

House of Peace - Milwaukee

a Capuchin Franciscan Ministry



Family Receives Food & Clothing While Mom Finishes School

Donor Support Helps House of Peace Provide Basic Needs

“I just graduated college,” Samantha said. “I have been raising my children including one with cerebral palsy so I was a late-in-life student.” Now that Samantha has a criminal justice degree she has been going to job fairs and actively searching for work.

“I discovered the House of Peace five years ago when I needed help with food. While I get Food Share benefits they don’t always last until the end of the month. So several times, per year, I come to the Emergency Food Pantry and Dominique helps me with a pantry pack,” Samantha said.

Three of Samantha’s sons were with her that day, Orell, 10 years old, Kyrell, 7 years old and Larell, 4 years old. All three boys had favorite foods they like to get at the food pantry. “I like bananas and hot dogs,” Kyrell said. Orell added, “last time we got a frozen pizza. When we went home I took some pepperoni from the fridge and dressed the pizza right!”

Samantha smiled and said, “Orell helped me prepare a really nice meal.” Just then the youngest, Larell spoke up, “I was a star at Christmas.” His mother explained,

“each year, we participate in the Breakfast with Baby Jesus that St. Francis Borgia Parish holds here at the House of Peace.”



▲ Orell, Larell, Samantha, Kyrell and Dominique McGhee (L to R). The family came in to receive clothing and stopped by the bread table. Dominique manages the Emergency Food Pantry and stocks the bread table. Since the start of the Great Recession, the bread table is emptied by hungry guests daily.

She continued, “I love to see the children in the Christmas pageant. Afterwards we get toys that help make our holiday much brighter.” Samantha is a frequent visitor to the Capuchin Clothes Closet. “I actually come for clothing more than I do for food.”

“With a house full of children and one disabled, I need clothing for my growing family,” Samantha said.

Samantha concluded, “I am still searching for a job and I want to provide for my family. All I need is a chance.”

Gerri Sheets-Howard, Ministry Director commented, “There are a lot of people in our neighborhood like Samantha who have played by the rules and raised a family while finishing their own education. Jobs are scarce. With our donors help, the House of Peace will be here to help them.”

Blessings of Service

by Gerri Sheets-Howard, M.A., Executive Director

One sunny morning last summer, while greeting various guests one woman stopped me. She was a middle aged woman, who had attended an empowerment class that I had facilitated entitled, “who wants to be a millionaire?” It really is a class about being ready for the time when “preparation meets opportunity.”

The woman shared with me how she was inspired during the class when I implored everyone to simply take the first step to climb out of the pit of despair. She told me that she decided that day to return to school to complete

her bachelor’s degree. For years, she had assisted at a small family daycare center and was not motivated to complete her studies. After taking the empowerment class she said it made her face reality and gave her the gentle push that she needed to re-enroll in school.



▲ (Left) Gerri Sheets-Howard, Ministry Director accepts a gift from the Chrysler Foundation presented by (Center) Mike Green, GM, Chrysler Parts Distribution. (Right) Fr. Perry McDonald joined Gerri to thank the Chrysler employees for selecting the ministry.

She graduated last May, and I believe that she will be an inspiration to all the children she meets. This interaction reaffirms for me that not only do people need food and clothing, but they are also hungry for words of encouragement!

Mendicant Friar Begg To Serve The Poor

While most people begin to prepare for the holidays in November and December, Capuchin Fr. Perry McDonald starts each summer.

One of Fr. Perry’s tasks is to encourage groups to hold drives to collect items to fill Hygiene Bags, Holiday Food Boxes and Christmas Toy Bags.

As a Capuchin Franciscan he uses the strategy taught by St. Francis of Assisi himself, *he begs*. Capuchins are a mendicant order defined as one that relies on charity to support their ministry.

As the school year began Fr. Perry spoke at the Archdiocese of Milwaukee’s Welcome Back Day for directors of religious education. Over 100 DRE’s heard Fr. Perry’s presentation and many committed their parishes to the service project.



▲ Fr. Perry McDonald addresses a regional meeting of Catholic school principals at the Cousins Center. .

Fr. Perry also spoke to over 100 Catholic school principals at the invitation of Kathleen Cepelka, Archdiocese of Milwaukee’s Superintendent of Schools.

The parishes and schools help fill over 2,000 food boxes, provide over 1,500 toys and stock over 3,000 hygiene bags.

House of Peace Ministry Council

Chairperson:
Diane Knight, M.S.W.

Members At Large:
Chuck Cmeyla
Julie J. Darnieder, J.D.
Felice Green, M.B.S.
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Pastoral Director:
Fr. Perry McDonald,
O.F.M., Capuchin

Executive Director:
Gerri Sheets-Howard, M.Div.

The House of Peace is a 501(c)(3) ministry of the Capuchin Province of St. Joseph. All donations are tax deductible as allowable by law.

House of Peace Services

- Emergency Food Pantry
- Clothing Center
- Spiritual Care
- Nursing Clinic
- Legal Clinic
- Social Worker
- Meeting Space
- Teen Scholarship Program
- Medical Supplies Loaning Closet
- Chapel

Social Networking



Facebook.com/
HouseOfPeaceMKE



Twitter.com/HouseOfPeace



YouTube.com/
HouseOfPeaceMKE

Co-Founder of Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic Retires

In 2001 Julie Darnieder was approached to think about an innovative way to provide pro-bono (free) legal advice to the needy while advancing the education of law students. An alum of the Marquette University Law School, Julie began to work with the Capuchins on the project.

“The original Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic, (MVLC) opened at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in 2002,” Julie said. “Then we moved to the House of Peace in 2003.”

“I love the House of Peace,” Julie exclaimed. “We provide critical legal care for the poor here. As a Catholic the House of Peace has always felt like home.” “I was also blessed to have a good relationship with the friars. In fact when Br. Mark Carrico left to return to Detroit my husband Mark and I adopted Monty his dog.”

As the MVLC has grown over the years, Julie’s role has changed as well. She was named an adjunct professor and was asked to continue to head the clinic. MVLC has

expanded to other sites but continues to be committed to the House of Peace.



▲ Fr. Perry McDonald thanks Julie Darnieder for starting the Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic at the House of Peace.

“I was so glad that when the House of Peace remodeled we were able to build out our offices downstairs,” Julie said. She explained, “Our new space provides us with several confidential interviewing rooms. Our guests deserve to be treated with dignity. These are people in crisis and if they need to vent their feelings they can do so.”

Julie continued, “All the staff here are so great to work with and Gerri is so amazing!” “We have spoken together before including at the Ladies of Charity’s national convention and she can be so eloquent. It is really a great partnership.” Julie has retired from Marquette but she will be back.

“I am looking forward to serving as an attorney volunteer sitting across the table from clients again. Being able to help people this way is so very rewarding,” she said.

Training Program Teaches Work Skills At House of Peace

“Janet was working in a hotel laundry but had no future other than continuing to fold clothing,”

Melissa said. Melissa works for Curative, an agency-partner with the House of Peace. Several months each year Curative places their clients at the House of Peace for training. The House of Peace receives additional staff support and Curative’s clients gain new skills.

Janet speaks only Spanish but enjoyed her placement so much that she plans to volunteer several days per week. Speaking through an interpreter she said, “I worked in the food pantry and

clothes closet. I really enjoyed the clothes closet as I like helping the staff.”



▲ Melissa, Janet and Choua sort and hang clothing in the Capuchin Clothes Closet.

After learning how to sort and hang clothing Janet began to help guests select clothing for their family members. “I saw Janet become much more comfortable speaking with English speakers,” Melissa said.

Joel is a maintenance man originally from the Dominican Republic. He served as Janet’s interpreter. As we wrapped

up the interview he added, “She is always smiling. Janet is very good with people and a real pleasure to work with.”



Dove Notes

by Fr. Perry McDonald, OFM, Capuchin



In a few weeks the House of Peace will distribute Holiday Food Boxes to 1,000 families for Thanksgiving, and another 1000 to different families for Christmas. Each box contains 21 items that can provide a full holiday meal to a family. Imagine how many different hands touch one of those items, say, a can of green beans! Let me share what I've seen Catholic grade school students do.

But imagine how many others touch that filled box: the person (1) who helps place the boxes into a House of Peace van; a volunteer (2) who carries the box to the storage area in the basement of the House of Peace; another volunteer (3) who brings it upstairs for distribution; another volunteer (4) who hands the box to the family; another (5) volunteer who helps carry the box to that family's car. Five more!

Mom and a 4th grader go to a grocery store and pick out that can of beans (1); that 4th grader carries the can to school (2) and places it amidst all the other items for the boxes. Another school child (3) picks up that can and places it on a table with the rest of the green beans; a student (4) joins others to form a line, and each picks up the green beans and places it in the box; when the box is full, an adult (5) checks that the can of green beans is there. When the filled box arrives at the House of Peace, a volunteer (6) checks for the green beans again. Six persons have touched that one can of beans so far.

Eleven good people have helped provide a can of green beans and 20 other items to feed a hungry family -- all doing the work of the Kingdom of God. Now multiply that by 2,000! Praise God!

*Fr. Perry McDonald, O.F.M., Capuchin
Pastoral Director*

Capuchins' Warm Winter Drive Donations of Blankets and Winter Clothing needed to clothe the needy

The House of Peace and the St. Ben's Community Meal are teaming up together to keep Milwaukee's homeless and working poor warm this winter. We are accepting donations now until the end of winter. We are looking for the following items:

• Blankets	• Adult Boots
• Scarves	• Children's Winter Coats
• Adult Winter Coats	• Children's Gloves
• Adult Sweat Shirts	• Children's Hats
• Adult Hats & Gloves	• Children's Boots

Can your school, church, workplace or group help? Consider holding a Warm Winter Drive this fall for the homeless and needy. We can pick up or you can drop them off at either Capuchin ministry for the hungry.

House of Peace
1702 W Walnut Street
Milwaukee, WI 53205

www.houseofpeacemilwaukee.org

Or St. Ben's Community Meal
1015 N 9th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53233

www.stbensmilwaukee.org

For additional information go to:

<http://bit.ly/HOPwarmwinter>

Or contact:

Jim Van Hoven, Development Director

414.416.4284 or jvanhoven@thecapuchins.org



▲ Guest Mattie Evans (left) receives a blanket from the Capuchins' Warm Winter Drive. House of Peace Social Worker Linda Barnes (right) presents the blanket.

