**Why FCV...**

*By Pat Flicker, FCV Director*

April is here again and we are quickly approaching the Taste of St. Cloud! This means it is recruiting season for FCV11 and time to bring FCV10 to a close. I used to laugh when people told me that time passed more quickly as you got older...but it is true. It seems like we were just going through orientation and already it is time to prepare for the closing retreat.

I am searching for new volunteers for the fall. As delightful as it is that the unemployment rate is at a 49-year low, it seems as though there are fewer young adults looking to do a year of service.

A year of FCV is not a year off, but a year on! A year of growth and gaining experience, growing in your faith, and gaining a deeper understanding of the gifts you have to offer. Our program is a place to learn and discover talents and discern next steps—all while making a difference in the lives of others. Volunteers who have spent time with FCV have common themes when they talk about what they enjoyed about their experiences:

“having three Franciscan Sisters live in community with the volunteers is priceless”

“the diverse opportunities at different nonprofits in the community encourages exploration and growth”

“the community companions that ‘adopt’ them for the year are amazing”

“the Franciscan Sister Companion and a Praying Sister who they meet with regularly is a gift for all”

“the $5,000 education award that is available so all people can volunteer regardless of their student loans, etc.”

The message for interested young adults: "Where else can a new graduate work for a year, have all living expenses covered and at the end of the year have $5,000 paid off on their student loans?" Realistically, however, this message is just the tip of the iceberg. The personal and professional growth that happens over a year at FCV is amazing! We have weekly reflections, prayer time, outreach and incredible opportunities to learn the Franciscan way of life.

If you know someone that might be interested in FCV, check us out at www.fcvonline.org or call me at (320)229-0307.

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**My life as a sister...**

*Sister Jan Kilian*

There are 60 years of difference between my age of 81 and the ages of these young FCV men and women who live in our house. The language and culture of these young adults, the things that matter to them, are not in the same library as the one in which my history is stored. My work now is to build relationships with people whose grandparents are younger than I am.

My novice director is surely turning over in her grave if she can see what I now accept as a clean kitchen. Whoever said, “Cleanliness is next to godliness?” There are far more important things to do out there than house cleaning! We take turns preparing the evening meal. Dinner conversations often include questions from me, “Will you please tell me what you are talking about?” The young people I live with care passionately about immigrants, the homeless and the students they work with. They are enthusiastically making a small part of this world a better place.

I, who am finished looking for what to do next in my life, share my days with young adults who take a year off to volunteer with nonprofits and give themselves time to determine their own next steps in life. It is a blessing to live in the present moment—for me it is. For those whose future lies unmapped before them, what the years ahead hold is of utmost concern. Our relationships are of mutual support. I look forward to their continuing to be so.
When God has other plans
By FCV Kiera Reynolds

One of my favorite sayings has always been, "If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans." I love this phrase because I find so much truth in it, especially in the past few years of my life. I come up with ideas, put plans together, try to make decisions and, just as I think that I know what’s coming next, everything changes and my plans fall apart. Sometimes I am confused and upset for a while, but eventually God shows me another path. The unexpected roads He leads me down are often challenging, but the experiences that they bring me are much more fruitful than anything I could ever have imagined or designed for myself. In His infinite wisdom, God always guides me to what I need, even if it’s not always what I want.

My experience with FCV has been no exception. When I first started my senior year of college, I thought that my first stop after graduation would be a graduate school program. But as the year progressed, I started to feel increasingly uneasy about this idea, even though I still thought that I eventually wanted to go into social work. My search for alternative options is what led to me discover FCV on Catholic Volunteer Network. When I arrived in Minnesota, I thought I would spend the year working with children affected by domestic violence.

While this is what I did for my first few months here, I eventually felt called to search for another service site, which led me to what I am doing now, which is working with the Latino community through the Diocese of Saint Cloud. Because the needs of this community are so varied, every day is different. Once again, God is teaching me how to embrace the unexpected. While I am still learning how to let go of my own plans and let God guide me, I am excited to see what He has in store for me next!
- 10TH ANNUAL -
TASTE OF ST. CLOUD
Monday, May 6, 2019 • 4:30-7:30 p.m.
St. Cloud River’s Edge Convention Center
Featuring 20+ restaurants, a silent auction, raffle & live music.

Tickets: $30 ($35 at door)

• To purchase advance tickets
Send a check payable to: Franciscan Community Volunteers
1600 11th Ave. S., St. Cloud, MN 56301 (Please note “FCV Taste” on the memo line.)

• Buy tickets online at www.fcvonline.org
(Specify “Taste of St. Cloud Tickets”)

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308 Main St-Cold Spring, MN
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Visit us on the web at www.fcvonline.org
Franciscan Community Volunteers is based on three pillars: meaningful service, intentional community living and Franciscan spirituality. Volunteers make a year-long commitment to work full time in local nonprofit agencies that serve the needs of those who are poor and marginalized while accepting the challenge of living simply and in accordance with Gospel values.

TASTE OF ST. CLOUD MAY 6, 2019
COME FOR AN EVENING OF FUN

LIVE MUSIC

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QUILT FOR RAFFLE
TICKETS: $5

“Sunset to Star Shine”

Gorgeous quilt made once again by Sister Mary Obowa for the FCV Raffle

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If you would like to save some trees, go to www.fcvonline.org.
On the right hand side of the homepage, you can enter your name and e-mail address to receive our newsletter electronically instead of through the mail.

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