

# THE OPEN DOOR

From the Core Community of Andre House

Holiday Issue 2018



CHRIST OF THE BREADLINES Fritz Eichenberg  
EICHENBERG

A Season of Gratitude



May you see LOVE in everything  
and may your HEART be filled with GRATITUDE this Christmas Season!



Lauren Schmidt  
 Erin Clapp  
 La. You  
 For. Brie Dondant  
 Anal Chavez  
 Wilfredo ☺  
 Melia Smith  
 Ash  
 Elizabeth Wrenn  
 Anne Saylor  
 Ashlee  
 Jay Minter  
 Toy Quick



# Happiness Doubled by Wonder

Fr. Tom Doyle CSC Director of Andre House

My father was one of two doctors in a small Washington town and spent every Christmas day at the hospital. So, the Doyle tradition was to exchange gifts on Christmas Eve in the living room in front of the fireplace. Dad sat at the base of the tree and distributed the gifts to the nine of us one at a time. My siblings and I took careful count of the presents, and shamefully, I generally felt like I had been shorted by comparison. I don't recall the year when nexus of happiness transformed from the act of opening "my" presents to watching others open theirs. There is something much more savory and deeply joyful in witnessing other people receive a gift.

Christmas at Andre House has its own rituals. The Core Staff rises early to prepare Christmas brunch. After eating, we migrate to Andre House to open the building for services. We prepare and serve Christmas Dinner, much like other days, but augmented by a ridiculous array of desserts. After dinner is served we the staff, a few volunteers and our guests sit together in our parking lot to pray and celebrate Christmas Eucharist (Mass).

*Eucharist*, the Christian ceremony commemorating the Last Supper, comes from the Greek word for thanksgiving. Almost every morning at Andre House, we pray together in that format and it serves as both the pathway and the goal for the meal for five hundred people we will serve that evening. The first sentence in the Eucharistic prayer penetrates me, "It is truly right and just, our duty and salvation, always and everywhere to

give you thanks, Father most holy."

It is a privilege to witness everyday, the profound exchange of gifts. I watch with amazement as our staff and volunteers share the gift of delicious meal served with eye contact and compassion that floods over the buffet line. I witness guests who are profoundly grateful to receive their meal and who teach me again and again the look of gratitude and the power of the words *thank you*. During Eucharist in our parking lot last week, one of our guests went on and on about how blessed he was, despite having his feet amputated and having had a heart attack the week before. He was just grateful to be alive and to be loved.

G.K. Chesterton observed "that thanks are the highest form of thought, and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder." The holy exchange of gifts is the lynchpin of both worship and transforming ourselves and the world. It is a holy paradox that both the giver and the receiver of gifts are equally and exponentially blessed resulting in gratitude.

My daily, and Christmas prayer, which I share and commend to you is from St. Ignatius of Loyola.

Take Lord and receive all my liberty,  
my memory, my understanding, my entire will.  
All I have and call my own. You have given to me.  
To you, Lord, I return it.  
Everything is yours; do with it what you will.  
Give me only your love and your grace,  
That is enough for me.



## A Grateful Spirit

*Lauren Schmidt Core Staff*

O come, O come Emanuel are the words that echo in my heart as we begin this season of Advent. Joy fills my heart as I think about the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ and His second coming. As I begin my preparation for this season of Advent, I feel called to prepare in joyful silence looking back to who I am, what I'm doing, and where Jesus fits into it all. The deeper I look back, the more I see that Jesus is the root of who I am and why I am here at Andre House.

Over the past couple of months at Andre House, I've noticed tremendous growth and even more failures. There are days where my weary heart gets the best of me and there are days where my joyful spirit bursts outside of me. In the days where I am weary, Jesus gently invites me to go outside of myself and look to the person in front of me. He gently moves my heart to look at Him and not myself. He reminds me of the gift each person is that walks through our doors and I get the blessing of encountering them—whether they are difficult or not.

I'm so grateful for how gently the Lord is working in my heart, and using each and every person I encounter to teach me something new about myself. Working here is nothing short of humbling if you allow Him to transform your heart. A piece of scripture I have grown to embrace is 2 Corinthians 12:9, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." In my lowest, most selfish moments, the Lord meets me there and calls me to rely on Him. Those are the moments where He transforms my heart. Those are the moments that lead to holiness.

Therefore, during this season of Advent, may we share in following the teachings of St. Paul when he says, "I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me," and I invite you to do the same, for that is where we are closest to Christ. That is where we allow Him to be our Savior. With that being said, I'd like to invite you to pray the words of St. Francis with me:

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:*

*where there is hatred, let me sow love;*

*where there is injury, pardon;*

*where there is doubt, faith;*

*where there is despair, hope;*

*where there is darkness, light;*

*where there is sadness, joy.*

*O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek*

*to be consoled as to console,*

*to be understood as to understand,*

*to be loved as to love.*

*For it is in giving that we receive,*

*it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,*

*and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.*

*Amen.*

## A Dwelling Place for Love

*Fr. Bill Dorwart CSC Spiritual Director Andre House*

Eager to take his place in the world the baby was restless. The unborn child's enthusiasm made his mother uncomfortable, as she and her husband carried him far from their home. This family, uprooted by an official decree, migrated into unfamiliar territory. Exhausted, cold, unsettled and unconnected they sought some shelter. With no bed to be found, they were deeply grateful for the offer of a humble shed with its small, straw-laden trough. The animals boarding there generously warmed and welcomed the newborn and his parents.

With no one nigh the celebration began. First a star – a ray of hope – glimmered in the sky. Then light began to dispel the darkness. A weary world rejoiced, as the heavens declared the glory of God and angels announced this special birth. It was a joyful proclamation heard first by those familiar with hardship and dearth. Wonder, longing and grace shepherded them to the crib where they embraced the promise of a new dawn.

Having recently stepped into my 70<sup>th</sup> year following a career as a Navy Chaplain, the journey has drawn me to a new, unexpected and unfamiliar place – [André House](#). Like many, at first glance I was struck by the tremendous need. Planted between two contemporary pillars of power, one to the east and another to the west in the Washington/Jefferson corridor, this small patch of hardship was shocking and inexplicable. But then, from another angle, it is a stark reflection of the world in which we live – the same one Jesus was born into 2,000 years ago. Too often, a world that continues to be harsh, challenging and unforgiving.

However, love is still eager to break through. Its enthusiasm can be discomfiting, as we are driven to find it a place to dwell. With few amenities André House appears to be an unusual accommodation. But it seems that a ray of hope abides here – a little light to dispel the darkness of a weary world. In a very short time, I have seen hospitality thrive because of the generosity, commitment and hard work of so many remarkable people. Daily the gratitude of guests and visitors overflows as the smallest of gestures makes a big difference. André House, a humble effort that is a hopeful sign.

Like the Holy Family, you and I are on the way – God knows where. As we move, like the shepherds, we too long for the promise of a new day. And, by the grace of God, we offer Him a place in the world. Lord, come abide with us. As a new year dawns, may our efforts proclaim that love is borne among us.





## Baseline Level of Normal

*Ryan Daly Core Staff*

This holiday season is the first I am spending away from family, but I did not spend the first leg of the holiday season alone. A volunteer invited a couple of Thanksgiving refugees, myself included, to their house to share a meal and community. During the dinnertime conversation, Ash Uss and I found ourselves answering one intriguing question: how has your time at Andre House changed you? Ash's response was very well developed, thoughtful, and inspiring. My response was simple: my baseline level of normal has changed.

Oftentimes, I find myself thinking about the world as a set of false dichotomies—love versus hate, success versus failure, good versus evil, joy versus sorrow, light versus darkness, Edward versus Jacob, transient versus rooted. I put things into two oversimplified, polar categories, and as the impartial observer, walk the line between black and white. My baseline being the average of two opposites—zero.

Andre House has uprooted me from this paradigm by a herky-jerk push-pull from end to end of the spectrum between dichotomies. My self-acclaimed role as observer has been supplanted by a role as the cursor on a slide rule displaced by the precarious, unpredictable day working with a marginalized population. For this I am grateful.

It is my belief that is better to have loved and lost than to never have loved before. Emotions are the color of life. And Andre House is an amusement park full of fun rides and excitement fueled by the ebb and flow of emotions, where the roller coasters take you from the joys of community to the sorrows of losing a Men's House guest. The ferris wheel revolves around the light of every time Boodah compliments my apron and the darkness of the shootings, slashings, and beatings that are all too common to street life. And the teacups, ohh the teacups, dizzy me in the unending confusion and specificity of life lived on a spectrum rather than a closed dichotomy.

I am grateful for our community

I am grateful for Chick-Fil-A Sauce

I am grateful for my friends living on the streets, you know who you are

I am grateful for pretty songs by The Head and the Heart that consist of many moans and some words

I am grateful for a caring family

I am grateful for my father's belief that each of his children should know how to change a tire

I am grateful for Two Hippies on Camelback

I am grateful for every smile and thank you I receive

I am grateful for every frustration that Andre House stirs about in my heart

I am grateful for the cargo van's ability to transport heavy things:  
blankets, vegetables, blankets, guest belongings, blankets

I am grateful for those so willing to listen to my ruminations

I am grateful for the nonexistent end of specificity

I am grateful for the hope of Andre House

I am grateful for life

## Spread Your Light

*White Tank Memorial Service Reflection Erin Clapp Core*



My God, My God why have you forsaken me? This is the question we ask for each of the souls buried here. 331 people who have passed away this past year with no one to mourn their loss. In a world with a loving and caring God, how are there 331 people who die alone? These readings today, they touch upon the beauty and sorrow that comes with death and dying. The light and the darkness. The book of Wisdom reminds us that, "the souls of the just are in the hands of God and no torment shall touch them". The reading from the book of Revelation gives hope of a new city that will come and a world where there will be no more death and no more mourning. But in the Gospel of Mark, we feel anguish as Jesus screams from the cross, "My God, My God, Why have you forsaken me?" Jesus, who is the savior of us all, Jesus who is the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit is experiencing a moment of affliction.

Every day we see these moments of hope and of despair, of joys and of sorrows, of light and of darkness. The people buried here had no one to honor their life or be there for their final breaths. These people all died experiencing a great sense of loneliness. This past year, I have found three bodies along the perimeter of Andre House. Three people who have passed on the sidewalk, on the corner of 11<sup>th</sup> & Jackson... There are hundreds of people sleeping on the street because of lack of affordable housing, poor mental health care, and severe addictions. How do we, as brothers and sisters, justify these things? I do not think we can. I think when we see tragedy we must experience the pain and the heartache. We must wonder what more we could have done. We must stay up at night thinking that some people do die alone. But in the midst of the hurt and the discomfort of seeing the worst in humanity, we must not forget the beauty that is also ever present in the world. We must remember that one of the gentlemen that passed outside our gate; he slept in the same spot each night and found comfort there. We must remember that two days before he passed, we got him new clothes and helped him clean up. We must remember that John Jinks, a former guest of Andre House and one of the men buried here that we remember this evening, used to laugh with us and tell us "to be bold, to be brave, and to change the world..." We must remember that while Jesus experienced a moment of affliction, he spent his life dedicated to doing for others. He set precedent for us all to love our neighbor and treat each other better.

Today we must remember the beauty of each of these people's lives. We must pray that they feel the hope of the coming of a world with no suffering or mourning and find peace in the comfort of God's kingdom. There is such darkness and we see this everyday. It often overpowers the light. And some days, it is even hard to find any light at all.

But today, you are the light, you come and pray and remember those who have passed who had no one to bury them. Go and ask more questions. Go and do not accept the status quo. Go and encourage people to do a little more... Go and spread your light.

## Community

*Lexi Swagler Core Staff*

At this point in my life I have come to realize that there are so many things to appreciate and be thankful for. I tend to find myself appreciating the many wonderful and beautiful people in my life, whether they have been in my life since birth or only a few months. Being at Andre House has made me realize how beautiful people can be even when they are experiencing the worst days of their life. When someone is having an awful day, they are much more blunt and honest with you, they cut out the normal day to day chit chat and get right to the truth of it all.

Encountering hundreds of people every day, has its advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, I am able to help many people with their basic needs and meet them where they are at but on the other hand, I am not always able to sit down and really get to know and help each individual with the deep issues going on in their lives. When I am able to get an opportunity to sit down with someone, I always take it. Learning about who a person is, why they are the person they are and are in the situation they are in not only gives me the opportunity to know them better, but helps me to learn how to help them and love them the way they need to be loved.

One of the most important things I've grown to appreciate here is community. Growing up with a large family and always having people around me I took community for granted. When I went away to college and no longer had a million people always around supporting me it became very lonely. But I quickly made friends and was able to find my own community within the sea of people at my school. Throughout the years my community shifted and changed with the changing of classes and school years, but there were always people there for me. Then I didn't recognize it as community, just as a group of friends and people who loved and cared about me. Being here has made me realize how important people are to me and how much I love and respect people. Community is a beautiful and necessary part of life that everyone needs, whether it's a group of friends, coworkers, or family. I however, am lucky enough to have all three of those in one, and for that I am grateful.

## Humanities' Norm

*Ana Chavez Core Staff*

*"Office. Showers. Half-porter. Gate. Overnight."* Every morning I wake up and run through my schedule for the day. When I share with people about my time at Andre House this past year, a common response I get is, "How wonderful of you to take a year *out* of your life"- But time won't cease when I leave Andre House. I think about all of the guests who are cemented in circumstances full of suffering and pain they can't get *out* of. An anguish and agony they did not choose to be exposed to. I think about how there is so much more that needs to be done systematically and compassionately for each of the people I have had the honor of meeting this past year.

I was in the position to provide clothing and showers and laundry to people, but this year has provided me with things far more valuable. The people I have met provided me with friendship and with courage. This year was difficult with unexpected challenges in my personal life. There were days I didn't know if I would make it to the end of meal service, but the guests kept me going. The guests taught me about resilience. They showed me how deep strength can go, and that you must always keep going. I have been able to endure more this year than any other time in my life. And I owe that to Charles who always requests the 22<sup>nd</sup> shower, whose knowledge of neuroscience rivals that of my own major in college. I owe that to Darlene who is always the last to leave the building each night, never failing to remind me of her prayers for the Core Staff. I owe that to Barry who has a new joke for me every day. I owe that to the community I had the privilege of living and working with. I owe that to Erin who made me realize the true meaning of empathy. I owe that to Lauren who proves that faith is stronger than any brick wall. I owe that to Ryan who demonstrates that anything worth fighting for is worth failing for. I owe that to Lexi, who's commitment to our guests is unwavering.

I think of the common humanity and how each individual in the world should do more to ensure less of this hurt and sorrow for our neighbors. I think about how neighbors aren't just the people we see each day as we cross the street but also those who are camouflaged by the skyscrapers and the government buildings. I am grateful for my time at Andre House. I am grateful that I lived a life that allowed me to be present here for one year. I can only hope that one day, a year of service or caring for others will not be seen as radical or out of the ordinary but as the norm for humanity.





Bringing all together to our tables and yours in the spirit of joy, friendship, community, prayer and love. Merry Christmas!!!

A page from the original

Andre House Book of Recipes and Household Hints 1995

*André House began about eleven years ago with Father Mike Baxter and Father John Fitzgerald, also known as "Fitz," with a vision of bring people into their home and offering hospitality to those in need. Being priests of Holy Cross, they instilled the values of the Holy Cross community along with the values and ideas of the Catholic Worker movement, started by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin.*

*They began with the Polk street house and took in guests little by little in November of 1984. The Christmas of that same year, after partaking in a turkey dinner, Mike, Fitz and other volunteers made a soup with the leftovers and took it to the streets. From there, they decided to cook once a week for those that went hungry.*

*The one guest house and the one meal a week to the hungry is where it started. Now we are serving six nights a week and seven mornings a week. We serve indoors now which provides a healthier and more comfortable atmosphere. We have a female guest house, and many other services including showers, lockers and a clothing bank. We are also closely connected with St. Joseph the Worker, a job placement service for those in need of permanent work.*

*But André House is much more than meeting people's immediate needs. We are about meeting people's spiritual needs by listening and loving, by being compassionate and bringing the spirit of Christ into each other's lives.*

## **THE FAMOUS...**

### **Turkey Soup**

<b>4 - 6 Turkeys, (about 75 lb.)</b>	<b>50 lb. onions</b>
<b>25 lb. Carrots</b>	<b>50 lb. potatoes</b>
<b>1 case broccoli</b>	<b>1/2 - 3/4 case of celery</b>
<b>1/2 case cabbage</b>	<b>1 case cauliflower</b>
<b>full container granulated garlic</b>	<b>5 lg. Bags of egg noodles</b>
<b>1/4 container rosemary</b>	<b>1/2 container thyme</b>
<b>1/8 container oregano</b>	<b>1/2 container powdered onion</b>
	<b>3 fistfuls basil</b>

Place two 80 qt. Pots and one 60 qt. Pot on the burners and fill them about 3/4 full of water. Unwrap and rinse the turkeys and divide them among the three pots. The water should be up to about the bottom of the bolts of the handles. Distribute the spices among three pots. Cover the pots with lids and turn the fire on high. This should be completed before 11:00 a.m.

At 3:00 p.m., or shortly thereafter, take the turkeys out of the pots and place them in three large pans to cool. Make sure they are cooked thoroughly. Place a second 60 qt. Pot on the stove. Take some broth from each for the pots so you have four pots of broth as the base for four pots of soup.

Wash and chop all vegetables. Carrots and onions first. Potatoes and celery second. And everything else third. Add them to the pots as they are chopped, stirring frequently and keeping the pots boiling. During the cooking process add about a **half container of salt per pot** and **lightly pepper to taste**. Turkeys need to be shredded in good size pieces and divided into the pots, discarding skin and bones. Noodles and pre-cooked rice can be added at the end to add bulk.

*\*\*This recipe has been adjusted in the last 10 years to accommodate numbers and cooks' opinions of taste.*





André House  
of Arizona

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