

Transforming the world through reverence

GOOD NEWS

St. Ben's Community Meal

1015 N 9TH ST. • MILWAUKEE, WI 53233-1411



A MINISTRY OF THE CAPUCHIN PROVINCE OF ST. JOSEPH

March, 2015

Guest Relocates & Finds A Community Welcome

St. Ben's Feeds and Clothes Guests Seeking Fresh Start

After years in state and county jails Jude hopes for a quiet life. He has a philosophical outlook. "There's no point in being down, putting a smile on people's faces makes for a whole new day," he said.

He traveled by bus from his native California to Wisconsin to be near his friends. "I fell asleep on the bus, missed Milwaukee and ended up in Chicago," Jude said laughing.

Br. David Hirt saw Jude was becoming a regular at the meal and noticed he needed warm clothing. Because we didn't have any more winter coats to give, Br. David gave him a warm sweater and gloves. For now Jude makes do with many layers.

Br. David added, "So many of our homeless brothers and sisters need protection from the bitter cold. With the help of our very generous donors, we are helping as many of them as possible but the harsh winter has made it difficult to keep up with the need."

Jude said, "Besides receiving clothing and meals I really appreciate the brothers' hospitality. They have made me feel welcome and that has made it easier to make new friends here." He continued, "The friends I've made over the meal have helped me learn where to get work, where to get meals and clothing."

Right now Jude lives in a nearby shelter. "I have a GED and I spend my days at the library searching for jobs online. Unable to leave our luggage at the shelter has made it difficult to interview for jobs. I wouldn't want to show up with luggage in hand."

Jude has found a few jobs working with Tony, one of the security guards at St. Ben's Community Meal. "Tony has another job shoveling snow so he is sometimes able

to bring some of the guys along," Br. David explained.

Jude chimed in, "I like Milwaukee and have been walking around getting my feel for the city. I have gotten lost a few times but I don't mind." Jude sees his friends occasionally as they live in a northern suburb.



▲ Jude, a new guest meets with Br. David Hirt to learn more about our services.

Br. David said, "We couldn't be here without our donors' support. It is our donors who keep the doors open, lights on and drop off gifts, including warm clothing, who we thank; I am just one of the middle men." Jude smiled and said, "We couldn't be here without you brothers."

Jude's goal is to find a job and maybe someday move up to where his friends live just north of Milwaukee." He is truly grateful for the donors who support St. Ben's Community Meal and the help they have given him.



Roaming St. Ben's

A Different Experience of Homelessness

by Capuchin Br. Rob Roemer, Co-Director

We refer to St. Ben's as the "Community Meal" because it is through the help of so many in the community that we are able to take care of feeding all who come to our doors. There is a sense of community here. All are welcomed to the meal and to our front doors, no questions asked. We get people from all classes of society coming for various reasons. In 2014, we served 99,361 meals, a daily average of 330/day for the 301 days we were open.

Thanks to so many good people sharing their talents and resources, we are able to offer our guests much more than just the hot meal. Our Front Door Ministry is open from 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday.

Thanks to our wonderful volunteers and resources, we have been able to serve many guests for basic needs besides the hot meal. We offer: showers, co-pays for medical prescriptions, bus tickets for medical appointments, hygiene bags, eyeglasses, ID's, birth certificates, inter-city bus tickets for stranded travelers, haircuts, GED tuition assistance, some basic clothing and advocacy help.

In 2014 we provided 448 people with haircuts, 305 with new glasses and over \$2,000 in GED tuition assistance. You can see the rest of our statistics on page 4. It really is a picture of the changing needs of our guests. Thank you for being one of our supporters.

SAVE THE DATE

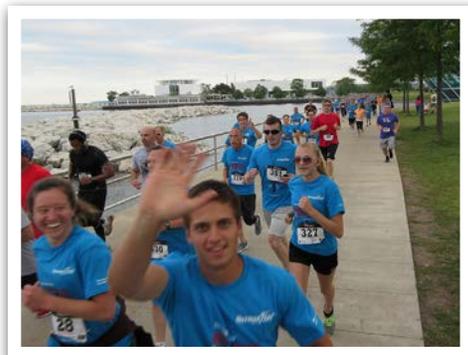
The Capuchins'

RUN WALK
FOR THE HUNGRY
GermanFest

Will be held on Friday,
July 24, 2015 - 7PM



Join Fr. Perry, Br. Rob, Br. David, Gerri and an estimated 3,000 runners and walkers on Friday evening, July 24th. We will celebrate the Capuchins' ministry to the hungry and homeless. All registered participants receive free entry into German Fest.



St. Ben's Community Meal Ministry Council

Members:

Chuck Cmeyla

Wendy Hermann

Mike Kelley

Pam Meyer

Duncan Shrout

Sara Zirbel

Director:

Br. Rob Roemer,
O.F.M., Capuchin

St. Ben's Community Meal is a 501(c)(3) ministry of the Capuchin Province of St. Joseph. All donations are tax deductible as allowable by law.

St. Ben's Community Meal Services

- Community Meal
- Justice Orientation & Urban Plunges.
- Capuchin Apartments
- Front Door Ministry

To make a gift to support
St. Ben's Community Meal go to:

www.stbenscommunitymeal.org/ways-to-help/gifts-donations

You can also use the enclosed envelope to make your gift via the mail.

Social Networking



Facebook.com/ StBensCommunityMeal



Twitter.com/StBensMeal



YouTube.com/ StBensCommunityMeal

Blog stbenscommunitymeal.org/blog

Advent Through Lent, Faith-Filled Supporters Find Ways to Help



◀ Archbishop Jerome Listecki serves dinner during Advent. Hey, who photobombed him?



▶ Br. Rob is interviewed by Tom Pipines, Channel 6 Sports Director as the Majerus Family Foundation serves a meal in honor of former MU Coach, Rick Majerus. Jodi Majerus, sister of Rick, stands behind Tom.



◀ Br. Rob addresses the students of St. Joan of Arc Parish School, Nashotah. The students are doing a hygiene bag drive for their Lenten service project.



▶ St. Ben's Ministry Council met at the Capuchin Apartments in February and served a meal to the residents. Members of the House of Peace's Ministry Council also participated. Many residents utilize the House of Peace's Food Pantry.

Twice each year HUD asks community groups to count the homeless. This information is used to allocate Federal resources to local communities to care for those living on the street.

Point In Time Survey Held At St. Ben's Meal

Semi-Annual Homeless Count Helps Community Qualify for Resources



1- Brothers Rob & David setup for chili.
2- Br. David presents a homeless woman with a backpack.
3- Chuck Cmeyla, PIT Volunteer Coordinator gets cookie trays.
4- Benny Barnes is interviewed by Charlotte from the VA.
5- Tony, Security Guard welcomes Gary, guest.





Ministry Musings

The New 2015 Model: Br. David

by Capuchin Br. David Hirt, Activities Coordinator

For those of you who have been around St. Ben's since Thanksgiving time, you may have noticed a new tall Capuchin hanging around. I'm Br. David Hirt. I've been telling people I'm the new, 2015 model Br. Dave. I'm the new activities coordinator for St. Ben's Meal Program. Before entering the Capuchins I double-majored in English and Theatre at Wabash College in Indiana, and got an MFA in Scenic Design at Wayne State University in Detroit. I am a poet and an artist.

I made my Perpetual Vows with the Capuchins in July of 2013. Before coming here I was the Campus Minister at St. Lawrence Seminary in Mount Calvary, Wisconsin: a boys boarding high school run by the Capuchins. Br. Dave S. and I sort of switched places, at least as far as living situation goes.

Here at St. Ben's my main job is to organize and run the Plunges, meaning that when high school or college groups

come in to learn more about poverty and the services available to the poor and homeless in Milwaukee, I'm their guide. I also run the orientations when groups come to share a meal with our guests; introducing them to our program and then helping them reflect upon their experience eating with our guests.

I help run the monthly Movie/game day as well. I'm also the one to contact if you want to find other ways to volunteer with us. With all of that I work at the front door on weekdays, help out at the Community Meal, and do whatever else Br. Rob deems necessary, hopefully adding a few years to his life.

I hope to bring a new set of eyes to the Meal and do my best to help the people to whom I've been sent to minister. See you at St. Ben's.

Over 99,000 Meals Served in 2014 Many Other Programs Help Thousands with Needed Services

Meals

Year	Meals Served	Daily Average
2011	96,433	319
2012	102,615	341
2013	99,415	329
2014	99,361	330

Over 9,000 volunteers and 75 sponsor groups serve the meal.

Local Bus Tickets

Year	Tickets	Cost
2011	11,696	\$21,000
2012	12,000	\$21,000
2013	12,000	\$21,000
2014	9,004	\$15,800

Tickets for medical appointments, some shared with Cap Apts.

Intercity Bus Tickets

Year	Tickets	Cost
2011	155	\$5,852
2012	143	\$5,009
2013	215	\$8,514
2014	181	6,736

Tickets to assist travelers stranded in Milwaukee get home.

Wisconsin ID's

Year	People Served	Cost
2011	496	\$9,733
2012	70	\$800
2013	52	\$622
2014	92	\$1,830

Guests can't apply for jobs or benefits without ID's. Change in law lowered our costs.

Prescription Co-pays

Year	People Served	Cost
2011	2,000	\$24,000
2012	2,498	\$26,745
2013	2,056	\$24,958
2014	1,850	\$14,281

We pay co-pays directly to the pharmacy for guests' medications.

Hygiene Bags Showers

Year	People Served	Year	People Served
2011	2,703	2011	1,582
2012	2,295	2012	2,166
2013	2,325	2013	2,023
2014	2,450	2014	1,938

Hygiene supplies are distributed to guests monthly. A shower is available for homeless guests.