



Franciscan Community Volunteers

January 2011



Standing: Ann Cook (Volunteer), Kathy Langer, Sister Clara Stang, Jillian, Megan, Jenny Adams (youth minister) and Karen; Seated: Carlie.

Princeton parish goes green

By Katie Cassady, Volunteer Manager

On Thursday, December 9, the Franciscan Welcoming House hosted five high-school students and their youth director, Jenny Adams, from Christ the Light Parish (Princeton) who are working on ways to turn their parish, school and beyond “green.” Each member of the group has been participating in the Youth in Theology and Ministry (YTM) program at St. John’s University (<http://www1.csbsju.edu/sot/ytm/>), which invites high-school youth to join in two summer sessions, at the end of which they are to have created and implemented a project as leaders in their parishes/communities. The students will be presenting their efforts

to their peers in the YTM program as well as to their parish next summer.

Volunteer Ann Cook, along with Kathy Langer from the Office of Social Concerns and Sister Clara Stang, hosted the evening, implementing much of the Franciscan charism on care of creation as well as insights from Franciscan Associates Jim & Alice Vogel. Also included were practical tips on a variety of topics from making laundry soap to

composting. The greatest conversations were around clean water and water conservation. Jennifer Basch, chairperson of the Franciscan Sisters Green Committee, provided resources to engage parishes to live more sustainably.

Hats off to these and all youth interested in creating sustainable communities! Your enthusiasm and efforts are much appreciated. We look forward to learning about the success of your project.



Taste OF ST. CLOUD

May 2, 2011
5:00–7:30PM

Coyote Moon Grille
480 55th Ave SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304

Tickets: \$25
(\$30 at the door)

Purchase online at www.fslf.org/pages/donateonline. Please specify “Tickets” in the “Other” box.

Or send check payable to: Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls
1600 11th Avenue South, St. Cloud, MN 56301



Ann's Leaving

There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens. ~Ecc 3.1

I learned very much from my time serving in St. Cloud, teaching and assisting. I made dear friends. I am grateful for the opportunities given to me. It is time for something else now. Not because of anything negative during the program, but because I feel the pull of the Spirit. Everyone who has ever allowed the voice within to speak can understand: though it may not make much sense at the time, the voice must be heeded. And so I simply say thank you. Thank you to the other volunteers for challenging me to be a better person. Thank you to all the Franciscan Sisters and Katie. And thank you to my supervisors and coworkers who were with me on the journey. I am grateful for your friendship.

Franciscan Volunteer Sponsor

by Jeff Odendahl

When I agreed to be a sponsor for the first group of Franciscan Volunteers, I wasn't sure what I was getting into or what I was supposed to do. Now, a year and a half later, I'm still not sure what I'm supposed to do, but I know what I've gotten into. I've gotten to know a group of young men and women who are bringing the Gospel values of Francis and Clare to life with all that they do and for all the people they meet each day. That is truly remarkable in this culture that emphasizes "what's in it for me?"—and let me have it right now!"

These "kids," and I say that respectfully because they are young and enthusiastic and fun-loving, know more about the real world and the people that inhabit it than many of our business, political and cultural leaders. As volunteers for a variety of social service agencies, they see first-hand what our "ownership society" does to those outside the circle of ownership. They are developing skills that will help them become better at working with and serving others, but they are already fully developed in the areas of compassion and love for others.

A few weeks ago, I had the good fortune to spend an evening visiting

with Greg, Audrey, Will, Eilis and Ann. I arrived after their Christmas open house, and they were relaxing for the evening prior to another "reality-check day." The results of community building within their little group were very evident. They were both comfortable with and respectful of one another. Communication was friendly and informal, much of it with no apparent verbal cues. Talk was easy, and often in different directions simultaneously. We spoke of their Christmas travel plans, public transportation in the St. Cloud area and different types of recreation as well as how their jobs were going and how they liked their agencies.

As I left them I experienced a deep feeling of well-being. Part of it was just the experience of being in the presence of people who care for each other and the world around them, but who retain a spirit of playfulness. It's what I imagine it must have felt like in Francis's community of brothers. These young people also give me great hope for our people and our planet. They are realists who won't accept that the way things are is the way they have to be.

FCV thanks these generous donors:

Fr. Anthony Kroll, Dorothy Chizek, Norb and Donna Korkowski, Joanne Fleck, Robert Barni, June Kelly, Jean Taylor, Scott Lehn, MaryAnn Penick, Tom and Diane Cassady, Brain and Harriet Braun, Mike and Barb Petschl, Helen Senn, Ron and Myrna Ohmann, Michael Monnens, Catholic Charities USA,

Elaine and Bill Northern, Richard Knettel, Steve & Rosemary Goulet, Jim and Rose Sauer, Marcel and Pat Kosel, Marlys Gallagher, Joseph and Helen Bettendorf, Bernice and Lee Ohmann, Archdiocese of Chicago, Office for Mission Education and Animation

Out & About

Have you seen us in the *St. Cloud Visitor*? The *St. Cloud Times*?

Have you read our blog?

Check it out:

<http://fcver.blogspot.com>

For more information about FCV, visit our website:

www.fcvonline.org

Update: former FCV marries

by Sister Clara Stang

Congratulations and best wishes to Will Braun, one of last year's volunteers, and Brett Jenkins as they begin their married life together! A couple weeks before their wedding as they were visiting at our house, we gifted them with a year's supply of ingredients for homemade laundry soap. (Let me know if you need the recipe.) Will, having used this kind of laundry soap as a volunteer, was delighted. Not only will it help save Mother Earth from contamination, but it will also help their budget.

Not long after that visit, Will e-mailed with a suggested book-title: St. Francis says, "How to Use Your

Sense to Save Cents on Everyday Things." Initially I was simply amused by the title knowing that, as Franciscans, we are more about saving the earth than saving money. We try to living simply so others (including future generations) might have what they need.

While with us, Will was immersed in our intentional community that was and continues to be committed to living simply and reaching out in service to others. As participants in this community, Franciscan Community Volunteers work full time through social agencies to serve the very concrete needs of the poor. In

doing so, they soon begin to develop an inner disposition to go to places where, with others, they find themselves also weak, vulnerable, lonely and broken. For such service to endure and be authentic, they must see Christ in one another and in those they serve. At this time, both Will and Brett share these values while working with and teaching young children.

Our hope and prayer for Will and Brett is that the values of living simply and reaching out in service will always bring deep meaning to their life together!

Homeless Memorial March

by Sister Clara Stang

By the time we reached Minneapolis for the 26th Annual Homeless Memorial March and Service, it was dark and cold. We joined hundreds of men, women and children of all ages who gathered for this five-mile march honoring the homeless who had died on our state's streets in 2010. We marched in silence, as each carried a sign with the name, age and the city in which that specific homeless man, woman or child died. We began the march all bundled up in our wintry woollens but soon, in the bitter cold of this frosty night I felt solidarity with the plight of the homeless of the cruel, wintry streets of Minnesota.

Walking along the snowy, icy and sometimes unshoveled side roads and the more traveled pathways of the elegantly decorated restaurants and stores of Nicollet Avenue, I sensed the contrast of the haves and those who do not have. Shoppers and on-lookers alike stopped to behold the contrast.



In my heart I wondered if this was how Mary and Joseph may have felt searching for a place for Jesus' birth. Like them, do the homeless sometimes feel that there is "no place in the inn for them?" Could even a donkey, a sheep and a cow survive on a cold Minnesota winter night?

Our march ended at Simpson United Methodist Church, where as many as 46 homeless stay every night in the emergency shelter operated by Simpson Housing Services. An even

larger group had already assembled there for a service of remembrance. Here some family members, friends or care-takers of the homeless shared personal stories as we all paid tribute to the homeless of Minnesota who had perhaps died too young, too alone or too tragically.

We prayed:
To the living, we are gone.
To the sorrowful, we will never return.
To the angry, we were cheated.
We cannot be seen, but we can be remembered.
Remember us in your heart, your thoughts, and your memories.
Of the times we loved, the times we cried, the times we fought, and the times we laughed.
For if you always think of us, we will have never gone.

Thanks to Simpson United Methodist Church for hosting this 26th Annual Homeless Memorial March. Thanks for the hospitality of a warm, delicious turkey dinner with which we closed the evening.



Franciscan Community Volunteers

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St. Cloud, MN 56301

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