

The Open Door

From the Director

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:



Fr. Eric Schimmel,
C.S.C.

Greetings from André House!

Now that summer has come to Phoenix, we at André House all know that means one thing...Summer Staff. OK, I understand that some people may have thought about the heat first, and we certainly are getting our fair share of days over 100 degrees, but I like to focus on the positive.

This summer we are blessed to have seven people come spend time with us on staff. Gabby and Lauren both come to us from King's College, a Holy Cross school in Pennsylvania. Lauren was with us for a week over Winter Break, and we are

happy she is returning. Vincent and Andrew are students at another Holy Cross school located in Indiana, Notre Dame. Kayla is from Bridgewater State College in MA and is also returning after spending time at André House over Winter Break. Finally, we have two young men who are seminarians in Holy Cross, Joshua and Ryan, who will go to the

Novitiate when they finish their time here. It is exciting to share our ministry with these talented young people. If you meet them, please welcome them.

As we celebrate the arrival of these Summer Staff members, the André House community also wants to be sure we recognize all of the people who help to make our ministry possible. We literally have thousands of volunteers come through our doors to serve in the soupline and other ministries each year. Without you, we could not have a soupline, provide clothes, or do most any of the services we offer to our guests. Therefore, the staff and I wanted to make sure that we have a Volunteer Appreciation celebration. We will have Mass and a potluck on Sunday, July 10th. (See details on pg 6.) There are rumors that we may have some staff members from previous years here that morning as I know I will preside at the wedding of a former Core Staff member the Saturday beforehand. All are welcome to our Volunteer Appreciation festivities.

Although I do not consider myself a big lobbyist by any stretch of the imagination, there are some issues in Arizona politics that so adversely affect our guests that I feel the need to bring it to the attention of the larger André House community. One issue this summer deals with AHCCCS, Arizona's Medicaid program. Some years ago, Arizona voters passed Proposition 204 which provides coverage for individuals up to 10% of the federal poverty level. The AZ Constitution has a voter protection clause that limits what the Governor and legislators can do when they disagree with voter passed initiatives. Still, those in power in AZ passed cuts to AHCCCS so that they would limit/freeze enrollment for childless adults – adults without children cannot enroll for AHCCCS after July 1, 2011. The Arizona Center for Law in Public Interest has filed suit to block this move, but the final decision of the courts is still up in the air as I write this article.

I pray that a just resolution to this issue can be found, and found soon. For me, the larger issue is how often, when people all agree that budget cuts have to be made, that the people who are most poor and vulnerable tend to bear the brunt of the burden. This contradicts our faith. Well over 50 verses in the Old Testament tell us that people who are poor are the ones we need to care for the most. Our Lord Jesus was born poor and invites us to give to people who are poor (see especially Mt 19:21, Mt 25:35, Lk 4:18, Lk 14:13).

In light of all that goes on here in the political sphere, I found what happened in our dining room a couple of weeks ago both uplifting and a good lesson. At the back table of the dining room we have a statue of the Virgin Mary, some baskets with paper and pencil for people to write prayers, and a box for them to place their prayers. Recently one of our staff members was looking through the prayer intention box and found a sealed envelope. The envelope had a few coins totaling 56 cents. As people are suffering as a result of the economy as well as suffering from the proposed "fixes" to the economy, one guest gave a powerful witness to hope. It reminded us of Mk 12:41-44 or Lk 21:1-4. Those who the world would classify as lowly are offering what little they have to the Lord in gratitude. I pray that we may all learn from the example of this generous soul. May more people be blessed with a need to give so that fewer people will feel the sting of dire need.

God bless,
Fr. Eric

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Reflection on Reflections

-by Andrew Lugo



Crosses? Hugs? ARKs? While serving at André House the daily life can be quite demanding so we devote some time each day to prayer and reflection. In fact, we are each assigned days in which we are in charge of leading the prayer and reflection during Mass and noonday reflection. Such days add a little more demand to our day but are worth it in the end.

Writing out a reflection is a very cumbersome task for me. For some of the staff here, it seems that in order to lead reflection, all they need to do is read the readings for that day and wham!, they are prepared and know what to say. In opposite, this does not happen as easily for me. Whenever I am scheduled for reflection, I happen to be awake most of the night, thinking and figuring out what am I going to say for the next day, just to write out a page. Sometimes, I never finish writing out what I have to say. Other times I have to look up someone else's reflection just to lead me in a direction to talk about something. Other times, a lot of what I jot down comes from my creativeness. Some reflections are bad; others are mediocre; but here and there, I am able to get a good reflection.

Although the editor would not let me print all the reflections that I have written over the past year in this newsletter, here are a couple of the topics that I have talked about:

- * My very first reflection was about showing your own cross to everyone else, to remind everyone and ourselves what we are called to do.
- * A more recent reflection was about ARKs. The first readings were mostly centered on the story of Noah and the Ark. That same week was also known as Random Acts of Kindness Week. So, if we treated the word "ark" as an acronym, ARK can stand for Acts of Random Kindness. Within the reflection, I explained all of this...how the story of the ark is really a story about one of God's ARKs, and compared that story to how André House is an ark for ARKs.

Several of the staff reflections were memorable, as well. Out of the many that I have heard, two stick in my mind. One of them was based on the story of the shepherd who left a flock of ninety-nine sheep in order to find and bring back the one sheep that had run off. Historically, if a sheep was to run away from the flock, once the shepherd would get close enough to catch the lost lamb, the shepherd would break the lamb's legs. The shepherd would then carry the lamb back to the flock on his shoulders and nurture the lamb back to health. This would establish trust in the shepherd so the lamb would know that it would be well taken care of by its master and learn to not to run away again. The second reflection talked about the ministries that we provide at André House. We have numerous offerings here that help our brothers and sisters in need, but *we always serve our guests*. This reflection recognized that although we have a habit of serving, we too should be ones that get served. By allowing the guests to participate in serving, they feel they are needed, useful, and have a purpose here. I believe this is an important ministry that we can offer, especially for a homeless guest, because they often wonder why they are here and if they have any purpose here in this world.

Just as the reflections that we do at Mass are significant, the noonday reflections are just as important, fun, and moving. One reflection I did on "hugs" was based on a story from the book Chicken Soup for the Soul. It was inspirational reading, and afterwards, I had everyone hug each other. After that "hug" reflection, some staff members have used the reading as part of the Soupline circle-up with their volunteers instead of doing a standard prayer. Some of us have even been giving out random hugs to guests! Personally, during Mass, I have replaced the traditional handshake offered at the sign of peace with a hug. Another positive reflection idea came from the book, All You Really Need To Know About Prayer You Can Learn From The Poor, specifically the chapter titled, "Fanning Flickering Flames." It was about a nun who felt she could not do a good job helping those that she served because she knew that she would never be in their same situation. She ended up praying to receive their suffering and pain so that she can feel more compassion and be more sensitive to their needs. This story has remained with me and reminds me of the lyrics from Christian music singer Brandon Heath's song, "Give Me Your Eyes." They have a similar message:

(Continued on page 3)

Wherever You Need Me

- by Matthew Linderman

When I coordinate soupline every Saturday, there comes a time when the preparation is nearing an end and I have to assign everyone jobs for the time during which we serve dinner. There are a number of jobs that are needed: working in the kitchen or family dining room, serving food or drinks, washing trays or taking out the trash. Some are more glamorous than others, but they are all very important. When assigning the jobs, I try to take into consideration people's preferences but sometimes when I ask, the reply comes back: "Wherever you need me."

A few months ago the Catholic Church celebrated the annunciation – when the angel appeared to Mary and informed her that she was to give birth to the Son of God. As I reflected on this Biblical event, that line came to mind: "Wherever you need me." This is basically what Mary was saying with those words, "I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word."

And this is how we too are called to respond to the Lord when He gives us various

"assignments", even when they may be unexpected or difficult. We are not to insist on serving God only in the way that we would like, but rather we agree to go wherever He needs us most. Like the

volunteer who is just happy to be able to help in some way, it should be with joy that we receive the opportunity to be used by God, submitting our gifts, our time, and ourselves in service to Him.

It is indeed a great privilege to be a part of God's work, and we know that whatever job He assigns us, it is an important one for which He will provide the grace and strength to do it well. May we continually reply to the Lord's calling as Mary did upon receiving the angel's message: "Wherever you need me."



Reflections - cont'd from previous page

(Continued from page 2)

Give me your eyes for just one second
 Give me your eyes so I can see
 Everything that I keep missing
 Give me your love for humanity
 Give me your arms for the broken hearted
 The ones that are far beyond my reach?
 Give me your heart for the ones forgotten
 Give me your eyes so I can see

The song and the reading have struck a chord with me. I took these lyrics and the story and made a prayer out of them. I use this prayer to deepen my feelings for the suffering of our brothers and sisters that live in the immediate area of "The Zone." This prayer has really motivated me on my journey here at André House.

Even though creating the reflections for the day is a cumbersome task for me, such a task is a well-honored tradition at André House. I have treated each reflection as unique and will continue to do so with those that remain...not because the readings they are based on change, but because the message within them will not only affect me, but could possibly affect someone else. In the end, I am glad I have done them, and I am sure they will benefit my spiritual and social journey here at André House and beyond.

Childlike Fascination

-by Elizabeth Diedrich

"Hola. Hello. How are you?" For the past two years every conversation I have had with Carlos has been the exactly the same. *"I am well. How are you?"* Once in a while I will respond in Spanish. *"Buena. Como estas?"* Then Carlos in his heavy accent laughs at me and says, *"Good. Thank you. You have candy for throat?"* I hand him his



cough drops, and he leaves the office.

Around André House everyone knows Carlos. He has a very distinct voice, and he has some version of the same conversation with everyone. Actually, he has the same conversation with a person each time he sees that person. This means I may say, *"Hello. How are you?"* with Carlos five times a day.

Two years of the same conversation. I never really thought about this. Then one day we had a different conversation.

It was just Carlos and I in the office, and he asked for a pencil, eraser, and pencil sharpener. He told me he likes to draw. He picked up a small piece of paper, no larger than a playing card, and sat in front of me at the desk and drew me a picture. He drew a simple picture of reeds, a fish, birds - a scene from a pond.

I was mesmerized as he drew. It was not his drawing that was mesmerizing; rather that after two years of exactly the same conversation Carlos was now a different person to me. He had learned my name two years ago and had practiced many times saying it correctly. Today, as his drawing was finished, he took a second piece of paper and practiced writing my name. Eight times he practiced writing my name.



It is easy for life to become mundane. It is easy to become caught up in the daily grind. It is easy to follow the in and out of a daily schedule. How often do you sit down at the end of the day and cannot even

remember everything that you did throughout the day?

I think this is especially true in relationships. It is easy to become static in relationships. I can often see this very clearly in community. After ten months together, we can exchange thoughts without words; we can predict when a person will not be able to follow through; we know each others' likes and dislikes and can read each

other with fairly good accuracy. This brings comfort and fluidity to our daily work. Yet, it also inhibits us from challenging each other and being open to listening. Similarly with family or friends, often conversations operate on a superficial level and lack the depth that brings about new ideas and the possibility of transformation.

I think what we need more of is a healthy, childlike fascination with our daily events and the people in our lives. Fascination is a strong word, but I think it is the best one to describe what is needed to make a relationship flourish. In the preface of his book, *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell writes: "Our instinct as humans, after all, is to assume that most things are not interesting. We flip through the channels on the television and reject ten before we settle on one. We go to a bookstore and look at twenty novels before we pick the one we want. We filter and rank and judge." Gladwell suggests that we must move beyond our human instinct and develop a constant consciousness to our lack of knowledge of each other in order to give us the freedom to continue to learn and transform relationships. Furthermore, a constant fascination of apparently mundane events grants us the ability to see the miracles of our daily lives.

It may seem awkward to try and hold a conscious fascination with the world, but if you take a moment, take a breath, and stop to wonder and awe, miracles will appear everywhere.



Simple Gestures

-by Alicia Padilla



Since being at André House I have learned a few things not just about the people, but about myself. One afternoon I walked outside the building to find Belen and Natasha, two of our guests, sitting on the sidewalk just outside our front gate. Belen is a disabled woman whose movements are very jerky, and she does not have full control of her body. Her hands are extremely crippled, making it difficult for her to perform activities that the rest of us take for granted. Belen was sitting on the ground while Natasha was doing her hair.

I didn't really think too much of what I saw until later that day. The image of the two women kept coming back into my mind. It reminded me of when I was younger and had very long hair. My mom would have me sit in front of her on the floor, and she would brush and braid my hair. The entire time she was doing this, I would squirm and complain about how the brush was pulling my hair and hurting my head...or I didn't like the way she was styling my hair...or I didn't like sitting on the floor because it was too hard. I would complain and whine about the entire experience. And here was Belen, sitting on the ground as still as possible, without any complaints. She was *thankful* for Natasha's willingness to help her do her hair.

I have three younger sisters, and, as I got older, my mom would ask me to brush and braid their hair. Again, I would complain, but this time about how *they* would wiggle, move, and not hold still. I would tell my mom I didn't want to do it because they would just mess it up and take it down. Actually, I didn't want to do it because I didn't think that it was important.

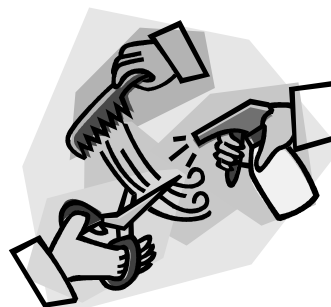
As I watched Natasha, I saw a great love that was behind her simple act of kindness toward her friend. I have come to realize that we take for



granted some of the simplest, everyday things. I am not only talking about material things we receive, but about how we overlook the joy of giving because it is part of an everyday routine or chore instead of an act of love. At André House, I have found joy in simple, everyday chores such as laundry. I have seen how thankful a guest is to have clean clothes to wear that don't smell like sweat, dirt, urine, or poop. I am thankful that I have always had clean clothes to wear. I now feel a joy, honor, and love when I do other people's laundry. Just think of how many times we miss out on those feelings because we look at it as an everyday chore, not an honor.

Thanks to our guests, I have learned so much. One thing in particular is that we need to do everything, especially those everyday chores and routine tasks, with love and offer them up as a prayer for those who it will affect. For example, the next time you help someone wash their hands before a meal, pray whoever's hands you washed may always reach out to God. The next time you scrub toilets, pray whoever uses that toilet will always be in good health. The next time you do laundry, pray whoever wears those clothes may always find themselves clothed in the light and love of the Lord. The next time you mop a floor, pray whoever walks in that path may find their path to Christ. The next time you prepare or serve a meal, pray whoever eats that meal is given the nourishment and strength to do God's will.

As Mother Theresa said, "It's not about doing great things, but doing little things with great love."



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION CELEBRATION!

We love our volunteers!!

To show our appreciation, we invite you to join us for Mass and potluck brunch.

This will also be an opportunity to celebrate our 2010—11 Core Community.

Please bring something to share.

Look forward to seeing you there!

DATE: Sunday, July 10th

TIME: Mass @ 9:30am. Potluck brunch to follow.

PLACE: Hospitality Center. 213 S 11th Av.

MASS & POTLUCK



Mailing List



Do you want to be removed from the mailing list? (STOP!)



If any of these are true, then please use the enclosed envelope and **send the mailing label on this newsletter** with either the changes that need to be made or the word "REMOVE" on it. The list will be updated before our next mailing.



Does your name or address need to be corrected?

If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please contact Teresa Hipp:



Are you reading a friend's copy of *The Open Door* & want to be added to our mailing list?

Email: coordinator@andrehouse.org

Phone: 602-255-0580 x302.

If you leave the information in a voicemail, please leave a phone number in case there are questions. Thank you!



André House's mailing list is not sold or given to any other organization



Do you need Community Service Hours?



As the snowbirds head home, the school groups break for the summer and people head off to vacation, André House typically needs volunteers during **July, August & September**.

Beat the rush to get your service hours in for next Fall by helping this Summer!

Email or call to schedule your time or if you have questions...

Teresa Hipp, Volunteer Coordinator

Email: coordinator@andrehouse.org

Phone: 602-255-0580 ext 302





André House

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Phoenix, AZ 85001
Phone: 602-252-9023 or 602-255-0580
www.andrehouse.org

The Open Door



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



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André House Needs:

Summer Focus Items

- Bottled water
- Deodorant
- Sunscreen packets & chapstick
- Toothbrushes, toothpaste & razors
- Nail clippers
- Sunglasses
- Men's underwear: sizes 28-38
- Men's jeans & shorts: sizes 30-38
- White tube socks
- Men's sneakers: sizes 6-13
- Feminine hygiene products
- Cough drops, Ibuprofen & multi-vitamins
- Pens
- Old/used small printer ink cartridges

