

Saint Francis of Assisi  
**Catholic Worker House**  
Waterloo, Iowa

Founded in 1982



July 2024

## We are **CELEBRATING** *by Rose Quirk*

As we celebrate the 43rd Anniversary of the Catholic Worker House, I am filled with **Gratitude**. Believe me, there have been ups and downs through the years, yet, the love, care and sharing have prevailed. We thank God for providing guidance and leading us through these years. We are grateful for ALL the volunteers – live-in and those who help with many things around the house. Through the years we have had many live-in workers and special Thanks for Tony, Brian and Bryan who currently run the daily tasks of the CWH.

We deeply appreciate those who prepare and serve our Community Meals. Some people and groups have been cooking for Years! These groups come each month: **Trinity Episcopal Church, Mercy One Hospital, Marisa Dolan & friends, St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Don & Linda Sullivan, and Diane Robert.**

We also thank the many individuals and groups who contribute when they are able. **Cookie, Nancy, and Mary** bring amazing meals from Dyersville!

**Shirley Hoffman and Marilyn Mihm** (pictured right), traveled from Ionia and Waucoma to serve up a delicious meal they brought.

We truly appreciate those that bring frozen casseroles that are served to our guests and at Community Meals: **Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Trinity Episcopal Church and Quota Club of the Cedar Valley.**

Our gratitude extends to the volunteers who help with clean-up, the men from the detention facility who help with cleaning, and everyone who steps in when needed.

Special thanks to those who pick up weekly donations from **Hy-Vee, Bambinos and Northeast Iowa Food Bank.**

We have been blessed by our guests and are thankful for everyone who has supported us. We received ten \$1 bills anonymously, we received the profits of a bushel of corn anonymously, and we count on those who donate every month. Special acknowledgments to the memorials from **James E. Sweeney, Carmela Quirk and Cheryl Weaver.** And, to **Sisters of St. Francis in Dubuque** Ministry Fund which helped us so much with our friends from Columbia and Venezuela. Thank you all for your gifts, donations, items, food. It takes a Community of Caring People for the Catholic Worker House to be Celebrating its 43rd Anniversary!

Reflecting on these years at the CWH, I believe Caring for each other, no matter what, is what life is about. Dorothy Day said, "*Love can be a harsh and dreadful thing*" – yes, it can be very difficult and yet it can be so Wonderful. Trust Love.



## We are COMPANIONS ON THE JOURNEY by Anne Betts

It has been a year since Catholic Worker Community welcomed six Colombian and Venezuelan immigrants, and what a transformative year it has been! Last fall, Rose shared the immense challenges we faced in meeting their basic needs: housing, food, clothing, medical, dental, and optometric care. Once these immediate needs were addressed, we embarked on the critical task of filing for asylum and work permits. We were fortunate to secure the assistance of three lawyers, located in Cedar Falls, Des Moines, and even Puerto Rico, who supported us both financially and legally.

It is unfortunate that while our country allows immigrants to cross the border, it simultaneously imposes significant hurdles for them to obtain the legal assistance necessary for financial independence. Most immigrants arrive with little more than the clothes on their backs, having exhausted their funds on basic necessities or fallen victim to theft during their journey. Fortunately, the Catholic Worker House received a grant from the Sisters of St. Francis Ministry Fund in Dubuque, enabling us to cover legal fees and initiate the citizenship process. Our immigrant friends, deeply grateful for this support, have started repaying some of the funds by working any part-time jobs that they could find.



Regular compliance with immigration requirements has been essential. Without driver's licenses, our immigrants rely on Rose for transportation to the Cedar Rapids Immigration office for their periodic check-ins. Rose's dedication has ensured they remain compliant, involving numerous trips to and from these hearings.

Our collective efforts have yielded significant results. Mayra Perez was the first to receive her work permit and social security number, which allowed her to obtain a driver's license and secure a full-time job at Bertch Cabinets. She is thriving in her new role and has recently moved into her own rental home—a monumental milestone in her journey. Additionally, two more of our friends, Marcela Higuera and Jonatan Gualdrón, have received approval for their work permits. We eagerly await the arrival of their documents, which will enable them to obtain driver's licenses and secure employment, thus supporting their families towards independent living.

Navigating the asylum process and the subsequent 180-day wait to apply for work permits is no small feat. I have been blessed to encounter numerous generous individuals, professionals and organizations within our community. Remarkable progress has been made at the Catholic Worker House this past year. I hope you all continue to support this wonderful establishment and its mission.

### Thank you:

**Mariella Negron Marty, Esq** - Attorney, Puerto Rico

**Trisha Floyd Nielsen** - Attorney, Des Moines

**Gunda J. Brost** - Attorney, Cedar Falls

**Rosario Garcia Fino** - TLMHC - Green Counseling

**Bradley C. Parsons OD** - Optometrist, Cedar Falls

**Lenscrafters** - Cedar Falls

**Jennifer A. Stevenson, DDS** - Dentist, Cedar Falls

**Amanda Brenden, DDS** - Dentist, Cedar Falls

**Gregory Christensen, DDS, MS** - Waterloo

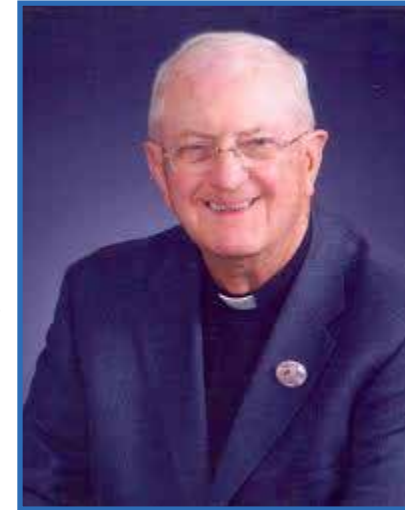
**Peoples Clinic**

**Hawkeye Community College**

**Rosie Guerrero** and **Hope Huff** for interpreting, aiding in applications and teaching English.

## Supporters of CWH Will Be Missed

**Rev. George W. Karnik**, long-time supporter of our Catholic Worker House, went Home to heaven on May 11, 2024 at age 91. He was buried in his hometown of Fort Atkinson, Iowa. In his many years of parish leadership as pastor of St. John's Catholic Church in Waterloo and St. Nicholas in Evansdale, Fr. George was known for being a compassionate voice for social justice issues and courageous in speaking out for Christian values. His many Letters to the Editor in the Courier often spoke of issues that needed attention and correction. Upon retirement, Fr George chose to live in a trailer court in Evansdale and at age 90 he retired to The Villa in Dubuque to be with other priests.



Fr. Karnik was a member of the Eastside Ministerial Association in Waterloo and was very aware of the needs of the poor. He was one of the founding members of the local Hospitality House so during the day people from homeless shelters had a place to go, job search, shower, eat lunch, and socialize. With others, he co-founded the Disciple Experience Weekend to explore the Social Justice teachings of the Catholic Church, as well as Christian Experience Weekends (CEW) which focused on our relationships to self, others, and God. Each year he looked forward to celebrating Mass with Catholic Worker House friends on our July anniversary. Fr. Karnik was a leader and very sensitive to people's needs and situations. He will be greatly missed physically, though we believe he is with us still 'on the other side' of death.

**Cheryl Weaver** died recently. She had served on our Advisory Committee for the Waterloo St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Worker House for several years.

She epitomized St. Francis' love for all of. One always felt challenged and inspired by her dedication to making this world a better place. She will be missed...



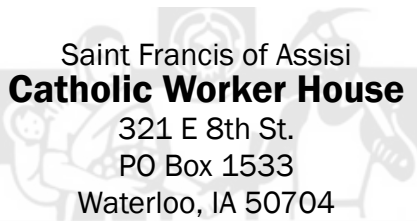
## Loving Action

My friend goes to a church of Caribbean immigrants in downtown Los Angeles. One day his pastor preached: Say you're walking in downtown L.A. or Chicago, or New York. A naked man runs in front of you on the sidewalk, screaming and cursing. What do you do? Most of us, of course, briskly cross the street. *That guy's unwell*, we think.

But say you live in a tiny town of maybe fifty households. You're walking around one day when a naked man runs in front of you on the sidewalk screaming and cursing. And because you live in a tiny town, you know this man ... it's Henry.

"Henry," you say, "come with me, friend. You need a warm meal and a safe place to stay." What does it take to shift our collective consciousness from a stranger who is unwell to Henry, my neighbor, created in God's own image?

The challenge is to imagine a fundamentally different reality; a world in which we recognize and fight for each other's dignity. A world in which we train our hearts to see even the people others might render invisible. A world in which we recognize that we – images of the Divine – are all bound up in the bond of life with one another. **And our hardest and holiest work is to not look away.**



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*Join us to Celebrate*  
**the 43<sup>rd</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
of the

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC WORKER HOUSE**

**Wednesday, July 17**

**Queen of Peace Church . 320 Mulberry St., Waterloo**

**5:00 p.m.**

**Fr. John Gossman will celebrate Mass**

*Dinner will be provided by MercyOne Hospital and will be at 6:00p.m. in the Church basement*

We are grateful for the following

**MEMORIALS**

**James E. Sweeney**

**Carmela Quirk**

**Cheryl Weaver**

*CWH will be Closed  
from August 5th - 19th  
for cleaning and vacation*

We welcome your Prayers and  
Financial Support  
and appreciate Donations of:

Paper items

Coffee & Filters

Sugar & Butter

Dishcloths, washcloths, towels

13 gallon trash bags

Kool-aid & Gatoraid mix

Men's Deoderant

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Worker House is a faith-based intentional community committed to practicing the Works of Mercy as found in Jesus' teachings. We are committed to feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, giving drink to the thirsty, welcoming the stranger, and visiting the prisoner and the sick. We are a lay movement and not under the direction of the Catholic Church.