



A Ministry of the
Capuchin Province of
St. Joseph

House of Peace

House of Peace Newsletter

"Serving Christ's poor"

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The House of Peace is a 501 (c) (3) ministry. All donations are tax deductible as allowable by law.

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Donations accepted
Monday-Friday:
8:00 AM—5:00 PM

Holiday Gift Baskets Make Love Real Thousands eat holiday meals because donors care

After praying that she could register for the Holiday Gift Basket program, Pam Hughes not only got in but became a blessing to those around her. Pam lives in Milwaukee with her 4 children including two who are disabled.

Pam has limited income to support her family. When she enrolled she asked if her sister could also enroll. Pam had recently reconciled with her sister after 7 years. While all spaces in the Holiday Gift Box program were full, Pam's sister did get onto the waiting list.

All participants are asked to take their choice of a one hour class. Pam attended the parenting class. "What I remember" she said, "is how they treated us with love. In fact, from the moment I applied, I was treated with love by everyone at the House of Peace".

After completing the class, Pam came back for her box of food, a gift certificate for a turkey and a gift card. With all this food she could share Thanksgiving dinner with her family, take a plate to her mom in the nursing home and give a plate to another woman in her building.

As Christmas approached, Pam began to worry how she'd get presents and a meal together for her family. Then she remembered, "I am already enrolled with the House of Peace"! When she came to pick up Christmas food and toys for her children she said she again felt so loved. "All of the toys had already been selected for my children and I appreciated receiving gift cards. Who else would do that for us?"

Gerri Sheets-Howard, Associate Director said, "The Holiday Gift Basket program is not just about feeding large numbers of needy people. We want to express love like Jesus did by speaking personally to our guests while meeting their needs. This year thousands of volunteers registered people, donated and packed food boxes, gathered and sorted new toys, and helped us with the distributions."

Gerri added, "They made it possible for staff and volunteers to take a little more personal time to affirm many of the people who came to us for help. The love Pam noticed is our purpose."

Oh, and when the **Milwaukee Bucks** distributed food to hundreds of families on the waiting list, Pam's sister received a food box too! She even had leftovers to take to work!

"In fact, from the moment I applied, I was treated with love by everyone at the House of Peace".



Thank you for your support this year!
Perry, Linda, Br. Mark, Shirley, Racine and Gerri

Dove Notes

Spring, 2006



House of Peace Ministry Council

Chairperson:

Judge Maxine White

Vice Chairperson:

Frederick Muth, Jr.

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Patrick Byrne

Tom Fischer

Fr. Matthew Gottschalk,
O.F.M., Cap.
Jeff Monday

Br. Bob Smith,
O.F.M., Cap.
Sr. Shawnee Sykes, SSND

Fr. Al Veik,
O.F.M., Cap.

Executive Director:

Br. Mark Carrico,
O.F.M., Cap.

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!

Dear Friends of the House of Peace,

Peace and all good to you! It seems like forever since I have written a letter to you. I hope you'll forgive me!! I guess it seems like forever because so much has happened since last I wrote. The holidays have come and gone, and we're already ankle deep into a new year.

I hope you've been well. Lent is on the near horizon or here, depending on when you receive this. I like Lent and the practice of 'Lenten suffering.' But I enter into it by choice, and I decide what my 'suffering' will be. Others have it imposed upon them. And the length of their suffering has no regard for the church calendar. But their hopes in the promises of Easter are no less fervent than yours and mine. In fact, they are probably more so. And many of our guests would tell you that this shared hope pays off.

Right before Christmas, our main room is crowded and hectic with people and activity. In the midst of the hubbub quietly sits a chunky little boy, probably about 10 years old. He sits on half his chair like he's saving the other half for his guardian angel. Only instead of his guardian angel sitting there, there is a brand new basketball still in its box. His arm is draped around it, protecting it as he holds it close. Situated there in the center of the frantic pace around him, he is a picture of pure, joyful contentment as we make eye contact.

"A basketball" I ask him, "Do you know how to play basketball?" He smiles even wider and doesn't say a word as he

hugs the ball closer to himself, locking his fingers together to hold it tight. I don't know why his Mom gave him his Christmas present there and then instead of waiting for Christmas. But different families do things differently, and I was not going to be the one to question her wisdom or his joy. That basketball made that little boy's Christmas. His smile made mine. Your help made them both.

Mrs. Henderson recently moved to Milwaukee and to our neighborhood. She was dropped off in "Mil-what-kee?" by a plane that brought her and other hurricane



Above: Volunteers helped register over 2,774 households for food & toys

Katrina evacuees to our city. Someone told her she could get food at the House of Peace and that was what she had come to see about. She had walked through the snow to get here wearing open-heeled shoes, the only pair of shoes she owned now. We invited her to look for shoes in our Capuchin Clothes Closet and she found a good pair.

In talking she shared that she had cancer and had lost her hair from the treatments. Her hat covered her entire head so I hadn't noticed. When she left the House of Peace that day she left with the food for which she came, a good pair of winter shoes, and a brand new wig from our American Cancer Society Closet downstairs. After all she had been

through; I'm so glad the House of Peace could help her that day. I think it made her feel welcomed and valued by her new community and neighbors.

Marvin called the other day. Not knowing that Brother Booker had died five years ago, he asked to speak to him. As a little boy Marvin had moved to Milwaukee from Alabama with his family: his Mom and a sibling. They became homeless in short order and Marvin met Br. Booker when someone referred them to him for help. Marvin said Br. Booker had been able to find them some temporary housing and had followed up with more help for the family.

“That basketball made that little boy’s Christmas. His smile made mine. Your help made them both.”

He added that after he graduated high school and college, he ended up playing in the NFL for a while, and is now a motivational speaker in Phoenix, AZ. He said he was thinking about Br. Booker and had ‘googled’ him, came across the House of Peace web site and got our phone number. He said he just called to say how much he still appreciated what Br. Booker and the House of Peace had done for him and his family. After all these years.



Above: Br. Mark Carrico, O.F.M., Capuchin and Jhatanya Grey say good bye after working together for 3 years. JT is now a full time college student.

Jhatanya - better known around here as JT - came to the House of Peace from the south side of Chicago. Like Mrs. Henderson the Katrina evacuee, she was new to Milwaukee. But JT was here by choice. An uneducated, unemployed single mother of three little girls (two of whom are autistic), JT came looking for help. She ended up with a job. In her three years of employment with the House of Peace JT didn't let opportunity escape her grasp.

With the assistance of our province's tuition reimbursement program, she completed her GED and then began college. Late last year she came and told me she had learned that she qualified for full financial aid, and she was going to resign from the House of Peace to go to school full time. January 20th was her last day.

In the three years she was with us she met and married a fine man, Andre, who has helped us numerous times as a volunteer. In addition we all got to know and love her daughters. We are very proud of her and wish her well. I think JT got the help for which she came three years ago.

As I *choose* to enter Lent I think of all these people who have been through their own Lent and Lenten suffering through no choice of their own:

The little boy who hoped for a basketball that his mother couldn't afford,

A Katrina evacuee with nothing but the clothes on her back and high hopes for help,

A homeless family in a strange town, afraid of the strangers who offer them kindness, and

JT, who escaped the abuses of Chicago's south side to resurrect her potential and her life.

They have all traipsed the road to Golgotha in search of the tomb where Easter begins. And because of the support you have given the House of Peace, they have found it. The season of Lent is a season of alms-giving. As you give your alms, please do not forget the House of Peace and those who are still walking that road to Golgotha, walking their own personal way of *their* cross. It's a way that for many will lead them to the corner of 17th & W. Walnut Streets where they will ring our doorbell, and ask for your help.

May God bless you with a holy Lent and, when it gets here, a joyful Easter! I know you will help as much as you can and I thank you. You are in my daily prayers.

In the Spirit of St. Francis,

Br. Mark Carrico, OFM, Capuchin
Executive Director



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Thank you to the all individual, foundation and corporate donors to the 2005 Holiday Gift Basket program including the following groups:

High Schools:

Messmer High School
Divine Savior/Holy Angel High School
Wauwatosa East High School
Whitefish Bay High School

Catholic Parishes, Schools & Orders:

Messmer Prep School
St. Veronica, Milwaukee
Holy Wisdom, Milwaukee
St. Anthony, Pewaukee
Tosa Trio: St. Pius X, Christ King & St. Bernard
St. Pius X School, Wauwatosa
District 12 Middle Schools Religious Education
Kewaskum Cluster: Holy Trinity & St. Michael's
St. Kilian School, Hartford
St. Joan of Arc, Delavan/Nashotah
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, New Berlin
St. Monica's, Whitefish Bay
St. Boniface, Germantown
St. Gabriel, Hubertus
Dominican Sisters of the Perpetual Rosary
St. Alphonsus, Greendale
St. Joseph's, Wauwatosa
St. Francis of Assisi Parish
St. Joseph's Middle School, WCCSD

St. Francis Borgia
Good Shepherd, Menomonee Falls
Mary Queen of Heaven, West Allis
St. Joseph's, Wauwatosa
Waukesha Catholic Schools System

Community Groups & Other Churches:

Broken Chain Baptist Church, Milwaukee
Lion's Court, Milwaukee
Douglas McKey Christmas Club
Best Buy, Brown Deer
Catholic Charities
SERTOMA Club
Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church
Odyssey Health Care, West Allis
Walnut Street Social Club
Milwaukee Bucks
Beertown Investment Club
Turkey Club
Holy Temple Christian Center
United Church Ushers of Wisconsin Assn.
Milwaukee Dist. Council 48, American Federation of State,
County & Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO
Brownie Troop #390 (Mequon)
SERTOMA Club
Aquinas Academy
Milwaukee Frontiers International Club

Supermarkets:

Sentry On Lisbon Market, Milwaukee
Sentry On Perkins Market, Milwaukee

Public Schools:

Urban Waldorf School
Golda Meier School
Juneau High School
Woodland School
Hickman's Academy
Pilgrim Park Middle School
Elm Creative Arts School

Colleges:

MSOE National Society of Black Engineers
UW-Milwaukee - Dept. of Student Accessibility Svc
Cardinal Stritch University
Marquette University Student Drive

Corporations:

Miller Brewing Company Employee Fund
M&I Bank
Relevant Radio
Letterhead Press
Quarles & Brady
Rockwell Automation
Curves
Penworthy Company

Public Sector:

Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office
Milwaukee County Sheriff's Dept.

We apologize if any groups were left off this list. Please send corrections to the House of Peace.

www.thecapuchins.org

capuchinhouseofpeace@juno.com

www.houseofpeacemilwaukee.org

Black History Month at the House of Peace



Left: Bob Moore, Fox News Weather Anchor and Reporter poses with students after his talk at the House of Peace.



Right: Gerri Sheets-Howard, Assistant Director, House of Peace performs her one woman show on Rosa Parks.

The House of Peace celebrates February as Black History Month with a series of presentations by local African American leaders for area school children. The children are an ethnically diverse group from urban and suburban schools, both public and private. Bob Moore, Fox News Reporter shared how the nightly news is collected and shared. Gerri Sheets-Howard wrote a play detailing the contributions of Rosa Parks from the bus stop in Montgomery, Alabama to her later civil rights work in Detroit, Michigan. Her Honor, Maxine White shared her experience as a judge. Many teachers shared their appreciation for the program.

Please consider including the House of Peace in your will. To discuss other giving options, call Jim Van Hoven, Development Director, (414) 416-4284.