

*One of the memories that will always be with me is of a mother who came up to me and asked, "Do you have any medicine to erase from my memory all the horrible things I have seen?" - Jan Olsen*

I have been a volunteer with the Bus Station Ministry for about a year and a half. I tell my family and friends that the time spent at the bus station is the most peaceful and joyful of my day since it is the chance to "live compassion" in these most troubling times.

One of my jobs at the bus station is to give out medicines. One of the memories that will always be with me is of a mother who came up to me and asked, "Do you have any medicine to erase from my memory all the horrible things I have seen?" I told her this is the only medicine I can offer and I just stood and held her while she cried. She then smiled at me and said thank you.

My heart and my spirit are healed every day at the bus station by witnessing the courage, resilience and joy and that I see in these women and children in spite of all they have endured to get to this point. My hope is that what we have to offer them in this brief encounter will heal a little part of them.

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Please go to [www.interfaithwelcomcoalition.org](http://www.interfaithwelcomcoalition.org) to find out how you can begin to make a difference in the lives of these mothers and children. You can become involved in Bus Station and Airport Ministry, Advocacy and Education and Fundraising. You are needed!! Please join us!



Jan Olsen (3rd left) with some of the Greyhound staff.

## Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio

A retelling of an old tale by Tom Keene

Editor's Note: *The Wolf of Gubbio, according to the Fioretti di San Francesco, terrorized the Umbrian city of Gubbio until it was tamed by St. Francis of Assisi. In this retelling the wolf may well represent any number of people who nowadays are being cast as "wolves" without any redeeming human value.*

The story goes that Francis and some companions in their wayfaring ways spent a few months in the village of Gubbio. With traditional hospitality, the villagers welcomed them to their homes and tables. However, one thing troubled the people: a mix of fear and anger that strangled much of their joy in life. Their chickens, lambs and sheep were being killed, one by one, because of a wolf that haunted their woods. Hunts and traps for the wolf always failing.

After reflecting on this, Francis went into the woods expecting to happen upon the wolf himself. Amid the trees, he found a grass covered clearing where he sat down to meditate and wait. After some hours, Francis gradually began to feel, welling up within himself, a Presence that enveloped him, the woods, the villagers and then the wolf all together and at peace.

Within minutes, Francis felt himself being watched. Moving only his eyes to scan the edges of the clearing, he saw the wolf.



They held eye-to-eye contact. Soon the wolf came into the clearing and hunkered down holding eye contact with Francis.

Thus, they stayed beholding each other. His thoughts rambling, Francis became aware he was getting hungry. Something he shared with the wolf. Francis mused how all life hungers for life and that all life feeds life. In that, he and the wolf were one. Soon, the wolf rose and walked half-way to Francis, paused and returned to the woods. With that, Francis

walked back to Gubbio and its people. It was dusk, night came.

The next evening, Francis had his companions invite the village families to gather in the market square to consider their thoughts on the wolf, her hunger and theirs. After sharing feelings and beliefs, the people reflected in silence. A girl, sitting on her mother's lap, spoke up. "Maybe, we can share our food with the wolf."

Some talk followed. An agreement came. Over the next few years, the families came to know the wolf as one slowed by age, where mice and rabbits out ran her. Now they understood.

One day, the wolf did not come to the evening feeding. Villagers searched for her and found her body. They buried it. The children passed on the story to their children.