

"LOVE YOUR
NEIGHBOR AS
YOURSELF."
-Jesus



"I WANT TO
ACCUSTOM ALL
THE INHABITANT
...TO LOOK ON
ME AS THEIR
BROTHER."
-Br. Charles

May 31, 2004

To my brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings and peace from Biloxi! I arrived a week ago, and quickly set up "shop" in my apartment. All is going extraordinarily well, but I do miss you all!

I am glad to report that there will be no problem in establishing my ministry in Biloxi. Based on the spirituality of Br. Charles de Foucauld (who was killed in Africa in WWI), I will live a simple, poor life among the poor, seeking not only to take some voluntary share in their joys and burdens, but to also live amongst them as a "universal brothers", in the words of Fr. Charles. My private vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience will guide me spiritually, as well as daily Mass, daily prayers, and the love and support of all who know of my mission. I must always remember that my inner spiritual life needs to take priority, as all of my work among the poor will flow out from this inner life. Besides, there are so many homeless and poor in my neighborhood alone that I imply could not care for them all.

For example, just two doors down from me there is an old hotel that is used by the homeless. They sneak up to the second-floor balcony and sleep. Last night, I found a man passed out on some cardboard. He had a near-empty bottle of mouthwash near him. I left a bag of food by his head, and wished that I would do more for him.

Yet, I gain so much consolation and joy from knowing that I am at least attempting to help, even though it is difficult. I am supporting myself, so I must look for work soon. I have reduced my living expenses to a minimum (fans instead of an air conditioner, a bike instead of a car, etc.) This should allow me to work less than full time to pay the bills. Some of you have offered to help financially, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Yet, your prayers are of greatest help, so do consider praying for this ministry!

Another financial help is the very nature of my work. Because I am focusing on a spiritual ministry of friendship and counseling, I will not have the overhead of a food bank or clothing distributor. Of course, if someone is hungry I take them to lunch or to the market, but my emphasis is always on giving them of my time and prayers. I have seen how most of the poor desperately want someone to take the time to speak with them and not pass them by.

In closing, please continue to pray for this mission! I hope to see every one of you soon, and you are always welcome here!

In peace and joy,

Matthew ✠

(our Lady of bad typists, pray for us)

Please send all
correspondence to:

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Prayers are needed and appreciated!
(no postal fee required)