

MANNA *in the wilderness*

December 2001

The Newsletter of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker

Volume 16, Number 2

Gestures of Kindness: Doing Small Things Well

Dear friends and supporters-

In the early days of the Las Vegas Catholic Worker (LVCW) we were giving hospitality to a terminally ill guest. When he reached the stage where he was going to be bed ridden we realized we had no pajamas for him. No sooner did I voice this simple need when there was a knock on the door from a total stranger who was bringing us a small bag of donations. In that bag was a new pair of pajamas, a perfect fit for our fragile guest.

I was reminded of this story recently when we were faced with a much bigger need, a new place to continue serving our soupline after St. James Church moves to a different location. It was not a week into my researching other options when I received a phone call from the son of a long time volunteer who was wanting to gift us with two small lots just across the alley from our present site.

These gestures of kindness and small miracles have moved and weaved their way into the story and sustained life of the LVCW. Over this year alone we have been shown many signs of hope and encouragement. In addition to the generosity of the many volunteers who participated in our soupline and food distribution projects, we were also blessed in other ways. Last December we were given a donation which enabled us to purchase the vacant lot adjacent to the Catholic Worker hospitality house with hopes of someday building a structure that would provide space to expand our projects.

In the spring we hosted with the Nevada Clay Guild the first Empty Bowls fundraiser. Ceramic artists from different parts of the city shared their talents to produce over eight hundred bowls, which were sold with soup to raise funds to feed the hungry. Over the summer we had youth from various congregations and skilled volunteers labor to paint and restore the inside of the Catholic Worker house. We have also been blessed with the generosity of a landscape designer who is presently developing plans for the outdoor property of the Catholic Worker house.

Finally, we are excited to announce that in the next year we maybe wel-

coming two or three new full-time volunteers to assist with present projects and support the establishing of new services. Given these new developments, a small group of us have been meeting to discern what possibilities the future holds for the LVCW.

In the next year we hope to raise funds to:

- Beautify the empty lots that were given to us for an outdoor soupline serving area.

- Landscape the property at the Catholic Worker hospitality house.

- By the end of 2002 begin building a second hospitality house adjacent to the one at 500 West Van Buren Avenue.

We come to you requesting your financial assistance to continue and grow in our ministry in Las Vegas. It takes many gestures of kindness to do small things well.

Blessings to each of you,

Julia Occhiogrosso, Gary Cavalier

WEDNESDAY MORNING SOUPLINE VOLUNTEERS:

Michele Brodoski, Colleen Brown, Mary Dickie, Jim Dufault, John and Karen Hazard, Fr. John McShane, Lori Ohmes, Gene and Joann Scherschel

THURSDAY MORNING SOUPLINE VOLUNTEERS:

Leigh Alarie, George and Peg Bean, Jacquie Bundren, Paul Colbert, Les Combs, Dale and Peggy Devitt, Diane Gagliano, Gisela Walquist

FRIDAY MORNING SOUPLINE VOLUNTEERS:

The UNLV Newman Center and friends, including: *Grace Cassetta, Ryan Hall, Fr. Bart Hutcherson, O.P., Patrick "Q" Quilao*

SATURDAY MORNING SOUPLINE VOLUNTEERS:

Lori Bossy, Sonja Brouwers, Peter Ediger, Jim France, Brock Fraser, Natalie Johnson, Brenda Logan, Jim O'Connor, the Schill family

MONTHLY FOOD BASKET DISTRIBUTION VOLUNTEERS:

Leigh Alarie, Lori Bossy, Sonja Brouwers, Stevi Carroll, Laurie Caves, Dale and Peggy Devitt, Jane Fransioli, Bonnie Pilcher, Claudia Trujillo, Anne Welsh



ENGRAVING: CHRISTMAS (1954) BY FRITZ EICHENBERG

Las Vegas Catholic Worker Community Blessed by Gifts

Following are examples of some of the many donations we have received this past year:

*

In May, employees of the Pete King Corporation arrived with a giant fork lift and they replaced the 12-year-old corroded swamp cooler with a new one they purchased.

*

Also in May, Jim Sedlik spent many mornings before work installing a beautiful new shower stall upstairs.

*

Christ the King Catholic Community donated a brand new subfloor in the kitchen, no more buckled tiles!

*

During the hot summer, 16 students came from New York as volunteers with the American Jewish Society for Service, and they spent many days completely prepping and painting the entire first floor of the Catholic Worker house.

*

Dr. William Pappas and his staff provide services to the folks in our soup line who need dental care.

*

Brock Fraser, our Saturday volunteer, continues to print our newsletter for free through his printing business, AccuPrint & Copy.

*

We continue to receive blessings and support from many of the Catholic churches in the Las Vegas area through food drives, financial donations and help with projects. We receive continuous and loyal support from Guardian Angel Cathedral, Christ the King Catholic Community, St. Andrew's in Boulder City, St. Bridget's Church, St. James the Apostle, St. John Neumann, St. Joseph Husband of Mary, St. Thomas More Catholic Community and St. Viator's Catholic Church.

Nancy McNeish, a landscape architect, has donated a beautiful plan for the front yard of the Catholic Worker house.

*

Darren Welsh donated a parcel of land just a block away from the parking lot of St. James Catholic Church. This gift is an answer to our prayers, as St. James may move to their new church any day, and we have been anxious about where we will serve.

*

Mario Intino has donated his computer skills to fix and improve our computer, helping us to mail and put together this newsletter.

Anne Welsh is our Christmas Card "Santa" again this year, hosting a table where our soup line customers can write parents, friends and relatives. She provides stamps, too. What a blessing it is for relatives to hear from someone they love and worry about.

*

Finally, we thank Masjid As Sabur mosque which shares use of the St. James parking lot where we serve our morning breakfast. They have been helpful to us and friendly with our homeless guests. They now serve a Sunday meal to the homeless (we don't serve on Sunday) inspired by our ministry.

"The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy...Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

—Martin Luther King, Jr.



**PRAY
FOR
PEACE
IN OUR
WORLD!**

(FOR
TAB)

**Thanks to all our
Donors who make this
ministry possible!**

WE REMEMBER MARSHA FRANCE

We remember with love our dear Marsha France who died November 19, 2001 after twenty-one months of struggle with cancer. Marsha and her husband Jim faithfully joined in serving the poor with the Saturday morning soup line volunteers. We will miss her warm smile and atten-

tive glance, her quiet strength and deep wisdom, her listening heart and kind words, her gracious courage and discerning soul... the gift of her being. Here for a moment like a glorious flower, departed into the stars and with us always. Our prayers go out to Jim and his family.

PLEASE JOIN US:

Wednesday-Saturday, 6:00 a.m.:

Morning prayer at Catholic Worker.

Wednesday-Saturday, 6:30 a.m.:

Breakfast meal served at St. James Church parking lot (G & McWilliams St.) to the poor and homeless.

Monthly, Tuesdays, 5:30 p.m.:

Mass or Liturgy, potluck following. Call for location and time.

Seven Days a Week:

Hospitality (IHN) to 3 to 5 homeless families, call 638-8806 to volunteer.

Last Saturday each month; 8:30 a.m.:

Deliver food to homes in need, gather for reflection & prayer, call for info.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Las Vegas Catholic Worker
(702) 647-0728
500 W. Van Buren Avenue
Las Vegas, NV 89106-3039

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