



NEWS

from the Northside

Recovering, Rehabbing, Sacramental-ling

by S. Mary Margaret McKenzie



As life unfolds in its reality writing with images and texts that describe me sitting in a Minnesota winter with its ice, snow, and sub-zero winds, basking in a flower garden with the sweet smell of spring, I am overwhelmed with profound gratitude for each and every one of you for your presence and God's, in your love and well wishes, your prayers, visits, phone calls, gifts and flowers, that strengthen me in my healing with an undeniable soundness.

This reminds me of a prayer a couple of friends gave me a few years ago that I have turned into my lived reality:

He is present in all His gifts, alive and alert, working to win me to union with Him. More—He rides down the sunbeams of His own graces into my heart to warm it with love—He the creator, pours Himself so vitally into the creatures

He creates for my use that in giving them He gives Himself. Almost like the sacraments they bring me, not only the Love of God but the God of Love.

I cherish the sunbeam of your being.

~~As we prepare this newsletter for mailing, our Sister is home and recovering!~~

Summertime is around
the corner!

Help send a youth to camp.
See back page for details.

Catholic Youth Camp
helps kids make friends
and connect with God.





www.visitationmonasteryminneapolis.org

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We are an urban monastic community. Please contact us for more information about our way of life.

 Visitation Monastery North Minneapolis

 @MinneMonastery

 Visitation Monastery

This newsletter is available on our website. If you prefer the online format, please contact the Sisters at vmonastery@aol.com.

Think VIP | *By S. Karen Mohan*

What do a Monastic Studies grad student, a physical therapist, a Visitation alumna, a European Salesian spirituality “seeker” and a married woman now leading women’s programs in Afghanistan have in common? Did you think VIP? If so, you’re right on! Our former VIPs are now in these endeavors, fueled by Salesian spirit and Gospel focus from their service in north Minneapolis.



VIP Alum Cody Maynus and Vis Companion Linda Goynes share treats at our Christmas party.

These VIP alum spent a year in our monastery’s Visitation Internship Program which began in 2011. Community living, development of relationships among the people of north Minneapolis, Salesian spirituality and ministry on the north side are essential components of this volunteer program.

VIPs spend 10 months living in the neighborhood in housing provided by the Sisters. After visiting the many options for ministry in north Minneapolis, they offer 30 hours of service per week at a site that fits their talents and interests; they also spend 10 hours of service with the Sisters. Living simply, studying Salesian spirituality and praying and working with the Sisters in the monastery give both VIPs and Sisters a strong sense of community. Spiritual direction and prayer opportunities are important personal and spiritual supports for VIPs.

The Visitation Internship Program is open for women and men between the ages of 21-35 years.

Our website has specific information about the application process and the program itself. The website also has a recent video interview with one of our former VIPs, Anna Dourgarian and is delightful to view!

We are now taking applications for the 2017-2018 year. Encourage someone you know to consider a year of service with the Visitation Sisters. Pray for young adults as they discern how to live out the Gospel, and if you are a young adult considering a year of “giving back and growing in your faith” in a vibrant, urban setting with a monastic community, consider this unique opportunity and “Think VIP”!

A WORK IN PROGRESS: Our Outreach and How It Is Evolving

By S. Suzanne Homeyer

Our monastic community has been about outreach from move-in day in 1989 until the present moment. As Visitation Sisters we have as our very foundation prayer and presence.

As contemplative women we see our prayer leading us inward to the depths of our hearts where God speaks. After listening contemplatively to the voice of God and the voices of our neighbors we find ourselves called to action in the world. There is no one way to reach out. Creative solutions to life's problems look different for each Sister and situation and sometimes it is messy and loud!

As we began to develop a strategic process for fine-tuning our monastic life over the next three years we took a long look at our community life as well as how we do our outreach. In previous years our Girard House really resembled Santa's Workshop before Christmas. This year our Advent seemed more like an Advent. The house could retain and offer an Advent atmosphere ideal for reflection and quiet conversation. Beginning last fall we worked with Sponsor a Family MN to provide for our families' Christmas. The Sisters then worked individually with each family on preparing their 'wish lists' and matched them with volunteers who drove them to pick up their gifts. Many new relationships were fostered during the trip to Sponsor a Family's location.

This article is entitled "A Work in Progress" because we are also transitioning into new ways of enhancing our existing ministries. The Visitation Companions, a group of about 25 men and women who have studied our spirituality and have made a commitment to living it as lay people in their families and the workplace. The Vis Companions are joining the Sisters for a four month transition time of working collaboratively to prepare and present Salesian Spirituality on the second Monday evening of each month. They plan to take this on as their own ministry in the fall of 2017, with the Sisters as guest speakers or surprise chefs! A new way to deepen their own commitment and share what they have found meaningful in their spiritual seeking is underway.

There are yet other empty canvases and pots of newly mixed colors waiting for the future to continue our Outreach — still a work in progress!



Kelton, one of our neighbors who participated with Sponsor A Family, and Sr. Suzanne take a few minutes for quiet conversation and a pre-Christmas prayer in front of our fireplace and near the Christmas tree before our Family Stocking Party.



Linda Goynes, Vis Companion, explains the program to prospective new member.



Our Fremont Chapel environment during Advent always included an icon of Mary. Each week a new one appeared, from December through the coming of the Three Kings at Epiphany.

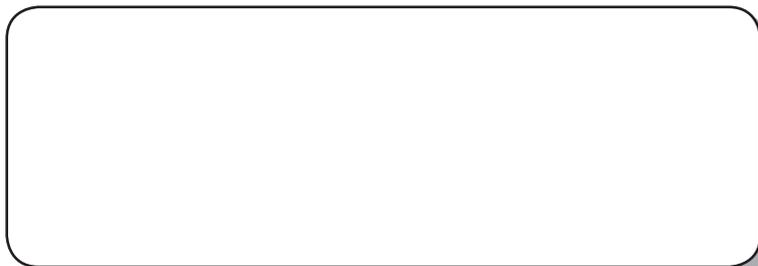
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"If you seek God everywhere, you will find God everywhere"

—St. Jane de Chantal



Catholic Youth Camp (CYC)



**Thank you for sharing
the gift of camp!**

Please consider sponsoring a camper for \$395 for a week at camp. This would be a great Easter gift!

Call S. Mary Frances at 612-529-8215 or send your tax deductible donation to Visitation Monastery of Minneapolis by May 15th.