

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI OUTREACH MINISTRY

2008 CALENDAR YEAR OVERVIEW

As we try to do each year at this time, the members of St. Francis Outreach Ministry would like to share this overview of our 2008 activities with you. It attempts to show you the Parishioners, our major source of funding, how we utilized the resources you provided to assist the needy in our surrounding community. Attached is a summary of our finances for 2008, along with a summary of the food, monies, and gifts that we distributed. We hope that by knowing what we do, and how much we need and appreciate your help, that you will continue - and perhaps increase - your support in 2009.

Need Greatly Increased Last Year: The news in the local and national media that the economy is struggling certainly also applies here in Grove City! The downturn in construction has led to job losses not only in this field but also in related service businesses. With more unemployment we saw a dramatic increase in requests for assistance: we assisted a total of 13,879 individuals – **77% higher than last year.**

Monetary Donations Increased By About 30%: Our funds come from a variety of sources. First and foremost are the donations by parishioners that are put in the poor boxes or dropped off in the parish center. Parish organizations such as the Women's Guild and the Knights of Columbus, along with the K of C Women's Auxiliary, provide us with funds on a regular basis. We also seek out grants and have been successful in receiving \$2,500 from the diocesan Catholic Charities (your Catholic Faith Appeal Funds at work), \$2,000 from The United Way, \$5,000 from the Carmelites and from corporations such as ExxonMobil. Finally, we continued to draw funds, \$13,000 last year, in line with our plan to spread withdrawals over 10 years, from the savings account established with the bequest from the late Sally Gerk. For all of this support we are grateful.

Food Assistance Was Our Prime Focus: While we try to provide financial assistance for crisis situations, we continue to operate primarily as a food pantry. Last year **we distributed 12,514 bags of groceries (91% over last year) and \$28,990 of gift certificates (1% over last year)** for purchase of perishable food items. We spent about three times as much for food in 2008. This was split between Harry Chapin Food Bank fees and local food purchases. Food availability from the regional Harry Chapin Food Bank decreased dramatically because of the widespread demand in SWFL. As a result, to enable us to help the increased number of clients, we had to purchase much more food locally than in the past. To compensate for this dramatic increase, money given for power bills and gasoline stayed about the same. We also had to make some difficult decisions midyear. Because of these increases, we stopped giving gift cards, we restricted visits to twice per month and we restricted help given to only people living in the greater Englewood area.

Support From Outside The Parish Increased: While our parishioners were the main source of donations, we were thankful this year for a significant amount of support from non-parishioners and local businesses. Father Carosella from Our Lady of Mercy on Boca Grande helped financially and also collected food for us. This year we also received monetary and volunteer help from Faith Lutheran Church. The following organizations collected food for us: the Rotonda Elks, the Over 50 Bowling League, and Oyster Creek Ladies Golf Association, Boy's Scout Troop 198, South Gulf Cove Homeowner's Association, Women of Windward, Key Real Estate Agency, and The Fountains at Lake Pointe Woods. Evidently many know of the good work we do and wish to share in this work. For these we are grateful and sincerely apologize for any organization that we may not have mentioned. We are also grateful for the bread and pastries we receive each week from the local SweetBay stores, the local Publix stores, and Key West Subs. The two Sweetbay stores also provide us with frozen meat. We also benefited as a recipient of the holiday "gift bags" purchased by customers at the Dearborn Street Publix.

In ending, we can let you know that the assistance we provided was greatly appreciated by our clients, and wish that you could have experienced the many heartfelt tears of gratitude that we witnessed. It was in many ways a good and bad year – good in that we were able to help so many, and bad in that there were so many needing this help. We pray that the year may come that we report that no assistance was provided because none was needed. However, until this wishful day comes, we continue to need and appreciate your support. May God bless your continued generosity!

ST. FRANCIS OUTREACH MINISTRY – 2008 OVERVIEW

1/1/08 Starting Balance	\$3,614.73
Additions	
– Deposits (Donations: Cash, Checks, Grants)	\$71,918.61
– Funds From Outreach Savings	\$13,000.00
– Interest and Adjustments	\$673.66
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Total Funds Available	\$89,207.00
Expenditures	
– Food Certificates	\$28,990.00
– Food Purchases	\$25,846.02
– Harry Chapin Food Bank Fees	\$3,616.00
– Rental Assistance	\$6,755.88
– FPL Assistance	\$7,156.04
– Water Assistance	\$3,519.32
– Gasoline Assistance	\$3,470.00
– Miscellaneous (Medical, Bank Fees, Other Miscellaneous)	\$2,025.50
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Total Expenditures	\$81,378.76
12/31/08 Ending Balance	\$7,828.24
Families Requesting Assistance During Pantry Open Hours	35.3 / Day
Total Assisted (Children / Adults / Seniors)	13,879
Bags of Groceries Distributed	12,514
Gift Certificates Distributed (For Perishable Food Items)	\$31,825
Food Received From Harry Chapin Food Bank	55,203 Lbs
Thanksgiving Baskets Distributed	260+
Christmas Gifts Distributed	300+



ABOUT ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI OUTREACH MINISTRY

For those who are not familiar with our Ministry, we have about 55 member volunteers. Our main focus and purpose is to offer food assistance to those in need. We do this via our food pantry in the parish center, which is open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 AM until noon. We distribute non-perishable food items, breads and baked goods, frozen meats and other frozen foods as available. Supplies are obtained through your food donations in the food baskets in the church lobbies and donations from local businesses. Harry Chapin Food Bank in Fort Myers is our largest source of non-perishable food items and frozen foods. When necessary we also purchase food locally using the cash donations we receive. While food assistance is our main focus, we also help in crisis situations with rent, electric, utility and other bills if funds are available. Should you have any questions please call the Parish Hall at 941-697-4899. We usually meet the last Thursday of each month at 9:15 AM in the Parish Center, but please call ahead to confirm. Everyone is welcomed, so please come to one of our meetings if you would like to be part of our Ministry.