



Rochester Catholic Worker

Our email address has changed to: st.joes@frontier.com

Rochester, New York — Winter 2014/2015

Rochester's Homeless Encampment – Mike Hazel

Sanctuary Village is the name given to the encampment of folks settled into a site under the I-490 overpass at the eastern end of the Anthony-Douglass Bridge. Initially set up in Washington Square Park to force the City's attention to the matter of the Civic Center's Garage being closed to overnight stays, the camp has since moved.

Sister Grace sat with Mayor Lovely Warren in mid-October and came up with this new site. The understanding was that the City (RPD) would not disturb the camp as long as residents police themselves and don't create disturbances.

Currently there are some 20 tents and 35 individuals in the encampment, 5 of whom are women. The numbers are growing now that the weather is turning. As of this writing, it was reported that there were also 7 additional encampments around the city. This has been an eye-opener for many people.

The House of Mercy and St. Joseph's House have been asking the City and County for a downtown facility where these homeless folks could find protection, shelter and assistance in getting their lives together. The situation has gotten much more acute since the Garage has been closed. It is obvious that these encampments are only a temporary solution to this problem. It will take a lot of work by the Rochester community to address this growing problem.



Sanctuary Village

OUR SHELTER PROGRAM

For the past two years we have operated a summer shelter and included women for the first time. We were at capacity most nights during the eight weeks of operation for it was obvious that there was a need. It has been a learning experience for us particularly in dealing with homeless women.

The winter shelter started November 4th and will go to April 15th. We have space for ten men and five women. We expect to run at full capacity since there is shortage of beds for homeless folks in the City.

The shelter opens each night by 9pm. We plan, this season, to serve a hot meal shortly after the guests check in. Lights out by 11pm. Lights come on at 6am and they can get a continental breakfast before leaving by 7am.

We are fortunate to have Bob McBride, once again, take on the responsibility of coordinating the shelter volunteers and managing the many details. He did the same for the summer shelter and gained a lot of experience that he will use in the winter shelter. For the first time this will be the coordinator's only job at St. Joe's because of the number of volunteers needed. If you would like to explore the opportunity to assist in the shelter program, give Bob a call at 458-5976 .

House Update --- Mike Hazel

Fall is upon us here at St. Joe's. The weather's turning the corner, and we are opening our shelter doors. The **Winter Shelter**, this year will be coordinated by our own **Bob McBride**, began operation Nov 4th and will run through mid-April. Bob managed the successful **Summer Shelter** this year, and looks forward to working with our many wonderful volunteers to provide 10 men and 5 women a warm, safe, and caring place this winter. There are still opportunities to volunteer; please contact us if you feel so moved.

The worker community at St Joe's has undergone some changes as our summer winds down. **Mike** arrived back at the end of August, and is currently doing correspondence work to complete a bachelor's degree while working at the house. September brought "**Fig**" an energetic new Worker with computer expertise. **James**, a stalwart shelter volunteer, has decided to become a Catholic Worker and will be offering his abilities primarily in service to Dorothy Day House. Our **Jim Y** has moved to Pinnacle Place but is still active in the life of the house. September also brought **Peter**, who has worked as a handyman at our sister Bethany House; has joined us as an out-of-house Worker for now.



James

Rev. Chava has been busy this fall with the migrant ministry of the **Oscar Romero Church**, and continues the community's efforts to provide spiritual and material care to migrants on the margins.

Keep your eyes peeled for a website redesign soon. **Fig** will be undertaking the project with our webmaster **Martin** to overhaul the St. Joe's webpage. New features will include a regularly updated wish-list and electronic donation portal through PayPal.

Our **TomM** has kept busy as usual, and has been no stranger to the press lately, with an editorial published in the D&C and an arrest as part of a protest at the County Government building. Workers from St. Joe's and House of Mercy along with others have formed the **Concerned Residents of Monroe County (CCRMC)** to call for housing justice now that the Civic Center Garage is closed. Workers from St. Joe's have been part of the continuing action to find suitable housing, and have been supporting a homeless encampment called **Sanctuary Village** while urging the County and City governments to undertake their state constitutional obligation to care for the needy and especially the "hardest to house" homeless population.



Fig

Peg and Paul continue to bottom-line the work of St. Joe's **Bread for All** bakery, and will be baking special (and delicious!) holiday pies again for Thanksgiving and Christmas - see this issue's advertisement for details.

The popular Foot and Hair Clinic coordinated by **Debbie Sigrist** begins its 22nd year when it starts Sunday, November 23rd. Foot soaks, clean sox's and haircuts are shared by a large group of volunteers with our appreciative guests over the three hour period.

As the warm season comes to a close, we continue to live out our various calls to perform the works of mercy. Sheltering, feeding, clothing, and being with our guests is what we do, and we couldn't do it without your continued support. We are glad, as always, to receive the gifts of time, treasure, and talent in the service of our brothers and sisters, particularly as winter arrives bringing its unique challenges. May we continue with the work we do to warm hearts, bodies and minds with the cheer only grace freely given and received can bring.

A Place to Call Church - Rev. Chava

We are now in the fourth year of the Migrant Ministry of Oscar Romero Church. I am very happy to say that after the *sturm und drang* of our first three years, we are enjoying a time of peace. At this writing, no one has been arrested since last January, nor deported. Two of our number who were scheduled for court this summer had their court dates postponed for a year.

The I-9 audit that cost everyone their jobs two years ago has had an unexpected silver lining in that there are now migrant houses standing empty, and we asked the farmer who used to employ them if we could use one of those houses for our church, and the answer was yes!

This summer we have enjoyed having a place to call church. I put out a request for tables, chairs, bookshelves and other necessary items, and we had the place furnished with donations in about two weeks. There was a wonderful night with community members putting together the table and bookshelves, hanging window shades, and exploring the library.



Oscar Romero Church and Rev Chava

For three years I've been collecting books for our eventual library. It

has been a delight to see how people have dived in and used it. We have books on learning English, books on learning Spanish, Bibles, novels, children's books, books on Oscar Romero. Also a Spanish translation of Howard Zinn's "People's History of the United States," pamphlets on health and worker rights and taking care of bicycles. We also have a children's corner, and one Thursday night this summer Brenda from St Joe's came out to teach a Religious Ed class to the school-aged children.

We celebrated the first wedding in the community, a joyful day. My favorite memory is of the groom taking a photo of his baby son as he came toddling up the aisle, the only member of the wedding party who didn't know he was in it! Sadly, only the Anglo guests were able to attend – the Mexican co-workers of the groom were working in the fields even though the farmer had originally said they could attend. In the end they had to work. The bride drove out to the fields to pick up the best man before the wedding. So even in a joyful moment like that, the pain and injustice of their lives comes creeping in, an uninvited but ever-present guest.

They have been working awfully hard. In September they worked for three weeks straight with no days off, usually twelve hour days. They had a day off, then two more weeks with no rest. That's legal in New York State because farmworkers don't have the legal protections the rest of us have. ***Please use your voice to speak up for them!*** And pray for our little church, currently enjoying a moment of peace.

Sharing Loaves and Fishes in Haiti-- Sarah Ahimsa

It is still hard not being in Haiti now that I've been back here longer than I lived there. I miss the community, the culture, and the passion that the people we worked with brought to their projects. I miss the sense of having a clear purpose and also being able to help people with small things that, to them, made a world of difference--such as affording medication that might save a life, starting a business selling phone cards, or sharing a meal with someone who hadn't eaten anything in 2 days.

For full disclosure, I should also say that as the days get shorter and the air brisker sounding the warning of winter, I also miss the tropical weather! I'm not really sure what my purpose is in being back here, but I assume that God must have some plan in the midst of my struggling to work, raise a 4 year old, once in a while clean the house and mow the lawn, and keep a few small projects going in Haiti.



Sara sharing "Soup Jimou"

One of those projects is the Loaves and Fishes food program for the elderly in Haiti that started during the global food crisis in 2008.



Sara and Aniella

Loaves and Fishes is a Rochester Catholic Worker program in Borgne, Haiti that provides meals made from local ingredients and bathing and laundry soap to 50 elderly and disabled people twice a week for about \$2/meal. Buying rice, corn meal, breadfruit and root vegetables from local farmers is a little more expensive than using cheap imported white rice, but is also more nutritious and good for the economy. It keeps the farmers in business and the money spent locally instead of coming back to US distributors.

Every time I go to Borgne, the people in the program stop me in the street and hug and kiss me, calling me their mother (even though they are clearly at least 20 years older)! At each meal the group prays for all the donors and supporters at St. Joe's. I'm sure God has his ear to their lips. When the program started they began praying for us to conceive and for Kev to quit smoking...the first prayer worked already!

Every year Tom Malthaner and I participate in the Assisi Center's Walk for Peace to raise some of the money. We usually raise enough to cover a few months of food at \$775/month. You may remember that my husband Kevin and I also used to hold an annual pancake breakfast for Haiti, but health issues and having a toddler made that increasingly difficult to pull off and another organization starting having a pancake breakfast for Haiti also...so we let it go. That left the brunt of the funding for the program coming from St. Joe's. As the house struggles to afford all of its own programs, we need another way to raise funds for the Haiti project. We are open to your suggestions!

(continued on p. 7)

Thank You

Holiday times bring a special stirring in our hearts and spirits. We at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality Community want to express our profound gratitude to all those in our large extended family: our volunteers, our contributors, our benefactors, our guests and our workers. We know that each of you contributes immeasurably to our ability to create hospitality and warmth both physically and spiritually.

This year the needs seem to be multiplying in our area. As you may know from the newspapers and television, or by your own observations, a number of the very needy have been turned out from their makeshift shelter at a city garage. We are trying to do what we can to provide the most basic protection for our brothers. If you are able help us in this effort, we would be most grateful.

We pledge to be good stewards of our resources. We take very seriously our mission of support for each individual who comes to us. Whether the need is a physical need for food, clothing, or shelter; or if the need is for human, spiritual kindness, it is given freely to the best of our abilities. Thank you for your help.

Along with our thanks, we want to extend our wishes for a joyful Thanksgiving and a blessed Christmas.

A Year of Giving -- Jasmin Reggler



Jasmine

The Rochester Free Store has been up and running over a year!

Our mission: to provide quality goods free of charge to those in need.

Our motto: give what you have, take what you need.

With your donations we were able to accomplish this. The Free Store has provided sheets, blankets, small appliances, clothing, electronics, household furnishings and more, to people looking for items they need.

Your donations, in good condition, make it possible for the Free Store to exist, and we thank you for this. Donations are received on Wednesdays 10:30-12 and 4:30-6. If you would like to donate your time sorting and organizing donations call 353-9882.

To make a monetary donation, make checks payable to St. Joe's Free Store. The Store is open the 3rd Saturday of each month, 3:30-5pm. And is located in the basement of South Wedge Mission at 125 Caroline St. For any questions or comments call 353-9882.

Finding Faith in Failure - Dave Ellefson

Oftentimes we must fail to succeed; my failure was losing everything... literally. I lost my house to a foreclosure, my cars were repossessed, and I had to file bankruptcy - twice. Along with all my stuff went any dignity and respect I had left. Oh yeah, perhaps the most painful - I had become estranged from all the people I loved.

With my tail tucked between my legs I sought help from the government by applying for benefits, something to help get me back on my feet. I believed it would be the net to keep me from falling any further. To my surprise, I was denied. I found myself standing outside the big brick DHS building with nothing but the clothes on my back and a continuing drug and alcohol problem.

I had no money, no place to go, and no one I could call for help. I was officially homeless. This was all new to me. I had no homeless training. I had no clue how I was going to survive. I knew that the worst crimes in the city - muggings, beatings, and shootings - happened at night to the people on the streets. I knew that when you sleep outside you are vulnerable to just about everything. I was scared. Probably more scared than I have been or ever will be. I started to follow others on the streets that were in a situation similar to me. There was a sense of camaraderie. It was that camaraderie that led me to St. Joe's.

I became a "guest" when I found the night shelter program at St. Joe's two years ago; it proved to be the net I desperately needed to keep from scraping absolute bottom. If it wasn't for St. Joe's I likely would have overdosed on drugs and/or alcohol. If not for the efforts of St. Joe's community members I genuinely believe I wouldn't be alive today.

In addition I've learned what it is to be a part of a community as I went from the winter shelter program to a room in their transitional housing program. This allowed me to get a job, start paying off my debts and help around St Joe's. As I became more at ease in this caring environment, I observed the many people that formed the community that operated this Catholic Worker house.

A year ago I was given a room on the third -floor where the live-in community resides. I assumed more responsibilities and was included in the many meetings that take place to keep the many programs operational. Recently, I accepted the offer to be a Catholic Worker.

Community is the true social service - as long as I stay connected I can do anything. It takes failure to succeed. If not for the failures I experienced with government agencies like DHS and the success of communities like St Joe's, I wouldn't have the sense of pride I have today in being a part of this place. Finding spirituality has also helped me on the road to healing. I will always remain humble and be mindful that bad things happen to good people. I just hope that I can continue to pay it forward the same way St. Joe's has toward me.

ROC the Day: Communitywide Day of Giving

The 4th annual Communitywide Day of Giving is December 2. If you chose to participate this year, please strongly consider St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. To participate you go online to: roctheday.org. We will be listed under **Human Services/ Shelters & homeless service**. Thank you.

BREAD FOR ALL BAKERY - Paul Frazier

Everyone Eats, No one Gets Rich, No One Goes Hungry.

The leaves start falling, the temperature drops, and the bread rises a little more slowly at Bread For All, St. Joe's small-scale bakery. The 90-degree summer days fade, we turn on the oven a little earlier in the day to warm the bakery up, and we add to our gratitude list.

Bread For All has much to be grateful for: Thanks to the support from St. Joe's and a wonderful team of volunteers we are moving into our fifth year. Our bills are paid, our breads continues to be the same terrific loaves, year after year; the trainees who come to the bakery find Bread For All a good place to build up a resume and learn basic kitchen/bakery skills -a lot to be grateful for.

Our news is this: We are looking for a bakery coordinator, someone who can put in a few hours a week helping with the many little tasks that keep the bakery glued together: coordinating schedules of trainees and volunteers; ordering supplies; contacting churches for possible Sunday sales of our delicious breads and desserts; helping bake when needed.

A call to the bakery if you are interested: 775-9135.

Next news: we will be taking orders for our scrumptious Sweet Potato and Pumpkin Pies. Made with hand-rolled pie crust, our pies will be ready on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. A call is all you need to do place an order: 775-9135. We will take orders through the Friday before Thanksgiving.



We continue to distribute our loaves in the Southwedge neighborhood – by bicycle – and supply St. Joe's with loaves for sandwiches or a meal each week. We also make a delicious dessert once a week for one of the meals at St. Joe's, We hope you will consider becoming a subscriber to our great breads and order a Thanksgiving Pie from BREAD FOR ALL.

CALENDAR

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|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Nov 23 | Foot & Hair Clinic |
| Nov 27 | Thanksgiving Dinner |
| Nov 28 | Closed |
| Dec 25 | Christmas Dinner |
| Dec 26 | Closed |
| Feb 11 | Foot & Hair Clinic |
| March 29 | Foot & Hair Clinic |

Sharing Loaves and Fishes in Haiti

(continued from p. 4)

In the meantime, Kevin and I are trying to plan a fundraising event for the weekend of January 24-25 so please save the dates! We are considering doing a spaghetti dinner and small carnival for Loaves and Fishes and Friends of Borgne (the school support program for children in Borgne out of Honeoye Falls), but we still need to find a location, because we would like to have more space than is available at St. Joe's. Wherever it is, please come and help us keep sharing Loaves and Fishes with the people in Borgne! Stay tuned.

St. Joseph's House of Hospitality
Rochester Catholic Worker Community

Some of us live in houses; some of us live on the street; some of us have a room of our own, or a bed and a place to keep; some of us have a cot or piece of a couch or patch of floor to return to each night; some hold special positions of power and roles with specific responsibilities, some do whatever they can. Our aim is to try each day to "build a new society in the shell of the old" as we practice the various works of mercy and labor with whatever resources, physical as well as spiritual, that we have been given at the time.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| George McVey - Editor | Tom Malthaner |
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| Tom Cleary | Jim Yacopucci |
| Harry Murray | Peg Gefell |
| Rev. Chava Redonnet | Bob McBride |
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| Rich Behrend | Mike Hazel |

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House Needs:	Mens Underwear (32-44)	Jelly/Jam BLEACH	Hoodies 39-gal. Trash Bags	Pillows Large Jackets
Prayers	Sugar	Toilet Paper	Razors	Gloves/Hats
Butter	Boots/Sneakers	Coffee/Mugs	BATH TOWELS	Toothbrushes/Paste
Laundry Soap Powder	Jeans/Cords	Single Sheets	Athletic Socks	Sleeping Bags

Volunteer Opportunity

Help Staff the Night Shelter.

*Will Train.
Can Sleep on the Job!
Plenty of choice hours.
Good supervision.*

Call Bob at 458-5976.

CELEBRANTS

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 11-10-14 | Tim McGowan |
| 11-18-14 | Sr. Grace Miller |
| 11-25-14 | Minister Brother Harry
and Pastor Don Davis |
| 12-2-14 | Fr. Jim Callan |
| 12-9-14 | Cathy Mryzka |
| 12-16-14 | Tim McGowan |
| 12-23-14 | Minister Matt Smeltzer |
| 12-30-14 | Fr. Patrick Cowles |
| 1-6-15 | Rev. Chava Redonnet |
| 1-13-15 | Rev. Matthew Leah Nivkolloff |
| 1-20-15 | Deacon Bill Coffey |
| 1-27-15 | Stergios Skatharoudis-Sufi |
| 2-3-15 | Rev Matthew Leah Nivkolloff |
| 2-10-15 | Donna Ecker (Bethany House) |
| 2-17-15 | Deacon Tom Driscoll |
| 2-24-15 | Fr. Bob Worth |
| 3-3-15 | Rev. Matthew Leah Nivkolloff |
| 3-10-15 | Stergios Skatharoudis- Sufi |
| 3-17-15 | Deacon Tom Clear |