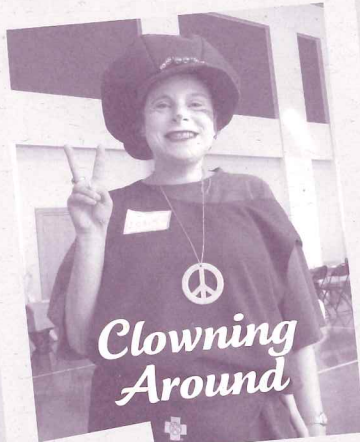


*10 years is a long stretch for any business, especially a non-profit. It is the milestone that says you're doing something right. It is a time of reflection of these last years, but, more than anything, it is a time of looking forward to the new and exciting life changes yet to come.*

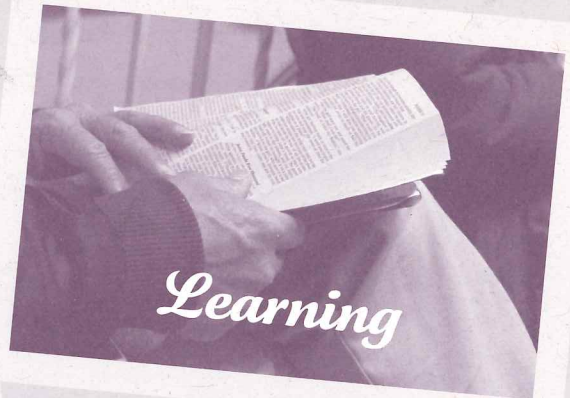
*Searching through literally thousands of photographs we realize how our family of fools has grown, how so many of the people we first came to know are still an integral part of our daily lives and how there are so many new beings bringing their talents and unknown people and adventures waiting in our future.*

*and*

*Clowning  
Around*



*Learning*

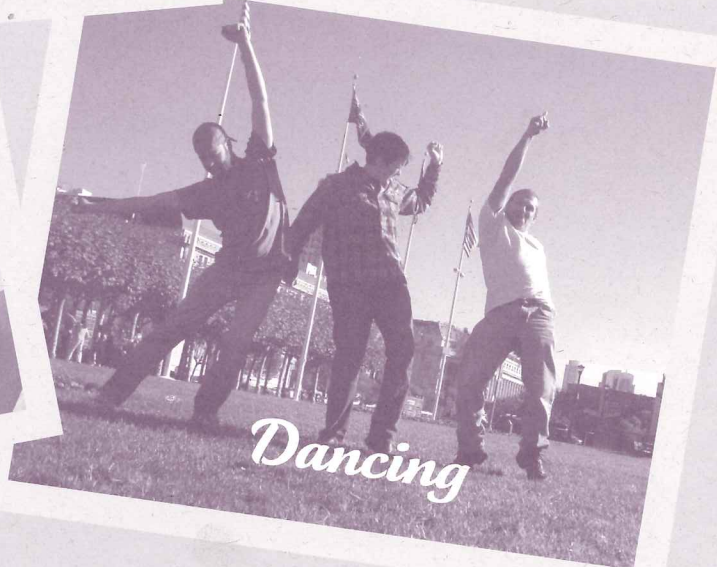


*...and*

*Sharing*



*Dancing*





*Dear Faithful Friends,*

*By means of your support and participation over the last ten years, you we have been walking with us on the streets of the Tenderloin, of other U.S. cities, of Nicaragua, and Canada. Thousands of people have joined us on Street Retreats to witness, notice and reflect on the lessons, personal and social, we learn as we walk together. We have discovered how much we hold in common in these days of a shaken economy. We recognize that, through no direct fault of our own, we feel much closer to the possibility of living on or near the streets ourselves. People's lives are changing quickly as companies close and their jobs are eliminated; as prices rise and charitable giving falls.*

*But we also live in a new era of promise wherein we are given the opportunity to IMAGINE how things can be better for everyone and there's no waiting period for it to begin. During the last Great Depression those who survived, in style, were known for things like "making silk purses out of sow's ears." That is also the Fool's Way. By discovering beauty in the most unlikely places, amazing works of art have been created in people and in things such as our wonderful Hat Factory. Rejected human beings living in deprivation show us daily what they can do to reverse the direction of human life towards health and beauty.*

*The Fools need and thank you for your continued financial support for the daily work of accompaniment and to cover the costs of the Fool's Court which is hub and home base for many people and our many ways of walking together.*

*Rev. Dr. Kay Jorgensen and Osgard the Clown*

*What have  
we been up  
to lately,  
you ask?*



## **Fiduciary Faithfulness**

**Sr. Carmen Barsody, OSF**

"Be innovators of new structures", was a challenge given to people from non-profit institutions at a social justice fundraising conference, "RAISING CHANGE". We live in a time when non-profit and for-profit institutions have become burdened by market-based salaries and hierarchical organizing, which often perpetuate a disparity in the distribution of resources. We hear cries for social justice, but what do practices and structures in a just society look like? How do we keep resources fluid so they may move toward where the need is greatest?

At Faithful Fools we actively explore these questions through our everyday practices, knowing there aren't determined answers. We seek to prioritize resources for those most in need of them. If a staff person or volunteer has what they need to live than they do not take from the common pot. Those who do receive stipends or salaries do so with a consciousness of asking in proportion to their needs. One's work, one's time and talent is not an acquisition or a commodity, it is a gift. We live in gratitude for the commitment of a large community of people that are the foundation of the organization. We call it, "Fiduciary Faithfulness."

Did you know our Business Manager works for \$1.00 a year?

*We thank Anton Jungherr for his amazing generosity as our business manager/CFO for all of these years, and for his support in things big and small, financial, practical and spiritual.*







## Growing & Changing

### Somatic Experiencing

Cynthia Merchant, Clinical Consultant

I'm very glad to be writing to you about a program we are bringing into being to provide Somatic Experiencing sessions at no charge to the marginalized and daily traumatized folks who live on the streets and hotels in San Francisco. We are doing this in conjunction with a network of organizations located in the Tenderloin and Mission District.

This first year is dedicated to laying the groundwork to establish this program. We are in the planning and training stages, hoping to fully train at least two staff members as Somatic Experiencing Professionals, as well as facilitate and support such training for at least 2 staff members of affiliated organizations. Rev. Megan Rohrer of The Welcome Ministry has already begun her training in July, and the Fools' Denis Paul will also begin in April.

While laying the groundwork for what we hope will ultimately be a bi-monthly free drop-in clinic with several Somatic Experiencing Professionals providing sessions to a substantial number of homeless folks, we will begin to provide free sessions on a bi-weekly basis to a small number of homeless people who through their ongoing work with the Fools have achieved a greater degree of stability and who have already expressed interest in this work.

In my 20 years of experience, Somatic Experiencing holds profound possibilities for healing and re-establishing a person's more harmonious and integrated experience of living in a way other modalities alone cannot. The folks living on the streets in San Francisco are among the most traumatized individuals I have ever met.

### Franciscan Associates

"Preach at all times and when necessary, use words" is what Saint Francis of Assisi is known to have said to his companions. As Faithful Fools, we are inspired by the Spirit of St. Francis of Assisi who saw all living beings as brothers and sisters. Nine Faithful Fools in San Francisco and Nicaragua have made commitments as Associates of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, MN. Together we seek to deepen our spirituality and seek just work and actions to make the world a more peaceful place.



Paula Pohlman, OSF with  
Megan Rohrer & Melissa Fajfarman,  
Fools & Franciscan Associates



Denis L. Paul



Gwyneth Jones



Michael Mallory



Abigail Trask



Rev. Jana Drakka

### Glad To Be Back

Denis Paul, Outreach Minister

After spending an amazing year with the Fools as a ministerial intern in 2006-2007, I am back, now as a full-time outreach minister, about to be ordained by the First UU church in San Francisco.

The first time around, I focused almost entirely on building relationships with individuals, but now my job is different, allowing me to spend more time planning and developing new programs. Working with Cynthia Merchant's expertise in Somatic Experiencing and Jana Drakka's in Harm Reduction Meditation, I will be helping to create a new program that uses these two modalities to bring healing not only to the people in the Tenderloin, but to those of us who work with populations dealing with the effects of continuous traumatization.

Meanwhile, I am also hoping to develop a residential program that will make space for lay people and clergy - Unitarian Universalist, Franciscan and otherwise - to come spend time at the Fools' Court during times of transition. People will be able to find safe space with us as they navigate times of professional, personal and vocational discernment, including shifts in sexual orientation or gender identity.

Right now, we are blessed by the presence of Intern Gwyneth Jones and Ministerial intern Michael Mallory. In the spring, we'll be welcoming Abigail Trask from Smith College.

If you are interested in spending some time with us, let us know! We'd enjoy your presence, and the rest of the Fools will welcome you in the same way that I have been welcomed back.

### Meditation and Harm Reduction

Jana Drakka, Temple Keeper

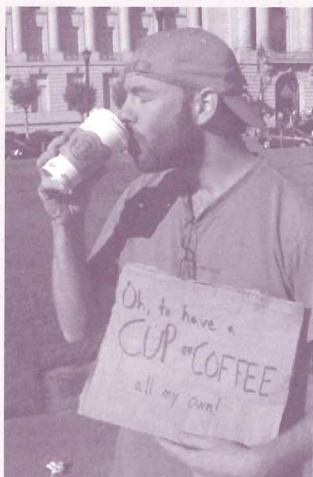
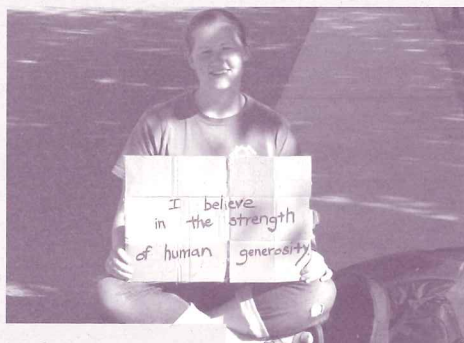
Gengetsu Jana Drakka has been studying at San Francisco Zen Center for fourteen years. She is a disciple of Zenkei Blanche Hartman and a great admirer of Issan Dorsey. She was ordained as a Zen Buddhist Priest in 2001, was Head Student in 2005 and became a practice leader in 2007.

Jana's ministry has a special focus on low-income and homeless people and those who work with them. She is Temple Keeper for the Faithful Fools, a board member of Religious Witness with Homeless People, a founding member of Safety for Women in the Tenderloin and works as a speaker, trainer and consultant with many other groups and institutions.

Jana currently has four harm reduction meditation sittings at various locations in the City and teaches a Harm Reduction Group for homeless folks at Mission Neighborhood Resource Center. Her warmth and humor allow her teaching to reach an extremely wide audience.



# Retreating to the Streets



*"What holds us separate?  
What keeps us separated?  
As we walk the streets  
what still connects us?"*

The Street Retreat is just that, it is a retreat. Whether it is a 1-day retreat or a 7-day retreat, it is a time to look into the mirror presented to us of the world where we live and to polish what we see in the mirror in our own hearts. It is a focused time of placing our feet on the streets and allowing our experiences there to move through our reflective hearts and minds and be transformed into action.

Along with our regular commitment to walking the streets of our own neighborhood in the Tenderloin District, this last year we have also retreated in the streets of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota and in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

During our 2008 7-day retreat in the streets of the Tenderloin, we spent the last night sitting vigil on the sidewalk in front of the Fools' Court. We witnessed suburban youth at the bar next door come for an evening of clubbing in the city. We saw rich drug dealers staking territory alongside small-time pimps who were mixed in with us and our homed and homeless neighbors. All of us together, the lines of separation often blurred.

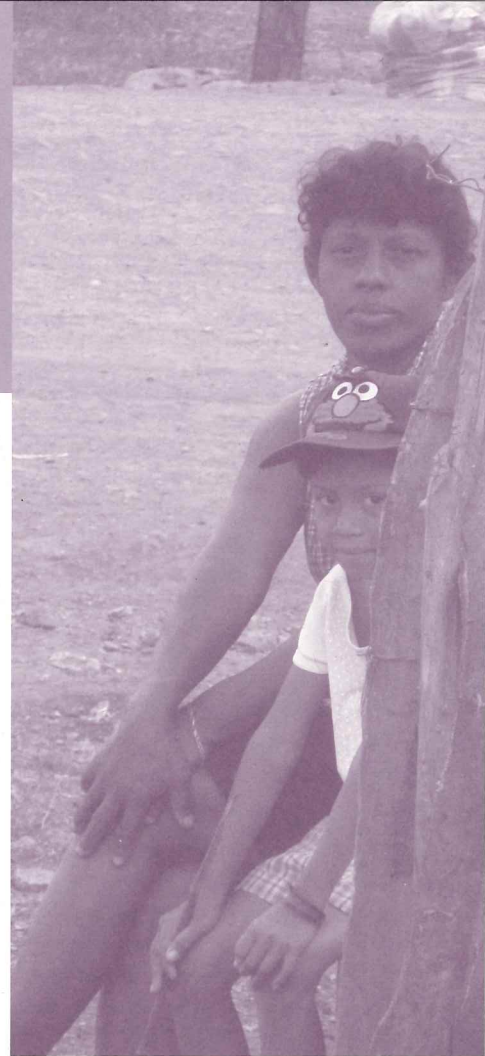
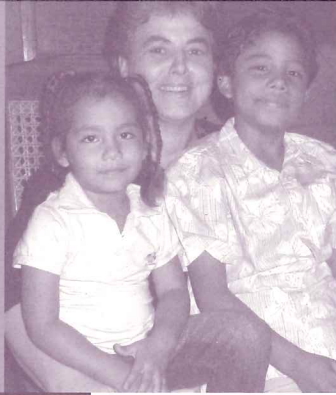
*"Hometown Street Retreats" Available in Your City!*

*We will walk the streets of your city with you.  
Call us if you would like to hold a  
Hometown Street Retreat.*

*In the Tenderloin,*







*Dear Fools of San Francisco,*

*Receive a greeting of peace and joy in this second week of advent and in this time that we Nicaraguans render homage to Virgen María, our holy mother.*

*I share with you that on the 5th of December the Franciscan Associates celebrated la purísima in the Fool's court with more than 100 people from different sectors of our community. We are gathering tonight to plan your coming in January. Don't worry about too many people (there are 10 of us going) because for us it is a great joy that more people want to come each year to visit us and strengthen our friendship, share cultures and understandings. We have paid attention to what is happening with your economy. Last night we saw on Univisión that the Ford factory and others are on the edge of bankruptcy like has happened to other large companies. Your economic crisis greatly effects our economy already more than it has.*

*In relation to the school, we finished another school year with the satisfaction that we have served and contributed another year of education and formation to children of our community, this with the support of you all and the people that work with me.*

*I share with you photos from the graduation and purísima.*

*Greetings to all and we'll see you soon,  
Heidi Meza, Founder and Director*



*St. Francis of Assisi School in Managua, Nicaragua*



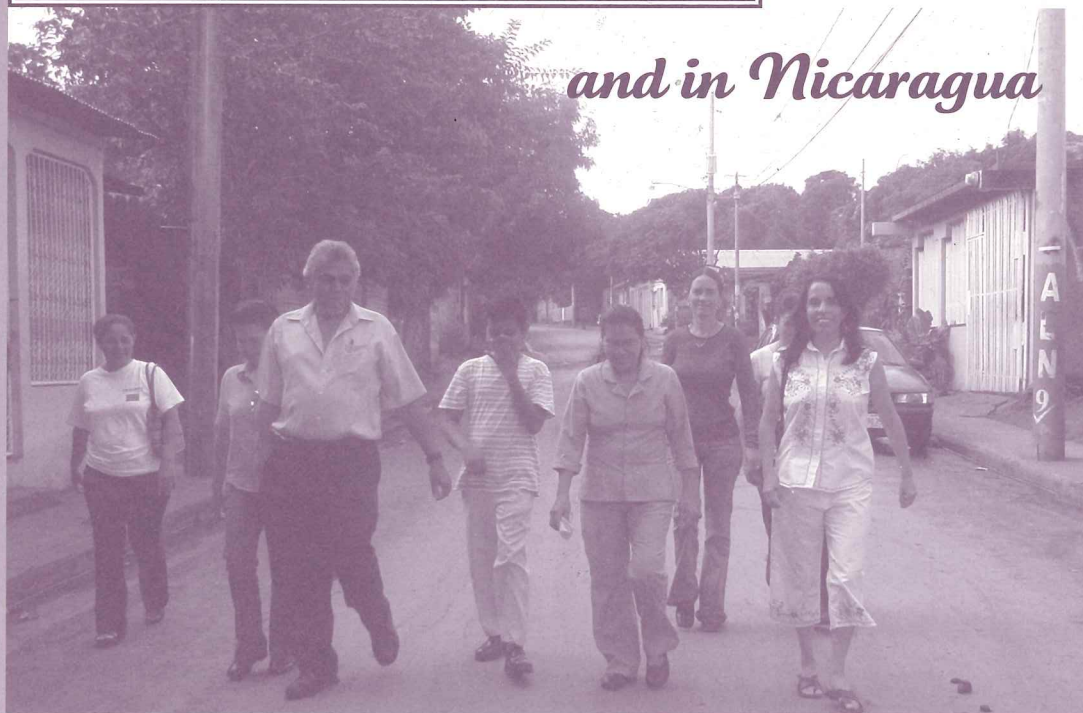
*Graduation 2008*



*Children in Managua School*

***This year a group of  
ten U.S. Fools are  
traveling to  
the barrios of  
Managua and the  
campo of Condega  
to walk with the  
Fools of Nicaragua.***

***and in Nicaragua***





# Sewing and Designing Hats



As many of you know, our **Hat Factory** has been open for just over a year. For those who don't, but have always admired our fabulous hats, we are pleased to announce this joint venture between Kirsten Hove's **Imperfection by Design** and longtime Fool Abby Dolin. Now is your chance to have a hat of your very own! We offer open workshops Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30 to 5:30pm in the Factory, located on the ground floor of the Faithful Fools Street Ministry. All skill levels are invited, and for a suggested donation of five dollars for materials, our talented haberdashers will guide you in the art of Very Silly Hat making. Or, if you prefer, you can purchase one of the many and varied hats already made in the Hat Factory. We look forward to seeing you there!

## Make and Share Hats!

Faithful Fools Street Ministry, 230 Hyde St., San Francisco  
Tuesdays and Thursdays (excluding first Tuesday of the month) 2:30-5:30pm  
Contact the Hat Factory at ([foolishmilliner@gmail.com](mailto:foolishmilliner@gmail.com))  
or Call 415.474.0508 for more information.

## Fools Street Retreat of October 2008

By George Kauffroth

*From Saturday to Saturday  
in the fourth week the weather  
was fine.*

*A gaggle of Faithful Fools  
Meandered in San Francisco's  
Benevolent Clime.*

*And I, a Street man of  
ten years, by happenstance  
encounters was with this  
worthy crew.*

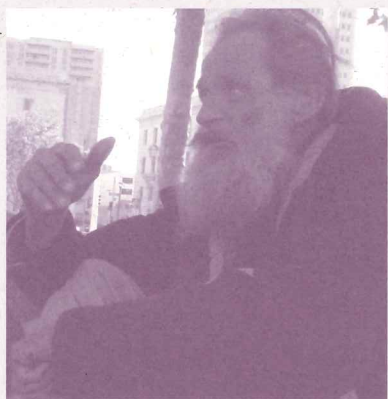
*Known for quite sometime  
in Bible sessions, I got  
to share their love before  
their retreat was through.*

*For quite sometime I  
garnered a bad opinion of  
myself.*

*Being homeless and all I  
felt dispossessed, forgotten  
on society's back shelf.*

*But hanging with these Fools  
A healing came to me.  
A better appraisal of myself  
did fall, setting me free.*

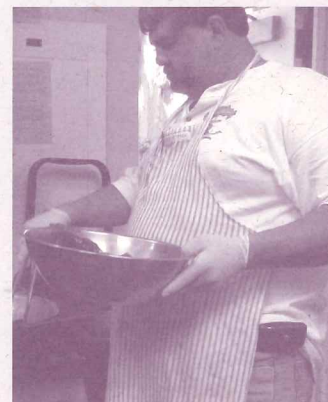
## Listening



*Whether it is a monthly Round Table  
gathering at the Fools' Court, a  
fundraising dinner or installing a  
shower, we would like to thank the  
many volunteers who make the meals,  
decorate the rooms, repair the walls  
and generally make sure everything  
operates in the right way.*

**Thank You!**

## Volunteering



## Fundraising

### Oscard's Feast 2009 "Garden Party"

Join Us for this  
Annual Fundraising Event!

March 28th, 2009  
6:00 pm

First Unitarian Universalist Church

Call 415-474-0508 for more Information



## Remodeling

### Changing Water's Path

*Thanks to many generous donations we have been able to choose where we most need our water. We now have a new roof (and dry floors upstairs), a dishwasher for those bigger gatherings, a shower in the lower level bathroom (and wet floors - as needed) and a chairlift to assist those who may not be able to climb the stairs to appreciate it all.*



*Marbeth Munn breaks in the new chairlift.*



*Bruce and Marcie Meyer*

*Married  
March 16th, 2008*

*Faithful Fools Court,  
San Francisco, CA*

## Creating the Artist's Collaborative

The arts have been central to the Faithful Fools's work since we began. Now, as we celebrate our tenth year, the Fools are seeking major funding to create the Fools' Artists Collaborative.

With this project we will bring together artists who have worked with us before and newly emerging artists; people who live in the Tenderloin and others from near and far. Using our established reflection process and relying on our underlying principle of each human's incredible worth, we will create artists reflection circles and mentor pairings. These supportive accompaniment structures will incubate new work that brings the perspective of the streets to audiences throughout the Bay area and beyond.

We hope to use our experience and your support to weave the threads we have already produced in the arts world into a solid fabric of joy, creativity and truth.

## Teaching a class at Starr King

Kay and Carmen have been teaching a course for Starr King School for the Ministry here at the Fool's Court that explores the relationships between parish and community ministries asking what are our roles as ministers at these crossroads. Using the model of the Street Retreat we will hold up the mirror of self-reflection to help us answer questions of what compels us and what are the risks of walking towards human suffering, including our own.

# Celebrating!

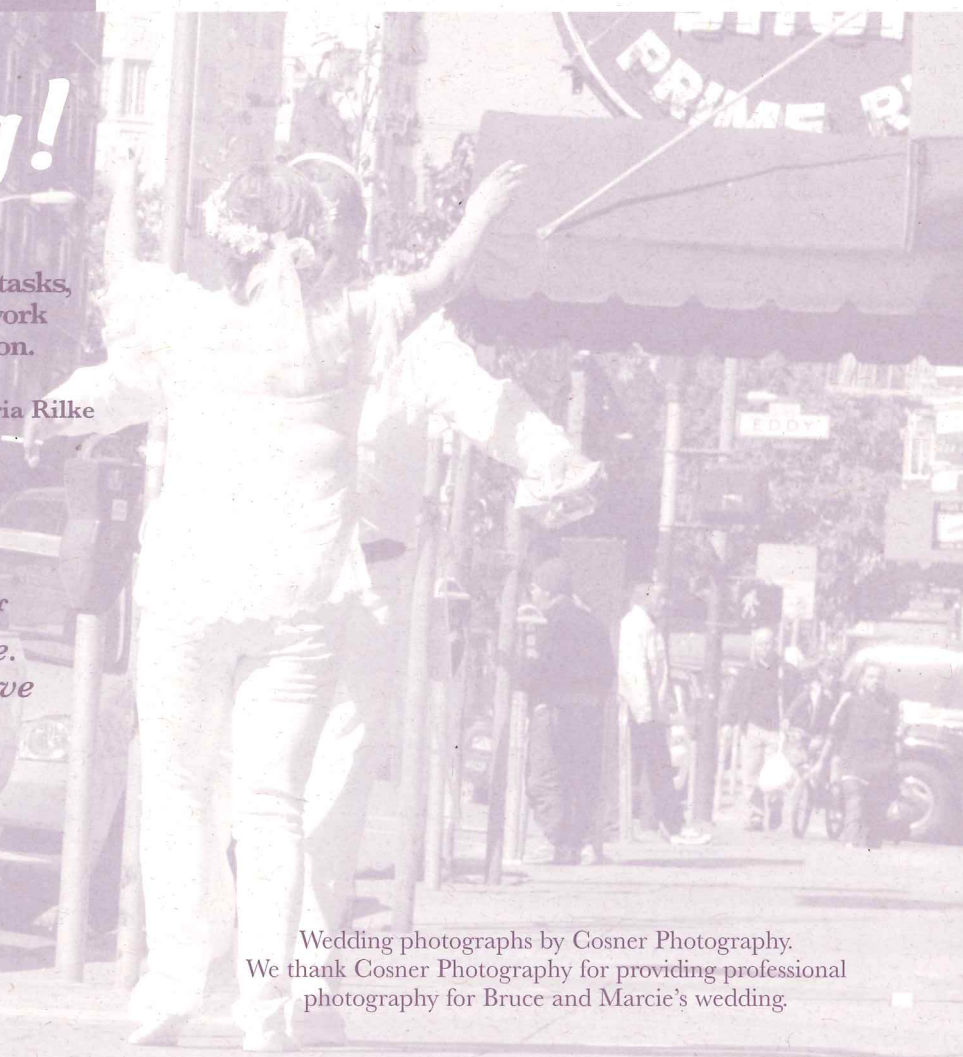
**For one human being to love another;  
that is perhaps the most difficult of all our tasks,  
the ultimate, the last test and proof, the work  
for which all other work is but preparation.**

**- Rainer Maria Rilke**

*Dearest Fools,*

*We write to you today to say we  
thank you and appreciate each of  
you for your kind hearts and love.  
We think how lucky we are to have  
you in our lives.*

*Love,  
Marcie and Bruce*



Wedding photographs by Cosner Photography.  
We thank Cosner Photography for providing professional  
photography for Bruce and Marcie's wedding.



*Thank You!*

*The Faithful Fools wish to thank these generous foundations and organizations whose contributions have allowed us to be faithful to our vision and work.*

Kalliopeia Foundation  
 Sisters of Loretto, Kentucky  
 Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, MN  
 First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Francisco  
 Catholic Health Initiatives  
 Sisters of Charity, BVM of Dubuque, IA  
 Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word  
 Sisters of Mercy  
 Sisters of St. Dominic, San Rafael, CA  
 Sisters of St. Dominic, Racine, WI  
 People's Life Fund  
 Conrad Hilton Fund for Sisters  
 Society for Community Work  
 VanLobenSels/Rembe Rock  
 Fleishhacker Foundation  
 William and Alice Hinckley Fund  
 Schutz Engel Foundation  
 Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence  
 Louise Reynolds Fund of Triangle Community Foundation  
 Bill Graham Foundation  
 Carl Gellert and Celia Berta Gellert Foundation  
 Trust For The Meditation Process  
 The San Francisco Foundation  
 Stanley Langendorf Foundation  
 Society Of The Sacred Heart

*Hundreds of Individual Donors and Monthly Pledgers, together with faithful congregations of many denominations throughout the U.S.*

*And a big applause of gratitude to all of our faithful volunteers.*

**Faithful Fools**



STREET MINISTRY

234 Hyde Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94102  
 415-474-0508  
[www.faithfulfools.org](http://www.faithfulfools.org)



*"On the Streets, We Discover Our Common Humanity"*

*Watch for our Newly  
 Designed Website Starting  
 January 2008!*

First Monday of Each Month  
 Round Table Gathering 5:30 pm  
 Second Tuesday of Each Month  
 Poetry Reading 4:00 pm  
 Movie/Discussion 7:00 pm  
 Third Saturday of Each Month  
 Street Retreat 9:00 am  
 Fourth Saturday of Each Month  
 Poetry Reading 4:00 pm  
 Thursdays  
 Bible Study 10:00 am  
 Tuesday and Thursday  
 Hat Factory 2:30 - 5:30 pm  
 Monday, Tuesday & Thursday  
 Meditation 9 am to 10 am  
 Friday  
 Meditation 8 am to 9 am  
 Sunday  
 Nichi Yen Shu Lineage  
 Meditation 3:00 to 5:00 pm  
 Monday  
 Coffee Hour 10:00 am - 11:00 am

**Faithful Fools Street Ministry**  
 234 Hyde Street  
 San Francisco, CA 94102



STREET MINISTRY