

North End Food Security Network

Food insecurity – words used to describe the lack of accessible, affordable, healthy, safe and sustainable food, words that describe the situation in Winnipeg’s North End. We know that poverty is an indicator of food insecurity. Those receiving social assistance, low income households, lone parent families, children and Aboriginal Peoples are at highest risk for food insecurity.

The North End Food Security Network, an initiative of the North End Community Renewal Corporation, has been meeting since Oct. 2007, to share and develop food security information and resources. The NEFSN includes representatives from North Point Douglas Residents Association, William Whyte Residents Association, Aboriginal Vision for the North End, Chronic Disease Prevention Initiative, Winnipeg Regional Health and Manitoba Food Charter.

The vision of the North End Food Security Network is a community where there is nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate food available for all residents, access to local food production, knowledge of healthy food choices and ongoing care and improvement of the environment.

Activities in 2011 include: participation by community members in the Main Street Farmer’s Market at Main and Mountain; U-Pick at Floodway Gardens for Good Food Box and Farmer’s Market; additional NEFSN community gardens at KaakiyowAdult Learning Centre and Turtle Island, David Livingston School and on Selkirk Avenue; Youth Cooking Skills and Adult Food Skills workshops. Gardening and Traditional Gardening Workshops were delivered in conjunction with the Urban Eatin’ Gardeners Worker Co-op. One hundred individuals earned the Food Handlers Certificate in 2011 by successfully completing the Food Handlers Certification workshop.

These initiatives help people improve their food security, increase self-esteem and enhance personal and community pride.

Interested in learning more about Aboriginal History? There is a four part documentary series entitled 8th Fire on CBC that is well done. It is a series that ran for an hour on Thursday evenings. Enjoy each documentary!

*Faith Studies
At St. Peter’s*

St. Peter’s Parish in Winnipeg begins its faith studies program with the series **An Introduction to the Theology of the Body: Discovering the Master Plan for Your Life**. The series, delivered on video by Christopher West, faculty member of the Theology of the Body Institute, is an eight-part program.

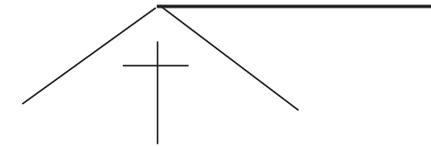
It is designed to give a solid understanding of God’s plan for humanity. Dexter Suban will facilitate the program. Sessions begin Feb. 7 at St. Peter’s Parish, 748 Keewatin St. and continue for seven Tuesdays. For information contact Dexter Suban at info@madeformore.ca. Drop-ins are welcome.

Other series to be offered at St. Peter’s in the future include **A Quick Adventure Through the Bible**, an eight part series on DVD presented by Jeff Cavins, that provides an introduction and overview of the Bible from a Catholic perspective, starting April 10, 2012 and **Catholicism**, a formational program delivered by Father Robert Barron of Chicago using art, architecture, literature, music and all the treasures of the Catholic tradition to illuminate the timeless teachings of the Church, starting Sept. 4, 2012.

These are only some of the programs available through **Made for More**, an initiative started by young adult Catholics at St. Peter’s, led by Dexter Suban and Jeannette Reyes, who recognized their own lack of knowledge about their Catholic faith. They set about educating themselves through research, reading, and personal study and were inspired to create a means of helping other Catholics increase their knowledge about their faith.

Made for More answers the call of Blessed Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict the XVI for the New Evangelization. The New Evangelization aims to evangelize the culture through effective use of current media.

For more information on Made for More and its programs go to <http://www.madeformore.ca>



UPDATE

MICAH HOUSE

ACT JUSTLY + LOVE TENDERLY +
WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD

February, 2012

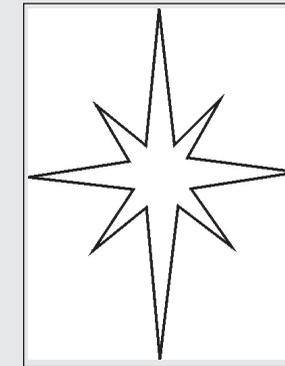
The Gifts of the Earth and the Joy of Community

In the midst of preparing for and celebrating Christmas, questions kept popping up particularly the question “Why are so many people motivated at Christmas to give to those struggling to make ends meet?”

A small group of people (12) who meet weekly at Micah House savoured the friendship and food on the Tuesday before Christmas. It was a full turkey dinner with all the trimmings; each had contributed in some way to the feast.

The love and joy was tangible. Each maker of a dish richly complimented. Several left with tears in their eyes, “Who and why did you do this for us?” forgetting that they themselves had been responsible for the dinner; it had been a joint effort and a marvelous experience of community.

A similar community gathering occurred on the Saturday before Christmas, although this time a hundred



and fifty people enjoyed a full dinner organized by people from Our Place/ Chez Nous at the Vineyard. Then on Sunday, the Immaculate Conception Drop In Centre served another 250 to 300 people. This was a community whose members were not the same as the Our Place Chez Nous group.

There are no words to describe the spirit of neighbourliness and care. All joyfully shared: more for those who needed it, less for those who did not.

Each organization had enough to share with others.

Was it a foreshadowing of the God’s kingdom?

It definitely was a living out of Pope Benedict the XVI suggestion in his New Year’s message: redistribution of goods is one of the roots of peace and community? Could we, as followers of Christ extend the love and care demonstrated at Christmas for a week, a month, all year?

A New Definition:

Many are having a difficult time with the new postures and gestures of the Liturgy, particularly standing at Communion.

The reception of communion and processing together to receive is the highest point in our liturgy. It

emphasizes a profound theological truth that we are called to be one and to stand in solidarity with one another until the whole world is fed! Is this not part of our call as community?

May this gesture deepen our conviction that our world is so in need of food, shelter, education, ...and we stand together to proclaim this. Isn’t this a wonderful invitation for all those able to stand?

“And she gave birth to her first born son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.”

She was five, sure of the facts, and recited them with slow solemnity convinced every word was revelation.

She said they were so poor they had only peanut butter and jelly

Sandwiches to eat and they went a long way from home without getting lost. The lady rode a donkey, the man walked, and the baby was inside the lady.

They had to stay in a stable with an ox and an ass (hee-hee) but the Three Rich Men found them because a star lited the roof.

Shepherds came and you could pet the sheep but not feed them.

Then the baby was borned.

And do you know who he was?

Her quarter eyes inflated to silver dollars.

The baby was God.

And she jumped in the air whirled around, dove into the sofa and buried her head under the cushion which is the only proper response to the Good News of the Incarnation.

—John Shea, *The Hour of the Unexpected*

No Room At The Inn

At Home/Chez Soi is a project of the Mental Health Commission of Canada to create a Housing First initiative.

Home. Think about it. Where is it? What is it? What pictures, images and emotions does home evoke? Is it the place you can be yourself, where you don't have to wear a mask? Does your treasure reside there? Is it a place of privacy, a place of fear or pain or is it a place of rest and renewal? For many, home is an illusion, unavailable or out of reach.

At Home/Chez Soi is a project of the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Five cities across Canada were given a grant to run an experimental Housing First initiative. In Winnipeg, there are 505 participants, 275 of whom are enrolled in Housing First and 230 enrolled in Treatment as Usual. The average length of homelessness was almost 10 years with the average income in the month



prior to entering the study \$433. Forty-eight per cent earned less than \$300 in that month. It has given people a new lease on life constantly worrying about shelter is a huge obstacle to healing either a mental or a physical illness or both. Over 171 participants are currently housed.

It has been discovered that getting housing and keeping it are two different things. Many supporters have to be in place who listen to individuals and together with individuals work issues. The goal? That all people may enjoy the fullness of life.

The above poem and article don't seem to be connected. However, the “star that lited the roof” for Jesus, Mary and Joseph, (and our five year old) mirror the joy of those who have finally found a home of their own.

Potluck anyone?

It was January 5th, a Thursday night. Forty people gathered carrying gifts, not of gold, frankincense and myrrh, but of food and friendship. People from the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Winnipeg met and greeted each other and shared food. Seemingly, the food multiplied as there was more left over than was eaten.

Among those present were five people from a small Refugee Committee being formed at Micah House. These five committee members befriended some of the 16 people living at Hospitality House.

Not only was one person able to provide part time work (at Tim Hortons) but some had invited a small family to partake in their Christmas meal during the holidays. One Member even took a mother and child to a McDonald's after their medical appointments.

The refugees and Canadians together made up a polyglot community typical of Canadian society and the Canadian Church. The gathering came at a 'kairos' (an opportune moment between the birth of Jesus and the Octave of Church Unity. Living together in peace is possible.



People from the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Winnipeg shared a meal at Micah House Jan. 5.

What is Micah House?

What is Micah House? What happens there? In the next several issues of the newsletter, some of the programming that happens at Micah House will be described.

As you know, Micah House is the centre for Social Justice. The activities, prayers and programs held there address issues of inequality or institutional shortcomings. One of these programs occurs every Wednesday from 6 to 7 p.m. It is called DRA or Dual Diagnosis Anonymous. About 12 people gather. Each struggles

to overcome addiction as well as a mental illness. The two together are a difficult burden to carry particularly because most programs only deal with one thing at a time.

For those who suffer from both an addiction and a mental illness, DRA brings some measure of hope. The challenge is to work with both simultaneously. That is what Stan, who facilitates the group, attempts. The program is a light in pretty deep darkness for those who participate.