



# Winona Catholic Worker

*The only solution is love.*



*Photo: Mike Munson*

## Brother Bede Welcomes You

*By Melissa Gordon*

On most days that the Bethany House is open, you'll find Brother Bede Baldry, FSC enjoying a cup of coffee, cracking jokes, and chatting with anyone who pops in. You can also occasionally find Bede at the Bethany House when it's closed – he hosts a dream circle for a small group that meets to share their dreams and wonder about what their dreams may be offering. Having spent nearly his entire life living in community and his whole career working with diverse groups, Brother Bede has an ease about him that makes everyone feel like they belong, whether in the bustling hours when the house is open or in the quieter, more intimate setting of the dream circle.

Originally from Montana, Brother Bede likes to say that he “broke the tie” when he was born after six brothers and six sisters. After growing up in a big family, Brother Bede joined religious life, first as a Benedictine monk, and later as a Christian Brother. While he's spent much of his life living in community, one assignment did require Bede to live alone, but five months into the assignment, he told his Superior, “I don't think I can do this.” Talking it over helped, and Bede finished the assignment, which lasted six years. “Sometimes you just need to say something out loud,” says Bede. Nevertheless, living in community is where

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## Anne Pellowski (1933-2023)

This summer we lost our long-standing neighbor, friend, volunteer, and advocate, Anne Pellowski. When Anne was preparing to move back to the Winona area after years of living and working in New York City, she specifically requested that her realtor find a property with close proximity to the Catholic Worker house, which is how she came to reside directly across the street from us, with a view of both houses from her front porch. Upon moving back to Winona, Anne immediately became deeply involved in the work of our houses, cooking large, traditional, Polish meals from scratch; overseeing our bookkeeping; participating in weekly prayer; and bringing back stories from her frequent international travels. Anne was beloved by our guests for her mix of warmth and cordiality tempered with a no-nonsense attitude foreign to most Minnesotans. She delighted guests with her ability to speak many languages and to remember everyone's specific dietary preferences.

Anne spent her long and illustrious career as a librarian, storyteller, and literacy advocate. She traveled to nearly every country on the planet, preferring small remote villages where access to books was least prevalent. She encouraged people to tell and write their stories, in their language, and to read and read and read. She met with dignitaries and politicians the world over, appeared on *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood*,

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# Bede

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Brother Bede feels most comfortable and most enriched. "Living in community isn't always easy," he clarifies, "but I think that my thoughts are OK, but yours and mine together are better, and community fosters that."

As a Christian Brother, Bede has had a broad career with diverse groups of people. He taught religious education in St. Paul, Minnesota; he did formation and vocation ministry with young brothers in the U.S. and Kenya; he did social justice work at a spirituality and education center in Chicago; and he was an administrator of two parishes and three chapels, three of which were on a Native American reservation, in his home state of Montana.

Among these experiences, Brother Bede doesn't have a favorite. "I've worked with many different cultures, and they all had something to offer," he says. "Working with different people made my prayer life and spiritual life richer and broader." Bede remembers wanting different images of God and finding them in Kenya, discovering that even though some cultures looked very different from his own, they had a fundamental similarity, which was their shared Christianity.

Witnessing diverse ways of glorifying God is perhaps what led to Brother Bede's deep understanding of, and respect for, human diversity. Bede understands that "everyone doesn't have to think like me to follow Jesus," and, on the flip side, "what might be OK for you, might not be OK for me." He also recognizes that there is wisdom in all of us, which offers us the gift of learning from one another, without having to be like one another.

"Understanding differences sometimes took time," he says, and celebrating differences while maintaining one's own beliefs and identity can be difficult. "I realized I'll never be Native American, or African, or Hmong, no matter what I do. But I can try to understand their values and support them in living their values."

Upon retiring, Brother Bede moved to a Christian Brothers' residence on the campus of Saint Mary's University in Winona, Minnesota, a university sponsored by the Christian Brothers. He immediately began volunteering at the Bethany House, where another Christian Brother, Denis Murphy, had ministered years ago.

"I love being with people at Bethany House,

talking with them, listening to them, and sometimes praying with them," Bede says. He acknowledges that he is somewhat limited because of his Parkinson's, but notes, "what I can do is listen. I can listen more widely than I could before."

In addition to volunteering at the Catholic Worker, Bede offers spiritual companionship (his version of spiritual direction), which he describes as "journeying alongside." Having spent a lifetime serving God by serving others, Brother Bede says, "God is a God of Love, and God is with us even when we don't realize it."

# Anne Pellowski

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and had dozens of her books published.

For many of us, Anne had always been old. We met her in her retirement and for decades she remained as she had been that very first day - independent, brilliant, fit, snappy and engaging. In the last few years of her life she aged in ways that challenged but never stopped her. She transitioned from cooking for us to receiving home-cooked meals from us. She called on various members of our community to do tasks that afforded her the ability to stay in her own home until the end, and we felt privileged to be able to give back to someone who had given us so much. She told her family, "I suggest you make friends with the Catholic Workers; they will always be there for you, and you couldn't ask for better friends." We agree wholeheartedly because that was what we found in Anne, who was as much a Catholic Worker as the rest of us. We are left with gratitude for Anne's friendship, her example of how to live your faith, and her encouragement to never stop learning.

## Needs List

### New or gently used:

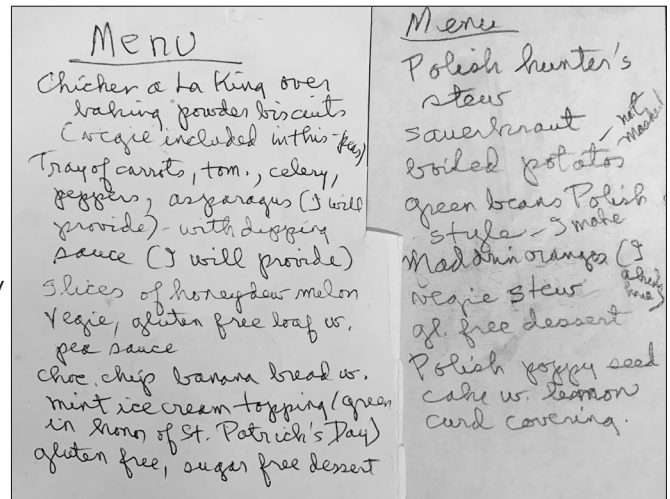
- socks
- hats
- gloves

### Travel size:

- shampoo
- conditioner
- toothpaste
- soap
- deodorant
- lotion

### General items:

- granola bars
- single serve meals
- soups
- peanut butter
- jelly
- hand warmers
- toothbrushes



Anne wrote out menus for each of the meals she prepared for the Catholic Worker. We've carefully saved them over the years, and plan to frame a few to be hung in the dining room.

# Roundtable Report

“Clarification of thought” was an idea that Peter Maurin espoused as the Catholic Worker was growing from an idea into a reality in the 1930s. Maurin believed that people should gather to discuss and debate pertinent social issues and that all people should have access to scholarly conversation, regardless of their work or education. We are gladly continuing this long-standing tradition in Winona with regular Roundtable Discussions.

This fall we hosted three conversations:

- **“Expungement”** with Kathy Sublett (founder of the group Let’s Erase the Stigma) discussing how having a criminal record affects one’s ability to find stable housing and work and how we can work to change those systems.
- **“The Opioid Epidemic and Harm Reduction”** with Helen Bagshaw (RN and opioid overdose educator) and Jenny Yahnke (Planned Humanity) discussing the realities of overdose in our community and how harm reduction and the use of Narcan can help save lives.



- **“No Ordinary Joe”** with Jerome Christensen and Doug Nopar about their collaboration on a book about local activist and organizer Joe Morse, who died in 2017. They discussed the process of writing the narrative of Joe’s life as well as his approach to social change.

The next Roundtable series will begin on January 21. Conversations are typically hosted on the third Sunday of the month from 3:00-4:30 pm. If you have an idea for a topic you would like to discuss, or if you would like to host, please contact us!

Come join us in our cozy living room for our next series of roundtables!

Photo: Jerry Windley-Daoust

# Fall Appeal...and the Appeal of Fall

*Afghans and quilts are once again draped over the backs of chairs and sofas, signaling the change of seasons...but the rhythm of hospitality remains the same.*

The seasons have changed. Hand warmers have replaced bottled water in the basket in the front hall. The large tote of homemade slippers have resumed their prominent place in the living room, and afghans and quilts are once again draped over the backs of the chairs and sofas. The table is permanently covered in a jigsaw puzzle, and the candles get lit regularly. Trips out to the front porch to smoke are much quicker now, followed by the stomping of cold feet on the door mat. What remains the same is the flow of people through the house, the smell of eggs and sausage on a Tuesday morning, the hum of the dryer under the conversation at the table. The phone rings, the mail arrives, and the bathroom needs to be cleaned again. The rhythm of hospitality is a comfort for all of us – volunteers, guests and visitors –

and we are able to count on it because of your consistent support. We have no paid staff, relying entirely on volunteers and the generosity of individual donors, with no government, church, or grant funding. Everything that is given to us is shared with those in need.

We currently provide hospitality four days a week, in addition to sharing the use of our house with other community groups at no cost. Our food and hygiene pantry is heavily used, showers and laundry continue to be a vital offering and hot coffee is never in short supply.

Our generosity to those in need hinges on your goodwill. Please consider a financial donation by check or paypal (winonacatholicworker@gmail.com) or shopping for items on our needs list. Thank you for your support!



## Who We Are

The Winona Catholic Worker is an intentional community rooted in the traditions of the Catholic Worker Movement. We currently open our home for hospitality, providing showers, free laundry, a small food pantry, the use of a phone and a mailing address, snacks, coffee, and a hot meal. Our most important work is being present to those who enter our home and creating a safe and non-violent space for others. Our community is: Gretchen Mulkey, Diane Leutgeb Munson, and Michael Leutgeb Munson, surrounded by a wide ring of support.

## Open Hours and Services

The Bethany House is currently open:

- Monday 8:00-11:00 am  
(breakfast made to order)
- Tuesday 8:00-11:00 am  
(breakfast made to order)
- Thursday 4:00-7:00 pm  
(dinner served at 5:00 pm)
- Saturday 1:00-3:00 pm  
(snacks available)

During open hours there is access to showers, laundry, food and hygiene pantry, hot coffee, telephone, mail, and conversation.

**Roundtable Discussions** are held on the 3rd Sunday of the month, 3:00-4:30 pm.

Want to know more about what is happening at the house? Get added to our monthly email list! Once a month we send an update about upcoming events, shifts that we need help covering and our current needs list. To stay in the loop, email us at: [winonacatholicworker@gmail.com](mailto:winonacatholicworker@gmail.com)

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## Fall Festival Funds Bathroom Upgrade

On an unseasonably warm September afternoon we meandered down a dirt road through a valley just outside of Winona, arriving at the home of Breanna and Tom Reigstad, whose Fall Festival was well underway. Dozens of cars were tucked under the trees, and the driveway led past an assortment of games and activities toward a garage with tables laden with food and placards of information about the Winona Catholic Worker. The Reigstads host this event annually, supporting a different local organization with the proceeds raised from all the fun. From chicken poop bingo to a 50-50 raffle to a “country store” with homemade pickles and jams alongside fresh eggs and carrots, the ways to participate and contribute were diverse and entertaining. While the kids attempted the obstacle course and picked their own flower bouquets, we gave a short presentation on our work and the upcoming bathroom renovations that would be supported by the Fall Festival. In the coming months we will overhaul the main floor bathroom, installing a new exhaust fan, widening the doorway, replacing the vanity, and updating electrical and plumbing. One of our most utilized offerings is the main floor bathroom for showers and hygiene purposes and we are long overdue for updates. With the help of the Reigstads and their Fall Festival, we are well on our way to making our bathroom more accessible and inviting. Many thanks to all who attended and donated to this incredible community event and special thanks to Breanna and Tom for their support!

## Reasons to Rejoice

There is poverty and hunger and war in the world, and preparations for more war. There is desperate suffering, with no prospects of relief. Yet, countries are making armaments. They are using the money that should feed and care for the poor to make instruments of death for the young and healthy.

But we would be contributing to the misery and desperation of the world if we failed to rejoice in the sun, the moon, and the stars, in the rivers which surround this island on which we live, in the cool breezes on the bay, in what food we have, and in the benefactors God sends.

—Dorothy Day, October 1978



Fritz Eichenberg, Dove and Hawk