

Habitat Joins List of “Culturing Compassion” Retreat Partners

Can you provide youth with a hands-on experience of participating in the work of your organization?

Is there a way for them to encounter the people with whom your organization works, in a manner that is respectful of their gifts and dreams as well as the needs and challenges they face?

These are the questions we use when exploring partnerships with community organizations for our Culturing Compassion retreats.

Jeff Carmack, volunteer coordinator at Central MN Habitat for Humanity, readily said, "Yes". So Habitat is now one of the community partners with whom retreatants engage in service-learning activities (along with Caritas Food Shelf and Place of Hope Ministries).

Because of Habitat's age-guidelines about who can work on their building sites, the hands-on experience occurs off-site. Students construct bird-houses, which are then placed in the yards of Habitat homes and their environs.



Youth and adult mentors from Trinity Lutheran (Monticello) building bird houses



Jeff Carmack examines the work of a couple of retreatants

"We do more than just provide households with a space of physical shelter," shares Jeff. "We're about creating a truly humane environment, which includes connections with the rest of nature."

Jeff also shares about Habitat's goals and activities, and arranges for someone currently residing in a Habitat home to share their story with the students.