

Capuchin Community Services

www.CapuchinCommunityServices.org

Friar Finds Ministry In Floating Br. David Hirt Builds Community at both Capuchin Community Services' sites



◀ Br. David Hirt, OFM, Capuchin poses with a dad and his son. They frequently eat at St. Ben's Community Meal. Br. David was serving hot sauce and "hello's" to the guests that evening. Earlier he taught a Justice & Peace Orientation Program upstairs in the church.

After a year and a half of serving at Capuchin Community Services, Br. David Hirt has found his ministry "floats." "I am not a "Flying Nun," he chuckled, "but rather a floating friar!" "My overall goal is to create community, especially for the poor, reflecting respect for all."

Br. David came from St. Lawrence Seminary High School where he led the Spiritual Direction program. "I use that experience to lead the Justice & Peace Orientations and the Urban Plunges," he said. He explained that both programs seek to provide an empathic experience of caring for the poor and homeless. Urban Plunges usually last several days and are designed for older students and adults. Justice & Peace Orientations are 2 hour programs held on a weeknight and serve middle and high school students.

"I also help out at St. Ben's with the Front Door Ministry and I am at the Meal almost every evening," Br. David added. "August is our busiest month at the Meal. We can feed 550 people each night. One reason is because so many families need help feeding their children. Another is that the families have even more challenges with feeding themselves when they have to pay for Back to School Supplies."

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Fleeing Abuse, Mom Finds Safety Both Capuchin Community Services' sites help abused woman with housing and other needs

Hunched over, Charlene remembers what brought her to Milwaukee and crosses her arms protectively. "I was a frequent victim of physical abuse so in June of 1989 I fled my home in Chicago to come here for protection," Charlene said. "My first social worker was Linda Barnes at the House of Peace!"

In those days Linda worked for Catholic Charities and was placed at the House of Peace as a field worker. Charlene said, "Linda helped me get into my first safe housing in Milwaukee. I have been coming ever since for food, clothing and hygiene supplies. The House of Peace has always been there for me."

Charlene helps her adult daughters by caring for her granddaughters each summer. "I live in a low income senior citizen housing building and Linda Barnes," now the House of Peace's social worker, "helped me get in there!"

Today La' Nayshia, age 9 years old and Meisha, age 10 years old are accompanying grandma. La' Nayshia has a big smile and shares, "I like getting clothes here, especially socks and shoes." Meisha chimes in and said, "I like books and getting clothes too."

Both girls become excited to share their favorite book series, La' Nayshia says, "I love Frozen and the Diary of a Wimpy Kid." Meisha shares, "I love the Junie B Jones books." Gerri Sheets-Howard, Administrative Director said, "We have had books available for years. We welcome gifts of new and gently used



▲ Charlene (far left) poses with her granddaughters and Br. Rob Roemer, Ministry Director.

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Save The Date!

November 5, 2016

Thanksgiving Morning of Reflection

9:30 AM to 11:30 AM, House of Peace
1702 W Walnut, Milwaukee, 53205

God's Mercy is Forever - Presenter:
Capuchin Fr. John Celichowski, OFM.
Registration is open now. Call
414.374.8841, ext. 41 or register online:
capuchincommunityservices.org/rsvp

November 12, 2016

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
Time & Location to be announced

Celebrate another year of service to
people in need. Details to follow.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

House of Peace

Emergency Food Pantry

- Help register over 1,000 families for the Holiday Food Box & Toy Distribution. Registration starts the week of October 10. Training provided the week prior.

To sign up call: **Linda Barnes, 414.933.1300, ext. 15**

St. Ben's Community Meal

Sponsor A Monthly Meal

- Groups needed to commit to taking a certain evening each month (ex.: 3rd Tuesdays) and preparing the meal for 350+ people. To learn more, call: **Br. Rob Roemer, 414.271.0135**

HOW TO DONATE

To make a gift to our Capuchin ministry to the hungry & needy go to:

www.CapuchinCommunityServices.org

Or mail your gift to:

Capuchin Community Services
P.O. Box 5830
Milwaukee, WI 53205-5830

Capuchin Community Services is a ministry of the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph. Unless otherwise directed, donations support the local ministry and the Province.

The **Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph** is a 501(c)(3) organization. Gift made to our ministries, Capuchin Community Services, St. Ben's Community Meal and/or the House of Peace, are tax deductible as allowable by law.

Roaming Ministry

by Br. Rob Roemer, OFM, Capuchin
Director

Capuchins Serving Milwaukee for 140+ Yrs.

The Capuchin Friars-Friar means "little brother" - have been serving in Milwaukee for over 140 years. We began on 4th and Brown Streets and have served at various parishes and ministries around Milwaukee and the surrounding area. In 1911, we came to St. Ben's Parish. We staffed a parish, boarding school, hospital & jail ministry, and in 1970 began what is now known as the St. Ben's Community Meal. In 1968 we also started the House of Peace Community Center on the corner of 17th & Walnut Streets. Today the two ministries are under one name: **Capuchin Community Services**.

As Capuchin Friars we did not ask for salaries, but instead relied on the generosity of the public. Our ministries today continue, thanks to the generosity of so many. However, as our Friars age and there are more health care costs and fewer friars in the workforce, we need to once again rely on the generosity of the public. Not only to support our ministries, but also our Friars of all ages. We have some young men coming up who have tremendous bills due to schooling. Whereas, we used to have larger numbers and do our own teaching, our numbers are much smaller and so we have to rely on the Public Education System and Universities. This adds a great strain on our expenses.

Our other big expense for our Brothers is the care of our elderly. We have a lot of Friars who served the church and community for many years. We never collected salaries or pensions for them. Today a good number of our brothers are in retirement homes and nursing homes. As you well know, healthcare costs are huge for any one person. Multiply that by about 60! So our leaders are asking each of our ministries to begin to look at helping to support our fellow Capuchin brothers with some of these expenses. Our letters from Capuchin Community Services, from here forward, will be including a statement to include financial help for our Capuchin Friars who work and have worked in the ministries, as well as those in training. I am grateful for the goodness of so many who help us care for the poor and hungry. I pray you will also support my fellow Brothers in the Capuchin Community.

Thanks for the wonderful support at the Capuchin Run/Walk for the Hungry!!!

Volunteers' Summer of Service at House of Peace



◀ Br. Rob Roemer rides on the Polish Fest grounds for the Capuchins' Run Walk for the Hungry.



◀ Volunteer Sue Lamb, (R) helps guest Regina Toliver (L) select some books for herself and her family.

▶ Linda Barnes, Social Worker (L) orients volunteers Margaret Becker (R) and Laura Suhr (C)



◀ Choua Vang, Clothes Closet Manager poses with students from Reach Out - Reach In Milwaukee.

▶ David Larson (L) from St. Francis Borgia Parish, Cedarburg gives volunteer Terry Meeks (R) a bag of donated clothing.



Floating Friar

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“I also serve at the House of Peace several times per week,” Br. David explained. “I drive the van for donation pick-ups. When I am visiting Catholic Schools and Parishes, often to accept donations collected there, my goal is to reflect our mission and charism. I want to raise awareness of what it is to be a Franciscan and a Catholic who’s been paying attention to what Pope Francis has been saying.”

“Pope Francis’ openness and compassion are wonderful,” Br. David continued. “He challenges all of us to live our faith beyond the basics.” Then Br. David ran off to lead a Justice and Peace Orientation for a group of students attending a program sponsored by the Casa Romero Renewal Center. A fast floating friar indeed!

Goodbye to Volunteer Coordinator

Cap Corps Volunteer Brigid Rush is leaving. She coordinated volunteer opportunities at both the House of Peace and St. Ben’s Community Meal. Volunteers Mary and Patrick Mc Cauley said, “We’re going to miss Brigid’s smile and generous spirit.” Brigid added, “I loved getting to know the guests and volunteers.” Br. Rob said, “Brigid helped more people volunteer. We thank her for caring for our guests.”



◀ Volunteers Mary & Patrick McCauley say goodbye to Brigid Rush after sorting clothes.

Abused Mom Knows Security

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children’s books. There are lots of motivated readers who visit us each month.”

Later that evening, Charlene brought La’Nayshia and Meisha to St. Ben’s Community Meal for dinner. On the way to St. Ben’s she stopped and picked up two of her other granddaughters, Malayshia, age 10 years and De’Aeja, age 7 years. All four girls enjoyed dinner with their grandmother.

Charlene has been able to get blankets and hygiene supplies from St. Ben’s when she needed them. “I especially like to look over the sharing table on the way out,” Charlene said. Br. Rob stopped by to say hi to the family and he explained, “Our sharing table always has bread on it like the House of Peace. It is also where we put mittens and hats in the winter or hygiene supplies in the summer for our guests to take after they finish their meal.”

Blessings of Service

*by Gerri Sheets-Howard, M.Div.
Administrative Director*

Eating to Live



◀ (L to R)
Dominique
McGhee,
Food
Pantry Manager,
La’Nayshia &
Meisha, Gerri
Sheets-Howard,
Administrative
Director & Charlene

There are several things that I have in common with many of the guests that we serve at Capuchin Community Services. I was born and raised, and attended school in the neighborhood. My family faced many of the day-to-day struggles that our guests face each day. I personally battle hypertension and a desperate fight to maintain a healthy lifestyle. I fully understand the health challenges many of our guests must endure, and I am able to discuss and encourage them to take small steps towards better health.

At our House of Peace site, each summer we offer a support group called, highway to healthy beginnings (H2B). Approximately, forty guests attend six sessions between June and August. In our classroom sessions, we learn about healthy eating alternatives, the importance of taking medications as prescribed, and other motivational messages to encourage us to maintain quality of life. We also leave our classroom settings to walk in our local park, along with nursing students from UWM-College of Nursing. The Nursing staff offers health screenings which helps us to be aware of our blood pressure and A1C levels.

Those that participate in H2B, are very supportive to one another. We share stories of triumph, as well as, those of unrealized goals. Through these sessions we are learning to make healthier food choices, and to incorporate some type of physical activity into each day. We are determined to live in order to be available to our families and friends, to be an example for others, and to make a difference in our community, one meal at a time.

Who We Are

Capuchin Community Services is a ministry of **The Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph**, a religious community of friars inspired by St Francis of Assisi. Our friars live and work with those who are in need of help... the poor, the disenfranchised, and the needy.



Our Ministry Council

Capuchin Community Services is advised by a volunteer Ministry Council consisting of leaders in our community. Current Ministry Council members include:

- Diane Knight
- Julie Darneider
- Anthony Myers
- Chuck Cmeyla
- Felice Green
- Sara Zirbel
- Wendy Hermann
- Pam Meyer
- Duncan Shrout
- Fr Perry McDonald
- Gerri Sheets-Howard
- Br Rob Roemer
- Jeff Parrish (Provincial Council Liaison)

Capuchins' Run Walk for the Hungry to Polish Fest

Over 1,900 People Help Fight Hunger



▲ Capuchin Br. David Hirt joins the walkers as they walked the Polish Fest grounds.



▲ Over 100 volunteers put on the event. Chuck Cmeyla served as the chair for the volunteer effort. Susan, Chuck's wife, helped check people in.



▲ Runners ran a 5K course across Lakeshore Festival Park and around the southern end of the Polish Fest grounds.



▲ Bill Michaels, Emcee (Far R) was joined at the stage by (L-R) Fr. Perry, Gerri Sheets-Howard & Br. Rob.



▲ Staff and volunteers from the House of Peace site fielded one of the 52 teams that participated this year.



▲ The crowd filled the Johnson Controls Stage before the Run & Walk began for a musical stretch.

Dove Notes

by Fr. Perry McDonald, OFM, Capuchin

The House of Peace and St. Ben's Community Meal continue to be influenced in its day-by-day operations by the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi. Most people know of the love that St. Francis had for creation seen in the many statues of St. Francis amidst flower gardens, with birds perched on his shoulder or a bunny at his feet. But while he really did have a great affection and respect for all in the animal kingdom, there is much more to his life and spirituality than that.

Through his own life experiences and through the many graces God gave him, St. Francis of Assisi developed a unique approach to life in general, but especially towards God Himself. St. Francis experienced God as "all good." He writes in his "Praises of God:" You (God) are the good, all good, the highest good...

For Francis, since God was "all good" he saw the goodness of

God in everything God created – in creatures, in his fellow human beings, even in sinners. He was filled with gratitude for his own life, for how God was directing his life and for the eternal life which awaited him after death.

The staff, donors and volunteers believe likewise that God is good. Each has experienced multiple blessings from God in their lives. That's why they try to imitate God's goodness towards those who come to the Capuchin Community Services with their needs for food, used clothing, medical and legal needs for themselves and their families.

Does your experience tell you that God is good to you?

Fr. Perry McDonald OFM Cap

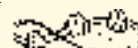
Pastoral Director



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Capuchin Community Services

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1015 N 9th St
Milwaukee, WI 53233
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House of Peace
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Milwaukee, WI 53205
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Support our ministry: www.CapuchinCommunityServices.org/Donate or by mail to P.O. Box 5830, Milwaukee, WI 53205-0830