



The Associate

A Publication By Associates For Associates

A First Month's Reflection

by Quinn Colling in Portland, OR

This past month has flown by so fast that it is hard to wrap my mind around everything. It is a constant challenge to remember the many names, places, and acronyms that will be a part of my life for the next year. My workplace, although one of the strongest and most welcoming communities I have been a part of, can best

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be described by the phrase "managed chaos". Despite these challenges, one thing is more apparent than it has ever been in my personal and work life: that "in the end, it is the reality of personal relationships that saves everything". Whether it is the folks we work with, our neighborhood, or our community, the personal relationships that we develop are what will carry us through the year and the rest of our lives.

In order to live in solidarity with those around us, it is essential to develop and maintain personal relationships. As I was reflecting the other evening, I realized that I am most grateful for those relationships that are challenging on every level. Some days after work, certain individuals would remain in my mind. While working, I found it difficult to love these folks because I felt that my attempt to develop a personal relationship was thrown back in my face. These certain people would try to test the limits of my patience, my compassion, and ultimately try to deceive me. Thich Nhat Hahn describes my state of mind perfectly when he mentions, "To love is a difficult thing when the people try to cheat and trick you, to get the most out of you if you show compassion, goodwill; when they try to get the better of you because you show concern". However, these folks are the people for which I am most thankful. They are an ever-present reminder of the challenge and importance that love and personal relationships have in our lives. For, it is only through that personal connection that one day these people will empower themselves to get off the street or drugs and begin a new life. In addition, they are a reminder of the positive role relationships have in our lives. Finally, the people who are often such a challenge remind me that the love and the personal relationships of others are what will ultimately save my life.

A Vision of Poverty In Response To Our Calling

by Tai Baird in Colorado Springs, CO

Who are we called to serve this year? How is our year of volunteer work in Colorado going to affect us? Prior to leaving our hometowns to serve for a year in Colorado Springs, all of us experienced similar reactions from friends and family regarding the population we were serving. Considering Colorado was recently named one of the nicest states to live in, when people heard that we would be spending a year in Colorado Springs a common reaction was either, "Where are the poor in Colorado?", or a blatant "There are no poor in Colorado!" Reflecting on these comments, it causes us to question and discuss how exactly one defines who the poor are or what poverty really is.

Some may think that comments such as those we received prior to our arrival would discourage us. Rather it motivated us to search even harder to determine why we devoted a year of our life to the four pillars of Holy Cross Associates. It is so simple to just say that the poor are everywhere and that Christians are called to serve, but it goes deeper than that. We have discovered in our devotion that poverty is not always visible in the way many automatically assume. Poverty in our perspective is a missing piece within a person's life. The poor are not just those that do not have enough money to support themselves. Yes, that may be the government definition of focusing on a monetary value of life, but in a worldview from someone that has come face to face with the realities of poverty; the poor are humans in all forms of identities.

Humans, no matter their history, their life situations, or the state they live in, deserve respect, dignity and love. This year, we were called to serve the Holy Cross community, the community of associates we live amongst and the community we encounter in the surrounding areas of Colorado Springs. Where and who we serve makes no difference. What matters in the big picture is that our devotion this year is contributing to a vision, a mission and a future. We are laying a foundation within our life and the lives of others by sharing our gifts with those around us. Our paths may vary depending on our daily focus, but we stand on common ground when it comes to an inner passion and commitment. For instance, in Colorado Springs, no one goes hungry at lunch because the soup kitchen serves the community 365 days a year. A person living on a low income or living off the streets can live in dignity because the people at Ecumenical Social Ministries care and provide food, showers and support in getting one's life back on track. The Children of low income families are able to get an education because the Head Start program provides the children with an equal opportunity for education. Victims of violence within intimate relationships for once see hope in their future and feel empowered to fight for a sense of self.

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Although without actions we cannot see the direct effects, in responding to that call to Holy Cross Associates we are being attentive to the missing pieces within us and the world around us. We are opening our eyes to the reality of spirituality, service, community and social justice in the world and in our life. Coming from different backgrounds and different understandings of life we recognize that no matter where we are called to serve, we are obligated to stand up for what we believe, to acknowledge the social injustices around us, and to trust in the plan that God has for our journey within this world.

The ABCs of Living In Brockton

by Lindsay Marsh, Nick Cocco, and Kate Crossin

Accepting Diversity

Brockton Rox

Cape Cod Cafe

D.W. Field Park

Edith Stein Parish

Finding God

Genaro and our trip to Newport, RI

Homeless

Inspiration from Fr. Joe and Susan-our Co-Facilitators

Joining the Brockton Public Library

Kids



Lindsay is upset because there is nothing in here about "Snakes on a Plane"



Monday night dinner at Stonehill.....Mmmmmm

Never Turning Down a Fundraising Opportunity

Obeying traffic rules-unlike other MA drivers



Potholes

Quincy: Our T-Stop



Rice and Beans



Stipends: Who says you can't live on \$60 bucks a month?

Taking in the "City of Champions"

Utilizing a fabulous prayer room

Volunteers

Where's Nick?

YMCA: Our favorite place to workout

Zzzzzs are what we get when the neighbors aren't outside and rowdy



A Lesson in Solidarity

By HCAZ

After a week of speakers and activities at Moreau Seminary back in August, we were more than eager to get started on what everyone had promised would be a "life-changing year." The four program pillars had been thoroughly discussed and house duties had been assigned. All that remained between the Arizona Holy Cross Associates and our new home of Phoenix was the Greyhound bus trip whose infamy, we were certain, had been exaggerated over time.



The first indication that there might be some truth behind all the Greyhound lore came before we even got out of South Bend Friday evening. Our bus pulled up to the stop and drove away 15 minutes later without us on it - it had been too full to hold four eager beaver associates and their luggage. Three hours after our original departure time, still in good humor, we boarded another coach and were on our merry way to Chicago where we met the first of several interesting personalities.



At 6'4 and 145 lbs., Kyle was swimming in his baggy jeans and white T-shirt. Several prominent tattoos and his penchant for blaring rap music from a cheap boom box at 2 a.m. did not make him an immediately likeable figure. Another passenger actually referred to him as an Eminem "wanna be." The tight quarters on the bus, however, were conducive to conversation and we learned that he had just been released from prison and was on his way to Arizona to accept an art scholarship. He showed us notebooks full of his work and gave one to Christopher to keep.



Kyle's wasn't the only unexpected gift we received during the trip. Our first night on the bus the air conditioning was blowing so hard passengers were coming up with creative ways to keep from shivering. René's seatmate resorted to a cheap doormat which he bought at a rest stop and tucked neatly around the both of them. When he got off the bus he left the mat/blanket with us, our very first house warming present (which is being put to good use on our kitchen floor).

By Saturday morning our moods had darkened a little bit. "Freshening up" in the roadside bathrooms didn't leave any of us feeling very clean. At a rest stop in Arkansas a fellow passenger suffered a seizure. An ambulance had to be called and he was wheeled away on a stretcher leaving the bus in a somber mood.

The second leg of the trip, Dallas to Phoenix, proved equally eventful. Late Saturday night we came upon a Greyhound bus that had broken down on the highway in the middle of western Texas. We squeezed as many of the stranded passengers onto our coach as we could fit, making things down right crowded.

And what cross-country trip would be complete without a run-in with the border patrol? Just a few miles into New Mexico we were stopped by the men in brown and questioned about our U.S. Citizenship. When Christopher replied that he was not a citizen they had him dig through the entire luggage compartment for his green card and gave him a stern verbal warning.



What cross-country trip would be complete without a run-in with these guys?

Needless to say we were thrilled when the Phoenix city lights came into view Sunday evening. As we unloaded our baggage we swore we would never travel via Greyhound again. Yet when the topic of discussion in the Holy Cross Associate Phoenix house turns to the bus trip it isn't the swollen feet and gas station food we talk about. Rather it is the people we met and the experiences we shared with them that we remember.

What a great first lesson of solidarity.

Monday Night Futbol

by Patrick Furlong*



I never imagined my love for Monday Night "football" could ever survive while I lived in South America. But life has a way of allowing the good things to continue, even if in a completely different way. And so this past Monday I felt like I had fallen off the face of my own reality and into a third world "futbol stadium" aqui in Cochabamba.

My sports fans will appreciate this because I tell you what I saw that night was sport in its purest form. O sea (aka in other words "USING MY NEW SPANISH SKILLS!") it was paying \$4 US and having the best seats in the house: lowest level, center pitch (think 50 yard line my American Football fans) sitting on a thin sheet of styrophone on a thick backless concrete slab.

During the game, not a single person that I could see left their seats. There was no food markets, no kids play areas or guys trying to give a free towel away if you sign up for a credit card, features so common in American ballparks and stadiums. Stranger yet for an American, there was no alcohol sold at this game, or any game in Bolivia for that matter. Why? Because the fans that beared these uncomfortable seats on this chilly night were there for one reason, and one reason alone: an intense love of the game. Beer, while immensely popular in Bolivia, would simply detract from the purpose of existings and watching the worlds most popular sport unfold before thousands of excited eyes.

I have always loved my American football, and will continue to do so, but leaving the stadium that night, walking the jubilant streets of a city celebrating in the success of their heroes, I happened across a park where young kids in tattered and dirty clothes excitedly ran and laughed around a grassless pitch with a lopsided ball, focusing intently on the task at hand: to get that excuse for a ball through what they called a goal, two stones set up only feet apart. It was that night, more than ever, that I could not help but have a moment realizing why it was that futbol was, and will always continue to be the worlds unifying game.

So long as we live in a world where 75 percent of the population lives in what we call developing or third world countries, an escape from poverty is found in the simple things in life: flat land, two objects to compose a goal, and anything that passes for a round object that can be kicked. There is not a lot of reason to hope when you look at the poverty stricken landscape of Bolivia, the 2nd poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere, but that night, I found myself captivated in the joy of people who came together to watch and play a sport, and in doing so, find a little reprieve and hope, even if only momentmomentarily. Perhaps as the incredible commercials with Bono says, One Game Can Change Everything

*Taken from Patrick's Blog at <http://pjfurlong.blogspot.com>



**The Brockton Associates
attending a Community
Night Mini Golf Outing**



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