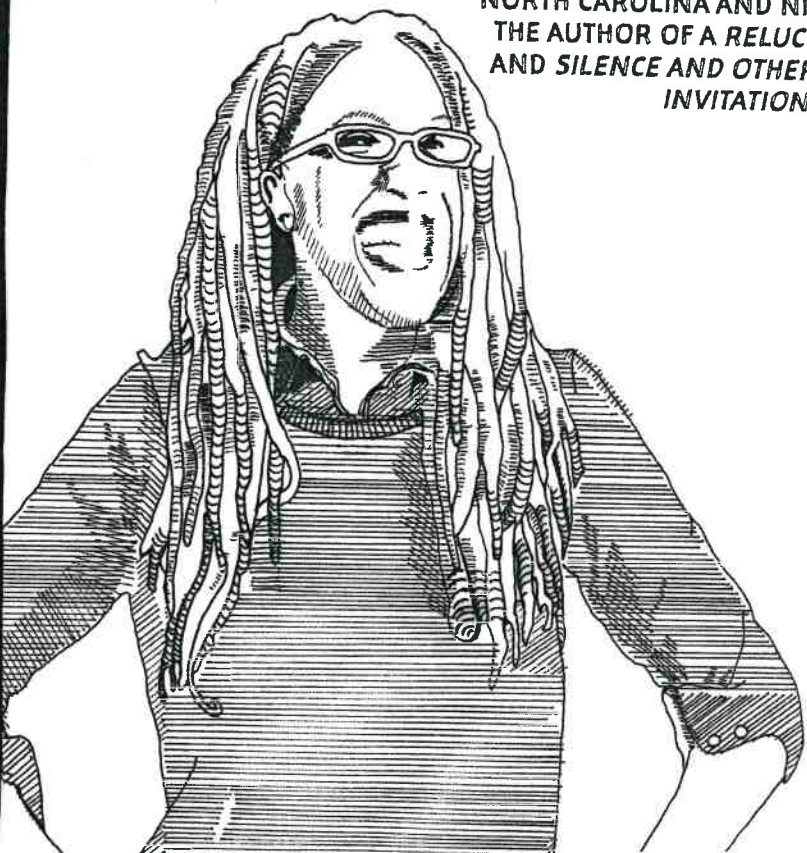
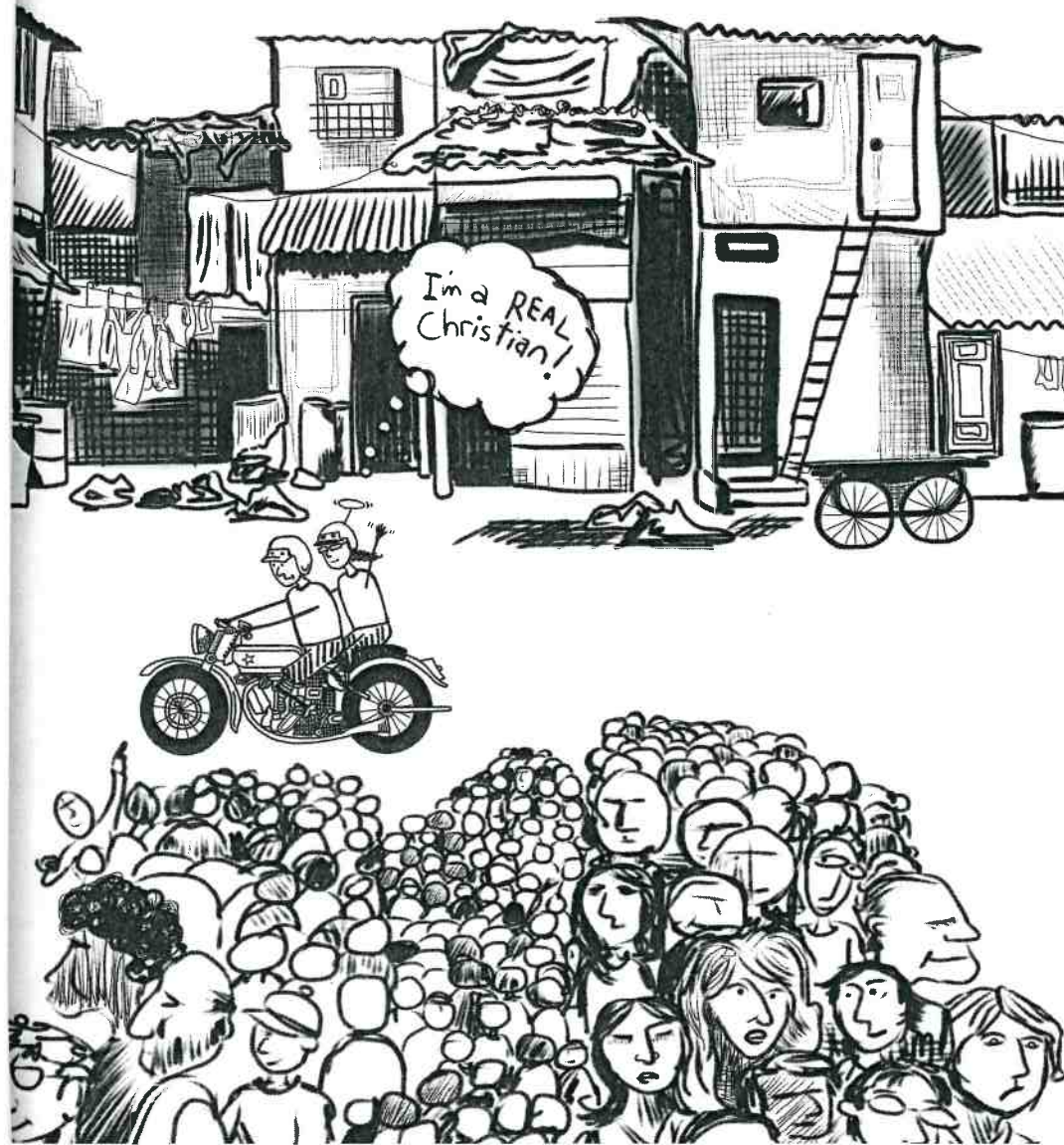


enuma OKORO

ENUMA OKORO IS A POET, SPEAKER,
AND AUTHOR. SHE SPENT HER
CHILDHOOD IN NIGERIA AND ENGLAND,
WENT TO COLLEGE IN MINNESOTA,
AND NOW SPLITS HER TIME BETWEEN
NORTH CAROLINA AND NIGERIA. SHE IS
THE AUTHOR OF *A RELUCTANT PILGRIM*
AND *SILENCE AND OTHER SURPRISING
INVITATIONS OF ADVENT*.



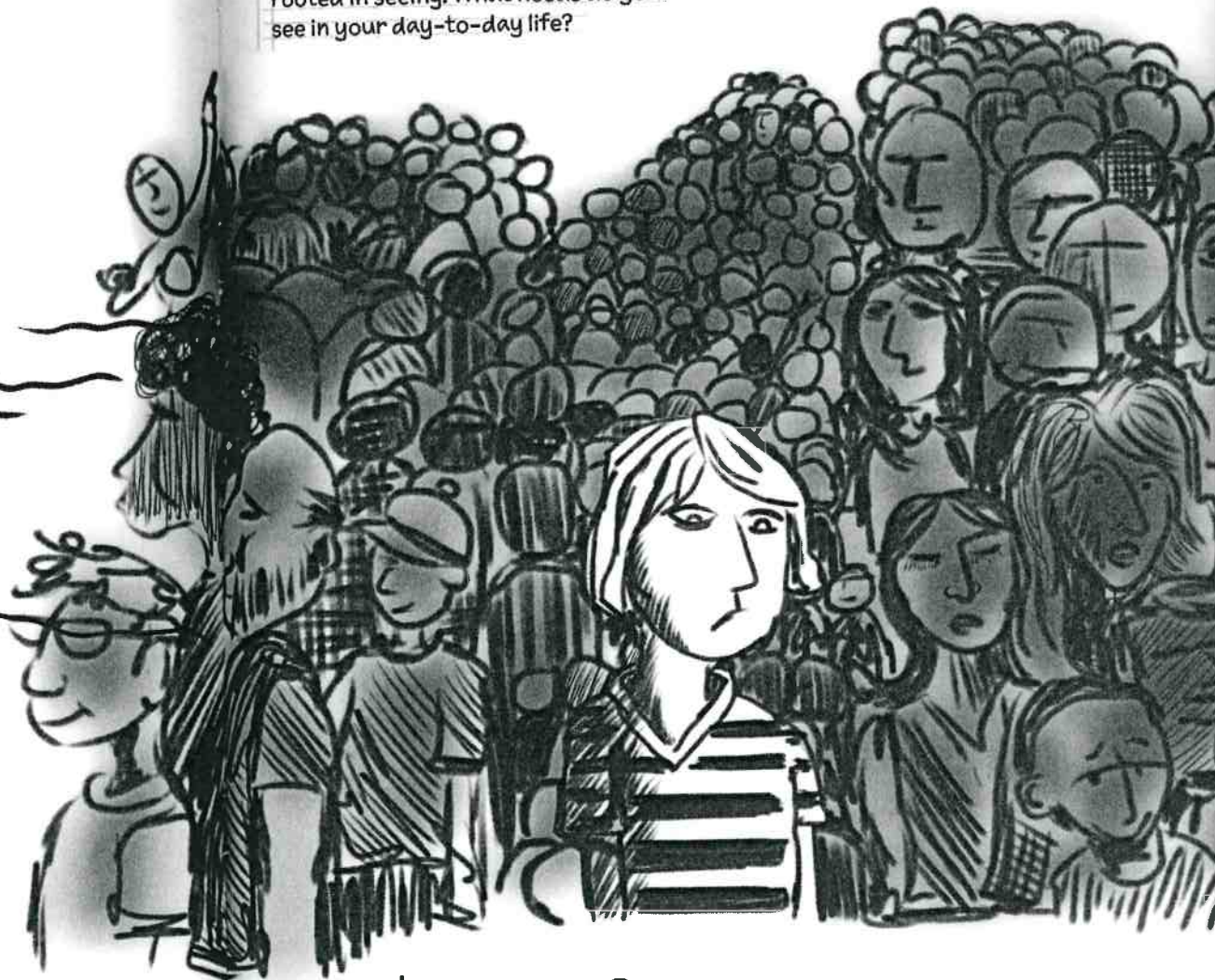
What assumptions have you made
about what service looks like?
Do you have to get on a plane to do
“real” service? Do you have to
suffer for it to count?





THERE IS OVERWHELMING NEED IN THE WORLD AND THAT CAN SOMETIMES PARALYZE US AND KEEP US FROM ACTION. BUT IF WE FOCUS OUR ATTENTION ON THE SMALLER PICTURE, WE OFTEN SEE PLACES OF NEED THAT HAVE BEEN RIGHT IN FRONT OF US ALL ALONG.


Enuma reminds us that service is rooted in seeing. What needs do you see in your day-to-day life?



Service


isn't just something we do for other people. It changes us by shifting our TIME, ATTENTION, and resources to something other than Ourselves.

HOW might practicing intentional acts of service start to change your perspective? your neighborhood? your work place? your community?



ENUMA SAYS, "WHEN PEOPLE SERVE OTHERS, THE WORLD GETS A GLIMPSE OF GOD." JESUS BROUGHT THE DEAD TO LIFE AND TURNED WATER INTO WINE. BUT HIS ACTS OF SERVICE WEREN'T ALWAYS GRAND MIRACLES.

JESUS SHOWED US THAT SERVICE CAN BE AS SIMPLE AND PROFOUND AS WASHING SOMEONE'S DIRTY FEET, TOUCHING THE "UNTOUCHABLES," OR TALKING TO AN UNPOPULAR TAX COLLECTOR.




"So if I, your Lord & Teacher, have washed your feet, you also OUGHT to wash one another's feet. For I have set you as an example, that you also should do as I have done TO YOU."

~John 13:14-15

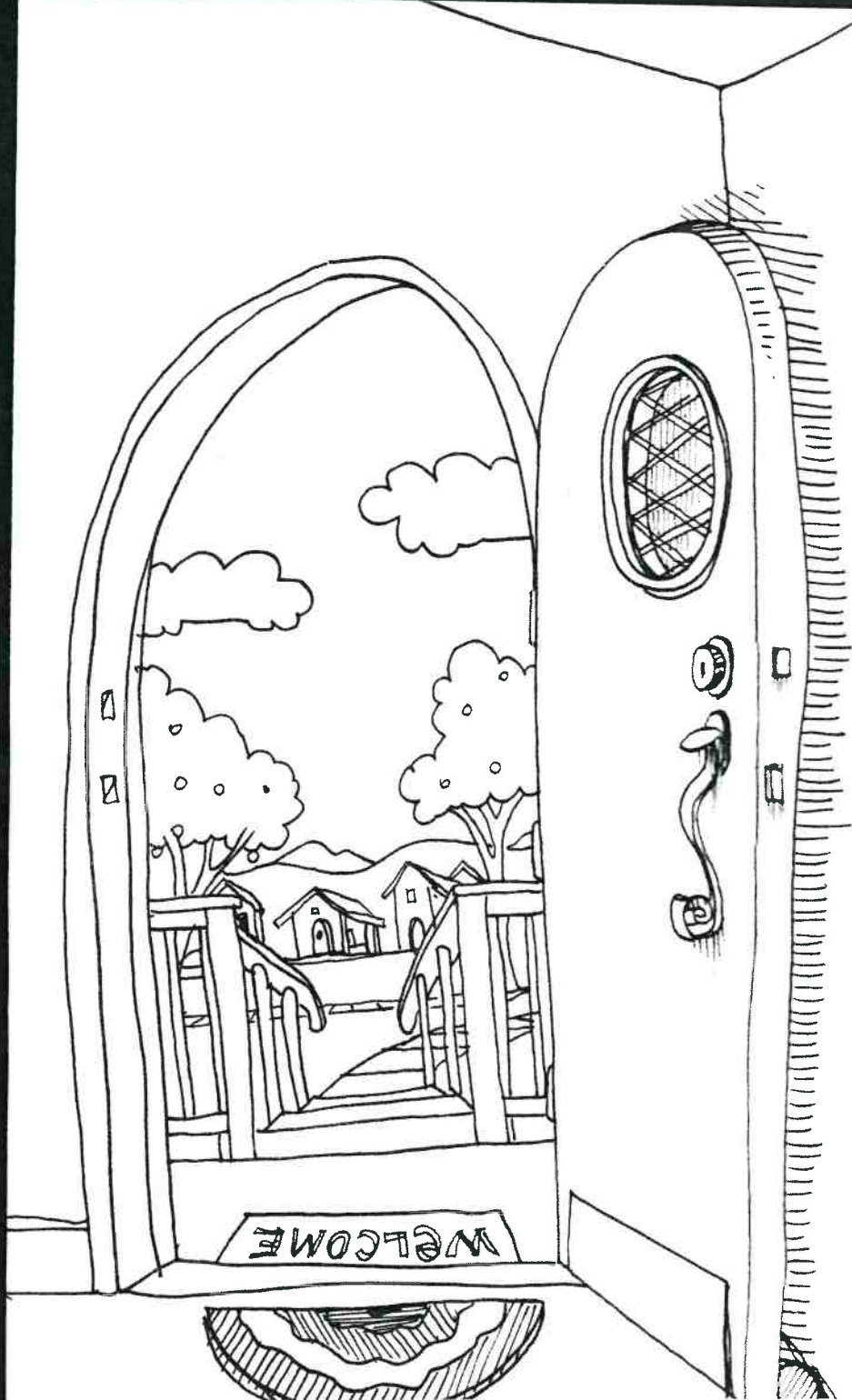


Raking Leaves

what are some simple acts of service you have done or could do for the people in your life?



Giving a Homeless man a Coffee



I Was **CONVINCED**
I HAD to get on a **plane**
to serve **GOD,**
When I COULD DO IT
Just as Faithfully
By walking
out **MY**
Front
Door?
- ENUMA

How
Will You
STEP OUT?





Since serving is rooted in seeing, use this week to start seeing some areas of need in your community that you could address through your service. Look around your neighborhood for someone who could use help around the house or benefit from some coffee and conversation. Pay attention to the "regulars" on your route to work—the homeless woman, the worn-out bagel guy, the awkward teenager on the bus. List some simple ways you could serve some of these people.



Individual acts of service aren't your only option. Today, do some research into organizations in your area that use volunteers. Which groups might be a good fit for you? Choose two or three that seem appealing and contact them. Set up a time to visit the organization or meet with someone who works there in the next day or two. Get a feel for what the organization needs and how you might be able to help out. Write down the names and contact numbers here:

"Everybody can be great because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject & verb agree to serve... You only need a heart full of **Grace**, a soul generated by **Love**. You can be that servant." Martin Luther King, Jr.

"This is what you shall do; Love the earth & sun and the animals, despise riches, give alms to everyone that asks, stand up for the stupid and crazy, devote your income & labor to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning **God**, have patience & indulgence toward people..." - Walt Whitman



Whether you're doing a more personal act of service or volunteering with an organization, get the ball rolling and put those good intentions into action today. Buy a sandwich for that homeless woman, shovel your neighbor's sidewalk, schedule your first shift as a volunteer. Write about how that experience went.



If serving someone else feels like more than you can manage, take some time today to do an honest inventory of what's using up your time and energy. What are you doing that's keeping you from practicing an act of service in your neighborhood or community?

"HOW DOES GOD'S LOVE ABIDE
IN ANYONE WHO HAS THE
WORLD'S GOODS AND SEES
A BROTHER OR SISTER IN
NEED & YET REFUSES HELP?"

— 1 JOHN 3:17

"REMEMBER that when you leave this earth,
you can take with you NOTHING that
you have received — fading symbols
of honor, trappings of power — but only
what you have been given: a full
heart enriched by honest service,
love, sacrifice and courage."

— Saint Francis of Assisi

PRAYER
OF THE DAY
MAY THE HOLY SPIRIT
GUIDE & STRENGTHEN
ME, THAT IN THIS,
AND IN ALL THINGS,
I MAY DO
GOD'S WILL
IN THE SERVICE OF
THE KINGDOM OF HIS
CHRIST. AMEN."

—adapted from
THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER



By today, you should have either acted on your plan or be preparing to do so in the next few days. That makes this a great day to consider how you're feeling about this process. What things feel uncomfortable as you prepare to step into an environment or a relationship that's unfamiliar? What are you excited about?



Today, consider how you can make this week's act of service a regular part of your life. What would it look like to help that neighbor for an hour every week? To develop a friendly connection with the bagel guy? To commit to an organization for the next month or even year? Think about how you can incorporate this practice into your life over the long haul. What parts of your normal routine might have to change for that to happen?

“
CHRIST
HAS NO BODY
HERE ON EARTH
BUT YOURS.
NO HANDS BUT YOURS.
NO FEET BUT YOURS.
Your eyes are
the eyes
WHICH EXPRESS
CHRIST'S
COMPASSION
TO THE
WORLD.
Yours are the feet
WITH WHICH CHRIST
is to GO ABOUT
DOING GOOD.
AND YOURS ARE
HANDS WITH WHICH CHRIST
is to
BLESS US NOW.”

~ TERESA OF AVILA