

“Show hospitality to strangers, for by doing so some people have entertained angels without knowing it.”

- Hebrews 13:2

by Julia Occhiogrosso

Seeds! Tiny seeds! When I hold them in the palm of my hand, I can barely grasp the mystery of what they will become. It was the seed of an idea that inspired the Catholic Worker witness in Las Vegas thirty-seven years ago. I could not have imagined the immeasurable acts of generosity that would arise from that seed: the countless modest gestures that collectively would enrich and sustain our outreach to those trying to survive on the margins of society.

And, it continues currently with the growth of our shower project. The seed of a phone conversation initiated by Clean the World Foundation grew into a plan for them to use our property as a site to operate their mobile shower service.

The Catholic Worker would sign-up and schedule shower guests at our food line. The mobile shower trailer, equipped with four complete bathrooms, would arrive at the Catholic Worker lot on Fridays at 8 a.m. Clean the World Foundation would provide clean towels with soap and shampoo. In the four hours scheduled, they would accommodate up to forty showers.

At first, attendance was slow. We soon realized that if we are offering a shower service to street people, we



Guests enter our backyard to pick out clothing and toiletries

need to provide a set of clean clothes to change into. We requested donations of socks, underwear, and men's clothes. Now along with weekly showers, we set out tables with boxes of socks and underwear and racks of shirts and pants sorted by size. Amazingly, there has been a steady stream of donations to meet the demand.

Mark, Roselle and Anthony are our ambassadors of hospitality to our shower guests. They set up long tables for the clothes and sundry items as well as chairs for people to use while waiting their turn for the shower. They listen well and do their best to meet miscellaneous requests, keeping the hot coffee pot filled and sharing their homemade sweet treats.

Meanwhile, I am in the kitchen with another volunteer crew preparing for the Saturday morning food line meal. From this vantage point, I catch glimpses of the scene of shower day activities outside. I cannot help but marvel at the mystery of a seed. A small and modest gesture has grown into something more than I envisioned. The fertile ground of a safe space has yielded a harvest of mean-

ingful human encounters. Tending to people's basic needs cultivates the fruits of gratitude, comfort and joy. For a few hours a week we are privileged to partake in a sacramental gathering of grace and hope. Your financial support helps sustain our projects.

Donation Information:

Checks: Please make checks payable to: Las Vegas Catholic Worker, send to: Las Vegas Catholic Worker
500 W. Van Buren Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89106

PayPal Giving Fund:

<http://lvcw.org/giving>
(No fees taken out)

Credit or Debit Card Donations:

<http://lvcw.org/donate> Click the **Donate** button above the credit card icons, then click the bottom **Donate with a Debit or Credit Card** button

Venmo:

@LasVegasCatholicWorker

The Widow's Mite *doing business* as the Las Vegas Catholic Worker is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.



PHOTOS: Above, the Clean the World mobile shower trailer with four complete bathrooms arrives at the Catholic Worker empty lot every Friday from 8 a.m. to noon and can furnish about 40 showers. **Left:** Guests have access to clothing racks and 2 8 ft. tables of toiletries. **Bottom left:** Benard (left) and Mark. **Bottom right:** Roselle, left, talks with a guest.

We need underwear, socks and t-shirts for our Friday shower program, please contact Julia: julia@lvcw.org or (702) 647-0728

**We will be Closed
Dec. 29 - 31**

PLEASE JOIN US

Volunteer Scheduling:
(702) 647-0728
or mail@lvcw.org

Thurs.-Sat., 6:00 a.m.
Morning prayer at Catholic Worker

Thurs.-Sat., 6:15 a.m.
Over 300 "To-go" Meals served to poor & homeless people (6:15 a.m.: meal assembly, 7:00 - 7:30 a.m.: meal distribution)

Friday, 8 a.m. - Noon:
Clean the World Foundation shower trailer in our empty lot., up to 40 showers given

Second Sat. of the month:
Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast (In December the Pancake Breakfast will be Sat., Dec. 24th, none in Jan.)

We are a Participating Member of: Nevadans for the Common Good

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“The sense of futility is one of the greatest evils of the day . . . People say, ‘What can one person do? What is the sense of our small effort?’ They cannot see that we can only lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time; we can be responsible only for the one action of the present moment. But we can beg for an increase of love in our hearts that will vitalize and transform all our individual actions, and know that God will take them and multiply them, as Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes.”

- *Servant of God Dorothy Day*
co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement