Indeed, summer flies by, especially at FCV. We say goodbye to the current volunteers and, before we know it, we are preparing for a new group of young adults eager to be transformed through service, intentional community and Franciscan spirituality.

Over the summer months, I spend time reflecting on the past year and the growth of each volunteer, while giving thanks for the Franciscan Sisters who live in community with the volunteers at Welcoming House.

The five new volunteers have arrived. Their actions match the season outside. Fall—the time to let go and “shed” old ways, to “die” to an old way of being, and to prepare for a time of hibernation and learning, of stretching and seeking out what is good and whole.

I have witnessed this process before, but for some reason this year seems to have me in awe. The first week of orientation was amazing. The group flourished. As Laura and I introduced journaling and talked about letting go and letting God inside of our hearts, I could see a longing in each volunteer. Already I see the shedding of leaves, the quietening of their outside lives. The focus of the year has been set: growth and openness, listening, becoming centered and focused on what is around, a dying of their old ways in preparation for transformation. The volunteers are ready to go and serve the poor and marginalized, to be companions on a journey with all they meet. To seek and understand where God is calling each of them.

Yes, fall is here at the Welcoming House. Monday nights we learn and grow in the Franciscan way, delve into the Catholic Social Teachings and learn about social justice. Each Thursday evening we have “Sharing from the Heart” where the volunteers and staff gather and talk about the week, checking in with each other, and going “deeper” into our hearts and our faith. It is during the darkness of those Thursday nights that we become open to change. Please, keep us all in prayer as we move forward this year, trusting all God has planned.
A new face with FCV!
By Laura Shrode, FCV Program Assistant

Hello FCV family,
My name is Laura Shrode, otherwise known as Pat’s new assistant! I was hired to work part time as the FCV Program Assistant in July 2016. I’m originally from Plymouth, MN. The College of St Benedict became my beloved home, from which I graduated in 2012 with degrees in psychology and biology. From there I moved to Denver to participate in a year with the Colorado Vincentian Volunteers (CVV). Perhaps you have heard of CVV, as your very own Katie Janssen-Cassady (previous FCV staff member) was a volunteer with CVV, worked with FCV for a few years and then she joined the CVV staff. Katie has been a great role model and mentor for me the past few years. Following in her footsteps, after CVV I started working towards a Master of Divinity degree at Saint John’s School of Theology. I felt called to ministry work and have been astounded by the variety of ministry experiences I have encountered so far. I recently graduated in May 2016. I look forward to experiencing life with no homework!

While at Saint John’s I worked as the recruitment coordinator for the Benedictine Women Service Corps, a program similar to FCV run by the Benedictine sisters. I also worked part time at the St. Cloud Hospital as a chaplain. I am excited to continue being present to people at the hospital this year, as I also learn to walk with those involved in the FCV program. My work with FCV will revolve primarily around volunteer formation and recruitment.

After having only known the FCV 8 crew for a little over a week, I can already tell you that I am amazed. We have five dedicated young adults who are willing to serve and willing to open themselves to the many ways the Spirit will lead them to growth through their FCV year. I cannot wait to accompany them on this journey, to hear their stories and to see what stirs in their hearts. I also look forward to discovering the ways that I will be enriched and grow because of my time with this group.

Engaging in Franciscan Spirituality Class is amazing!
Pat Flicker, FCV Director

I am just starting year two of a new and exciting program sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls called Engaging Franciscan Spirituality. This past Saturday about 14 of us gathered to explore the lives of Saints Clare of Assisi and Agnes of Prague.

I was mesmerized as the stories unfolded about these two amazing women who looked beyond their families’ expectations and followed their hearts and God’s will toward a life of poverty, service and religious life following the Franciscan traditions.

Agnes of Prague, a princess, was betrothed at age eight. As she matured she realized her calling and refused to marry—just think of how brave she must have been to go against the “norm” and her family. Saint Clare, also from a wealthy family, heard Francis preach at age 18 and decided to devote her life to following the Franciscan way.

Both of these early Franciscan women showed courage and determination in following their call. As I sat back and listened, it occurred to me that the Franciscan way is not for just anyone. Then, as I ate lunch at the Motherhouse, I looked around at all of the sisters and thought of the strength of each of them. The strong desire they had for living the Gospel way of life. I think of the hospitals, nursing homes, schools, programs and communities of faith that were started by these courageous women. Their commitment, their service, their care for others and their witness to the Gospel is astounding.

I have been so blessed to be a part of their ministry. Each sister has touched so many lives, and their enduring love and presence continues today—and extends to the volunteers as well. In the short time the volunteers are with us, I see their lives change by witnessing the amazing grace and passion of the Franciscan spirit.
Meet Ann Anosike. Ann was born in Nigeria and moved to Irving, Texas when she was nine. She graduated from the University of Notre Dame with her BA in Political Science and minors in International Peace Studies & Theology. During her college years Ann realized the importance of faith and reaching out to people in love. She is devoted and excited to be helping young people learn about their faith, which is why her service site at the St. Cloud Catholic Charities Children’s Home is perfect for her. She will be in supportive services and helping with different after school group therapies for youth in need ages 8-18.

Meet Anna Taylor. Anna is from Berea, KY. Her service site is Mid-MN Legal Aid, where she will be helping new immigrants. Anna chose to volunteer with FCV because it had the perfect combination of a chance to live in an intentional Christian community and volunteer at Mid-MN Legal Aid to not only further her Spanish skills, but also use them to serve others and make an actual impact in the world.

Anna’s love of Spanish began in high school and continued throughout her time at college, during which she studied abroad in Segovia, Spain for a semester and also served as an apprentice translator for the college’s student-run Hispanic Outreach Project. She graduated from Berea College with degrees in Spanish and Business Management.

A fun fact about Anna is that she enjoys English and American folk dance. Her decade of experience in this dance community has taken her on performance tours all over the US and even to Canada and Denmark. Watch out, because she knows how to dance with sticks, “swords” and even dance while jumping rope!

Meet Jennifer Wonsever. Jenny is from Severn, Maryland. She has her degree in Psychology from the University of Maryland and will be serving at Anna Marie’s Alliance child care center. Anna Marie’s Alliance works with women and children in domestic abuse situations. Jenny chose to join the Franciscan Community Volunteers because the passion of the director and sisters greatly inspired her. In her time here in Minnesota, she hopes to grow closer to God and serve the children at Anna Marie’s Alliance. In her free time, Jenny likes to draw, paint, and create art in many ways. She finds incredible beauty in the stars of the sky and the rocks of the earth. Most of all, she cannot wait to see what God has in store for her this year.

Meet Isaac Vacheresse. Isaac is returning to the program this year from Moody, AL. He served at the Boys & Girls Club for six months here in St. Cloud with the 2015-2016 volunteers. This year Isaac will be serving at the St. Benedict Senior Center in the Therapeutic Recreation department. While serving, he will be working with music therapy, spiritual care, and helping with many recreational activities with the elderly. Isaac is very excited to be with the program another year. He is also enthusiastic to have his brother (John-Caleb) on board for a year of service. He asks for prayers for the community as they navigate through this year and discern their next steps.

Meet John-Caleb Vacheresse. John-Caleb Vacheresse is from Moody, AL. He has left his 3 year radio operator position with EWTN Radio station to serve at the Boys & Girls Club-Southside, which serves an average of over 160 youth each day. He loves to act and has a small part in The Donut Man series produced by EWTN. His other talents include sculpting figures and having a very personable sense of humor. He decided to join the Franciscan Community Volunteers after realizing that he was seeking connection to others and discerning the next steps in his life. After watching his younger brother Isaac this past year, he decided to serve for a year in an intentional community and look at what God has planned for him.
Start by doing what’s necessary; then do what’s possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.

-St. Francis of Assisi

You can support FCV

- Partner with us financially-your dollars go a long way in supporting the poor and marginalized.
- Check us out on the internet… Let other people know about our program by liking, sharing and commenting on our posts!

Looking ahead

Sept 18  Donor day at FSLF Volunteers will helping! Come and meet them!
Oct 3    Transitus in Little Falls
Oct 4    Feast of St. Francis
Oct 28-30 Fall retreat-Motherhouse with David Leidl Please keep us in prayer
Dec 4    Sunday-Open House at the Welcoming House

SAVE THE DATE:  5-1-2017 Taste of St. Cloud

Green tip

Did you know you can receive this newsletter electronically?

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.

Franciscan Community Volunteers is based on three pillars: service, 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.