

# The Open Door

## From the Director

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Fr. Tom Doyle, C.S.C.  
Executive Director

I had the privilege of being near the Pacific Ocean for a few days in June. I took every available opportunity to run, walk or sit where I could see the ocean churn and hear its roar. At sunrise and low tide, in the middle of the night at high tide, the ocean did what it did: roil and rumble. For millions of years without pause the ocean has been a glorious spectacle. I was delighted when I was in its presence, and amazed when I considered that it has been the same glorious spectacle of God's handiwork for the millions of years that I was not there to witness it.

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Next month I will move to Phoenix to serve as the Executive Director of André House. I had the privilege of being at André House for a few days in April. I took every available opportunity to walk, sit and visit with the guests, staff, Core Staff, volunteers, board members, Holy Cross priests and brothers, and benefactors. For nearly three decades, without pause, André House has been a glorious spectacle; a place where the dignity of human beings are honored each day. The eyes of volunteers and guests have met with compassion over the service of millions of meals. The guests have been sustained by warm food and human compassion. The volunteers have been touched and transformed by authentic community. The benefactors have shared the bounty of their tables with strangers. God's beneficence has been celebrated through prayer rooted in both need and abundance. I was delighted when I was in the presence of André House, and amazed when I considered that the same glorious spectacle of God's handiwork, through the delight of human hospitality, had been at work every day for the almost 30 years that I was not there to witness it.

For the holy instincts that established André House, and for you the men and women who have supported and served André House each day of its existence, I am amazed and profoundly grateful.

I am thankful that I, just like you, have been called to serve at André House. I look forward to the delight of meeting you. Until then, be assured of my prayers for you. Saint André . . . pray for us.

Peace,  
Fr. Tom

## The Summer Staff Experience

- by Brian Buechler, Notre Dame Summer Service Staff

My name is Brian Buechler, and I have had the privilege of serving at André House as a member of the Summer Staff for the past two months. I am from Kansas City, Kansas, and am currently studying Mechanical Engineering at the University of Notre Dame.

I came to André House as part of a program through Notre Dame's Center for Social Concerns in which we were allowed to list our preferences of many service sites across the country. The program consists of eight weeks of service that are paired with various readings concerning social justice, service, and suffering. Although I had the option of choosing a site with a less rigorous workload and closer to home, I chose André House because of its Holy Cross identity and its close proximity to the people they served.

By interacting with our guests at André House I have come to know many of them and better understand their past and present struggles. Quite often people come to me asking for a specific kind of help, and I am unable to assist them--either because we do not offer that particular service, or because we do not have adequate resources to continuously provide that service to everyone who asks. This can be difficult to accept at times. The people who come to us for help suffer so much from a number of burdens: the heat, lack of food, inadequate shelter, and the many other dangers of living on the streets.

Thankfully, the numerous discomforts our guests experience do not prevent them from showing their unique and friendly personalities. Many guests joke with me about how I appear very



excited to be working at André House because of my naturally expressionless face. In fact, one guest has given me the nickname "Smiley."

Every day, as I go about my work, our guests frequently express their gratitude for the services they receive. The gratefulness I have seen in them did not initially strike me since I had expected it. After reflecting, however, I find this thankfulness to be especially noble, since many of our guests likely face the temptation to resent God for allowing them to endure their hardships. And despite the difficulties many people face and their struggle to accept them, I frequently witness testimonies of their faith and their trust in the Lord.

In my readings this summer, I have gained a new perspective on suffering, thanks to the writings of St. Ignatius of Loyola. In his Spiritual Exercises, St. Ignatius likens following Jesus to following a king whom we must closely imitate in order to share in the king's victory. Ignatius writes that Christ the

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## One Church, One Body: André House

- by *Claire Cummings*



I have always loved stained glass windows. Usually found in a church, they depict the Apostles, Christ, the Saints, or simply images that in some way draw us closer to God. They tell us a story in a way that words cannot. My mom and I were talking about these windows a while ago, and she said something that I cannot get out of my head, “Claire, you have to go inside for the story to make sense. From the outside, it’s just a piece of colored glass.”

As I reflect on my year of serving at André House, I find this simple story resonating in every person I have met, every bathroom I have cleaned, every hot dog I have cooked, every bleach stain on my clothes, and every moment in the ups and downs of the last 12 months. I came to André House a year ago expecting to work hard and live Christ’s Gospel in a way I never had before. From the outside, André House appealed to me in every way: a chance to immerse myself in direct, glamorous, dirty, smelly service. In doing that (and much more), I unwittingly became a part of a story much bigger than me, and I think it’s safe to say that I have been changed.

One of my Catholic heroes, Pope

Francis, recently said that, “The Lord wants a poor Church which evangelizes the poor.” It is an ideal that speaks to my heart. Even before coming to André House, I had a hard time living with the extremes that our Church contains: inexplicable wealth juxtaposing severe poverty and suffering. It doesn’t seem right that any child of God should sleep on the urine-covered street when there is an empty bed in someone’s house – that anyone should be cold when there is an unused jacket hanging in someone’s closet.

I do not say this to make you feel guilty about the size of your closet (although, when was the last time you cleaned out and brought your extra clothes to André House?) but to lay out the spiritual tension that I have seen André House balance out so well. André House brings together every kind of person from every walk of life in one place, with one goal, because at André House we are truly *One Church*.

André House is a poor church that loves, serves, and evangelizes the poor. I have seen eight-year-olds volunteer alongside graduate students and eighty-two year olds (you know who you are): men and women of every age and race coming together to feed, clothe, and shower our guests. More than that, I have seen them sit with our guests, share jokes, stories, and advice. I have seen so many people come together because we all have something in common: in our love for all God’s children, we share a love for André House.

So I guess what I am trying to tell you is that despite how hard this year was (with or without a director), despite how many challenges the staff and I faced, despite the amount of times I wanted to cry because a guest was yelling at me for no reason, despite the powerlessness I felt

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## Change

- by Jonathan Squires

Since our past newsletter, André House has experienced many changes coupled with various challenges. The whole year was burdened with struggles that arise with a short staff. Bending and stretching became an everyday task, but God was with us. His love kept this ministry alive.

In August of 2013, André House began a new year with only three staff members. No one from the previous year chose to stay, so the core staff took the reins without any past experience. While it is possible to start off fresh, it is not ideal. The newbies have a higher learning curve, with less guidance and a short supply of teachers. Fr. Eric and Br. Richard felt and dealt with this added stress. Nevertheless, the 2013-2014 year went on without failure. God sent countless amounts of help to the André House staff. His love brought many hardworking and dedicated volunteers out of the woodwork and into the limelight, so the Gospel would endure. Our community really stepped up, filled in the holes, and helped the short staff continue offering services to those in need. For this, we are eternally grateful.

Later into the year, good news and bad news continued to hit the André House community. Staff would come, and staff would leave. Our beloved Jay Minich came in October from Chicago. He decided to stay and has since invested himself in God's hospitable touch. Then, one of the original three choose to leave for personal reasons. Back to low numbers, André House was left with Jay, Kenia and Claire. This new group held down the fort, on 11<sup>th</sup> and Jackson, with Fr. Eric and Br. Richard. Toward the end of November, however, Claire was able to convince a friend from college to join our staff. This friend, named Keenan, had been accepted into the Peace Corps but was

waiting to receive a start date. Keenan was a huge blessing from God, in our time of need.

Moving forward to 2014, change in the André House staff did not end. Brother Richard has been known to say, "It is never a dull moment at André House," and he is correct. Keenan finally received a start date to travel to Namibia and teach biology. He, therefore, chose to return home at the end of February. Prior to this, however, I decided to join the picture at André House. It happened that I was visiting Notre Dame in the fall of 2013, and it was there that I learned about André House and its scarcity of staff. My experience with the homeless and poor population was very limited, but I wanted to grow in my relationship with God and all His people. There was a need on both sides of the table, with the limited staff at André House and my limited experience. God united them perfectly, and I moved to Phoenix a few days before Valentine's Day.

After my arrival, the André House community continued to stretch and bend. God's hand in all this is not human. It is divine. Fr. Eric took a sabbatical around the time of my arrival. His enduring dedication and service to the ministry of André House had provided grace and fruit for nearly six years. During Fr. Eric's sabbatical, however, Holy Cross was in the process of switching over to another year with new assignments for priests and religious. Both Fr. Eric and the staff were notified that there would be a change. Eventually, Fr. Eric received a new placement in Campus Ministry at King's College. We then received a new director, Fr. Tom Doyle, from Notre Dame. Due to Fr. Tom's commitments at Notre Dame, he cannot officially join us in

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## Generosity

- by Jay Minich

In my first four months at the André House, I have been humbled by the spirit of generosity that is constantly present at the André House. I experience this daily among our Core Team as well as with our countless volunteers who allow André House to succeed by giving of their time, talent and treasure. Yet, I am even more amazed by the giving spirit of our dear guests who, despite the immense challenges of “life on the street” in Phoenix, find ways to care for one another, to be present to one another, and to contribute to the success of the André House mission.

Two examples immediately come to mind where I have seen this generosity in action. The first was two months ago with one of our regular guests named Amy, who herself finds just enough to eat. She was standing near the front of the dinner line on one of our busiest nights. There was a gentleman who was in front of her who had cut in line and did not have a dinner ticket. I asked him if he would please move to the end of the line and obtain a ticket at the front gate. He begrudgingly agreed, but with a sad, down-trodden look on his face. Amy looked at the man, smiled and, without asking him why he had cut in line or judging him in any way, said “he can have my ticket” and then went to the back of the line herself. I was amazed at her selfless choice in that moment.

The second example involves a guest named Jose who has struggled with poverty for years. Jose was sitting in our hallway waiting for his number to be called to enter our clothing closet. As I was walking by, he pulled me aside and asked me how donations are made to the André House. I assumed he was simply curious as to where our funding comes from and began to explain how our donors contribute. But Jose quickly stopped me and said, “I would like to make a donation. The André House has given me so much each day for so long. I am doing better now and really want to help you guys because the work you do is so important.” I was speechless and humbled by Jose’s giving spirit.

St. Francis reminds us that. “It is in giving that we receive.” I saw the grace and joy that Amy and Jose received by choosing to be generous even when it was not easy. I want to thank both of them along with our many other guests who have allowed me to receive a lifetime of inspiration over these past several months through their acts of kindness, generosity, and love towards one another.



## Challenges Accepted!

*-by Kenia Rivera*



As of July 26<sup>th</sup>, it was exactly one year since I moved out to Phoenix to be a part of the wonderful community here at André House. Looking back at the past year, as well as looking forward to the future months ahead of me, it is amazing to see the events in my life that have led me to where I am now. As well, it is interesting to see how these same events have encouraged me to continue working at André House for a second year. Reflecting on my years as an undergraduate student and getting involved in helping others and social justice, I would have never thought it would lead me to Phoenix, completely across the country from where I was born and raised in Boston. However it makes perfect sense, in a way I feel each and every one of us staff members that are here working for this ministry are meant to be at André House for one reason or another. Personally I would not have grown the way I have mentally, emotionally, and spiritually had it not been for my experiences here in Phoenix.

The thought of picking up and moving across the country can seem nerve-wracking for some, especially if they do not know anyone or have any family in the area. It can be difficult to reestablish a life when these factors are coupled with a new job that is completely different from what someone is used to back at home. However in many cases personal growth does not come at an easy price and often times we just have to have faith that this is the plan God has created for us. Just as with exercising, we constantly push ourselves physically until we develop stronger muscles; if our life as a human being was a cakewalk from birth until our death there would be no growth or learning. Life begins at the end of your comfort zone, and what can help is having faith that things will work themselves out. As well, we should take in the information we receive after enduring something difficult or from making a mistake.

Every year, André House is faced with many challenges, and this past year was no exception. Of all the times we were tested and stretched to our limits, the staff all combined had the same positivity and confidence that 'we can handle it'. This combined with our faith in God and faith that things will work out if we just continue and persevere is what helped us all through the year and allowed the building to stand and continue with its regular services. Many times, however, I did find myself doubting whether or not I would make it through my first year. I was scared of what the next day's challenges would bring and nervous for the future years if I happen to drop the ball during my time here in Phoenix. With help from the André House community and the guidance from God to take on these new challenges in my life, finishing up my first year has been the most rewarding experience of my life.

In the Book of Jeremiah there is a passage that says, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you," meaning that before we are living on this earth God had already set out a plan for us. The same passage then goes on to say, "Ah, Lord God! I said, 'I know not how to speak; I am too young.'" To me this verse speaks of my doubts and fears upon starting my work here at André House one year ago; I honestly felt I did not have the skills or was prepared enough to be successful in what I was called to do. However the Lord goes on to say, "Say not 'I am too young' to whomever I send you, you shall

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## Community

*-by Kiersten Oubre, St. Edward's Summer Service Staff*

I first came to André House last year as a member of an Alternative Spring Break group from St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas. Although I was only here for a week I fell in love with many things about André House. The community at André House is one that is hard to define. I felt welcomed on my first day, and I believe the guests do as well.

When I was discerning what I was going to do with my 2014 summer my heart led me back to André House. I applied; I was accepted; and, I have been here since early June and will be leaving in the beginning of August to finish my degree.

When I arrived to André House in the beginning of June I was unsure what I was going to see, feel, or experience. Was it going to be similar to the last time I was here? Was I going to feel as welcomed? It did not take long for all my nerves to be eased. When I arrived in Phoenix I was greeted by the most hospitable Core Staff who welcomed me with open arms.

I knew the summer would be different than the week I spent here, since I would be a part of staff, but I was still unsure what all I would do. When I was given my work schedule I laughed. Did they really expect me, a girl who burns cookies, to run a soup line? My thoughts were that I could not possibly be responsible for feeding 600+ people; they are out of their minds.

Again, I found myself welcomed with open arms on my first Wednesday night soup line as Meal Coordinator by all of my lovely regular volunteers who have been coming for 4-10 years. I quickly learned that André House is not an "I" thing; it is a "we" thing. Everyone helps each other. I was no longer nervous about being



'coordinator' of a soup line because I knew my volunteers would be coaching me on what to do and supporting me. One of the things about André House is that it is nothing without its volunteers. They pour time, sweat, and love into everything they do. Thanks to my Wednesday night volunteers I have not burnt down André House, yet.

The André House community is a beautiful one; it is one of the main reasons I fell in love with the establishment. However, the André House community is not just made up of volunteers and staff, but also the guests. Of course our volunteers and staff make a great community, but our guests make it even better.

Every day we have Mass or liturgy of the Word outside in the parking lot before we open. Every day cars are honking, planes are flying, which are things we cannot control. However, some days there are guests arguing, blaring music, and I have heard other guests step in to say 'they're worshipping' and the guests, for the most part, tone it done. Now, out of all the



## *Change cont'd - by Jonathan Squires*

*(Continued from page 4)*

Phoenix until the beginning of September this year. God's hand has blessed us with a strong staff, however, and we have confidence in our Lord, who will lead us through the future direction of Fr. Tom. We are in good hands.

Amid all the change and through all the challenge, Br. Richard stood firm as the cornerstone of this ministry built for God. André House would not have been able to keep its roots in the soil without the work of Br. Richard. He is a timeless stamp of perseverance, and he has led us through all this change. Br. Richard is the one constant where variable after variable tests our foundation. Kenia, Claire, Jay, and I have since combined our strength with Br. Richard to make decisions in the best interest of André House, while we have been without a director. I will admit that it put us to the test: we struggled to find new core members for the coming year, we struggled in obtaining summer staff, and we struggled to keep our services open, as many regular volunteers left for the summer and donations slowed down. It was a difficult transition, but we made it. God gifted us with three new staff members who start this August, in addition to Kenia, Jay and I, who have elected to return for another year. Three other blessings arrived in the form of summer staff, and the love of God kept André House running as though it never hit a bump.

We want to thank all of you for your prayers and support in our time of need. Our appreciation of you and God's everlasting love gives us hope for better days in the future of André House and those it serves. The everyday challenges and changes are real, but the truth behind it all is that God is with us here and now.



## *Challenges... cont'd - by Kenia Rivera*

*(Continued from page 6)*

go. Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you.” This reading was one of the most comforting readings to me, and part of me wishes I had stumbled across this reading a year ago when I was full of nerves and fear. However, again, I do feel as if I was meant to experience the year and all of the challenges, because God does have a plan for me, and André House was carefully woven into my plan.

Through all that the staff has done in the past year I have learned so much about myself and what I am truly capable of accomplishing. In addition, I continued to learn about social issues in the area, how to effectively communicate, and how to better serve those around me with respect and love. I have learned we should not doubt these new situations in life, because many times it is what we need to strengthen ourselves. André House has done just that for me. I am excited to see how I have changed over this past year, and I am even more excited for the next year to come. I am now completely open to challenges and have the confidence that I will get through whatever difficulties I may face. I am also eager to pass what I have learned along to new staff and assure them that whatever issues may cross our paths while serving at André House: we can always handle it!





## *One Church, ... cont'd - by Claire Cummings*

*(Continued from page 3)*

when I could not give someone housing or a bus pass or deodorant, despite all of that: at the end of this year, I am leaving André House in awe. I am leaving André House inspired. I am leaving André House with a firm hope that our Church, despite its divisions and extremes, is – and can be – One.

Part of me has always thought that to find God, you go the Eucharist – Christ's physical presence with us. But if you want to *love* God? You go to the streets. You go to André House. I hope that as I move on, I can continue loving Christ on the streets. I hope I never lose the courage to go inside, to see the whole story, and to love whole-heartedly despite the suffering I might see. Maybe one day I will even create a stained-glass window of André House – and it will start with an open door.



## *Community cont'd - by Kiersten Oubre*

*(Continued from page 7)*

weeks I have been out here, this is one of the more beautiful things I have seen. The guests respect us, the guests treat André House like it is their own house, and we respect our guests creating a lovely little community together.

André House is not just a place that serves the poor, but we are a place that loves, befriends, and treats them with the dignity and respect they deserve. This is why André House is a magical place. Although I am only spending a short time at André House, I believe in these two months I have changed, grown, and learned so much about myself. I have learned how much a, “How are you?” can mean to someone. I have gained confidence in my own leadership abilities and myself.

I cannot seem to put into words the experience I have had here, but I can say it is a magical place filled with loving people. André House is a safe place for our guests. André House is all the amazing things it is because of the amazing staff and volunteers who commit their days to serving, which is something I applaud them for. For those who are reading this I would like to thank you for opening your arms and welcoming me into your workplace. I could never thank y'all enough. Y'all's hospitality has been breathtaking. Thank y'all for reminding me of God's tender love.





## *Summer Staff... cont'd - by Brian Buechler*

*(Continued from page 2)*

King tells us, "Therefore whoever wishes to come with me must labor with me, so that through following me in the pain he or she may follow me also in the glory." Suffering is not an end but something we endure just as Christ did, trusting that God will bring goodness out of it.

It has been a pleasure serving at André House this summer and getting to know the many people who make it such a special place. The joy with which the staff and volunteers serve is essential to persevering in the mission of André House. Working here has taught me how to manage and communicate with people in high stress situations in order to best alleviate their pain and help them achieve a better quality of life. In the future, I look forward to taking all the experience I have gained and applying it to my everyday life away from André House.



## **Arizona Working Poor Tax Credit**

*It's easy to take advantage!*

This is a dollar-for-dollar credit from the State for charities helping the working poor and, beginning in 2013, donors NO LONGER needed to itemize their taxes to benefit from this credit. When you donate to André House, you can receive the tax credit by completing Form 321 when you file your tax return. Single individuals can earn up to a \$200 dollar-for-dollar tax credit (married, filing jointly, can earn up to \$400.) For complete details:

- *Call the AZ Dept of Revenue:*  
602-255-3381
- *Check out the AZ Dept of Revenue website:*  
[www.azdor.gov/taxcredits.aspx](http://www.azdor.gov/taxcredits.aspx)
- *Contact your accountant*

The benefit of the **Arizona Working Poor Tax Credit** is the charity gets the money and the donor gets a dollar for dollar reduction of Arizona State tax. How can you lose?

# Mailing List



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



Does your name or address need to be corrected?

If any of these are true, 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.

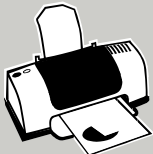


Are you reading a friend's copy of *The Open Door* & wanted to be added to our mailing list?

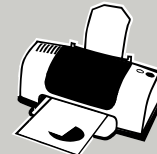
If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please call Teresa Hipp, Volunteer Coordinator, at 602-255-0580 x302. If you leave the information on the voicemail, please leave a phone number in case there are questions. Thank you!



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



## OLD INK CARTRIDGES?



Please donate your old printer ink cartridges to André House. See below for donation address & times.

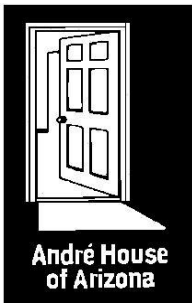
For a complete list of needed items, click on the Donate link on our website: [www.andrehouse.org](http://www.andrehouse.org).  
**THANK YOU!**

### DONATION ADDRESS & TIMES:

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

Mon - Thu 10:00am to Noon & 1:00pm - 4:00pm  
Fri CLOSED  
Sat & Sun 1:00pm - 4:00pm





## André House

PO Box 2014  
Phoenix, AZ 85001  
Phone: 602-252-9023 or 602-255-0580  
[www.andrehouse.org](http://www.andrehouse.org)

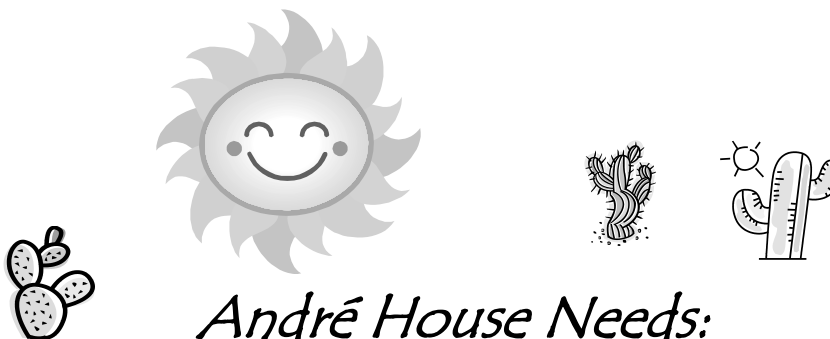
# The Open Door



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



Non-Profit Org  
Us Postage  
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Permit No. 2751



## André House Needs:

### Summer Focus Items!

- ⇒ Wash cloths
- ⇒ Men's underwear (especially sizes 30-36)
- ⇒ Men's pants/shorts (sizes 30-36)
- ⇒ Women's shorts (smaller sizes)
- ⇒ Travel size toiletries
- ⇒ Socks & belts
- ⇒ Deodorant, razors & toothbrushes
- ⇒ Backpacks
- ⇒ Bottled water

