

SAINT HERMAN HOUSE NEWSLETTER

FOCUS North America - Cleveland



Dear Brothers and Sisters, Friends of the St. Herman House,

Christ is in our midst!

On Sunday evening, March 10th, I gathered with the faithful of St. Theodosius Orthodox Church in Cleveland to observe Forgiveness Vespers, which marks the beginning of the Great Lenten journey to the celebration of Christ's glorious resurrection. At the end of the service, the priest and the faithful greet one another with a full prostration (if they have the strength), kneeling and placing one's forehead on the ground before standing up again. As we did this, we asked one another for forgiveness. "Forgive me brother, forgive me sister, God forgives, have a blessed Lent." These and other words were quietly exchanged as the choir softly chanted the Paschal Canon (a set of resurrection hymns) and sang the familiar refrain, "Christ is Risen." Forgiving one another is the only way to commence a journey of faith, and the choir's refrain announced our destination - the empty tomb. It was a beautiful service.

There were roughly fifty people present, and I was determined to prostrate before each one. At age 63, that has become a more daunting task. At about the thirty-fifth prostration, I was having to pause and catch my breath - by the fortieth, the words of forgiveness were getting a bit too breathy. My mind began to persuade me that I should just bow instead; the prostrations were too much. As I arose, shaky and breathless on about the forty-fifth prostration, the angelic face of a beloved 80-year-old parishioner stood before me. Down she went, full prostration! I thought to myself, "Lord if she can do it, so can I!" Down I went. "Forgive me sister, forgive me brother." Together we rose, and I found the strength to continue.

My whole body hurt with soreness until Wednesday, and with each pain and aching muscle I was reminded that however out of shape my body had become, my soul was likely a bit more out of shape. Perhaps this is the message.

And how do we exercise and condition the soul? With prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. The work of St. Herman's is a spiritual workout - "Soulercise" if you will! It takes a lot of prayer, a great deal of self-denial, and almsgiving. Almsgiving comes in the form of volunteerism, gifts-in-kind, and monetary donations. Yes- the laying down of yourself for the lifting up of others, especially those in need, always costs time and money. Please join with us in your spiritual exercise this Lenten season. You can do it! Spiritual exercise can seem as mentally and emotionally exhausting as the labor of the body in exercise, but there are always those faces, the thankful faces of those we serve, that keep us going, keep us giving. Yes, we can do it!

Your fellow servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "H. Paul Finley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

H. Paul Finley, Local Director

Resident Story - Frank

“I want to better myself “

Twenty-seven years old, Frank has struggled with addiction since his teen years. “I burnt a lot of bridges,” he says, and that’s how he ended up without a place to live. He had been kicked out of a boarding house and was staying at a shelter when he came to St. Herman House this past August. “Compared to outside, this is like heaven,” he says of St. Herman’s. He knew the alternatives and didn’t want to get kicked out, so he tried hiding his drinking from Paul, but he couldn’t hide it well enough. Although he was working two part-time jobs, Paul could see the writing on the wall. “He had lost other jobs because of his drinking, and unless he addressed his addiction, he was going to lose these jobs, too. And I couldn’t let him stay in the house and keep drinking.”



Paul advised Frank to focus his energies not on working but on getting help. Frank quit his jobs and instead enrolled in an intensive outpatient program (IOP) for people recovering from addiction. He also began working on his General Education Diploma. In the past he had lost out on job opportunities because he didn’t have a high school diploma. Between the IOP and his studies, he spends 6-7 hours a day at the May Dugan Center, a multi-service organization a few blocks from St Herman’s. May Dugan has social workers, addiction counseling, and an education center, and Frank is taking advantage of all there is to offer. The services he accesses there are saving his life, he says. “Its going to make me out to be something great. I know I’m on the right track.”

“ I’m putting all of my time into bettering myself, staying sober and getting my GED. ”

What’s New at Spruce Island Farm



We’re excited for spring at Spruce Island Farm! We’re erecting our first greenhouse and adding more beehives. To prepare ourselves, Director Paul Finley and assistant house manager Kirk B. took a road trip to Holy Oak Farm in Wisconsin. Holy Oak Farm is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide agricultural and business skills development opportunities for veterans, the homeless, and other disenfranchised or underserved groups as a catalyst for becoming productive contributors within their communities.

Holy Oak Farm staff have many years of experience in greenhouse horticulture—particularly growing flowers and vegetables—so the trip was a great opportunity to learn from them. They also have an aquaponics lab, which combines raising fish with soil-less plant farming. The fish wastewater serves as a source of plant food, and the plants naturally filter the water. It was very interesting and something we might one day replicate at the farm.

Sixth Annual Golf Classic

June 17, 2019!

The Tanglewood Golf Club

Chagrin Falls, Ohio

11:00 Registration / Lunch

12:00 Shotgun Start



Single Golfer: \$175 - Regular Registration

Save \$25/golfer by registering an Early Bird Foursome -
\$600 - Prior to May 24th

\$700 – Foursome Regular Registration

Four-Person Scramble Featuring:

18 Holes of Golf with Cart

Lunch, Beverages, Dinner, Prizes

For More Information

Email: golfsthermans@focusna.org

Call: Kirk at 216-973-9391

Register Electronically: www.focusnorthamerica.org/golfclassic

In Memoriam – Anthony Faulisi

In early March, **we said goodbye to a dear friend and former resident, Anthony Faulisi.** Anthony had lived at St. Herman's in 2010, and in our transitional house in 2016-2017. He was a parishioner at St. Albert the Great in North Royalton. He had studied at seminary and was always eager to talk about theology and scripture. He was a friend to many at St. Herman's and will be greatly missed.

Even after moving out, Anthony came back frequently to St. Herman's as a volunteer, as his way of showing his appreciation for all St. Herman's had done for him. Not only was he a close friend to the residents, but he was beloved by the two house dogs. They had a unique bark just for him, and as soon as they heard him open the front door, before seeing him, they would run to the gate and wait for him.

A friend of Anthony's sent us a moving tribute. *"Anthony personally touched so many of our lives and it was evident in the faces and comments today at the funeral. It's rare and special to be friends with someone who loves you just as you are and in turn opens himself up completely to you. He wasn't hiding anything. He shared his life and anything he had with all of us. We'll all miss him. But you know as well as all of us, he is exactly where he wants to be. He has been ready to meet the Lord for a long time."*



Memory eternal!

FOCUS

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ST. HERMAN HOUSE • CLEVELAND

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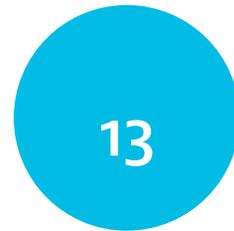
YOUR GIVING IN ACTION in 2019



Meals Served
through February



Men Receiving
Shelter



Men Receiving
Transitional Housing



Grocery Bags
Distributed



Number of Men
in the Main House
Working Part or
Full-Time



Number of
volunteer hours