

April, 2024

Dear Friends,

I am the luckiest and most selfish person you may know.

Reflecting on the poor who come to the House of Peace and St. Ben's, I am reminded [in Psalm 34] that *"the Lord hears the cry of the poor."* I am lucky in that if I really want or need something from God, the poor have God's ear and can make it happen. And so I am lucky to be among the poor.

I am selfish because who of us does not want to go to heaven and have eternal life? In the Gospel of Matthew, it's very clear how we will be judged:

Jesus will ask *"When I was hungry, did you give me food? When I was thirsty, did you give me drink? When I was naked, did you clothe me? When I was in prison, did you come to visit me?"*

I am selfish because my service to the poor allows me to say "Yes" to these questions. And I believe that the same can be said for you. Thank you for aligning yourself not only with Capuchin Community Services, but even more importantly with the poor. May God bless you for your care of and regard for the poor!

Peace and all good,



Fr. Mike Bertram, OFM Capuchin
Ministry Director

► Kenny, Fr. Mike
& Linda invite
you to sign up
for the Capuchin
Walk. See story
on pg. 3.



P.S. The 2023 service statistics are printed on the back of this letter.
Your gift today will help us to continue to serve 125,000+ people

Ministry sites

St. Ben's Community Meal
930 W State St Milwaukee WI 53233
414 271 0135

House of Peace
1702 W Walnut St Milwaukee WI 53205
414 933 1300

Thank You for supporting Capuchin Community Services!

CCS Serves Over 125,000 People in 2023

Thank you to supporters for helping make this possible!



Our Mission: *Inspired by the gospel of Jesus and the example of Francis of Assisi, the Capuchin friars of the Province of Saint Joseph, together with our partners in ministry, prayerfully build sister-brotherhood in the world. We attend simply and directly to spiritual and other basic human needs, especially those of people experiencing poverty and disenfranchisement, promoting justice for all.*



Capuchins Serve 125,000+ People in 2023! *Seven of ten people seek help feeding families*

St. Ben's Meal & House of Peace Food Pantry feeds 87,792 people.

Guests seek help dealing with food inflation and poverty in 2023 by eating at St. Ben's and getting groceries from the House of Peace Emergency Food Pantry.



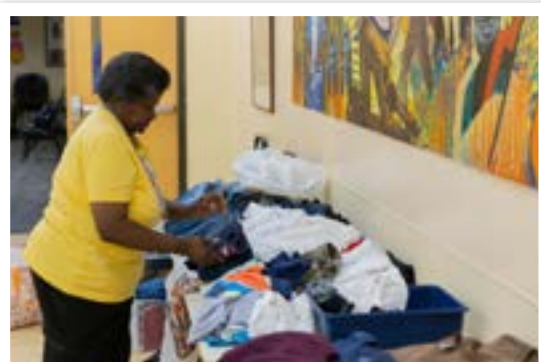
◀ Fr. Mike Bertram (center) helps a guest at St. Ben's Community Meal using a walker on the dinner line.

▶ Barb (left), a volunteer at the House of Peace, helps Armondo Diaz, the food pantry manager, stock shelves.



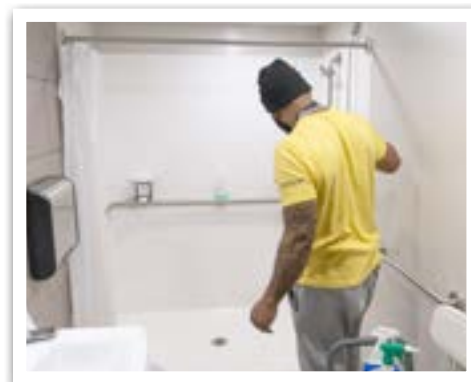
House of Peace & St. Ben's Meal hygiene programs served 17,000+ people

Over 8,000 individuals received clothing last year at the House of Peace. St. Ben's Community Meal provided showers and underwear to 7,000 people throughout 2023. Both sites distributed hygiene bags.



◀ Lena volunteers with the House of Peace Clothes Closet. There is never a charge for any services, including clothing.

▶ St. Ben's Meal staff clean the showers before the next guest uses them. St. Ben's provides clean towels & underwear.



CAPUCHIN COMMUNITY SERVICES		2023 Impact - 125,157*	
January - December 2023			
Feeding People			
36,967	87,792		
18,600	9,087	9,087	
1,018	1,690	11,343	
Resource Distribution			
21,631	498		
8,008	2,055	498	
105	1,740	7,000	
2,661	917	369	
278			
Social Work Services			
13,734			
1,050	2,541	4,405	
2,274	2,880	584	

To learn more about the Capuchins' 2023 impact

You can read more about the impact your gifts make possible in Milwaukee. Turn over Fr. Mike's cover letter to review our statistics for 2023. Thank you for supporting Capuchin Community Services!



**Capuchin Walk for the Hungry
Registration Open Now!**

Please join us at our annual walk to help the Capuchins feed people struggling with hunger. You can register at www.capuchinwalk.org. See page 3 for more details and resources to promote the walk.

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2024 T-Shirt

WORKS OF MERCY

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

House of Peace & St. Ben's Community Meal

Saint Ben's Community Meal needs volunteers to serve on the floor on Sundays- Thursdays starting in May. The House of Peace needs volunteers to help in the food pantry in the mornings and clothing in the afternoon. These & other opportunities are posted online:

House of Peace -

ofmcap.cc/HouseOfPeaceVolunteers



St. Ben's Community Meal - ofmcap.cc/StBensVolunteer



Questions? Contact:

Nicole Fair, Volunteer Coordinator
Phone: 414-933-1300, x1123

Email: ccsvol@thecapuchins.org

IN-KIND DONATIONS

House of Peace & St. Ben's Community Meal

The House of Peace: Donations are accepted from 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday. To deliver, please ring the doorbell then return to your vehicle. Staff will assist with unloading and provide a receipt.

Saint Ben's Meal: Donations are accepted from 9:00 am to 11:00 am, Monday through Friday. To deliver, please ring the large doorbell next to the Meal Hall doors, and then return to your vehicle. Staff will assist with unloading and provide a receipt.

Called & Sent Forth

by Fr. Michael Bertram, OFM Capuchin
Ministry Director



Happy Easter to you all! I hope that your Lent offered you the chance to make healthy changes in your life for you and others.

Speaking of health, not everyone is as blessed as we are. And it comes down to the most basic of health needs: food. As many of you are donors, I thank you for making food available to those struggling with hunger.

Over 2023, Capuchin Community Services provided food to 90,000 people through its many food programs, including the St. Ben's Meal and the House of Peace Food Pantry. I talk about these services when I do presentations on Capuchin Community Services. And I get replies like those of high school students in Pewaukee who wrote, "Thank you for devoting

your time helping those who can't provide for themselves and their families. You have shown me how grateful I should be." Or "Thank you for helping me donate to those in need and helping me remember that not everyone has what I have." How true for us all.



▲Fr. Mike brings the sponsor group volunteers into the Gathering Space. He leads a prayer over the Meal for the volunteers, staff and guests.

Our annual fundraiser,

the Capuchin Walk for the Hungry, is coming up on Friday, June 14, at the festival grounds in connection with Polish Fest. Your participation helps to feed people experiencing poverty. It's not too early to make plans to attend. God bless you all for the support that you give to Capuchin Community Services - support that is life-giving and, in many cases, life-saving . . . all thanks to you!

Fr. Mike

St. Mary's Parish, Hales Corners Serves at St. Ben's Community Meal



◀Volunteers from St. Mary's Catholic Church in Hales Corners serve a nutritious meal that guests enjoy. Those who eat at the Meal include people who are homeless and those who live in small apartments in the area on very limited incomes.

Capuchin Walk for the Hungry Returns!

Online Registration Open Now



▲Fr. Mike (center) & Br. Rob (right) walked last year with over 950 supporters of the Capuchins' ministry in Milwaukee.



▲Fr. Henryk (center) walks with a large crowd over the bridge in 2023 onto Festival Island State Park with the skyline behind them.

Capuchin Community Services' 18th annual **Capuchin Walk for the Hungry** is scheduled for Friday, June 14, 2024, at Polish Fest. Participants will receive T-shirts, free entry into Polish Fest for all three days, and the opportunity to help our neighbors struggling with hunger.

You can register today at www.capuchinwalk.org as an individual, start a team, or join a team. After you register, you will receive a link to share with friends, family, and co-workers. People can join you on the Walk or make an online gift supporting your walking. Please register today and share registration and donation links with those around you!

New Resources Available to Promote Walk

Participants and donors to the Capuchin Walk for the Hungry have four new or updated resources available. All resources are available in both printed and digital formats. To request copies of printed materials, please contact Jim Van Hoven, Development Administrator, at (414) 509-8465 or jvanhoven@thecapuchins.org.

Registration Form:

This form is for people who don't want to pay online. We added a QR code so you can hand these out to both online and offline supporters.

Online: <https://ofmcap.cc/CapWalkRegForm>



Team Posters:

New this year! We have posters that promote team registration. A QR code and URL included to make registration easy.

Online: <https://ofmcap.cc/CapWalkPoster>



Save the Date Postcards:

We have extra copies available. You can add a message and mail or distribute them to invite others to walk with us.

Online: <https://ofmcap.cc/CapalkPostcard>



Sponsor Brochures:

Can you help us find more sponsors for the Walk? Printed and digital brochures are available. Please consider sharing at work.

Online: <https://ofmcap.cc/CapWalkSponsors>



▲In 2023, Br. David Hirt waved to walkers with the Hoan Bridge in the background.



▲Almost 1,000 walkers celebrated the Capuchins' ministry in Milwaukee.

Memorial & Estate Gifts Help the Capuchins Serve

Y(OUR) FUTURE COULD START NOW!

The late Francis Cardinal George often remarked, *"The only thing we take with us when we die is what we have given away."* The future is promised to no one. Might it make sense to begin planning your legacy today? That legacy could be tied to the future of Capuchin Community Services. The two types of gifts we often receive after a donor's death are memorials and estate gifts.

Memorial gifts are gifts made in memory of someone. Many volunteers and donors will specify that they would like memorial gifts to go to Capuchin Community Services after they pass. Putting this in an advanced directive can take the stress off family members. When people make a gift in the name of a loved one to Capuchin Community Services, we will also send a sympathy card to a family member, letting them know that their

loved one is being remembered in the prayers of the Capuchin friars. Memorial gifts can be made by mail or through our website.



▲ Your estate and memorial gifts help CCS offer programs like the Warming Center.

Estate gifts are made through a donor's will, life insurance policy, financial account, or trust. A gift to us through your estate plan would benefit countless people who greatly depend on our care. A gift of any size can make a difference. To learn more or to request a free copy of our booklet, *Ten Secrets of Effective Estate Planning*, call our office at (414) 509-8465.

There is no better way to create a legacy or honor the passing of a family member or a good friend than by offering a gift in their name to help the poor and hungry of Milwaukee.

Learning About and From One Another

Milwaukee Capuchin employees traveled to Detroit to see more Capuchin ministries and meet others who are part of the Capuchin mission in the Midwest. Those who traveled [pictured from left to right] were Fr. Mike Bertram [Director of Capuchin Community Services], Cindy Burnside [manager of the Clothing Department at the House of Peace], Stephanie Sprewer [administrative assistant at St. Francis of Assisi Parish], and Demond Ford [site host at the St. Ben's Meal].

Among the many Detroit ministries, Br. Tien Dinh led the group on a visit to Earthworks under the direction of Wendy Casey. Br. Rob

Roemer took the group through the Service Center and showed them the various available ministries and services. The group was introduced to the Solanus Casey Center and received the story of Blessed Solanus Casey from Sally McCuen, the hospitality coordinator.



A packed schedule of visits showcased many other ministries. The Milwaukee participants all reported an appreciation of the "big picture" of who and what Capuchins are all about. The experience helped me develop a broader sense of collaboration in ministry and get to know our other ministry partners.

- Fr. Mike

Capuchin Community Services Ministry Council, Social Media & Ministry Sites

Chuck Cmeyla • Julie Darnieder • Diane Knight • Dean Lex • Gerri Sheets-Howard

Br. Biju Parakkalayil, OFM Cap., Provincial Council Liaison

Fr. Michael Bertram, OFM Capuchin, Ministry Director • Br. McLean Bennett, OFM Cap.

Fr. John Celichowski, OFM Cap., Director of Provincial Ministries



[Twitter.com/CapuchinComSvc](https://twitter.com/CapuchinComSvc)



[instagram.com/capuchincommunityservices/](https://www.instagram.com/capuchincommunityservices/)

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[Facebook.com/CapuchinCommunityServices](https://www.facebook.com/CapuchinCommunityServices)



[YouTube.com/CapuchinCommunityServicesOrg](https://www.youtube.com/CapuchinCommunityServicesOrg)

St. Ben's Community Meal
930 W State St
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