



Capuchin Community Services

www.CapuchinCommunityServices.org

St. Ben's Meal Hall becomes Warming Center when temps drop Frequent bouts of 10 degrees or less stretch resources

Willie was lying in bed, getting ready to fall asleep inside St. Ben's Community Meal hall. "The Capuchins have helped me in so many ways," he said. "They helped me get a birth certificate, bus tickets for job interviews, help with legal issues and of course they have fed me when I'm hungry."

Willie added, "St. Ben's is giving me shelter, helped me with medical problems and I say, St. Ben's is a blessing from God!" Br. Rob Roemer said, "We couldn't do any of this without our donors help. This winter we have opened the meal hall on any evening when the air temps are predicted to be 10 degrees or colder."

Br. Rob continued, "The City of Milwaukee gave us cots for our guests and that's what Willie is sleeping in tonight. Our biggest challenge has been finding enough volunteers to help welcome people to the Warming Center because we've just had so many frigid nights in a row!"

Willie's friend, Lori was standing nearby and she began to get upset. Lori said, "My friend knew how cold it was going to be tonight and she still put me out on the street!" Lori had been "couch surfing" at a friend's house and she was so angry she started to shake. "I am on disability and

this is the first time I've been homeless. St. Ben's will open their door to you even when a friend might not. It's warm and comfortable inside St. Ben's Meal and there's so much love!"

Br. Rob explained, "Our meal tables fold up and are on wheels. So we can move them around and use them as temporary partitions. We create a women's only sleeping area and a larger men's only sleeping area. St. Ben's only accepts single adults and we have at least two chaperones on duty in the meal hall."



▲ Willie Tipton gives an interview from his cot inside St. Ben's Community Meal. On nights when the air temperature is predicted to be 10 degrees or lower, St. Ben's serves as a warming center.

Besides Br. Rob and staff, volunteers were also there to help serve the guests hot drinks and snacks. One man didn't want to share his name but said, "I was sleeping in a garage off Center Street last night. When I woke up in the morning my feet were swollen due to frostbite. I had to hobble to a corner store

to use the payphone to call 911. I am glad St. Ben's Meal is open tonight, I don't know what would happen to me if I tried to sleep outside again tonight."

Br. Rob said, "We are glad we can be here for our guests when the temperatures get so cold. I thank our donors, volunteers and staff without whom we couldn't offer a Warming Center."



◀ Andre (Center) serves a hot snack to a couple who arrived at St. Ben's Community Meal's warming center.

SAVE THE DATE!
Capuchins' Run Walk for the Hungry
Friday, June 15, 2018
Polish Fest
Summer Fest Grounds

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

House of Peace

Food Pantry Assistance Needed

- Weigh food donations, sort and stock shelves and pack food bags. Volunteer shifts open Mondays and Wednesdays 10-1pm or 1-3:30pm or Tuesdays and Thursdays 1-3:30pm.

Capuchin Apartments

Monthly Dinner

- In order to create community for the residents of the Capuchin Apartments, we sponsor a monthly dinner. Volunteer groups are needed to donate the food, prepare and serve the meal. Staff from St. Ben's Community Meal will be in attendance to facilitate the dinner service. Now booking groups for the rest of the year starting with May 2018.

St. Ben's Community Meal

Once per month Meal Hall Cleaning

- Volunteers are needed to help deep clean St. Ben's meal hall once each month for 1-2 hours. Cleaning supplies are provided. Volunteer shifts available Monday-Friday 11am-3pm or Saturdays between 2-4 pm.

How to Volunteer

Contact Shirelle Jenkins, Volunteer Coordinator

- Email: sjenkins@thecapuchins.org
- Phone: (414) 933-1300 x 1123

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. Gifts 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
Ministry Director

More Than A Number

Last year the Community Meal had the lowest number of guests it has seen in the last 20+ years. We ended the year with a total of 93,852 meals served. A daily average of 314 meals each day we were open. The House of Peace served a total of 18,548 people with pantry bags, an average of 1,546 households each month. I would like to think this is a good thing. It tells me people are finding ways to be more self-sufficient. Wouldn't it be nice if we could put a sign on our doors, *Out of business, Services no longer needed?* I don't think that will happen. But I would like to think we are about more than just numbers here at Capuchin Community Services.

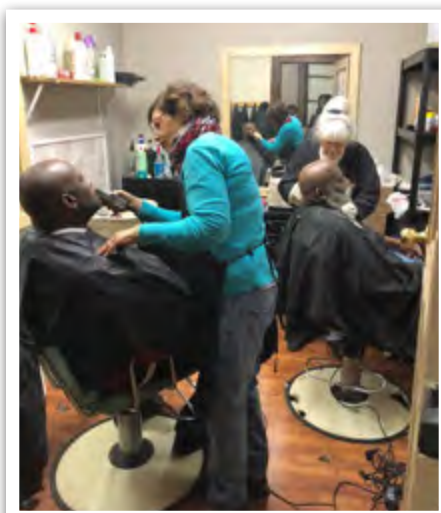
Capuchin Community Services is a result of our two Capuchin ministries- House of Peace and St. Ben's Community Meal coming together to serve the poor, hungry and homeless. It came about after realizing that as two separate entities we were both trying to do the same thing and even duplicating services. This merger allows us to each concentrate on specific areas and also share our knowledge and resources. There are empowerment classes, health services, meal program, legal services, clothing, wellness training, showers, hygiene, eye glasses, eviction assistance, haircuts, advocacy, bus tickets, blankets, and an overnight warming center. The list goes on. We are not only about the person in need of food, or the number of people who come to our doors. We are interested in the whole person, each with their own story and need.

What allows us to go beyond just the services or the person as a number? It is our Sponsors and Volunteers. Many come because they want to interact and help. The volunteers at the doors, in the pantry, clothing area or in the serving line all interact with our guests. In doing so they help us to learn what it is the guests might need. They help us to assess each person's situation and save us a lot of time and money. If we had to pay people to do all that the volunteers and sponsors do, there would be nothing left for the guests at the doors. I believe this is what makes Capuchin Community Services so special and unique! It allows us to use more of the donations directly for the guests coming to our doors. It allows the guests to feel heard and accepted, not just a number.



▲ Br. Rob Roemer (left) shares the "ministry of presence" with a lonely, homeless guest keeping warm at the warming center.

Volunteer Barbers Needed



▲ Volunteer barbers care for homeless & working poor guests at our St. Ben's Meal site. If you are a barber & would like to volunteer, please call Shirelle Jenkins, Volunteer Coordinator.

Warm Winter Drive Results



▲ Capuchin Brother Jerry Smith poses with Michelle Harris (right) & her daughter Latonya Peterson (center) in the Capuchin Clothes Closet at the House of Peace site. Guests can "shop" for free clothing with dignity for their household. The Warm Winter Drive collects new & gently used clothing & blankets for households in need.

Catholic Schools Week Celebration includes Hygiene Bags & Warm Winter Drives for CCS



▲ Br. Rob Roemer, Ministry Director (Left) & Jessica Grochowski, Grant Writer (Right) accept "Blessing Bags" from students of St. Matthew's Parish School, Oak Creek. ▼ That evening Marquette University students distributed them to guests at the meal.



▲ Br. Carl Schaefer spoke to students of St. Kilian's Parish School, Hartford. They filled Hygiene Bags and made blankets for the homeless. ▼ That evening Kenny Howard, Assistant Director (Right) distributed them to guests staying overnight in the Warming Center. David Wilder, Jr. (Right) accepted the blanket. David works 3rd shift for a temp agency whenever possible so he can stay warm overnight.



Blessings of Service

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

Seminary Furniture Gift Rebuilds Homes

An early morning house fire right after the New Year destroyed all of Ms. M's personal property and forced her and four children to search for a new home and furnishings. Sacred Heart Major Seminary had just donated approximately 75 twin beds and other miscellaneous items to Capuchin Community Services. I knew immediately that Ms. M would be one of the first guests in need that I would contact.

However, we had an issue with storage space, which needed to be resolved. The only option was the Brother Booker Ashe multipurpose room. This room is usually used for events and empowerment classes. Refusing to accept the beds was not an option. We know that bedding is a great need, for many struggling families in the community we serve. Our ministry van wouldn't be able to accommodate the transporting of the beds; therefore a truck rental would be necessary.



Cooper Ghan (right) thanked Gerri Sheets-Howard, Administrative Director, (left) for the bed he received. An immigrant from Liberia living in the USA for 7 years, Cooper shared his gratitude for the respect and love he experienced at Capuchin Community Services' House of Peace site.

of two days, approximately 40 families received beds/furniture. I believe that the Capuchin Community Services staff and volunteers slept better, knowing that we played a role in others being able to sleep comfortably as well.

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
- Gerri Sheets-Howard (Administrative Director)
- Br Rob Roemer (Ministry Director)
- Jeff Parrish (Director of Provincial Ministries)

I called Ms. M to inform her that we had four gently used twin bed sets, for her children. She was overjoyed! Next, I called a young man who recently moved into his first apartment, and offered him a lovely cocktail table and a twin bed, he was very appreciative.

The remaining beds were stored in the Brother Booker room, and guests were given the opportunity to select from the items on hand. In the period

St. Anthony Project

by Dan McKinley, Capital Campaign & Major Gifts Consultant

Construction Continues & Gratitude Grows!



► In late fall, Br. Rob Roemer and other Capuchin friars joined with community leaders to celebrate the groundbreaking at St. Anthony Apartments. Mayor Tom Barrett, County Executive Chris Abele presented the key to new housing with the support of our donors and partners.



Over the past year we have been inspired by the wisdom of Blessed Fr. Solanus Casey, a revered Capuchin who welcomed everyone who brought their troubles to him during the long days of his Front Door Ministry in Detroit. He was revered for his humility and compassion: "people noted his sensitivity and gentleness. If you were sick, he hurt with you. He could say a few words to you and you would be perfectly at ease." He helped people who were suffering learn to Thank God Ahead of Time.

We are thankful that the Capuchin's Front Door Ministry at St. Bens will have a new home in the transformed St. Anthony building; the support of over 1,400 donors who contributed more than \$2,300,000 helped make an inspiring vision a reality. Br. Rob happily was thanking God at the beginning of the ambitious campaign for St. Anthony, and now I often hear him saying to everyone who played a part in the campaign, "Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!"

I see the Capuchin spirit of reverence and gratitude for the work they do ministering to homeless people as a blessing every day. This gratitude will be embodied in the new building as we find the most appropriate way to honor the names of every donor. Each person or family who made a gift to St. Anthony received an acknowledgment letter and a blessing from Br. Rob. Is the name on your letter the name to list in the Memorial? Would you like to honor another person? We will reach out to you in the coming months to make sure we properly honor your wishes.

Until then, we thank you abundantly. And Thank God Ahead of Time!

To Eat With You

by Br. David Hirt, OFM, Cap.

To eat with you is hard. To serve,
Now that's an easy thing because
There's always something there beside
The two of us; at least the me
I know and you I have surmised.

But spoon or pitcher makes a fence
And maybe better neighbors too.
I have to let my safety go
To eat with you.

It's all that matters, though. To serve
Is only good if banqueting
Is good; and eating's only need
If who is eating's not the point.
To be the world as what is true,
I eat with you



Sisters Shalea (above), Tatyana (above right) and Tashana (right) serve guests at St. Ben's Community Meal on a cold January night. According to Pearls for Girls Program Coordinator, Amanda, "The girls in our leadership development program select a service project each year. Capuchin Community Services' St. Ben's Community Meal was their first choice this year. The girls said they wanted to be able to help people from our community who had less advantages."



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Capuchin Community Services

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1015 N 9th St
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414.271.0135



House of Peace
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Milwaukee, WI 53205
414.933.1300

Support our ministry: www.CapuchinCommunityServices.org/Donate or by mail to P.O. Box 5830, Milwaukee, WI 53205-0830