



Portrait of Jim Harney by Robert Shetterly

James William Harney
1940-2008

Like a cool breeze against your cheek or the sculpting power of torrential waters, Jim Harney was a force of nature. His intense reverence for the sanctity of life catapulted him from the priesthood to prisoner to prophet, and over time and space, took him to the violence and victims in El Salvador to the starving in a Haitian landfill and to so many other places where, as he termed it, the crucified of this world reside. He always returned home with riveting stories of their struggle, of their indomitable spirits, and thanks early on to sisterly advice, he returned with powerful images of the people he met along this remarkable journey. Jim's long career as a photojournalist was secondary to his love for humanity and his efforts of educating Americans through countless talks he gave in living rooms, schools and churches across this country about the harrowing lives of people crushed by war and poverty. Through his stories spoken in a strong passionate voice, or his penetrating photographs of souls laid bare, Jim sought unendingly to help bring about justice, and in particular, to those upon whose backs, hands and throats Mammon has so brutally trodden. The last vestiges of Jim's vitality were spent walking from Boston to West Warwick, Rhode Island in support of the undocumented while drawing attention to the suppressive economic forces that compel the marginalized of society to risk literally life and limb in coming to America. Though the cancers in his throat, lungs and head prevented him from completing the walk to Washington, D.C. and that ultimately claimed his life, his work through *Posibilidad*, the organization that he helped create, is sure to continue.

