

Memories of Charles Moore from colleagues of the Ecumenical Institute

Charles was intentional in his death. The act of burning oneself in public is a shocking act. I have heard hundreds of monks in Tibet have done so in protest of Chinese rule. I grew up as a high school kid watching a monk in Vietnam burn himself in protest of the Vietnam War. I did not understand it, but I never forgot it and I continued to wonder why someone would be so deeply committed as to give their life to make that statement. I am still wondering.

Don Hinkleman

I worked with Charles on a couple of courses in Bombay and at other events. I too was struck by his dry humour and dour perspective. I, too do not know what was going on in Charles mind when he immolated himself and also do not want to hurt his memory and that of his relatives with my comments. But I do not find this act an inspiration although it does draw attention to what he may have said about racism in the US. But the shocking nature of this act can cause us to either speak imprudently or clam up with guilt. To use a cliché, "all of us live lives of quiet desperation". I remember rumors from a decade or so ago of Charles' plan to immolate himself in a similar fashion. Did we miss an important signal of what was happening in his interior then? I too missed seeing what was happening to one of my colleagues who ended up immolating herself in one of our projects in India.

While each of us are responsible for our own interior, we can be of help to others if we stay alert with love and respect towards Charles and all of us.

Dharmalingam Vinasithamby

Charles Moore is an impressive man whose life remains in the sphere of "eternity" in my baggage of Christian metaphors. We had his young teenage son at the Saskatoon House. Like many of our Order youth, he was not at ease with assigned "authority" figures, Duncan Holmes nor I. But I liked the son probably because he was "rebellious" enough to be assertive.

Being an SMU/Perkins grad myself, Charles is a brother! Will light up a candle here in Canada (will most likely just turn on a LED flashlight) as Calgary goes on a Stampede, and I take five couples to Lake Louise in Banff on a three day tour. Canada Day was a big deal, and tennis bonne femme Bouchard just made the Wimbledon Finals.

Charles lit a bigger fire. He remains aflame in me.

Jaime Vegara

Like many of us, the last time I saw Charles was at the Vail event in 2000. The mode and intentionality of his death are very much appropriate topics for our reflection; so is our way of celebrating this unrepeatable life by recalling our own stories and the impact this life had on us.

I generally appreciated Charles' dour perspective on whatever was happening, including what we were doing at the moment and he was himself involved in. In a community which was decisionally upbeat, Charles perpetually saw a lack of attire on the Emperor--and I found refreshing his willingness to share those perceptions with the rest of us. A line attributed to Thomas Hardy comes to my mind when I think of Charles: "Cheer up--the worst is yet to come."

Our only posting together was the team sent to Maliwada in 1976 to launch the first HDTIs and the replication effort in Maharashtra. Charles and Pat were there for the first year. All of us on that team are profoundly indebted to Pat's keeping us alive during it by managing to find food when there was none. My recollection is that Charles found himself utterly lost in that environment and soldiered on during the year they spent there without ever finding a role that genuinely engaged him. Most of what happened in his life after that I knew little about.

My favorite recollection of Charles, though, is of a moment during the 1971 Global Research Assembly. Our plenaries that summer were at Malcolm X College (pre-Kemper era). On the occasion of this evening's plenary, a thousand or so of us were gathered in the assembly hall following dinner, and there was a great deal of excitement and accompanying din. I happened to be backstage with Joe and a few of the staff, getting ready for the upcoming session. Joe turned and said, "The mood out there is entirely too high. Charles, will you go out and say a few words."

This simple request broke us all up for a moment, recognizing that Joe was calling on one of our colleague's special gifts, namely, that of lowering the mood of a group. Charles did go out and say a few words, and the mood quieted dramatically. I have sometimes told this story, which sticks in my memory along with the one Slicker was fond of telling about his friend, Red, as a way of recognizing that we all have remarkable gifts to contribute to the mission, however strange they may appear to be.

We celebrate this completed life of a colleague --

Gordon Harper

For many of us we are his family, still. It is not for us to judge his act nor its sanity. That is between he and the Mystery, which I am sure he was deeply aware of. It sounds insane and a waste to most, I'm sure. I certainly wouldn't have done it. But that is an opinion and we will never know the depths of his soul or the call he felt. Our task is to celebrate his existence, his place in the galaxy of the Order and pray for his immediate family that they may be comforted.

In one sense all our deaths are absurd. We were born to be free and act in forgiveness. I take him at his word and deed. We die our own deaths or we allow death to decide for us. As I said, his choice is not my choice, but he certainly understood the call to act on behalf of all.

The last time I saw Charles was at the 2000 Order Gathering in Vail. He spoke and it was not received well and for that I am sorry. He was a beloved man, with so many gifts and so much

anguish. May he be at home in the ultimate Mystery. I shall miss him and am grateful for having him shape, as so many hundreds did, my life and direction.

Grace & Peace,

Jack Gilles

Dear colleagues:

Like all of those who have responded here and those who have not, when I first read the news of Charles I was shocked, tears flowed, and a meditation on Charles began and continues mindfully in my consciousness. Charles has always been and continues to be part of my meditative council...

Just one Charles story to add to those this event has given us for reflection as part of in our contemplative life. I think we were living in Oak Park in the late 60's and early 70's so we were with Charles & Pat a lot during that time. Recruiting courses and the LCX were front and center. Our regional cadre helped support these efforts. I remember one time during that stretch when we were presenting something relative to the LCX at a new church...We were there with Charles & Pat and others. As we were leaving the church, I turned to Charles and asked him how he felt the meeting went (I must have been a little invested in the outcome). He said: "Did you hear the singing, great harmony, beautiful!". That's all he said. It's then I learned how to read a group. It's not what they say but what is their emotional response. This simple lesson was adapted into my business screen at the time and later as a facilitator. He made a difference in my life...As human beings we tend to make decisions emotionally and then later or simultaneously rationalize them with our minds...What a profound life lesson..

During most of the month of June this year I was in Plum Village monastery(France) to participate in a Thich Nhat Hahn(Thay) led retreat that focused on the theme of: "What happens when we die/ What happens when we are alive"? (the Zen approach)...Thay is one of my spiritual teachers. He's a Vietnamese Zen Buddhist monk whose lifelong efforts to generate peace and reconciliation moved Martin Luther King, Jr. to nominate him for Nobel Peace Prize in 1967.

While I was at this retreat Thay, in a dharma talk, shared his reflections on what he shared with MLK. During the 1965-66 period he was in communication with Martin on the war, Martin asked him to share his thinking on the self immolation that monks were taking to protest the war. Thay said it was not an act out of despair but a clear intention to bring attention to the horrible war that the people did not want. It was a way to express for the voiceless the horrors of war brought about by two super powers. He said this was an act on B 1/2 of those without a voice and compared these acts to Jesus' death (act) on the cross. In the end he said it was an act of compassion.

So where do I take this understanding as it applies to Charles's act? From all that I've read here on this list serve from Charles and others who were close to him (I hadn't seen him in many years), his final act of living appears to be an offering on B 1/2 of all... A protest around the foundational social issues of our time...He continues now in all of us. His act is not one I would choose. I am involved in Mindfulness practices/training and Permaculture regenerative living systems here in Colorado, Nebraska and Mexico. While the vision I once held to save the world has been lost, I do now work

where I am to be/do the necessary deed locally to leave behind a trail of demonstrations where mindful & regenerative living goes on for others to see and practice. This unfolds as we speak.

I take away for myself that the unintended (or intended?) consequence of this profound act on community (ours in particular) and others we are a part of: is to draw us together at a time when many of us continue to be engaged in social activism and spiritual transformation. It requires that I pay more attention to relationships and take care of strong emotions when they signal that healing is needed.

Charles as you continue in the vast cosmos and in our hearts I say thank you for all you shared with us in your life and in your passing.. Continue on!

Salvatore (aka Ray) Caruso

I am very distressed to hear of Charles Moore's death, and very sad for his family.

He was my prior for four weeks in Summer '71. I had little knowledge of EI except for an RS-I in George Yost's church in February, and no context for being there except for the enthusiastic recruitment of Tim Lush – this is a chance to change the world.

My first contact with Charles was on the falling-off-the-wall porch of South House where John and I were trying to decide whether to stay at Summer '71 or decamp for home. I had been assigned to a women's dorm on the fourth floor next to the central atrium in this falling down, wooden building; John to a men's. No responsible mother of four would stay with that risk of fire. I was in tears (not all that usual for me) when Charles happened by and asked what was the problem. I let him have it. He said to wait here. In a few minutes he was back with a new room assignment for both John and me: the room off the porch over the kitchen. I later learned it was his and Pat's room.

Summer '71 was a major shock to my system, and Charles was both a patient and inspiring prior, with a wonderful wry humor. He suggested at one point, that at the age of 39 I should pick up my bed and walk, the instructions given another woman of that age by Jesus. From him I learned that I too, perhaps, could be a spirit woman.

We kept in touch. He called one day in the late 70's from Grand Saline to say that he was very depressed and had been unable to get out of bed for two weeks. I suggested he come to Denver. He was talking then of self-immolation. I think he always thought of himself as a monk and the monks in Tibet were very visible in their fiery protests.

John set up an appointment for Charles with a psychiatrist at the medical school and he was admitted to Denver General Hospital Psychiatric Ward. He was angry with me, but accepted library books, etc. I called on the next Friday to tell him that John and I were going to San Antonio for the weekend to see my brother. He was not there. He had just walked out, left no message. We went to the airport to catch our flight and came home because I felt I needed to know what had happened. John called DG and they said, yes, he had left. No, the doctor did not think he was in imminent danger. He had left the bag of library books for me to return.

We lost touch over time, but I was very happy to hear that he had married and had a church in Texas. I wish he had chosen other ways to be the very powerful spirit that he was. However, I am not totally surprised that he would take this step. He had been thinking about it a long time.

I regret that I did not talk with him about our journey with our gay son Will. He married his partner of twelve years in August 2012 in upstate New York. Ken Barley a one-time Order member, past minister of Montview Church, and friend, was celebrant. I would have liked to tell Charles about that extraordinary event. It would have given him hope.

I was talking to my pastor today about the Institute and Charles, and said that in 1972, EI had made the turn to the world because of the belief that great social change would happen through secular structure, not through the church. That seems to be the case with acceptance of homosexuality. The Presbyterians are just putting their toe in the water to change their stand. We'll see how all those Presbyteries vote.

I am clear that if it were not for Charles, I would not have been associated with ICA for over forty years – a blessing indeed.

Thank you, Charles, for being a great spirit and for being part of my life.

Louise R. Singleton

Ten days ago an old colleague of mine committed self-immolation. He wasn't an Asian monk but a Texas minister. He left messages explaining that he did this act as a protest against racism, capital punishment and social injustice. He explained that he loved his life, was not depressed and was not committing suicide but was making a final statement with his death as part of a long life lived for others. He was 79. I remember him as a wonderful combination of gentleness and passion. May his sacrifice wake each of us up to what is worth dying for.

Another old colleague of mine is in the midst of a march across America to call attention to climate chaos and the urgent necessity to stop burning fossil fuels and shift to renewal energy. He is 77. He is a strong willed person who has lived a life of caring for others. May each of his steps from West to East wake each of us up to what is worth living and dying for.

Another elder colleague of mine goes to the streets of Albuquerque every day bringing food, clothing and concern to the homeless. She is 74. She is a brilliant, passionate person who has spent her life caring for others all over this world. May her loving expenditure wake each of us up to what is worth dying for, what is worth living for.

Each of these elders chose and chooses every day to do and to be what is worth living for and what is worth dying for. There is no one right answer. It is a deeply personal discernment and decision that we each must make in solitude and in community.

As for me I have decided to engage in teaching, training, speaking, facilitating and writing to promote innovative leadership for sustainable human development, to catalyze what I call a "compassionate civilization" of environmental protection, gender equality, participatory governance, socio-economic

justice and cultural tolerance. This is not the right thing to do. It is what I am compelled to do with no assurance that it will make a difference.

Dying is a very lively part of life. What for you is worth living for and dying for? How might our living and our dying make a difference in another person's life, in society's perceptions and priorities?

Robertson Work

We each have a vision of the emerging new reality that we wish to participate in bringing forth. But, as Martin Buber said, it will not turn out according to our decision. The hard part is, we have to put aside our expectations regarding outcomes, and do what we do simply because each of us, in our own way, has decided it's the right thing to do. I'm sure Charles understood that. I cannot imagine that Charles Moore would have taken this decision without a thorough review of all the steps and perspectives in this paragraph, not just the last phrase:

"The responsible man acts in the freedom of his own self, without the support of men, circumstances, or principles, but with a due consideration for the given human and general conditions and for the relevant questions of principle. The proof of his freedom is the fact that nothing can answer for him, nothing can exonerate him, except his own deed and his own self. It is he himself who must observe, judge, weigh up, decide and act. It is man himself who must examine the motives, the prospects, the value and the purpose of his action. But neither the purity of the motivation nor the opportune circumstances, nor the value, nor the significant purpose of an intended undertaking can become the governing law of his action, a law to which he can withdraw, to which he can appeal as an authority, and by which he can be exculpated and acquitted. For in that case he would no longer be truly free. The action of the responsible man is performed in the obligation which alone gives freedom and which gives entire freedom, the obligation to God and to our neighbor as they confront us in Jesus Christ. At the same time it is performed wholly within the domain of relativity, wholly in the twilight which the historical situation spreads over good and evil; it is performed in the midst of innumerable perspectives in which every given phenomenon appears. It has not to decide simply between right and wrong and between good and evil, but between right and right and between wrong and wrong. As Aeschylus said, "right strives with right." Precisely in this respect responsible action is a free venture; it is not justified by any law; it is performed without any claim to a valid self-justification, and therefore also without any claim to an ultimate valid knowledge of good and evil. Good, as what is responsible, is performed in ignorance of good and in the surrender to God of the deed which has become necessary and which is nevertheless, or for that very reason, free; for it is God who sees the heart, who weighs up the deed, and who directs the course of history." -- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

And for Charles, this action must have become "divine necessity." And so he is still my prior.

Kathleen Hamm Jones

A radical response to issues a former colleague obviously felt very strongly about. Grace and Peace, Charles

Michael Tippett

I only met Charles a couple of times, so did not know him well. I knew him as a man of vision and compassion, a deep thinker searching for justice. His final act in life punctuated his deep care for justice. May his life and death be long remembered.

Douglas Michael Shaw

I remember a talk , I recall was given by JPC (John Cock) but maybe not,about whether or not the future needs red martyrs or white martyrs - red being physically fighting and dying for the cause, white being those who demonstrate the social change as a vision of renewed community, for example. Charles Moore's passion for creating human was more intense than your average revolutionary. He was the presence of the Soul's heart beating. Call it suicide or martyrdom, his choice came from the place where the crying calls us to our dying.

Judi White

I am shocked and saddened by this news. Let us listen to Charles' reasons and act to effect the changes he called for. He was a dear friend and stalwart colleague.

Pat Druckenmiller

When I (with Paige) was prior of Madison '70-72, Charles was our Regional Prior at South House Chicago - with Jim & Karen Troxel in Milwaukee, Bain & Marge Davis in Rockford, Bill & Carol Schlesinger in Peoria, etc. It was a momentous year, focusing on the Local Church Experiment and RS1. Charles once said of himself "I am RS1" and indeed there were extended periods of time when he was, challenging us to be RS1 also. I am most grateful for that period of time, being around him and included in the warmth of his care.

The last memorable time was in Brussels in the fall of '82 when a bunch of us from the House and from Centrum went to see the movie 'Gandhi' for the first time. He led the movie conversation on an outdoor patio near the theatre. It was very, very good.

'The Last Picture Show', a movie depicting a group of 1950s high schoolers coming of age in a bleak, isolated, atrophied West Texas town that is slowly dying, was shot in a West Texas towns, very much like Charle's home town. He was excited about that.

In awe of his death and his life,

Ken Fisher

Charles and I had many good chats and always brought up, with big laughs, our shoot-out at the Lake Forrest saloon when I told him I was leaving the Order and he told me I would go to hell and I told him to go to hell. We deeply appreciated each other, all said and done. Last time I saw him was in Chicago a few years ago. We shook hands and held on. I'm so glad. I liked and respected Charles, but hardly understood him, nor him me, I am sure.

He was a deeply reflective, deeply sensitive, and deeply everything kind of spirit man. I can imagine the process of his thinking from reading the Holcombe UMC and Randy Williams articles. He sensed his time was running out on how to change history, but by-god he committed himself

to doing just that in some way or other. There is a big stir in the institutions and communities mentioned in those news articles, and many people, including us, are brought to a deeper reflection on how we change our nations and the Earth community.

He used Bonhoeffer's decision-making process and obviously very intentionally decided to do what he did. Do I wish he hadn't? Yes. Do I understand his internal grappling with the state of things these days? I think we all do. Will we be able to forget this event? No. Will it cause us to reflect deeper about our given role in history?

Yes Charles, we give thanks for you and will remember you. Grace and Peace are yours. Journey on.

John Cock

Never have the words "shock and awe" fit my feelings as they do today, as news of Charles Moore's death by self-immolation came. The documentary marking the 50th anniversary of Freedom Summer in Mississippi and the signing of the voting rights act inspired me to work on a piece I'd written about my grandfather last week. I share it in honor of Charles, who laid down his life on behalf of our culture.

Granddaddy

He called me "Daughter." With so many grandchildren, perhaps his aging brain couldn't recall my name. I liked being called Daughter. I liked the old, clean smell of him, of soap and Prince Albert pipe tobacco, the gentle scratch of his whiskers on my cheek, and how far down he had to bend to give me a hug. He was a jolly, vibrant old man.

He taught me to play checkers, and respected me enough not to give me easy wins. It was enough for me, at four years old, to gain a king occasionally. If my king jumped one of his, I was elated. I celebrated even while falling into his trap. Laughing, he jumped my two remaining kings. The game was over. His laughter alleviated my loss.

Before meals, he washed my small hands with his huge ones, then gave me one end of the towel as he dried with the other, chanting, "Dry together, be friends forever," in his soft, Georgia-tinged accent.

He had moved from east Texas to the Panhandle with four children and Grandmother, already ripe with the fifth. Eventually, there were eight. Raising them couldn't have been easy, farming the dry, wind-blown plains. I wonder if they moved to prevent their children from witnessing the lynchings that

were still common where they came from. Only white people lived in their new community. Long gone were the proud Comanche and the great herds of buffalo.

Later, Granddaddy bought a grain elevator that could be seen for twenty miles across the High Plains. It burned, but his business affairs evidently rose from the ashes, since the fire happened long before he taught me how to play checkers, wash my hands and be friends forever.

He was elected county commissioner. Sometimes when we visited, a county road grader was parked in the long driveway leading to his farmhouse. Aunt Ina Rae told me what Grandmother said: "Being elected ruined him. All he wanted to do was go down to the courthouse and talk. It didn't last long. Elections are won and elections are lost.

I was thirteen when he came home from town one day and shocked me. He raved about seeing a n----- in town. I could hardly recognize my Granddaddy, his face scarlet and his eyes bloodshot with rage.

He yelled at the top of his voice. "He was walking on the sidewalk with white people." He kept repeating, clearly horrified, "ON THE SIDEWALK!"

It was 1950, years before I enjoyed being in a racially integrated social setting. But I think I knew and anticipated the change that was coming, even then. The twentieth century was at its midpoint and still had much to teach us. Granddaddy had taught me about love and light. At that moment, he taught me something else. We do not escape our inner darkness, no matter how far away we move from its external forms.

Blessings,

Jann McGuire

Charles Moore was, as many have attested, good at confronting people with decisive questions that affected their lives. Well, he's done it again. His death surprised us all. And when we're surprised, we're up against Mystery, another name for which is God. It's difficult now as always to affirm that ultimate unknown as Father.

Trying to understand or explain Charles' death is really beside the point. Together, though scattered, we've mourned and celebrated the unique and unrepeatable life of one who influenced so many of us. And in honoring him we've once again manifested John Donne's insight:

No one is an island entire of itself; every one
is a piece of the continent, a part of the main;
if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less...

It seems we are the less with Charles gone. And the bell tolls for us all.

John Epps

Recent witnesses concerning the life and death of Charles Moore have expressed deep respect for him. What a privilege it has been to hear the many voices of appreciation for the presence Charles chose to become. Charles Moore continues on in good company!

Concerning Charles' choice to die, I believe that he chose not to be mechanized by any social institution, whether it be a religious or secular authority. Charles perceived the evil in being a dehumanizing cog in any church and/or community machine. Charles chose another human alternative: dramatically and profoundly saying "No" to continuing to live and participate in institutional acts of abuse. Charles echoes DH Lawrence: "DEATH IS NOT EVIL, EVIL IS MECHANICAL." Charles Moore's death rattles our bones and recalls us to an awareness of divinity.

Concerning Charles' decisions to live over nearly eighty years, I am at a loss for personal and memorable collegial encounters and interactions we might have had. However, today, his life has kept arising for me, beckoning me to attention. Please accept the following quote as another offering in celebrating the unfolding and fulfilled life journey of Charles Moore with us:

"There seems to be a way for things to happen which is intrinsically right for them: they become what they were meant to be ... Do human beings also tend to unfold according to such interior designs, or is our life wholly random? It seems a reasonable and useful hypothesis to believe that we are like the rest of creation. According to the Eastern doctrine 'dharma,' we are each called upon to achieve a particular life-pattern. And while all patterns have equal dignity, each one of us should avail himself or herself of the possibility that is uniquely one's own and not someone else's. Each of us should try to discover the pattern and cooperate with its realization ... Our entire life's purpose is already present within us, and furthermore, at each stage of our life there are subordinate purposes---steps along the way toward the fulfillment of our ideal pattern." Piero Ferucci

May Charles Moore be well remembered,

Charles Lingo

We give thanks for and celebrate the life of Charles and pray for his family and all who knew and loved him and were touched by his passion for justice--and for all who daily discern how best to live the one life and die the one death on behalf of all in freedom, responsibility and obedience, in humility, gratitude and compassion.

Carleton and Ellie Stock

As you gather together to celebrate the birth, life and death of our colleague Charles, please know that I am standing with you as you speak. I will remember him as he stood and shared his experience of the Mountain of Care through the story of the old man on the airplane. Perhaps that, among the many story that have been shared about Charles, is a common memory of his life.

With love and gratitude for our colleague, Charles, who has brought a critical conversation to the table,

"Tell me, What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" Mary Oliver

Nancy Lanphear

Perhaps it's a little like Christmas and we're watching "It's a Wonderful Life." I only knew Charles Moore for a very intense 44-hours in April of 1971. He was the "first teacher" of my RS-1 in the basement of a rather obscure little Methodist church on the outskirts of Bartlesville, OK. And I am forever changed. And on it goes.

We have been blessed,

Sunny Walker

I remember that RS-I. I helped in enablement. We knew how fussy RS-I teachers could be so we really worked hard at getting the first night table set up 'perfectly'. Charles arrives, looks at the set up and says we need to move the tables 4 inches as they were not in middle of room. Bless his pea-picking heart.

Frank Knutson

Thank you, Charles Moore, for touching my life in Cincinnati, 1970- RS1- which led to so much more.

Myra Griffin

Just the day before news of Charles death I had been trolling through The Courage to Lead Daily Journal in preparation for a UMW program I had agreed to lead on Living Sacramentally, Walking Justly. The text had proven disgusting to me due to the author's ignorance of the natural world and a presumption that somewhere on the globe the church had a program addressing nearly every issue she could think of. It lacked complete awareness of space and time. She talked about Baptism and Communion yet did not scar the surface of the deep promises we make and how we should let them change our lives.

The quote I chose from November 10 by Reggie Leach was, "Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You must set yourself on fire."

It was highly objectionable to the group. I came home and found news of Charles death on my computer. My first response was to feel guilty. The quote had been shared in an attempt to shock them out of their normal patterns of thought, but I hadn't let it really shake me. News that someone I knew as kind, generous of spirit and very serious had taken this quote to heart was a great

comeuppance. Most of my week has been in prayer. I do not have such courage, even though I know that the images of the Buddhist monk in Viet Nam transformed a lukewarm opposition to that conflict into radicality.

My tears for the United Methodist Church have not found their end. I struggle with all the same issues Charles did on a daily basis. My thanks and appreciation for his deed is boundless. Every day in the struggle to minister adequately to my appointed congregations and as a participant in the structures will be different from now on. I will be braver. I will not worry about repercussions. I will continue to shock with the presumption that we all deserve it. I will struggle to stay on fire.

Thank you, Charles. We journey together in a new way.

Margaret Aiseayew

Charles was a complex and insightful man. His short "other world spin" telling the story of being seated next to a fragile elderly black gentlemen on an airplane, and then being asked to assist him on a trip to the toilet, remains one of the most powerful statements that I've ever heard about the spirit journey of responding to moral issues of social justice. It was all there, consistent with my experience once he called attention to it: abstract passion, occasional resentment, the ultimate joy of engagement which at times, if one stops to think too much about it, reveals an absurdity within it all. I heard that talk 40 years ago and yet it is as fresh in my mind, and as deeply inspiring, as if I heard it this morning. Charles was not a man to forget then nor now.

Terry Bergdahl

I was in the Order from 1971 through 1976, so I'm sure many of you don't know me. I was married to John Latham at the time. I forget the details but somewhere during those years at some meeting or other in some town I've forgotten about, Charles was leading a discussion. Someone told a story of personal loss of a loved one, then another did the same, and I did the same. As there seemed to be a desire to move on, Charles said: No, this is how the dead live on. And so the stories continued a bit. It was a precious, touching, and profound moment that Charles created. A moment in time I'll always remember.

I didn't know Charles well nor work with him directly. But what I saw was a kind, sensitive and profound spiritual leader. I'm grateful I knew him.

I've read so many of your stories about Charles - not just his final act but old times that mean a great deal to you. I sense that this is what Charles might have hoped would happen; that through our stories his dedicated to the relief of innocent suffering would live on and possibly inspire others to take up a similar dedication. Whether we and others in our country choose to be inspired or repelled by his act is a personal choice, but it seems to me that that's why he ended his life in such a dramatic, painful, and impactful way. As many have said, I would not do it myself and I believe there's plenty to keep living for and fighting for in our society. But obviously some are called to take a different stance as regards the end of their lives.

I wish you all well and join you in mourning the passing of Charles Moore.

Grace and peace.... and Namaste,

Jan (Latham) Allen

I remember that the Holcombe family path matched Charles and Pat's from time to time via our common assignments, and I admired their dedication to our community and the local church experiment, but I also remember working with Charles on common concerns for justice issues when he was serving as pastor of Grace UMC in Austin when we returned from the Philippines to Texas in the year 2000, and I accepted the job as the Peace with Justice Coordinator for the General Board of Church & Society UMC. I remember visiting and worshipping at Grace UMC and noticed how pleased Charles was that the church had been able to be a witness on many justice concerns. We shared common concerns and missional activities around the Death Penalty and Restorative Justice throughout Texas as well as other justice concerns as we each served in various capacities. I always believed that Charles was deeply rooted and passionate about his call to serve and chose to be part of the change he hoped for all people.

When I first heard of Charles' death and his choice to "die his death", I recalled a time being in a seminar on the West Side of Chicago being led by Joe Pierce and he asked the question: "When is the last time you thought about committing suicide?". And as only Joe Pierce could bring off, he went around the room and we each answered. So much of our community's life story was about....how will you decide to die your death. I do not like the word "suicide".....What I prefer is "how will you die your death". My ancient meditative council, Rumi said it back in the 13th Century: *It's your road and yours alone, others may walk it with you, but no one can walk it for you...*

I found Salvatore (aka Ray) Caruso's statement says it for me as well...Charles' final act of living appears to be an offering on B 1/2 of all... A protest around the foundational social issues of our time...He continues now in all of us.....

Grace and Peace,

Wanda Holcombe

A Rhapsody for Charles Moore

MORE

Longer than always is a long, long time.

But far beyond forever you'll be mine.

I know I never lived before and my heart is very sure

No one else could love you more.

There is more than just a bit of irony in these words; yet they well-up from the deeps of my being.
Rest in Peace.

Bill Salmon

Woke up in the night thinking about those of you who will stand together at the funeral for Charles. And remembering when JWM was very ill, I heard he said he would wait for us all at the pearly gates, so we could all march in together. A touching image to think of all our colleagues hanging out there together awaiting the rest of us.

Appreciating those of you who will attend the funeral and stand together in memory of Charles.

On the journey,

Nancy Trask

The Kosmos in all its glory gave Charles Moore to us. His death by his own hand by pouring gasoline on himself gave us existential two prong fright by bathing us anew in the Mystery and putting us at choice....."sleepers awake to the inequalities in our life, individual and social'. Perhaps, we substitute care for gasoline and become torches for care.14

Joe Slicker