



NEWS

from the Northside

Home

by S. Karen Mohan

Each new year, the Sisters focus on a particular theme that we might “pay attention to” as a way of directing our thoughts, prayer and action in the months ahead. Our community leader, Sr. M. Frances, suggested the theme of HOME for 2018. She encouraged us to continue our strategic process by looking at our own living space and the kinds of adjustments or changes we might need to make in order to continue our ministry of prayer, of solidarity with those who are materially poor and of the care of our own Sisters. This theme also calls our attention to those who struggle to have affordable housing ... or even a roof over their heads.

When the theme of HOME was presented, my memory took me back to June of 1989. Sisters M. Margaret, M. Virginia, M. Frances and I were driving through the neighborhood with our realtor when we saw a poster board “For Sale” sign in front of 1527 Fremont. We walked up to the front porch of this unlisted property, were greeted warmly by a member of the family, and felt almost instantly that this could be the place! Later we learned that there had been a lot of praying in the Burgess’ home and always a place at their table for someone in need. No wonder this home exuded faith and hospitality! In 1996, when our monastic and lay communities began to expand, we needed a place to grow. A soon to be demolished house, one block away from Fremont, became the next “place of our delight and rest” (words of St. Jane as she entered the first Visitation monastery). The renovation of the 1619 Girard house included handicapped accessible features for future needs. Now we are looking at other adaptations that would help us continue our ministry of “prayer and presence” in north Minneapolis and care for our Sisters.

As we consider what will enable us, a community of energetic elders, to care for each other and our neighbors, our theme of HOME is guided by two realities.

The **first** is our awareness of the pressing needs of many

people who come to our door daily, and our desire to be in solidarity with them. For example, shortly before Christmas, Linda and Andy came to our door distraught. Their landlord hadn’t paid his mortgage and their apartment house was boarded up with all their belongings inside. And it was winter. Another neighbor had to choose between paying rent or paying for an emergency family need. Our community has partnered with Basilica and Ascension in providing emergency assistance to those with whom we are in relationship. We want to intentionally network with those people and organizations whose mission it is to advocate and create affordable housing in our city.



The Homeless Jesus

The **second** reality is the call of the Gospel. “When I was homeless and you welcomed me... (Mt 25:35) The sculptor Timothy Schmalz has created a strong visual for this mandate of Jesus. The statue of the Homeless Jesus is now permanently present in front of the Basilica of St. Mary. Jesus, who has become like us in all things, is depicted as a homeless person sleeping on a park bench. What is he saying to us? What is he asking of us?



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



Visitation Young Adults

by S. Brenda Lisenby

The Visitation Residential Lay Community was founded in 2015. Since then there have been many who have expressed their interest in being involved but who have been unable to commit to such a community for various reasons. In particular, young adults who feel at home with Salesian spirituality and the ministry of the Visitation Sisters were facing a number of challenges in relocating to north Minneapolis. So when the Residential Lay Community consisted of only one “resident” beginning last summer, that resident, Heidi Schleif, was listening with her heart to see where God might be leading. It was leading to the Visitation Young Adults, an emerging extended community of the Visitation Sisters.



Visitation Young Adults gathered at St Jane House in January for dessert and discussion of one of the “little virtues” of Salesian spirituality—interiority.

The Visitation Young Adults are an informal lay community of young people gathering for the purpose of mutual support, study of Salesian spirituality, justice advocacy, and social ministry. The Visitation Sisters are excited for these young people who come together two evenings each month at St Jane House for dessert, sharing and prayer. As their gathering finishes, the Young Adults come to the Monastery to join the Sisters for Night Prayer the third Wednesday of each month. At other times, the Young Adults participate in advocacy, ministry, attend concerts or other local talks of interest. If you are a young adult, you can find our group “Visitation Young Adults” on Facebook. Communication for this group is primarily through this (private) group and Facebook Messenger. Welcome!

Poster on the front porch of our monastery.

Seasons' Greetings

by S. Suzanne Homeyer

Much time has passed since our most recent newsletter – the Halloween cards that once adorned my office door have been replaced with Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa greetings and my first Valentine arrived two days ago! Many people have filled our hearts and home during this end of old year/beginning of a new year time.

As we transition we continue to reach out to neighbors, especially children and families. The treats Vicky Bailey brought us came in handy when several Vis students joined us to welcome almost 100 ghosts, goblins and princesses into our homes to show us their costumes, meet their parents and enjoy the brief time together for 'tricks and treats.'

Thanksgiving wouldn't be complete without Mendota Visitation students and their families collecting and decorating boxes of groceries for traditional turkey dinners. Monastery friends and neighbors and some of the Sisters' family members accompanied the Vis students to deliver boxes to families in their homes and to share a brief prayer of thanks.

Partnering once again this year with Sponsor A Family Minnesota enabled parents to prepare their own wish lists, meet volunteers who helped them pick up their items and thank the people who made 'Christmas' possible for their families. Visitation Companions, Vis parents and other community friends provided transportation and shared the gift of time. Parishioners from St. Thomas Becket along with many others generously provided gift cards.

The Sisters felt like we were gifted in a special way when we were recently told that former Windsock friend, Herbert Johnson appeared in the Super Bowl half-time show with Justin Timberlake! Herb once told a group of his friends that the Sisters are his fan club!

A very unique form of gifting took place on Martin Luther King, Jr. Service Day. Starbucks Coffee selected St. Jane House, our urban retreat and meeting space, to be one of their sites. Over 40 volunteers helped transform the house by giving it a new coat of interior paint. This facelift is a hint of the year ahead. Brian Mogren, a.k.a. "Mr. St. Jane House," is planning a year-long celebration of the TENTH ANNIVERSARY of this ministry. The kick off was a Mass and several events will take place in the coming year. The official party will be June 9th. Mark your calendars and plan to be there!

Halloween



MLK Service Day at St. Jane House



Herbert with his fan club

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*"Let us build a house where love can dwell and all
can safely live . . . All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place."*

— Marty Haugen lyrics



Catholic Youth Camp (CYC)



Please consider sponsoring a camper for \$400 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.

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

