



Good News

# St. Ben's Community Meal

*"I dream of giving birth to a child who will ask, 'Mother, what was war?'" -- Eve Merriam*

Transforming the world through reverence

If you want peace, work for justice

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

Donations of cash, food, blankets, hygiene products, new socks and underwear always appreciated and accepted Monday-Friday during business hours.

## Heartfelt Thanks

### Homeless Guest Shares Her Gift Of Organizing

Even with heart and other health problems, Tracy B. is a woman with a grateful heart. Homeless for the last three years, Tracy has lived in shelters and on the street near St. Ben's Community Meal.

During the month of December, she slept in the snow on the porches at St. Ben's and the County Courthouse despite having arthritis and a serious heart problem. She explains she became homeless after her husband died; due to their debts she had to sell their property. She also survived a terrible car wreck earlier in their marriage that left her with injuries to her back and feet.

Tracy has turned to St. Ben's frequently for assistance. "St. Ben's has provided me with toiletries, blankets and a place to shower," Tracy said. "All of my clothing is from St. Ben's as are my shoes." Tracy added, "I have had my hair cut here at least once, and the Columbia-St. Mary's Medical Clinic at St. Ben's helped me get onto GAMP."

GAMP is the acronym for General Assistance Medical Program, a state and county funded program that purchases health care for indigent Milwaukee County residents like Tracy. "St. Ben's has also helped me to get a new ID and bus tickets," Tracy said as she proudly displayed her new ID. Tracy has been very grateful for all of the

help she has received from the Capuchin friars at St. Ben's. Last July she realized she needed to give back.

Tracy shared, "I was taking a shower and I ran out of shampoo. I went into the basement for more and I recognized that I could help by organizing the donations stored there." St. Ben's stores clothing and hygiene bag supplies in the office basement. Tracy set up bins for the items and a system to fill the bags. As someone who was still living on the street, she knew exactly what other homeless people would need.

Recently Tracy has been able to move into an apartment with the help of other agencies. "I don't eat here every night as my housing is so far away now," Tracy said. "However, I am still here volunteering two days a week working in the base-

ment so I do eat here on those days," Tracy added.

Br. David Schwab, OFM, Capuchin commented, "I am constantly amazed at the graciousness of guests who come to the Meal and for other services. Many of them, like Tracy, sincerely want to give back. It is very heartening to hear their expressions of gratitude for food, bus tickets, hygiene products, etc. Most guests are very grateful for the generosity of sponsors and donors."



**Above:** Tracy packs a hygiene bag for a homeless guest.

## Save The Date!

**Friday, July 25, 2008 St. Ben's to sponsor 5K Run/Walk to Germanfest.**

Germanfest has announced that St. Ben's Community Meal will again be the charity sponsor of the 2008 5K Run/Walk. Bill Michaels, "the Big Unit" from 620AM WTMJ Radio will be emceeing and participating in the event.

Since St. Ben's has sponsored the run, attendance has increased by 60% to over 660 participants. "Runners and walkers can expect that this summer we will continue to focus on making the experience fun while effectively managing the large crowds," Br. David said.

This year's course will again be a CARRS Managed Event and USATF Certified. The Run/Walk starts from the North Gate of Summerfest and goes north past Discovery World and the Milwaukee Art Museum.

All those who participate will be given:

- Commemorative T-Shirt
- Free Admission To Germanfest
- Food/Drink Gift Card Worth \$5
- 2 For 1 Coupon To Return To Germanfest Another Day
- Runner's Bag With Special Gifts
- Name Entered Into Run/Walk Prize Drawing

A registration form will be mailed this spring to all those who receive the St. Ben's Good News newsletter and past 5k participants. Here are some ways you can help make this year's 5K Run/Walk a success:

- Invite a group of friends from church, school or work to join you this year.
- Tell those who aren't regular runners they can walk the course or push a stroller.
- Ask your church, school or employer to become a corporate sponsor.

Corporate sponsors receive a great package of benefits. Potential sponsors should contact our Development Director at (414) 374-8841, ext. 26 for a sponsorship package.



**Above:** Fr. Werner Wolf, OFM, Cap. prays for a safe race in German with Br. David Schwab, OFM, Cap., Bill Michaels from 620AM Radio and all of the participants.



**Above:** A runner completes the race while CARRS staff log in times.



**Above:** The Cordon Family & Friends pose before starting the 5K Run/Walk.

## St Benedict the Moor—Aging Gracefully!

St Benedict the Moor was founded in 1908 by a Black Catholic layman from Chicago named Lincoln Valle. His goal was to evangelize Black Catholics and provide a setting to nourish their growth.

As we mark 100 years of parish life and ministerial activity, we are grateful for the rich history of St Benedict's. We will try to capture some of that history in future issues of the Good News. The committees that are working on the various celebrations to mark this century of service, have chosen as a theme: Celebrating Working for Justice. This work has been the common thread running through the entire 100 years. St Ben's history includes ministry as a parish, school, meal, clinic, and jail chaplaincy.

Many sisters and brothers have been supported through these various ministries. We rejoice with those who have walked this journey over these years. We are thankful for what has been and look to the future with anticipation as we consider where the Spirit of God is leading us.

*-Br. David Schwab, OFM, Capuchin & Executive Director*



**Above:** A homeless man set up this “bed-room” on the porch of St. Ben's. He sleeps on 3 old couch cushions with his belongings at his side. He has written a message on the side of the box: “Please do not remove—It's all I have to sleep outside with—with God's love—Joe”

**Right:** St. Ben's Community Meal has repainted the dining hall, added new lights, poured a new floor and the meal tables have all received new tops. The Meal was originally started by Casa Maria, a Catholic Worker house in Milwaukee before eventually moving to St. Ben's. A bust of Catholic Worker founder, Dorothy Day, is on display.



### Grants Gratefully Received:

Catholic Community Foundation

David & Julia Uihlein Charitable Foundation



**Above:** The Milwaukee Bucks and Kapco honored St. Ben's Community Meal as their first “Hometown Hero”.

St. Benedict the Moor  
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## Thank You's



### Hams Arrive From Madison

Thank you to the Wisconsin Restaurant Association for the donation of hams to the Meal. Our guests enjoyed them!

### Christmas Gifts Gratefully Received



Many people donated gifts during the Christmas Season. Thank you to all the individuals and groups that donated food, clothing, Giving Tree gifts, money and stocks. The Capuchin Friars will remember you each in prayer.

### Snow Blower Update

Like our neighbors throughout Southeastern Wisconsin, we have been moving snow since December 1st. Thank you to the donor who dropped a snow thrower off at St. Ben's. Our backs and arms ache less because of your charity. God bless you!



P.S. Are you, or do you know of, a man aged 18 - 50 who you think would make a good Capuchin friar? If so, please contact our Capuchin Vocation Director, Fr. John Holly, at (920) 915-4400. He's waiting for your call!