



St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church Mobile Loaves & Fishes News

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MLF Visits Community First! Village

On January 19, 2018, a delegation of nine people from St. Francis of Assisi visited the 27 acre master planned [Community First! Village](#). The Austin project, sponsored by our former parent Mobile Loaves and Fishes organization, it is a master planned community that provides affordable, permanent housing and a supportive community for the disabled and chronically homeless in Central Texas. We had the great honor of having Alan Graham, the founder of Mobile Loaves and Fishes, serve as our tour guide.

Recalling the founding of the St. Francis **MLF** ministry, Alan commented how exemplary it was that more than 800 parishioners stepped up as volunteers for the program. After explaining the challenges in life with a parent and siblings, Alan emphasized the fact that without exception, he has found that what every homeless person lacks (and is the reason for their homelessness) is a stable, loving family. As a result,

the primary goal of the village is to provide housing in a community that focuses on being a large family of caring people. He uses an approach that is not condemning, or judging, but tolerant of people's problems and travails.

I think many of us anticipated a collection of "micro" homes where poor people live. We expected to see a lot of people just hanging around their small homes. However, what we found was something entirely different. Here was a well-planned multimillion dollar community with the infrastructure for support that allowed people to do meaningful work to raise them out of poverty. There are plans to expand the village's facilities unto adjacent land. In addition to a large administrative building and a range of affordable homes, the **Community First! Village** has:

- * places for worship, study and fellowship
- * a memorial garden, columbarium and prayer labyrinth
- * a medical clinic
- * barber shop
- * Wi-Fi access
- * numerous walking trails
- * community gardens
- * an outdoor movie theater
- * a community market
- * a building with pottery and art facilities to allow the people meaningful work
- * a blacksmith pavilion to make things for the village and allow the people to do meaningful work
- * a garage for residents to do mechanical work and earn a living
- * Capital Metro Bus stop

They also have long-term resident volunteers. Another surprise is that the lodgings in the front of the facility are a multiple home bed and breakfast for anyone to visit overnight. It has very high occupancy, which adds to the revenue of the village.

We were very impressed with the village, but we were even more impressed with the insight and grand vision of Alan Graham. He has mobilized the hearts of generous Central Texas people and businesses to attack the root causes of chronic homelessness. He has unselfishly exemplified Jesus' command to "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Glenn Darilek □

Note: Additional photos of the **Community First! Village** can be viewed on our **MLF Facebook** page.

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I Can Smell the Bread Already!

Do you own an SUV or pick-up truck with a covered bed? Can you spare two hours once a month? Can you imagine the wonderful smells of freshly baked bread wafting through your vehicle. If the answer is yes, please consider volunteering for the newly formed **Bread Transport Team**.

For the past several years, the **Flowers Baking Company** has been providing a weekly supply of 200 – 240 fresh loaves of FREE bread to our ministry. The **MLF** needs willing volunteers who can pick up the bread and then deliver it to our kitchen. **Flowers Baking Company** is located at 6000 N. E. Loop 410 (next to the Pepsi bottling plant). The bread is available for collection between 8:00 am – 11:00 am each Thursday.



After it is transported to the **MLF** kitchen, the “new” loaves of bread should be placed in the clothing area refrigerators, while the older bread is moved into the refrigerators in the main kitchen.



If you are interested in the **Bread Transport Team** or need additional information, please contact **Butch Rendon** @ butchrendon@outlook.com.

MLF Facebook Can Tell our Story

Did you ever wonder what is happening with our ministry? Would you like to post some photos or share your thoughts about what the **MLF** program means? The **MLF Facebook** page provides an excellent opportunity to do both! Group members can easily upload photos and publicize information. Click this [Facebook](#) link to sign-up for a free account and help us tell our story. □

HELP WANTED

Help Wanted!

Openings posted February 1, 2018

Our ministry needs help in filling these important roles:

- 1) **Bread Transport Team**** drivers (two hours once a month);
- 2) **Commissary Team**** members to inventory, arrange supplies, place new orders, and check-in weekly **Labatt Food Service** deliveries;
- 3) **S. A. Food Bank Pick-up Team**** drivers with large SUVs or pickup trucks who can transport our food orders to the **MLF** kitchen (two hours once a month);
- 4) **Egg Boiling Team** members for weekends (two hour shifts) and other boiling times are flexible. This is a great option for busy teens who need service hours; and
- 5) **Meal Delivery** drivers (using **MLF** truck) at various locations for 2nd Friday supper, 3rd Sunday lunch, and 4th Tuesday lunch deliveries.

****These teams all have rotating schedules.**

If you can assist with these jobs, please contact **Julie Mellin** @ volunteermf@gmail.com. □

Contact Us

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MLF website: www.sfasat.org/MLF/index.htm

MLF News files: www.sfasat.org/MLF/mlfnews.htm

Upcoming Events

February 25 – 26 MLF Second Collection

A Quick Reminder...

- **Captains**, notify mlfnw@sfasat.org **before canceling a meal run**.
- Wear gloves and a baseball cap / hairnet when prepping meals or bagging cookies.
- Prepare **only** the amount of meals shown on the **Meals Calendar** posted on the refrigerator.
- Transport turkey and cheese sandwich trays on beds of ice.
- Sweep the floor and empty trash / recycling (into commercial bins) after each meal prep.
- Ensure that doors to clothing bay and ice machine room are locked after prep shifts.
- Fill-out the [MLF Truck Run Log](#) after deliveries **and** use the bottom section of **MLF Truck Run Log** to report any unusual events / problems that occur during deliveries.
- Report truck maintenance issues to David Aguilar @ tgeagle2@att.net. □