

*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

## A Consistent Presence to the Homeless and Hungry

September, 2014

### Br. Dave Accepts New Assignment; Br. Rob Leads Ministry

**B**r. Dave Schwab has been reassigned by his order, the Capuchin Franciscans, to lead one of the houses of friars in their province. Br. Rob Roemer, who has served with Br. Dave as co-director for more than two years, will take over as the ministry director.

Br. Dave brought a unique blend of skills to the St. Ben's Community Meal. He was very effective at working with a diverse group of volunteers and he launched the Capuchins' Run Walk for the Hungry.

"We Capuchins' have certain values that we focus on in our ministries," said Br. Rob. "I think Joyful Service, which we describe as respectfully addressing people's needs--transforming all--really describes Br. Dave's time here."

Br. Rob continued, "He felt it was important to regularly assess the guest's needs so he created the Front Door ministry." Today, the Front Door serves over 14,000 annually with prescription co-pays, showers, hygiene supplies, eyeglasses, bus tickets and much more.

"What really epitomizes Br. Dave's ministry is that every time someone expressed a need, Br. Dave said, 'Let's set something up!'" Br. Rob smiled as he remembered Br. Dave's enthusiasm. "Br. Dave's purpose was to be a consistent presence to the homeless and hungry. He

took his title to mean he was to live like a brother to the poorest of those around him."

Br. Rob continued, "Certainly the launching of the



▲ Br. Dave Schwab poses with Sonny, a guest. To hear from Sonny how Br. Dave has helped him, go to our homepage: [www.stbenscommunitymeal.org](http://www.stbenscommunitymeal.org).

Capuchin Apartments could be seen as one of Br. Dave's major accomplishments. He didn't build it alone, but by creating partnerships with others. Heartland Housing was the lead agency on the apartments. Connections made with other groups helped create 38 more apartments for the homeless and mentally ill possible."

Many community leaders shared their appreciation for Br. Dave's ministry at St.

Ben's Community Meal.

Bill Solberg, Director of Community Services for Columbia-St. Mary's said, "Brother Dave is a great representative of Capuchin values and gifts. Columbia St. Mary's and St. Ben's Clinic staff enjoyed his hospitality in hosting the clinic on-site at the Meal and working together to serve vulnerable people in the community."

Bill smiled and added, "We know, however, that Dave's quest is actually in finding better roads for biking and we wish him safe travels in that." You can read more quotes celebrating Br. Dave's time at St. Ben's Community Meal on **Page 2**.

## Ministry Supporters say Thank You to Br. David

**B**r. Rob Roemer asked a cross-section of supporters to share their thoughts when they heard that Br. Dave Schwab was leaving St. Ben's Community Meal for a new assignment. Here are a few of the comments received:



**Tom Bohmann**, Tomahawk Mfg., Member, Sponsor Group - Third Wednesdays: "I ... met Br Dave 8 years ago when I started bringing down food and serving as part of the Menomonee Falls Cluster. ... Our relationship grew into several outreach activities between our church and St Bens over the years. ... He will be missed."



**Rob Shelledy**, Coordinator, Social Justice Ministry, Archdiocese of Milwaukee: "Br. Dave is an unassuming guy. His willingness to help and hospitality will be sorely missed. He has admirably guided the community meal, which is one of the best examples of Christian service in our community."



**Sharon Nelson**, Activity Coordinator, Capuchin Apartments: "Br. David is an angel of God. He truly embodies Christ's Spirit of love and generosity, warmth, grace, and humility."



**Barb Augenstein**, Parish Secretary, St. Benedict the Moor Parish: "Br Dave was caring, kind and unselfish especially when working with St Ben's needy guests, even more so if kids were involved. He daily demonstrated St Francis' charge to preach the gospel, if necessary use words."



**Carla Dupont**, Volunteer GED Program Coordinator: "... Br. Dave envisioned a St. Ben's initiative to help guests interested in obtaining a GED or High School Diploma, ... for further education. Br. Dave said "Education is a way out of poverty." Four years later, two guests have completed a GED, others are in GED review classes, and several guests are in college programs. This is part of Br. Dave's legacy."



**Kent Hadley**, Volunteer Urban Plunge Organizer: "Br. Dave has been an integral part of our Urban Immersion program since its inception. We will miss his humor but most of all will miss the witness he gives as a man of God. I will pray for him in his new assignment."



**Sr. Bernadette Prochaska**, FSPA, founded Guest Services Committee: "Brother Dave Schwab is the true model of Saint Francis, and therefore of Jesus. In his many years here at Saint Ben's he has been hospitable and giving. He has been a true healer, all the while, keeping a smile ready for all who would come into his presence. We are all truly grateful for our relationships with him, and we pray that he will always keep us in his heart."



**Shari Egan**, Capuchin Run Walk Team Captain & Front Door Volunteer: "Br. Dave is such a great person. Everyone respects him."



**Joe Halaiko**, Messmer Catholic Schools: "Dave is a role model of Franciscan hospitality through his genuineness and care for all people. Thank you for your example of servant leadership, Dave!"

## 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](http://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

# Capuchins' Run Walk for the Hungry 2014

Over 2,950 people register to Run or Walk & help feed their neighbors!



▲ Br. MJ Groark & others run along the lakefront.

► The walkers' route took 1,000+ past two lighthouses.



◀ Br. Rob Roemer thanks the participants from the stage.

► A runner high fives the camera after passing the Milwaukee Art Museum.



◀ Walkers enjoy the 2 mile route across Lakeshore State Park.

► Br. Dave Schwab (standing, third from left) is honored by the CapRunWalk Steering Committee.



► Chuck Cmeyla & Sue Mathison (standing, orange shirts) pose with their team, **Keep The Faith**. The number of teams grew 20% to 90 teams this year.



To see more photos and race results, go to: [www.capuchinsrun-walkforthehungry.org](http://www.capuchinsrun-walkforthehungry.org).





# Roaming St. Ben's

## Fire At Capuchin Apartments

by Capuchin Br. Rob Roemer, Co-Director

On August 9th I received an early morning call that there was a fire at the Capuchin Apartments. Turns out the fire was contained to 1 person's room with minimal damage. Thankfully, no one was hurt. However, the sprinkler system was set off and by time firefighters got there, the water damage was extensive. 15 tenants are still homeless as I write this. Water went from 3rd floor all the way down to 1st floor, causing ceilings to collapse and ruining walls.

The Red Cross was there within a couple hours. They were very helpful in getting the tenants to a

safe shelter. They fed and housed them for a week. Damage was extensive, the tenants had to find another place to live while clean up continued. We have put them up for several weeks at a motel, getting a special rate through the Red Cross.



Several churches and organizations have been very generous in collecting funds and furnishings to help with costs of motel as well as collecting furnishings for the rooms after they are cleaned and repaired. Thanks for the generosity of so many of you! You never cease to amaze me with your coming through in time of need!

## Collaborative Holiday Food & Toy Drives Begin Next Month

Over 2,500 households received holiday food boxes and/or toys last year.



◀ Linda Barnes, Social Worker (seated, left) and Gerri Sheets-Howard, Ministry Director (seated, right) registered guests at St. Ben's Community Meal last year. Judy, standing in denim jacket registers for herself and her two granddaughters.



▲ Staff, residents and a Cap Corps volunteer unload boxes of food for those who live in the Capuchin Apartments. We are looking for people to help us fill 4,000 boxes of food and collect new toys for this holiday season. See insert for how you can help us feed, clothe & care for those in need.

Last year the House of Peace and St. Ben's Community Meal collaborated on the Holiday Food Box and Toy Drives. The project helped some of St. Ben's guests and will continue this year. Not every guest at St. Ben's is homeless, many guests are struggling with poverty, mental illness or loneliness. Some have access to a kitchen but lack food to cook.

Those guests who qualified for the program received food boxes and, if they have children at home, toys. The residents of the Capuchin Apartments also received food boxes.

► By mid-December the shelves were full in our "Santa's Workshop". They are empty now, can you help fill them?

