



The Open Door

SUMMER
2007

From the Director



Fr Bill Wack, CSC

Greetings in the Risen Lord! Easter and Pentecost brought great joy to us as we celebrated the new life that is given to us in Christ Jesus. Though we are surrounded by poverty, homelessness, violence and despair, we take heart knowing that all is swallowed up in the victory of the Resurrection. In fact, we already see evil being overcome by the goodness of so many in our community at André House.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

A TWO Day <i>Journey</i> - by J. Parreira	2
Is the Year Already Over???	3
- by H. Nguyen	
Help!	4
- Fr B. Wack, CSC	
Love In the Darkness	5
-K. Masloski	

One of the pleasurable tasks for the staff is to write "thank you" notes to our donors. We like to acknowledge personally every contribution that comes our way, no matter how small or large, so we send many notes every week. This year we have been writing a LOT of postcards and letters, which means that we have received an abundance of help from many of you. Because we cannot say it enough, let me do it again: THANK YOU!

In the last newsletter I mentioned that my new passion is finding permanent, supportive housing for hundreds if not thousands in our area. Many people have come forth to say that they, too, are interested in this huge project. Though it is still in its infancy, there is a growing movement in our community to secure and provide housing for those who cannot afford it. This is a much more effective solution than shelters or even transitional housing. With the way things are progressing I can see someone starting a pilot program fairly soon. After that, we will be looking to the county and city, as well as other agencies, in order to do this for many more.

In the meantime we still have great needs, especially as we head into the hot summer months. Please pray for us as we remember you in our daily prayers.

God bless,
Fr. Bill

PEACE!



A TWO Day *Journey*

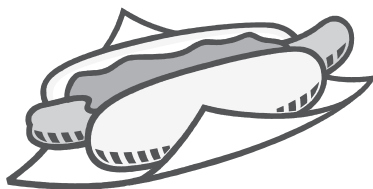
-by Joe Parreira



Joe Parreira
Core 2005 - 07

to success. Where have we *journeyed* lately? Some have *journeyed* back east to see relatives, down south to see the world, South Bend to hang out with the family, to even *journeying* a few blocks day after day to begin work as we do each day of the week here at Andre House. What is our *journey*? What passage or progressive step(s) have we taken for either ourselves or, more importantly, for others?

My *journey* has continued since day one, and, for me, has consisted of two days. How many *journeys* can one make in two days? Between my first year of hot dog Wednesday and second year of chili Sunday, I have been able to progress and *journey* to a success. That success has come through great friendships with people whom I, before taking this *journey*, had never known, and today am very proud to have gotten to know.



Wednesday Night
Hotdogs!

How difficult it is to list all the many names and groups of people who have given their time numerous times continuously on a Wednesday night. To those people who ever you were, or are, I would like to say, "Thank

you." Thank you for assisting me through this path filled journey. Thank you for your friendship Frank, Ron, Donald [picture is up the wall], Marie, Nancy, Sandy. For continuing to be there for me -- I can still swing by before starting my day off to get a hug, encouraging words, or just catch up on your travels and life's doings, whether sad or happy. Thank you Order of Malta group: Jim, Diane, Wendell, Johns, and Co. With the summer coming along I worry I may not see many of you for awhile, but thanks for your many words of wisdom and stories of life beyond ten miles of Andre House to keep me striving. Thank you ASU/Newman Center group, from which, I can proudly say, I originated from. Thanks for your dedication of time and unremitting effort in whatever tasks needing doing. Thanks Anand, Bridgette, Caitlyn, Tony, Sean. To all those who have played a part in making a Wednesday night meal happen, thank you. I often ask myself, have I taught you well or have I learned well from you?

How may I thank thee Sunday? With a new group of faces each Sunday, let me try to count the names. Thank you to those I have had the pleasure of getting to know on Sundays. It was a difficult challenge that I accepted prior to the start of this term. That challenge, I would say became the smoothest of transitions. Thank you people of OLV (weeks 1 & 2): Marilyn, Jim, Denise's, Karen, Bobbi, Marge and all the many others. Thank you to the people of St. Rafael's Church, especially Matt, Randy and Andrew. Thank you people of St. Thomas More Church (week 3): Katie, Elizabeth, Bill, Mary Jane, Christina, Shipman's, and all. Thank you people from the Franciscan Renewal Center-CASA (weeks 4&5) for your continued dedication, enthusiasm and hard work. With your help we were able to make the ten "til seven time happen. Thanks Frank, Andrew, Betty, Iris, Norbert and company, oh and thanks Scott for the extra cleaning in the kitchen when we were ahead of schedule.



Chili Sunday!

- cont'd on page 4

Is the Year Already Over???

- by Hoa Nguyen

When I first signed up to work at Andre House, I did not realize how fast the year would fly by. My mother told me before I left for Arizona to make it the best experience possible because working Andre House would go by quickly, just as my four years at Emmanuel College had. It seems like just yesterday it was August, and I was starting my orientation at Rock Point.

Before I came to Andre House, I thought one year was a long time to volunteer, especially being away from everyone I knew and loved at home. I thought I would not have time for a social life; not have time to meet people; not have alone time for myself. I expected to be working from morning to night and would get tired and stressed out -- which I do. But I was wrong about all the assumptions.

I will admit that it took me a long time to adjust to new living conditions. Living in Massachusetts, the weather is nice and cool, whereas the move to Phoenix brought a very hot, dry heat. But, I got used to all the changes of the weather and the new location. Since I did not know any places in Arizona, it took me few months to find things such as great restaurants like Vietnamese, Mexican, Thai and Indian food. It took me few times getting lost to locate them, but now I have many fun places to go out to hang out with my friends in the communities of Tempe, Scottsdale and even to my favorite spot, South Mountain. Every Saturday, on my day off, I go to South Mountain to watch the sunset and release my stress from work.

As the months go by, I am getting to know the city and meeting new people everywhere -- which I enjoy very much. Not only do I enjoy meeting people outside of my community, but I enjoy getting to know all of the volunteers that come to Andre House every week. Talking and getting to know them make me feel at home and being part of a big family at Andre House. I also like meeting the guests here, and I get to listen to them share their stories of how they became homeless. Most of their stories are sad, and I feel like there is not much I can do but to listen and help with the services that Andre House provides.

I remember one of the conversations I had with a volunteer who asked me what I was going to do when this year was over. I said that I would like to go back to school and get my Masters in Accounting. Father Bill sat next to me and said, "Of course, that would be after she is done with her second year at Andre House." After that conversation, it made me think about volunteering another year of service work here. Initially, I had only planned on one. As time went by, I started to love the city, enjoyed my work as a staff member and enjoyed talking to and meeting new people. As my time approached its end, I felt like I was not ready to leave "my family" and end my time here at Andre House. So I thought it through very hard for one month and asked what I wanted to do that would make me happy. The answer was clear: working at Andre House makes me happy. And with that, I have decided to stay for a second year and serve God's people as one year was not long enough.

My parents are very supportive and happy with my decision. They want me to be happy with the choices I make in my life. But one of my best friends had a different view of my decision. He was very disappointed in my choice and thought that I am wasting my four years of education. He felt I should start a career with my major. He does not know what is going on at Andre House and what great a place it is. Nor does he know the feeling you get when helping so many homeless people in Phoenix. But then again, it is my decision and my life. I want to make a choice that will make me very

happy, which I am. Andre House teaches me to have confidence in myself, to be a strong person and especially to say "no," when it has to be said. I had trouble saying that word all my life. Andre House has opened my eyes to God, to His teachings and to His people. I am looking forward to doing more in the next year.





Help!

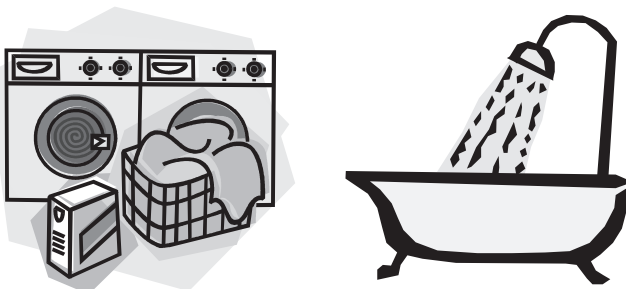
- by Fr Bill Wack, CSC

In order to provide food, clothing, showers, laundry services, and more to the hundreds who come to us daily, we rely on thousands of volunteers every year. Most of these will help us to prepare and serve our evening meal, but others join in with sorting and distributing clothes, as well as helping us keep up the place.

In addition, there are a handful of people who volunteer with us regularly, taking a shift in the office, showers, transitional homes, and shopping at the food bank. These folks are invaluable to us as they take over when the staff is ill or on vacation or retreat. In order not to overwhelm the few who are available for this service we are trying to increase the number of people who can assist us regularly.

If you are interested in being a regular volunteer, or if you would like to be put on a "coverage list" for times when a staff member is away, please let us know. We would be happy to train you for whatever ministry you would like to do. The best part about working with us at André House is the people – the guests as well as the staff!

- BW



Volunteer Appreciation Day!

Friday, July 27th

Mass @ 5:00pm at the

Hospitality Center

213 S 11th Av, Phoenix

85007

Potluck Dinner immediately
following Mass.



A TWO Day *Journey*, cont'd - from page 2

All in all, my journey through these passed couple years here at Andre House has taken me far and beyond my initial expectations both with people and work. I have learned much from our guests and volunteers and the concluding message still remains; "don't stop believing", for a *journey*, whether it is of two days or a lifetime, will always end in a greater joy, the joy of heaven.

-JP



Love!



Love in the Darkness

by Kristen Masloski

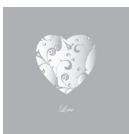
[The Church has] never preached violence, except the violence of love, which left Christ nailed to a cross, the violence that we must each do to ourselves to overcome our selfishness and such cruel inequalities among us. The violence we preach is not the violence of the sword, the violence of hatred. It is the violence of love, of brotherhood, the violence that wills to beat weapons into sickles for work. ~ Oscar Romero

Recently, many people have asked me why I serve and how can I do my job day after day despite all the violence and hate I see in the Zone (the area of Phoenix where the André House is located). How can I serve someone who I know is injuring him/herself by using drugs? The answer is simple: out of love. My work calls me to love like Christ loved. Everyday, that is my prayer: that God opens my heart to do His work and love like Christ loved us. Christ's love was a dynamic, life-altering love. He loved us so much that He allowed himself to be crucified so that we may live and be saved. Because of this, my response to all those who ask me why I serve is because the people I serve are Christ. Our mission statement here at André House is Matthew 25:40: "Whatsoever you do to the least of my people, that you do unto me." Christ lives in every one of us, so when a person looks at someone with Christian eyes, that person should be seeing Christ.

The gospel calls all of us to love: "This is my commandment: that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than to lay down his own life for his friends" (John 15: 12-13), but to love requires action; love without action is simply words. Although Christ does not call us to violence, He calls us to purge ourselves of our sins, to "repress in [ourselves] the outbursts of pride, kill in [our] hearts the outbursts of greed, of avarice, of conceit, of arrogance. Let [us] kill it in [our] hearts. This is what must be killed, this is the violence that must be done, so that out of it a new person may arise, the only one who can build a new civilization: a civilization of love" (Oscar Romero). It is only then that we can love and live the message of Christ.

Throughout my time here at André House, I have grown tremendously as an individual. I have realized many insights that I could have only come to understand by working with the homeless. By working with the poor, the people Christ decided to come to earth and live among, I have found God in places I would never have expected to find Him, and for that, I will always be grateful.

- KM



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The Open Door



**Join us every
First Friday for
Mass and a
Potluck Supper
at
1203 W Polk at
6:30 pm**



André House Needs:

Summer Focus Items!

Bottles of water / Individual size
Men's Jeans (especially sizes 30-38)
White Socks
Deodorant
Sunscreen (especially travel sizes)
Phone cards (for long distance phone calls)

