

Catholic Heart Workcamp draws young people to help those less fortunate

By **Gary Morton, For The Dialog** - 2 July 2018, 10:44



Painting a garden fence at Jeanne Jugan Residence in Newark are, from left, Meghan Rotter and Kate Harrison, both of Richmond, Va. Dialog photo/Joseph P. Owens

Bryan Rogers had a first-ever experience at a [Habitat for Humanity](#) worksite in Ellendale on June 27.

“This is my first time [working] on a roof,” he said while laying a sheet of roofing and trimming it atop the shed of a newly constructed Habitat home.

Rogers, of Manasquan, N.J., was among more than 200 [Catholic youth and adult leaders](#) who descended on Delaware for a Catholic Heart Workcamp June 24-29.

Besides working on four Habitat houses in Ellendale, participants performed a variety of service projects throughout Delaware and on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. Among their projects: Sorting food and preparing boxes for distribution at the [Food Bank of Delaware’s Milford facility](#); removing greenbrier at [Trapp Pond State Park in Laurel](#); moving “loads of rocks” at Killens Pond State Park in Felton; helping with yard work at the [Little Sisters of the Poor’s Jeanne Jugan Residence in Newark](#); cutting trails at Camp Grove Point Girl Scout Camp in Earleville, Md.; and power washing, painting, weeding and other lawn work, cleaning and other household tasks at homes of individuals who are unable to do the work themselves.

When possible, the young people visited with the people whom they are helping. That tied in to this year’s theme, to “ECHO the heart of Jesus in our world today by serving the neglected, brokenhearted, and marginalized members of society.”

And always, the camp focused on participants' faith. At lunch at their work sites, work groups read selected Scripture passages and answered questions aimed at helping them connect the work they did to their beliefs. Evening programs included high-energy programs of music and skits, plus reports from the different work groups on what they did and their answers to the day's questions.

Forty-two camp sites were scheduled in the United States this summer, with three others are slated in St. Croix and Grenada in the Caribbean and in Rome and Assisi, Italy.

The Dover camp was hosted by Holy Cross Parish and headquartered at St. Thomas More Academy in Magnolia. Participants came from eight parishes in Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.

A group from Holy Cross will travel to Roanoke, Va., for a weeklong camp beginning July 15.

While Bryan worked atop the shed of one home at the Habitat site with adult leader Bryan Angell of Warrensburg, N.Y., Sean Winter and Samantha Smith were roofing the shed of another house.

Sean, of Warrensburg, N.Y., was making his first Catholic Heart Workcamp. "I wanted to be active and do something for others," he said.

Samantha, of Odenton, Md., was on her fourth work camp experience. Like Bryan Rogers, who was on his sixth Catholic Heart Workcamp, she had never worked on a rooftop. "I painted houses, built decks, and weeded, but I never did roofing," she said.

At the Food Bank of Delaware in Milford, Mary Chandler from Richmond, Va., summed up the workcamp experience as she helped bag ice.

"We know what we are doing is helping other people," she said. "And everyone [at the camp] is Catholic. You can be more open about it [her faith]."