The Holy Hammers home-building program is a ministry that is close to the heart of Jim Colten. “Most Habitat home buyers have experienced housing instability, meaning they’ve had to move often,” he says. “Except for my time in high school, I was never in the same school for more than two years so I can understand what that can mean to a child.”

Right now the Saint Rose-Corpus Christi Holy Hammers ministry is looking for volunteers for the upcoming project—building the first half of a two-story twin home on St. Paul’s East Side. The work will begin on April 14 and last for about 10 weeks. The job description is simple: No skills required, must be at least 18 years old (or 16 or 17 when accompanied by an adult), willing to help for a day (or more). You will work in a small group where one person has experience in the assigned task.

“This has been a fantastic ministry for me,” says Jim, who joined the program in 2002. “I have had some really good days on jobsites. One year as we were putting the finishing touches on a house, the family arrived and the children were running around claiming their rooms. What a blessing.”

Jim and his wife Sue, members of Corpus Christi, are both retired (he was a computer programmer at the University of Minnesota and she was a librarian for Hennepin County). Their three children attended Saint Rose School.

Other things to know about Holy Hammers:
· Holy Hammers began a relationship with Habitat for Humanity in 1999. Corpus Christi was one of the charter member churches; Saint Rose joined in 2012. Currently 15 north suburban churches support Holy Hammers.
· In the past 20 years Holy Hammers has built 22 complete homes and helped build 10 others. That support has contributed to homeownership for more than 180 people. The Holy Hammers churches have also donated $1.5 million.
· Habitat for Humanity puts the families looking to purchase affordable homeownership through a rigorous vetting and education process. As a result the foreclosure rate is less than 2 percent.