

The Open Door

Summer

2023



Andre House

OF HOSPITALITY

MAKING GOD KNOWN, LOVED AND SERVED



In this issue:

- Director's Door
- *Into the Wild*
- Prayer to St. André Bessette
- Welcoming the New CORE
- *How Andre House Enriched My Life*
- *The Joy of Service*
- *Shades of Humanity*
- *Finding Yourself*



Director's Door

The heat this summer brought significant challenges for our guests and for Andre House.

For our guests, many needed medical attention because of the weather. Even sleeping at night proved difficult. They turned to us for help.

For Andre House, the summer provided challenges too. Toward the beginning of the record heat, the air conditioning broke at Andre House. The parts needed to repair the a/c units were not immediately available. As a result, we felt the need to provide some sort of relief from the heat to our guests and volunteers, so we rented portable a/c units. Then, came the increase in energy bills because of the heat. It seemed like one thing after another was breaking.

However, just as Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael survived the fiery furnace because of their fidelity to God (see Daniel, chapter 3), so too, Andre House survived the record-breaking furnace of the Phoenix heat because of our fidelity to God. At Andre House, we are strengthened by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass daily. Additionally, we have adoration once a week. God is Good, and He continues to Love all of us. At Andre House we will continue to make Him known, loved, and served.

Recently, Pope Francis spoke about how Eucharistic Adoration leads to service for the poor. The pope encouraged adoration as a foundation for serving our fellow human beings. He said: "it is my hope, then, that the Eucharistic Congress will inspire Catholics throughout the country to discover anew the sense of wonder and awe at the Lord's great gift of Himself and to spend time with Him the celebration of the Holy Mass and in personal prayer and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament."

If you have not been down to Andre House for a little while, I invite you to come down. Come encounter Jesus; come serve Jesus, come Love Jesus.

Also, please come and join us for Adoration of the most Blessed Sacrament on Wednesdays from 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm.

Lastly, please keep all at Andre House in your prayers. We are praying for you.

John Delaney
Executive Director



"It is especially appropriate then for us to pray in the presence of the reserved Eucharist. Each of us needs the nourishment of at least one half-hour of quiet prayer daily. – Holy Cross Constitutions n.30"

Into the Wild

by Fr. Brian Kennedy, C.S.C.

Once during my first week at Andre House, I was walking through the parking lot when a guest gave me an astonished look and said that he *“ain’t never seen a priest in the wild before!”* I was struck by the comment, and reminded of the encouragement that Pope Francis has repeatedly given to priests: to “get out of the sacristies and into the streets” and to go “to the existential margins” of society to share the gospel with those who are most forgotten and in need. Indeed, we are all called to follow Jesus the High Priest who went *“into the wild”* of our world to seek and to save us.

Yet we are also all tempted to stay in our comfort zone (especially if it’s air-conditioned), to stick with what we already know, and to only associate with our friends or allies. Our Lord once challenged his disciples: *“If you love those who love you, what reward do you have? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others?”* God is always calling us out of our little bubbles, and into greater relationships of love in community.

Andre House exists to **“make God known, loved and served.”** We walk in the footsteps of countless saints of mercy – like Peter Claver, a true “priest in the wild,” who would set out in his little boat to meet the horrific slave ships of Cartagena, bringing food and medicine and hope for the oppressed onboard. “We must speak to them with our hands before we try to speak to them with our lips,” he would say.

In the “The Joy of the Gospel” the Pope wrote that *“an evangelizing community knows that the Lord has taken the initiative, he has loved us first, and therefore we can move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast.”* May Andre House always be such a community. And may our merciful God bless each one of you, and all our guests.



“Indeed, we are all called to follow Jesus the High Priest who went “into the wild” of our world to seek and to save us.”

Andre House



A PRAYER FOR ANDRE HOUSE

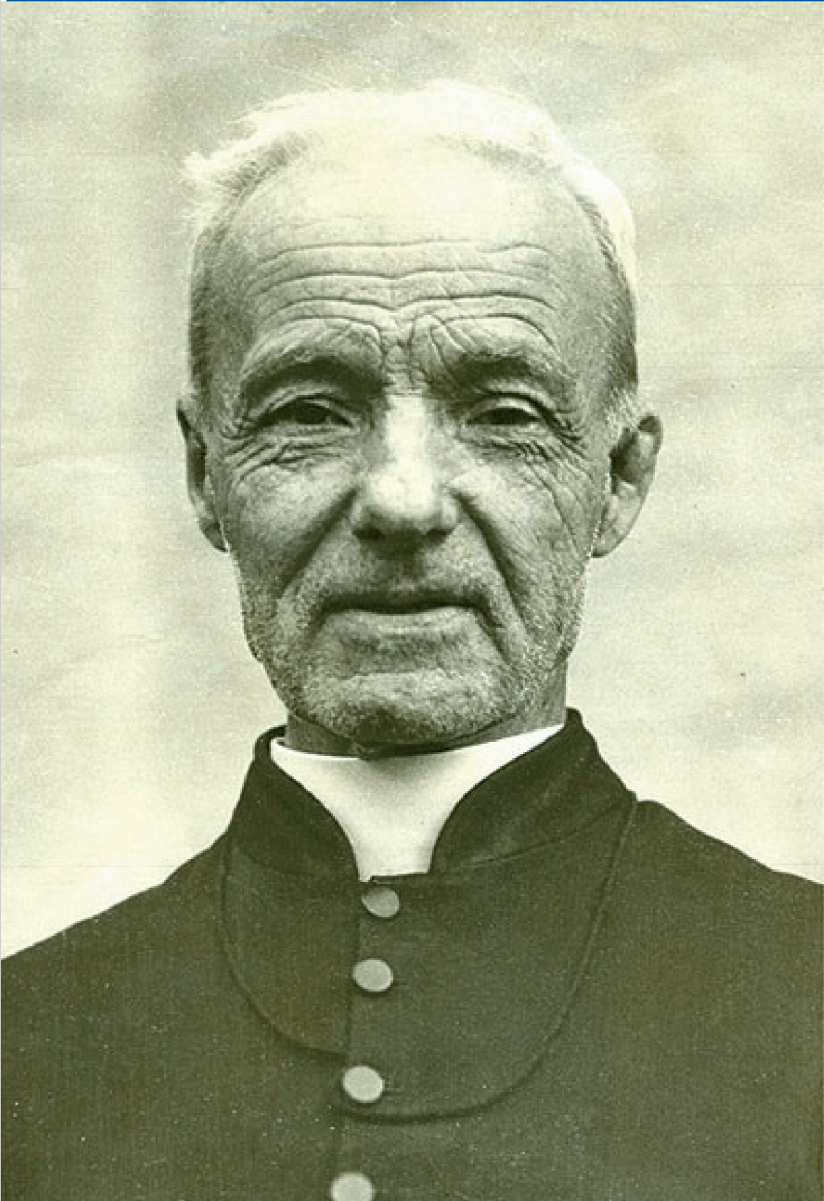
by Fr. Brian Kennedy, C.S.C.
Andre House Pastoral Director

Lord God,
You called St. André
to open the door
in friendship
to those in need.

We ask you to bless all
who are welcomed today at
Andre House of Hospitality.

Give healing and comfort
to the lonely and afflicted.
Give nourishment and faith
to the hungry and weary.
Give us all a heart of love to share
with others our hope in Christ.

We ask this through the joyful
intercession of our patron in heaven,
St. André Bessette. Amen.



*“When praying,
one speaks to God
like a friend.”
-St. André Bessette*



The CORE Team

In Their Own Words

At Andre House, the spirit, tone and setting of its work is best reflected in a special unit of staff, who dedicate 1 – 2 years of their life to direct service to the homeless and hungry of Phoenix through the entire array of Andre House services: the Andre House CORE Team.

Mirroring other known volunteer service models, undergraduates offer themselves completely to the mission of being “present” to our homeless population. They live in community, receive a monthly stipend, an education award and are provided medical benefits, room and board for their term with the CORE Team. They are the front line of compassion, care, mercy, help, love and company to our guests. For each of the services Andre House provides, there is a dedicated CORE Team staff person leading the movement.

We bid you welcome our new 2023-2024 CORE team members, who have commenced their year of service, and who introduce themselves in this current issue of The Open Door.

Mateo Miramontes

Laura Abernathy

Bri Boughter

Jenny Wiertel



Mateo Miramontes

I am from the Phoenix area and just finished up at U of A with a Bachelor's in Physiology. I started coming to Andre House to volunteer in 2017 and throughout the years have continued to serve the community to the best of my ability by doing normal dinner services or by interning three of the summers. I always knew and wanted to be a part of the Core team here at Andre House. Andre House to me is a family that I have always been able to count on and has helped me through difficult times.

A question that I am constantly asked and that I even ask myself is, why? Why do I keep coming back to Andre House? The answer to that question has always been that Andre House is a place of radical love in the face of crisis. People in the Zone are radically honest and raw about how they are feeling, a trait that I often feel can be missing from those outside the Zone. That radical honesty and rawness has taught me to also to radically love and be honest with myself and others. The Zone is a place that is constantly in flux, always changing, never still, but at the same time, a place frozen in time.

Throughout the years that I have been there, the same problems and challenges continue to infect the area. The timeless nature of the Zone can be incredibly frustrating and make one feel hopeless, but at the same time, the love you experience from the guests of Andre House is like a magical salve that patches the wounds of the heart to help you push on through to the next day. Pushing to the next day, hoping for a better tomorrow, is something that I always look forward to for my friends on the street, or those sleeping at CASS.

To conclude, I am under no illusion that this will be an easy year, and there will be many days wondering: did I do the right thing? Should I have done more or fought harder for someone? Many tears will be shed; bitterness, from injustice, will be had; anger, towards those in power; but in the end, knowing that I am not alone in the struggle, that the Core team is fighting the same fight, being there with the guests as they fight that same fight, and knowing that in the end we have neither been forgotten nor have we given up, and with the love of our Andre House community we'll push for a more loving future.



Laura Abernathy

Hi! My name is Laura Abernathy and I will be on the core staff this upcoming year at Andre House! I am from Pepperell, Massachusetts and recently completed my Bachelor of Science in biology at Saint Anselm College. Following my year of service, I plan on obtaining my Master's in Public Health, followed by medical school.

My Andre House experience began around a year ago, having been accepted the past semester to lead a service trip through our campus ministry. I was on a zoom call with all the other leaders, waiting eagerly to hear who our co-leader was and where we would be leading. When I saw my name with an image of the Andre House building, all I felt was pure excitement to be able to lead to such an influential place. Little did I know the impact that Andre House would have on me.

During that short week in January, I heard stories of unimaginable suffering from individuals on the street. I saw individuals suffering from addiction and mental health afflictions. I saw firsthand our justice system failing these individuals in more ways than one. I saw the hopelessness, defeat, and uncertainty that the guests experienced daily. It was hard to watch - gut-wrenching, honestly. But the thing that drew me back instantly was the love, care, and ability to form relationships with whoever and whenever solely based on one common factor, Andre House. The amazing individuals who are so commonly overlooked by society have figured out the importance of relationships, of community and dependability. That was hard for me to understand. How so much pain, darkness, suffering, and misery could co-exist with the beauty, light, and happiness I saw within the community in the Zone. That is what is so special about this place. The Zone is such an unpredictable place, where as a core member at Andre House you are constantly on your toes waiting for something to go wrong. But when something goes right, and I see that person get housing or even something as simple as putting a smile on their face for the day, I remember why I came here.

It's those little interactions and short conversations that allow the feelings to reciprocate between us, and I often find myself smiling even bigger than them. While it hasn't been long, this place is my home. Every moment I have spent at Andre House has made me have hope for these individuals, hope of better outcomes and new opportunities. Sometimes the steps taken to achieve those are small, but here at Andre House, I am grateful to be able to be with them every step of the way.



Bri Boughter

Howdy! My name is Bri Boughter, and I am a loud, passionate, service-loving Texan. I just graduated from St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas this past May with a Bachelor's in Biology and minor in Sociology. I first came to Andre House over spring break my Senior year of college (this March), and fell head over heels with the work ethic, dedication, and love I saw in everyone I interacted with. Some may call my decision to move to an entirely new city, join a staff of people I hardly know, and serve a community I'm relatively unfamiliar with crazy, but I call it God's timing.

I've always been an incredibly passionate person, from trivial obsessions of Frank Ocean, Gossip Girl, my yellow rain boots, and Valentine's Day to more salient fascinations of healthcare inequities, service opportunities, community engagement, and spirituality. When I love something, I love it big; I can't remember the last time I wasted energy on something I simply liked. On the last day of my service trip in March I wrote in my journal, "it's genuinely hard for me to imagine myself anywhere but Andre House next year."; it was strikingly evident that this organization made me feel loved, and that the people who exist inside of our doors accepted me exactly as is.

The best way I can describe my first 6 days at Andre House is metamorphic; I was bombarded by the radical joy that Andre House has never failed to provide whilst simultaneously experiencing the tragic effects of failed institutions in the United States that result in poverty and homelessness. I've always been an avid humanitarian, but working at Andre House reminds me that the feeling of gratitude doesn't have to be temporary. Even amidst the chaos, fear, pain, and sadness that often resonates in the Zone, Andre House manages to be a safe haven for guests and staff alike; it's a place of healing, love, and immense appreciation for the human soul. The Andre House mission was the answer to my unwavering doubts: being successful is only determined by the way you make the people around you feel. I am proud to be a small part of an organization that views love as a human right and something that everyone deserves to feel.



Jenny Wiertel

Hello Andre House family! My name is Jenny Wiertel and I am so excited to be joining core staff. A little about me: I grew up in the Chicago area and I attended Georgetown University for undergrad. At Georgetown, I was involved in campus ministry and the Center for Social Justice, and through this work I discerned a call to ministry. So, I went on to Notre Dame for my Master of Divinity where I studied pastoral theology and ministry. Through Notre Dame I was lucky enough to be sent to Andre House for two amazing summers. I fell in love - with our guests, with the work we do here, with our entire community. During my MDiv studies, I also got to intern with the Catholic Worker in South Bend. I felt increasingly called to dedicate my life to this movement and this work in any way that I can. Once I finished my MDiv I couldn't imagine going anywhere else, and so I here I am.

The world can often feel like an extremely dark place. At Andre House, we live and work in the midst of a humanitarian crisis. Our friends on the street struggle day after day. I have witnessed extreme human suffering here, and there are days where I feel tempted to give up hope. However, at Andre house I have also experienced an abundance of love and life. In the midst of such suffering, my breath is often taken away by the moments of pure joy, laughter, and dancing that happen in our parking lot, in our dining room, and on the streets.

When the darkness feels overwhelming, I try to open my eyes and pay attention to the moments of beauty that continually break through. I know that this year will be challenging but I am grateful to be working alongside all of you. Together, we can trust that being present here matters. Together, we can work to choose to love in the face of darkness, day after day.

HOW ANDRE HOUSE ENRICHED MY LIFE

by Bobby Rath

As a young man, I was inspired by the life of St. Francis of Assisi. St. Francis' spirit was that of performing social service, charity, and caring of humanity. His life was mirrored by that of St. André. This way of life brought me to Andre House. I was impressed with their variety of services: evening meals, clothes distribution, showers, laundry, and medical needs.

My first job was washing pots and pans and helping prepare food for the night. I eventually became a regular volunteer on Monday nights. My position was preparing beverages and serving drinks. This gave me an opportunity to interact with our guests. I became friends with some of the guests and would meet up with them after dinner at their tents. I would bring religious books, drinks, and snacks. We would read and visit. Thank you to Sandy for collecting the books for us. It truly enriched and humbled my life getting to know their stories.

Thursdays, I would help Brother Richard with laundry for our guests. It was rewarding to me to return their clothes, fresh and clean. During Covid, for 18 months, the staff served single containers of dinner off the loading dock. The core members, clergy and volunteers never missed a meal during the time of Covid.

During Holy Week, on Holy Thursday, we washed the feet of the homeless. On Good Friday, we processed through the streets of downtown, reciting the Stations of the Cross.

I have been blessed to have volunteered with dedicated, kind, and caring priests, staff, and fellow volunteers for many years. Thank you to my family and friends for their support and donations.

I pray daily for those experiencing homelessness, that in the midst of their pain God may give them hope, strength and peace. They are never alone... God walks with them each moment.



***“I was inspired by
the life of St.
Francis of Assisi.***

***St. Francis' spirit
was that of
performing social
service, charity,
and caring of
humanity.”***



The Joy of Service

Lacy Cain, Wildjoy CEO

Years ago, I asked my followers on Instagram what non-profit we should donate to and the Andre House came up. We sent some money and didn't think about it again. Years go by and we were in "the Zone" passing out extra sandwiches from our event when an un-sheltered person told us about how much they love the Andre House. We asked where it was and they pointed to this large building in the middle of the chaos of Downtown Phoenix's 'The Zone'. After walking in and taking a brief tour, we signed up to volunteer that evening and it opened my eyes.

The Andre House is so much more than a means to an end for people in need. Not only can people-in-need visit the Andre House and seek laundry, social services, food, fresh water and more, but they can engage in true love outpouring from the volunteers and staff. I asked Michael (the Volunteer Services Manager) what the preferred word was for the people-in-need that would be visiting that evening and he replied 'we call them our guests'. That is the perfect way to describe what the Andre House is. It serves guests from all walks of life meeting people where they are at and I loved it.

When you visit the Andre House for a volunteer shift, you walk away feeling so blessed and uplifted. Through preparation of the food and resources, you get to engage in community with the other volunteers and eventually get to serve 500 - 700 people dinner. I love working in the St. Francis Room where wheelchair users and other people with special needs get to sit like at a restaurant and we walked around serving them like we were their servers. I love getting to scoop dinner on the line and make plates for hundreds of people personalized to what THEY want. I love the smiles and conversations I have had while in the Andre House.

That's why I shared a video on my business, Wildjoy, to our 530k+ followers about why they should engage and volunteer at the Andre House. Our videos boosted volunteer sign-ups in August and garnered 676k+ views in a few weeks. Wildjoy loves the Andre House very much and we are grateful to work together.

Shades of Humanity

by Ryven Mangundayao - 2023 Andre House Summer Intern



“Hey, cameraman,” I hear while passing out 2 p.m. snacks at porter. I look up, and it’s Lay, one of the guests I had the privilege of getting to know during my internship this summer. Her words prompt a smile from me, and jokingly, she adds, “Better make me look like a movie star in those photos!”

That week, I’d been carrying around my camera, which I hoped would help answer a burning question I’d held since day one: “What makes the André House so special?” Why is it that this place radiates such an aura of hope and warmth, even amidst the struggles and hardships our guests face? I found the answer hidden not in the daily routine of work or the services we provide, but in the people. And not because they happen to be in the same place at the same time. But because they are the heart of this community. Each one with their own story to tell. Each one an essential piece in the rich mosaic that makes up André House.

Eager to celebrate this realization, my camera became my companion, slung around my torso as I portered or helped out at front gate. In every snap of the shutter, I intended to capture not just faces, but souls; not just moments, but memories and the vivid spirit of this community. I aimed to be more than a cameraman, but a storyteller, painting a community portrait in a colorful and cohesive way.

I had a slow start getting pictures at first, but as I got more comfortable breaking down initial barriers and approaching guests with empathy and a genuine interest in their lives, my camera became a bridge. It connected me with stories, bridging the gaps between moments and allowing me to delve into the lives of those that walk through our doors.

This vision culminated in the creation of a photo mosaic, a collage representing the incredible resilience and beauty of the André House community. Each tile, with its vibrant and varied shades of humanity, represents a unique journey, yet collectively reflects a shared purpose and belonging. It’s a reminder that even in our differences, there is unity; in adversity, there is hope.

When you look at the mosaic that is now up inside the building, I hope you don’t just see faces, but you see the soul of André House—its mission resonating in the many hearts that beat as one within its walls. And as the years go by, may the mosaic serve as a timeless reminder of a summer where an ever-resilient community came together in solidarity, finding light and hope amidst challenges and losses.

Being a Phoenix native and a volunteer over the years, I’ve been familiar with the mission and work of André House. Yet, I’ve always wanted to immerse myself more deeply in this community, and this internship has given me that very opportunity. Every day, I witnessed the indomitable spirit of the André House family, strengthening my conviction in the purpose this house of hospitality serves. This summer reaffirmed a calling I’ve long felt—to serve those in need right here in my hometown. I’m deeply grateful for all those who’ve become part of my story here and for this full-circle journey—one of growth, understanding, and reaffirmation.

Thank you, André House, for letting me be a small part of your vast and beautiful mosaic. With this being my final summer at Notre Dame, the moment was ripe for this experience, and as I step into the next chapter of my life, the memories, lessons, and connections I’ve forged here will forever be a guiding light.

Finding Yourself

by Seth Macy

As the summer sun painted the world with its warm embrace, I embarked on a journey that would forever leave an indelible mark on my heart. My experience over these past few months has been nothing short of positive, life-changing, and profoundly eventful, as I had the privilege of immersing myself in a world where compassion knows no bounds and community thrives even in the most unexpected places.

What struck me most was the refreshing lack of prerequisites for service. In a society often preoccupied with prerequisites and barriers, I found myself in an environment where the only requirement for receiving and giving was a willingness to engage in human connection. This simple yet profound principle shattered the barriers that often divide us and paved the way for genuine relationships to blossom.

Among the countless experiences that left a lasting impression, one aspect that I truly relished was the palpable sense of community among the homeless population. Far from the stigmatization and isolation that society often imposes, I witnessed a vibrant tapestry of individuals who supported, uplifted, and leaned on one another. The homeless community was a testament to the resiliency of the human spirit, proving that even in the face of adversity, we are capable of creating bonds that defy circumstance.



Yet, perhaps the most striking element of my summer journey was the way the staff interacted with those they served. Instead of the typical client-provider dynamic, I witnessed something truly extraordinary – the staff treated each person they encountered as a friend. It was heartwarming to see how these dedicated individuals listened, empathized, and engaged with the homeless population on a personal level.

As I reflect on this transformative summer, I am reminded of the words of Mahatma Gandhi: "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." Indeed, losing myself in this journey allowed me to discover not only the resilience and strength within the homeless community but also the depths of compassion and empathy that reside within me.

In just a few short weeks, I have witnessed how compassion knows no boundaries and how a shared sense of community can bridge even the most profound gaps. The lessons learned and the relationships formed will forever serve as a reminder that true fulfillment can be found in the simplest acts of kindness and in the unbreakable bonds of humanity.

This summer has undoubtedly been a turning point in my life, a chapter filled with experiences that have reshaped my perspective and enriched my soul. As I look towards the horizon, I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to have been a part of something so beautiful, so profound, and so undeniably life changing.



ANDRÉ HOUSE
PO BOX 2014
PHOENIX, AZ 85001
PHONE: 602-255-0580
WWW.ANDREHOUSE.ORG
WWW.ANDREHOUSE.VOLUNTEERHUB.COM

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

CORE COMMUNITY 2023-2024

Mateo Miramontes
Bri Boughter
Laura Abernathy
Jenny Wiertel

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Megan Agliano
Br. Richard Armstrong, C.S.C.
Tom Crotty
Kathleen Downey
Mike Hanosh
Greg Herrle
Todd Kallmyer
Liz Odhner
Rev. William Lies, C.S.C.
Rev. Brendon McAleer, C.S.C.
Mike Smith
Chris Haug

STAFF

Mark Cordova
John Delaney
Sue Edmonds
Theresa Falzone
Taylor Hoffler
David Iloh
Fr. Brian Kennedy, C.S.C.
Jay Minich
Wilfredo Morales
Michael Murphy
Debbie Shane



To make a donation to Andre House,
visit
www.andrehouse.org/donate

or send support to:

Andre House
PO Box 2014
Phoenix, AZ 85001

If you file taxes in the state of Arizona, your donations to Andre House may qualify for a tax credit under the AZ Charitable Tax Credit. This dollar-for-dollar credit allows single filers to get up to \$400 and joint/married filers up to \$800 in credit on Arizona state taxes. Consult your tax advisor for advice specific to your tax situation. When claiming the credit, make sure you fill out form 321 and reference Andre House QCO number 20467.

Do you operate a foundation or charitable trust? Please consider making Andre House a priority in your grantmaking goals in the 2023-2024 year!

To ensure the doors of Andre House remain open to serve the future homeless and hungry of Phoenix, have you considered a legacy gift? Please consult your financial planner/attorney to explore including Andre House in your estate giving plan.