

Martin De Porres House of Hospitality

225 Potrero Avenue
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Thanksgiving 2000

Dear friends,

As you all know Barbara is taking a break from writing the newsletter. Her spring newsletter was misinterpreted by some to mean that she was leaving Martin's. That is not the case. She is well, pursuing her inward journey and continuing her vital involvement at Martin's. During her break other members of our community will attempt to fill the void. We are all very aware of her unique gift of letting God speak through her.

I came to Martin's in 1984 after many years of political organizing and collective endeavors. I came to realize that what I felt lacking in those communities was the profound heart, soul and faith which I was soon to find in the Martin's community. What I also found was a place to serve in an environment that could only be described as authentic. There is no pretense. If poor and suffering people have anything to offer us, it is certainly the opportunity to be authentically ourselves. There is little talk of health insurance but much talk of sickness. Little talk of the best car to buy or the latest hi-tech gadget. Much talk of bread to eat, cardboard to sleep on or a clear pair of socks to wear. Little talk of faux reality TV shows like Survivor, which mock the very fact of their lives. The gift of this authenticity is in bringing God closer. Rarely do I feel as close to God as when I am hanging out with our guests in the courtyard. There is no past, there is no future, there is only the present.

I have been graced with many blessings here at Martins. The blessing of my wonderful wife Barbara who I met here and our beloved daughter Camila. The blessings of being part of a loving and supportive community. And finally the blessing of finding a place to serve and encounter God in a way that I couldn't previously have imagined.

As we approach Thanksgiving I am reminded that all of the work we do here at this magical place would not be possible without you, our family of supporters. We thank you again.

In love and gratitude,

Charlie

for the Martin's community