



MISSION STATEMENT: Nazareth Farm is a Catholic community of volunteers inspired by the Gospels and Social Teachings of the Church and focused on prayer, community, simplicity and service. We are devoted to developing relationships and eliminating sub-standard housing through home repair in rural West Virginia. We provide a communal experience of Church as a center of action and prayer.

FOUNDED: June 24, 1979 by a priest from the Diocese of Syracuse, New York

LOCATION: Center Point, West Virginia. Located in North Central part of West Virginia

PERSONNEL: Nazareth Farm is staffed by a director, construction project coordinator and up to eight volunteer staff who commit to at least one year of service and receive a small monthly stipend. All live in community together, dedicated to and inspired by the cornerstones, the mission statement and the Gospel call to justice, service and love.

SERVICES PROVIDED:

Home Repair: Nazareth Farm provides volunteer home repair to people in need in Doddridge and the surrounding counties. The labor is free and the homeowners pay only for the cost of materials (a no-interest loan is provided for people who cannot afford to pay up front). Type of work: additions, roofing, floors, walls, painting, porches, decks, wheelchair ramps, siding and more. We serve approximately 30 to 40 families each year.

Service Retreat: Since Nazareth Farm's inception, thousands of High School and College aged volunteers have served here as part of a week long service retreat experience. The staff at Nazareth Farm facilitates about 26 volunteer weeks a year. Around 850 volunteers from all over the United States visit the farm each year and live by our cornerstones of community, simplicity, prayer and service.

Christmas: At Christmas time, Nazareth Farm hosts a Christmas party for the entire community. There are games, music, and activities, and gifts are distributed (by Santa!) to all the children. Nazareth Farm also sponsors an Adopt-a-Family Christmas program and distributes gifts to all the families we've worked with in the past year.



What is Nazareth Farm all about?

While Nazareth Farm's primary service is home repair, our work involves much more than just the physical labor. We go beyond hammering nails and painting walls and dig deep into the basic need for people to feel loved, respected and appreciated. With a focus on social justice and cornerstones of community, simplicity, prayer and service, we believe in the dignity of each and every person, and we always strive to learn from one another. Our volunteer weeks are a time to extend our mission to the volunteers who come from all over the United States, and they often leave Nazareth Farm inspired by the Gospel and rejuvenated to live a life of service. Our staff weeks are a time for the staff to build community with each other, the local community and to take care of the property and gifts given to us. Our two distinct dimensions of providing home repair to families in the area while also providing a service retreat experience for high school and adult volunteers combine to create a unique mission that has been a part of Doddridge County since 1979.

What can volunteers expect on an average day at Nazareth Farm?

Here at Nazareth Farm, we rise early and begin each day by centering our hearts and thoughts on the day at hand through prayer. After prayer, we do chores around the Farm, share breakfast together and head off to the worksites for the day. The staff at Nazareth Farm leads the work crews in everything from roofing and insulation to siding and painting. Lunches are packed in the morning and are eaten at the site. At the work site, we also encourage volunteers to visit with the people we're working with. We strongly believe that this relationship is essential in keeping with our mission to know and love the people of our community. Every Tuesday evening we welcome community friends to Nazareth Farm for community night, an evening of food, fellowship, prayer and storytelling. It is often a lasting memory for the volunteers and our community friends.

All of the volunteers, leaders included, are divided into different work crews for the entire week. During the week, the crews visit a different work site each day. Most crews will also spend one day at the Farm on home crew doing meal preparation, house-keeping, and other aspects in the ministry of hospitality. Also on the home crew day, volunteers are given a chance to plan the evening's prayer service with the help of a staff member.

Once back at the Farm volunteers have free time for about 1 hour until dinner. This time can be used for journaling, hiking, Frisbee, napping or spending time with friends. As part of simplicity, there are no TV's or radios to distract from the company of each other. After dinner and dinner dishes, we close our day with prayer - once again, to bring us to our center and to reflect on our day. The time spent after evening prayer is free for campfires, walks and more fellowship.

So what can be expected on a day at the Farm? A miracle.

Whether they are big or small, miracles happen every day at Nazareth Farm. In fact, they happen everywhere. Sometimes we just need to open our hearts and minds in a new way to see the ones God gives us every day.