



St. Francis / St. Joseph Catholic Worker

Autumn
2005

□ P.O. Box 14274 □ Cincinnati, Ohio 45210 □ 1437 Walnut Street □ □ (513) 381-4941 □

OUR MISSION

St. Francis/St. Joseph House of Hospitality strives to provide hospitality to homeless men. We recognize that God created each human being with great dignity and respect. The community of those of us who live and work at St. Francis/St. Joseph House of Hospitality desire to uphold this principle and to serve our guests accordingly. (Rev. 12/11/98)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mark C. Schmieder

Brennan Hill

Joyce Kiernan

Michael Harmon

Arlene Turner

House Manager: Karl Fields

ROSA PARKS (1913 — 2005)

In this issue, we pay special honor to Rosa Parks, a person who ignited the civil rights movement, a person who initiated the nonviolent protest of injustice, a person who helped bring America back to its conscience. Rosa Parks challenged America to fully live up to its creed of **equal rights and justice for all**.

Mrs. Parks was a simple, strong woman who has become a symbol of "the power of one." A seamstress, she was a person full of dignity and self-respect. On December 1, 1955, when she refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white person, she was told by the bus driver, "I am going to have you arrested." Rosa Parks replied, "You may do that." That act



Montgomery Sheriff's Department
booking photo of Mrs. Parks.

set off the 381-day boycott of the bus system in Montgomery, Alabama

December 1, 2005, marks the 50th anniversary of Rosa Park's courageous act.

Much still has to be done. We can start by renewing our dedication to overcome the subtle racism of "white privilege" that few Caucasians fully realize.

We still do not understand fully the poverty in our country. Some attitudes about poverty were revealed

in the immediate aftermath of hurricane Katrina. We must ask ourselves, What is my attitude about those in poverty?

November – a Month of Thanksgiving

Grateful Heart

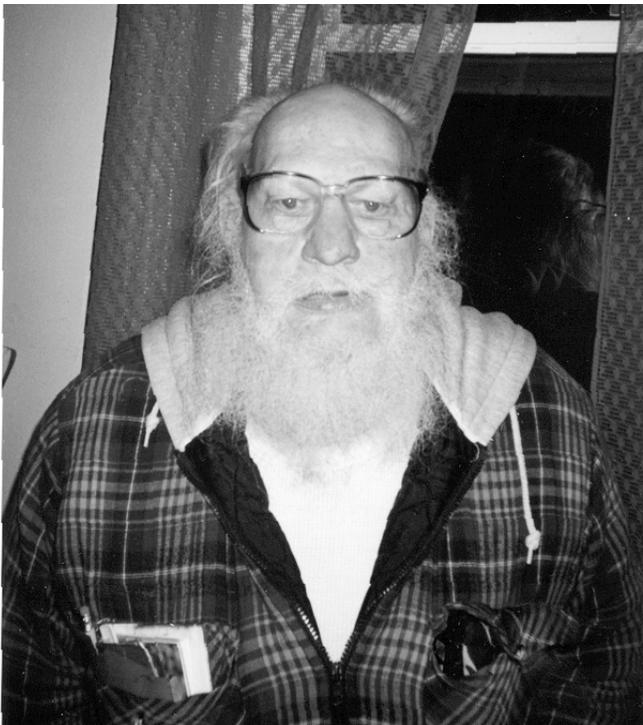
Each November for the whole month, I work each day striving for more of a Thankful heart, to see the good around me and give thanks. A grateful heart takes work and effort to develop. I believe, too, that we have to constantly renew ourselves by our expectations and by seeing the potential and the goodness in those who come into our presence.

We give special thanks to all those who help keep the House running. The House is a sign of hope in Cincinnati and in our lives.....

Mark Schmieder.

Young Neighbors in Action

We give thanks to the group of 7 high school students from Plymouth, Michigan who did a thorough cleaning of the place and helped with the soup kitchen for a week this summer.



About Robert:

Robert came for a month's stay after his apartment sustained fire and heavy smoke damage. Red Cross had given him only a 30-day hotel stay when he was referred to us by an outreach nurse.

Thanks for Roof Surfacing

Special thanks to Kevin and Harrison (house guest) for fiber-coating the roof above the office area. This job was so much needed as the roof started to leak. When another guest asked, "Are you getting paid to do the roof?", we overheard Kevin respond, "Getting paid? I don't want to get paid – this place saved my life!"

Kevin is doing well after leaving the House eight months ago.

Remarkable

In the month of **October**, we served **20 guests** and 8 were successful exits and 4 were hospitality stays of 3 days or less. The other 8 guests out of 20, are with us accomplishing their goals.

We continue **the soup kitchen** and October 25th started serving the soup and sandwich inside. We average 135 persons on Tuesday, Thursday, & Saturdays at lunch.

Thanks to

Community Service Workers

The Catholic Worker House works closely with the Hamilton County Probation Department in helping individuals to fulfill their requirements for "community service."

June, a community service worker, says, "I have dedicated my service to the House since May, 2005. I worked hard but had fun in the duration. If we had more men in the world like the staff at the Catholic Worker House, this world would be at peace. Thanks for being there for me and with me during my struggle." We are thankful for their help and inspiration.

"As consent moves into surrender and trust takes hold, remind me to expect Your image in the most unexpected places." *Excerpt from "September Prayer" written by Sheila Norris of Colorado Concerned Catholics*

Homeless Woman Returns Lost Purse

The Ledger 9/20/05 (Lakeland Florida) :

When Polk County Sheriff's Deputy, Sandy Scherer lost a bag containing her personal organizer, \$800 in cash and two paychecks, she didn't have a lot of hope.

After 16 years in law enforcement, she'd become a little cynical. But just in case, she rushed back to the parking lot in front of the Polk Government Center in Lakeland. She had parked there earlier, and accidentally left her bag on the hood of her car.

She was surprised to find someone turned in the purse at the front desk. Not a cent was missing. But when she managed to get in contact with 24 year old Canesha Blackman, the woman who turned in the bag, and asked to meet her so she could thank her personally, she was even more surprised.

Canesha Blackman was staying at the Salvation Army shelter with her five children. "It was really inspiring to me," Scherer said. "It

restored my faith in humanity. Blackman was surprised that anyone would be surprised. "If I lost my bag, I would want someone to give it back to me," she shrugged as her children ate dinner at the shelter.

Yes, she sure could use the money. She can stay at the shelter only 14 days. She hasn't seen her husband since March, and he hasn't given her a dime. But she couldn't take someone's money, she said. She wouldn't want it done to her.

"I had someone trick me out of \$100.00 once, and it felt terrible," she said.

When she found the bag, she didn't even open it – she just carried it into the government building and turned it in.

She was surprised when the deputy sheriff contacted her to thank her, and even more surprised when Scherer came to the shelter to meet her. "I didn't know if she'd want to come here, because some people are like that," she said.

Life Sentences & Juveniles: Only a dozen or so countries give life sentences for juveniles. Of the four countries currently incarcerating juvenile prisoners for life, Israel has seven prisoners, South Africa -- four, Tanzania -- one, and the United States -- 2,200.

WISH LIST
towels,
wash cloths
coffee,
sugar



University of Cincinnati Volunteers for the Soup Kitchen, from the St. Monica Newman Center

FINANCIAL APPEAL

Our budget is extremely tight this year and we are asking for your extra consideration. We are so grateful to our generous friends of the house.

Perhaps you and friends could consider one of the following adoptions:

Newspaper\$17.50 / month
Resident's phone (for job messages, etc.)\$29.00/ month
Water Bill\$160.00/ month
Groceries (beyond the Free Store and donated items)....\$260.00/ month

We are thankful for any help you can give and have given.

*(The St. Francis/St. Joseph Catholic Worker House
is a 501-(C)-3 Tax exempt organization)*



*Joe Holloway, Jr./
Associated Press
Mrs. Parks speaking at
Ebenezer Baptist Church
in Atlanta on
Jan. 15, 1969.*

2005 CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION



Please Join Us at the House



Saturday, December 17, at 6:30 PM

Dinner at 7:00 PM

Music, Song and Party Follows



Meet Staff Person

Keith Waller

While at a previous job, Keith volunteered to work with the homeless in the Ministry of his Church and of Mary Magdalen house, in the Over-the-Rhine area of Cincinnati. Keith felt called to work with the homeless. When that job ended, he came to work at the St. Francis/St. Joseph Catholic Worker House when a position opened in January 2003.

In the fall of 2004, Keith and his wife purchased their own home. Keith, who has been in



recovery for the past 15 years and possesses a very deep faith, states, "If I ever stop working with the homeless, I will be homeless again. I am thankful for the opportunity to be of help to others and thereby help myself?"

Recently, Keith has become a licensed minister and has started a "Ministry of the Word" with a Worship Service for the men

here in the House. We are happy and thankful for Keith's dedication and ministry here at the Catholic Worker House.

Giving :

Katrina, Tsunami, Earthquakes

Recently, we received a donation in an envelope along with a "Wall Street Journal" article stating that non-profits will face a hard time in meeting their budgets as their donors will be giving their resources to the major catastrophes. In addition, there was an interviewee on National Public Radio stating that the Katrina effects were so massive and so needy that private individuals cannot meet the crisis and it is totally the government's responsibility. He stated that individuals will give out of guilt and helplessness for the Katrina victims.

My viewpoint is we have give; it is our natural human response because to give is to be more human. Jesus many times looked at the people and had compassion. The Dali Lama says that the one basic virtue needed to change the world is for human beings to develop and have compassion.

Kahlil Gibran, in his reflection on Giving, in his book *The Prophet*, states: "You often say I would give, but only to the deserving. The trees in your orchard say not so, nor the flocks in your pasture, They give that they may live, for to withhold is to perish."

Our budget here at the St. Francis/St.

Joseph Catholic Worker is extremely tight, and we depend on donations. We appreciate the expression of humanity we receive in your gifts to the House.

Katrina Victim: Ted came to us from New Orleans by way of Houston, having lost all his possessions. In fleeing his flooded apartment, he took with him his prized set of cooking knives as he worked as an assistant chef in one of the restaurants of New Orleans. In the evacuation, Ted had to leave his knives before boarding the bus to the Houston Astrodome, because the knives were considered weapons. Ted was homeless one more time.

Ted did have a debit card with \$175 available, so he was able to board a bus to Cincinnati, to the Catholic Worker House where he had stayed several years before. He had been an asset to the House with his great cooking skills. Ted arrived at the House with his dark pink wrist band signifying he was a Katrina victim, and this entitled him to some benefits from the Red Cross. Ted left us a few days later to live with a friend, has since found a job and is starting over again.

A Catholic Worker Success Story

Bobby arrived at our Catholic Worker House in January 2005, homeless and without employment. He was nervous about finding a job because of his personal history and lack of work history. Bobby had a real desire to change his way of living but with limited skills and a checkered past, he did not really know where or how to start.

At the house, we want all the guests to get employment, save 65% of their next pay, and bring proof to their weekly interview with our staff.

After having little or no luck with employment, one day after a heavy snow, Bobby asked to borrow

one of our shovels. Later he returned and had to ask for help. He had gotten so many offers that he could not do all the snow removal jobs by himself.

After the snow had melted away, he asked to borrow a bucket. With that one bucket, Bobby began to wash business owners windows. He started with a few small businesses and his window washing business just took off. Bobby was able to move into his own place on February 23, 2004. Today, Bobby has contracts with LaRosa's Staples, Foot Locker, just to name a few. Bobby had told us that this is all "thanks to the St. Francis/St. Joseph Catholic Worker House."



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