

## From the Director



Fr. Eric Schimmel, C.S.C.

Did you hear that the Pope resigned? Who's going to be the next Pope?

As we began this holy season of Lent, many people asked me these and similar questions. Yes, I heard the Pope resigned. No, I don't know who will be the next Pope.

Many asked me, "Why did he do it?" Although anyone could easily look up what Pope Benedict actually said when he announced his resignation, it seems that either no one did, or perhaps people don't believe official statements of public figures.

On the one hand, the apparent skepticism and distrust of those in positions of political authority makes sense to me. Too often politicians and other leaders say one thing while doing another. Yet I believe that the doubts come from somewhere else as well.

Not often do we see someone in a position of power and authority freely and willingly give it all up. In fact, one can much more easily find people striving to attain and/or maintain power. This struggle for power can begin at an early age with temper tantrums and children who either do not want to hear the word "no," or who can use it forcefully back at their parents – "NO! I don't want to go to bed!"

Yet the Christian mystery we focus on in a special way during Lent is that "when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor 12:10) Christ humbled Himself, the Son of God accepting the wood of the cross and the shame of the Passion, to bring us to life and resurrection. Jesus humbled Himself not just in accepting the cross, but also by accepting help from Simon of Cyrene to carry that cross.

Many guests at André House struggle with addictions. Anyone familiar with recovery programs knows that a first and major step in recovery is acknowledging our powerlessness and weakness over our addiction. Only when we step aside and stop trying to have all of the power and control do we allow God and others to help us. Only then can we receive healing. Similarly with a medical illness – I cannot get the medicine I need unless I consult medical personnel, let them examine me, and give me a prescription.

By recognizing we cannot do it all on our own, we become free to allow other people to help. That is when healing and recovery occur.

One thing I love about André House is that we operate with complete trust and dependence on God working through others. Our Core Staff is great, but we know that we cannot do it alone. We struggled for a bit when one of our Core members, Tina, had to leave André House in October for medical reasons. Then we were blessed by Carolyn who joined us in February from another service program, and Colleen who joins us this month.

In January, we were blessed to have a group from Bridgewater State College and a group from King's College help. This Spring Break we have groups from Stonehill College, St. Anslem College, St. Edward's University, and Emmanuel College. Their enthusiasm and zeal for serving others lifts us up.



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>Willingness to Wait</b> - by C. Garcia	2
<b>Perspective</b> - by G. DiLonardo	3
<b>Rubik's Cube</b> - by R. Smith	4
<b>Glasses</b> - by A. McAlevey	6
<b>St. Andre</b> - by K. Allen	6

## Willingness to Wait

*-by Carolyn García*

Sometimes, the hardest thing to do is wait. I came to André House after a busy four years in college and an even more frenetic stint as an elementary school teacher. I had been used to living a caffeinated whirlwind of a life, with a thousand things to do at any given moment and never enough time to do them. So my first afternoon porter shift was something I was completely unprepared for. What was my job? I had to sit on the red chair on the dock and help bring donations into the building. What if there were no donations? What was I supposed to do then? Talk to the guests in the lot. Keep sitting in the chair. Wait. Just wait.



At first, shifts like these were difficult for me to handle. I felt useless and antsy because I had nothing to do, and awkward making conversation with the guests. I would think of my life up to that point and wonder what the purpose of my being there was if I wasn't getting anything accomplished. In the past, I might have been writing a paper or preparing a lesson plan. Now I was sitting outside for an interminable hour and a half with what seemed like little or nothing to show for it. Sometimes I thought how much I would rather be working a busy shower shift or folding clothes efficiently in the clothing closet. How was just waiting accomplishing God's work?

Then, during one of these slow shifts, I thought of André House's namesake, Saint André Bessette. His job as a lay brother at Notre Dame College in Quebec was being the porter. This meant that as a member of the intellectually zealous Congregation of Holy Cross, at an institution of learning, his job was to stand at the door and open it to people passing through. That couldn't have been a very prestigious job, or an exciting one. He could have spent his time feeling useless, but instead, his open and humble demeanor and devotion to Saint Joseph led him to miraculously heal numerous people and later become Holy Cross's first canonized saint. There were probably times, I realized, when Saint André wondered what his role was in God's plan. However, he remained faithful that the Lord would use him to do good work, and He did. André didn't demand a better job. He just concentrated on the simple evangelism of being welcoming to those he met. I told myself I would try to do the same.

Now, my most valued shifts are those when I feel I have been able to do just that. I try, even if it feels forced, to strike up conversations and to always greet everyone with a hello and a smile. My efforts to do these simple things have brought me great blessings. Guests have opened up to me; they have showed me their tattoos and told me their life stories. They have laughed with me and shared their sorrows with me. Sometimes, this small offering of companionship is the greatest act of service I can give. Waiting is a huge part of our life as Christians—we are waiting for the second coming of Jesus, like servants waiting for our master to come home. We wait vigilantly, with lit lamps and expectant hearts, for Christ, showing Him to those we meet in the meantime through our lovingness and willingness to wait.

## Perspective

-by Giancarlo DiLorenzo

By the time this newsletter reaches you, the 2012-2013 André House Core Staff will have passed the halfway point of our time in Phoenix. During that time, we have all met some incredible people – volunteers and guests alike. What I have found most poignant about all of my interactions is that no two perspectives are exactly alike.



Being at the building Monday thru Thursday allows me to meet many volunteers who have been coming to André House for many years. Many of you know Betty Dickinson (who sorts donations in the basement) and some of you may know Joan and Jack Butler (Tuesday night regulars) who have been coming down to André House for well over a decade. If you come around often enough, you may even know some of the guests by name. More likely than not, they even know your name.

What strikes me most is that all of the men and women who have become a part of André House have a different story to tell. Some of them remember when the main building was still St. Mary's Food Bank. Others can tell you stories about serving soup out of the back of a pick-up

truck. Still others remember a time when the Women's House was located on Fillmore. What I am getting at in this article is that through all of the noise around us we can make out a clear picture of what André House was for some and what it continues to be for others.

André House continues to provide services for many people. We strive to make the experience for all of those who enter through our doors a pleasant one – volunteers and guests alike. Whether it is directing a group of high school students from the Estrella Foothills Interact Club or helping a man recently released from prison get a new set of clothes, we put as much time, care, and effort into every interaction, regardless of what kind of mode of transportation you took to get to us.

From my perspective, André House is what I have known it to be since I set foot through the doors four years ago through a King's College SERVE trip. It is a House of Hospitality for all who enter. It is a Holy Cross social ministry in the Catholic Worker tradition, and I am very proud to be a part of that.

*(Continued from page 1)*

This year we are also blessed to have generous benefactors helping us in our ministry. Two companies chose to reach out in a special way as Sleep America has donated new mattresses and box springs for our transitional houses and staff houses. Sherman Williams is generously donating paint and painters to paint the insides of our transitional houses.

We still find ourselves blessed by numerous incredible volunteers helping us on our soup line and other areas of ministry. These blessings come because people first recognize that they cannot do it alone. This rings true for the guests who come to us for services, but also for the staff as we try to coordinate everything. We are blessed with and by you because we recognize that we are in this together, and that God has graced you with incredible gifts and talents to share. Thank you for sharing them with us. We pray that you feel blessed by doing so.

May you have a holy Lent and a Grace filled Easter.

God bless,  
Fr. Eric

## Rubik's Cube

*-by Rachel Smith*



The other day I was walking through the parking lot during our Soupline when a guest approached me and asked if I knew of anyone who could lend him a Rubik's Cube. In a split second I decided that I would give him my own Rubik's Cube, and I told him to find me the next day at the building. That night I went home and sat with my Rubik's Cube for about two hours, solving it over and over again. I thought about all the times during college that this simple puzzle calmed me down when I was feeling stressed, and after much reminiscing I was ready to give it up. Since I was eight years old I have always had a Rubik's Cube lying around, and I knew that giving one away now did not mean I would never have another one.

The next morning at the building I gave the guest my Rubik's Cube, and he could not help but hug me with a huge smile on his face. For a second I was taken aback because guests do not generally feel comfortable giving staff members spontaneous hugs. He told me that losing his other cube was a huge stress for him since it was his only form of income. He would solve it and do tricks with it in order to earn money on the streets. Prior to this interaction I had only known this guest as someone who kept to himself and only used our services for dinner. Seeing this small gesture of generosity lift his spirits was enough for me to feel right in my own actions. It was never my cube to keep.

Later that night this same guest

came through our Soupline. He found me in the dining room and thanked me again for giving him my Rubik's Cube. He said, "I want you to know that this cube is more to me than just my livelihood. It's the one thing that can calm me down and take away my anxiety while I'm living on the streets." I told him that I understood, but I do not think he realized just what that meant to me. I felt a connection with this guest that I had yet to feel with anyone else at André House. To most people the Rubik's Cube is either a mind-baffling puzzle that should have never been invented, or it is a simple way to impress other people. For me, it is the one thing that calms my nerves in a matter of minutes. Regardless of how many times I solve it, I never get bored. Metaphorically, it is a chaotic, jumbled mess in which I can see order and eventually a solution. It is a tangible way for me to solve something that is otherwise too complicated to solve. Sharing this moment with this guest helped me realize that it only takes a simple commonality to bring two people together. Without knowing each other, we were able to understand each other. If only moments like this happened every day!



## *Easter Activities*

**Please join us for the following celebrations throughout the Lenten Season:**

### Holy Thursday

*We will offer to wash the feet of our guests during Soupline. Volunteers welcome 5:00pm-7:00pm to help set up, wash feet & clean up.*

*After Soupline, we will have dinner at our Transitional Houses (1203 W Polk). At 8:30pm there will be the Mass of the Lord's Supper, including washing of the feet.*



### Good Friday

*We will have our traditional Stations of the Cross ceremony. Please meet at the Capitol parking lot at 5:00pm.*

[Please verify times beforehand by checking our website Events Calendar at [www.andrehouse.org](http://www.andrehouse.org) & clicking on News & Events.]

### Easter Sunday

*11:00am Mass at Transitional Houses (1203 W Polk)*

*1:00pm Potluck - bring a dish to share*



## VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BRUNCH

*Sunday, April 14, 2013  
Mass at 10:00am  
Brunch immediately after*

André House Hospitality Center  
213 S 11th Ave  
Phoenix AZ 85007  
(Northeast corner of 11th Ave & Jackson)



**André House**



To honor the generosity of the many volunteers, benefactors & prayerful supporters of the André House ministry, we invite you to join us for Mass & potluck brunch on Sunday, April 14th. Please bring a dish to share.

We hope you will join us!



## Glasses

*-by Annie McAlevey*

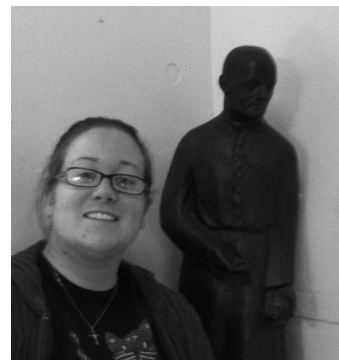
On Saturday afternoons in the Pascente Office, an eye doctor donates his time and services to the guests of André House. He sets up his equipment in the back room and soon there is a list of 20 people waiting to see him. One by one each guest goes in and receives an eye exam, free of charge. No insurance necessary. For most of our guests, this will be the only vision test they will have received in years. After about an hour the doctor packs up his things and says he will return in two weeks with 20 prescription eyeglasses for the guests. There is one guest in particular, Chris, who has been wearing a pair of glasses with only one lens for weeks. For the next couple of days, each time I would see Chris, he would say, "Annie, I can't wait for my new glasses to come in!" Seeing the joy on his face whenever we talked about his new glasses was overwhelming; I was so excited for him. Finally the two weeks were up and the glasses had arrived. All afternoon I handed over brand new prescription eyeglasses to my friends. I could tell they were excited to start this new chapter of their lives with clear vision. That evening I saw Chris at dinner, but more importantly, he was able to see me.

## St. André: A Man of the People

*-by Kelly Allen*

At our Hospitality Center we have a statue of St. André on a wooden stand, which is located in the hallway between the office and the chapel. During soup line one night I was walking through the hallway and noticed St. André was not on his wooden stand, but rather he was on the floor with one of our guests. This guest was just smiling and laughing to herself while putting pennies in St. André's hand. I told her she could keep the pennies; however, St. André had to go back on the stand. She told me "It's ok. He is my husband." I told her, "I am pretty sure he didn't have a wife." She assured me that she was his wife and went on her way. With the help of another guest, we picked St. André up off the floor and placed him back on his wooden stand. (I have no idea how this woman got St. André off of the wooden stand because he weighs a ton! On purpose, I am sure, so he does not just walk away.)

My first instinct was to think this whole situation was just a bunch of hoopla. While I am not a scholar of Br. St. André Bessette facts, from the little that I know about him, he was a man of the people. One of his ministries when he was a Brother was to be a porter. Portering is one of the shifts we have at André House every day. When I first came here, I did not think this shift was very important. To me, it just seemed like "parking lot watch." In a sense it seemed like there were never many guests around and hardly any donations to be received. Upon further reflection though, I came to realize how important the porter shift is to André House. It is a time in which to be present for the guests...to answer questions and have conversations. During my porter shift I have seen compassion among guests and have shared many laughs. While I am not a St. André expert, I believe, to him, if he had interaction with one person, it made all the difference in the world.



# Mailing List



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



Does your name or address need to be corrected?



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



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.

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

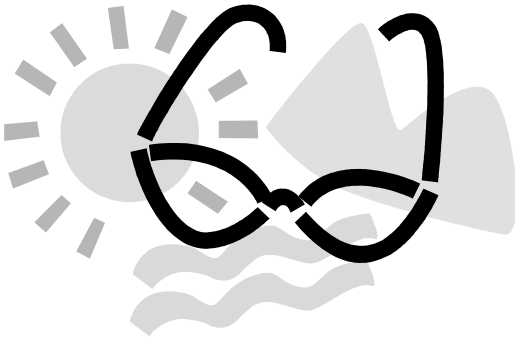
Email: [coordinator@andrehouse.org](mailto:coordinator@andrehouse.org)  
Phone: 602-255-0580 x302.

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 **June, July & August**.

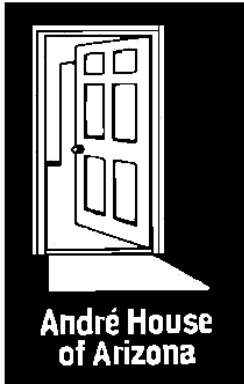
Beat the rush to get your service hours in for next fall by helping this summer!

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

Teresa Hipp, Volunteer Coordinator  
Email: [coordinator@andrehouse.org](mailto:coordinator@andrehouse.org)  
Phone: 602-255-0580 ext 302

*(no drop-ins, please)*





PO Box 2014  
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 Potluck at  
1203 W Polk  
6:30pm**



Non-Profit Org  
Us Postage  
Paid  
Phoenix, AZ  
Permit No. 2751



### André House Needs: Spring Focus Items!

- Bottled water
- Sunglasses & sunscreen
- Shorts & summer clothes
- Men's jeans & black pants (sizes 30-38)
- Belts
- Backpacks
- Men's & women's underwear
- Men's white tube socks
- Men's tennis shoes (sizes 9-12)
- Cough drops, antacids, ibuprofen, vitamins, etc
- Greeting cards (all kinds...blank, birthday, etc)

