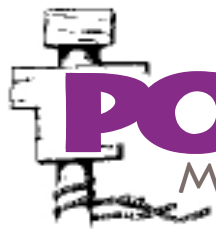


Are you sitting down? Well, it finally happened! Our website's donation service is actually up and running! Please visit our website at www.theportministries.org and click on our new improved "Donate Now" window and experience how miraculously easy it is to donate to Port Ministries! Thank You for your support!

Yes, Believe
it or not, it's finally fixed
for your convenience...

Oh Dear Lord,
They finally did it! Truly
all things are possible
with you!



26th YEAR OF SERVICE

VOLUME 27

NUMBER 1

SPRING 2011

**We THANK
God and all
Benefactors &
Volunteers
who make our
services
possible!**

PORT MINISTRIES **POURRI**

A NEWSLETTER OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE TO THE POOR



A Port Ministries outreach bringing hope to the neighborhood's lonely and infirm...

HOME VISITING

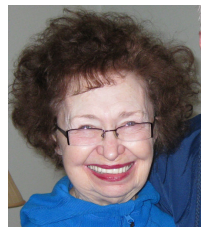
Walter Koszut, the Home Visiting Coordinator, writes: *In our Home Visiting Ministry, the greatest gift that we give to the lonely, infirm and elderly is Jesus, our Savior and our Brother. We give Him with our listening presence, our love, our time, our kindness and understanding. We give Him as we pray for them and with them. We give Him through the goods we share and we would like to offer a special thank you to the "Breadsmith Bakery" and the "New Deluxe Bakery" for their generous weekly donations of breads, sweets and pastries. All this is only mirroring the greatest gift of all... can anything we offer compare to Jesus, the nourishing Bread of Life... the sweet consolation, the comfort and joy of the gift of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist? We give Him in a most astounding way; in the body and blood, the living God in Holy Communion where He is giving Himself to us in a most astounding way!*

An unusual thing is happening lately... as the Eucharistic Minister announces "the Body of Christ" and places the Gift on their tongue, they are rarely saying the usual "Amen", but instead are responding... "Thank You!" Rather than a slip of the tongue or the effect of memory loss, could this be the face of Jesus and His voice calling out "thank you" to anyone willing to visit Him and serve Him in the distressing disguise of His beloved; the poor? Sometimes without the means to properly respond or thank you themselves, they are still giving even more... they are giving all they are without any "cover ups". Some, in their sufferings, are carrying a heavy cross. So, they mirror back for us with "clarity" His hidden, but, true presence; reminding us through their poverty, that He is the one doing a work of love here. Thank You, Jesus!



"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me."

~ Matthew 25:40



CURRENT ACTIVE SERVICES:

The Mantle:

•ESL/GED Adult Ed., Computer, Child Care, Arts & Crafts, Music, Tutoring:
Tues. thru Sat.: 10:30am to 12:30pm.
•“Harmony, Hope and Healing”
Music Ministry:
Tues.: 10:30am to 12:30pm.
•After School Tutoring:
Tues. thru Fri.: 2pm to 5pm.

Port Ministries Free Clinic:

Tue. & Thur.: 1pm to 3pm
Sat.: 9:30am to 12pm

The Winter Bread Truck:

Tues. thru Fri.: 6pm to 9pm
Sat.: 10am to 2pm

Home Visiting:

Tues. & Thur. 9am to 3pm

Tony's Gym:

Daily Afternoons

Volunteering Opportunities

for Ministry for individuals and groups of all ages...
16 yrs. and up.

St. Mary of the Angels:

Secular Franciscan Fraternity

(see contact information on the next page)

Thank You to all our Benefactors & Volunteers

Home Visiting's New Outreach...

Through the efforts of Fr. Hugh Zurat, O.F.M. and Deacon Javier Pineda, S.F.O., weekly Mass is now being offered to Catholic residents at a local nursing facility where we have been visiting for over 7 years...



For some months now we've been granted the privilege of celebrating the Eucharist at the *International Nursing and Rehab Center* with the residents who are visited weekly by the members of our Home Visiting Team.

Every Thursday afternoon at 2:00 the residents, most in wheelchair, gather in the first-floor dining room, which we commandeer as our place of worship. We arrange them as best we can near the altar so that they can see, hear, and take part as best they can in the Eucharist. And, as so often

happens in most nursing homes, we are greeted with smiles and about as much enthusiasm as can be mustered. It is in this setting that we begin our celebration. However, truth be told, quite often by the time we get partway through the readings from the Word of God, attention begins to wane and heads begin to nod due, in large part, to age and medication. Nevertheless, as we get through the intercessory prayers and into the Eucharistic Prayer and then on into the Lord's Prayer, heads lift and eyes open especially when Roy, one of our seventy-nine year old residents, sings the Our Father in a beautiful, clear tenor voice with much gusto and flourish. This is followed by a lively exchange of the Greeting of Peace and the reception of the Eucharist.

From a purely human point of view, as I listen to the proclamation of the

Gospel in English and in Spanish, thanks to the ministrations of Deacon Javier, and then preach a short homily in English, followed by Deacon Javier in Spanish, I often wonder and ask myself; "Is it worth it all?" But inevitably my faith kicks in and reminds me that it is Jesus who is at work here and not I.

And then, from that purely human point of view again, when at the end the residents shake your hand, with one or two even kissing your hand, and thank you with a smile and a sparkle in their eyes, you know that it is worth it all. And so, you leave determined to hopefully be a more effective instrument of Jesus' Word and Eucharist the next time around.

~ Fr. Hugh Zurat, OFM.



LENT: Our Ashes Transformed ~ Fr. Hugh Zurat, OFM

By the time you read this, you'll probably have been smudged with blessed ashes on your forehead and on your way into another forty days of Lent. What do the ashes symbolize? I don't know if we would be able to reach a consensus, but, perhaps, they speak a language of the heart more than that of the head, because more people go to church on Ash Wednesday than on any other day of the year, including Christmas.

Why are the ashes so popular? Perhaps they are first of all a symbol of our mortality and a reminder of our immortality, which is expressed so well in one of the prayer formulas that accompany the imposition of the ashes: "**Remember you are dust and into dust you will return.**" These words are a reminder that it might be good for us to take some time to look into our lives, as we are living them right now because the way we live our lives now will determine our future eternity. Perhaps, then, there is a need to make some changes. And this is one of the principal goals of Lent, a change of heart, and why the other prayer formula for the imposition of ashes is: "**Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel.**"

How is this change of heart to take place? Jesus tells us in the gospel passage (Matthew 6:1-6,16-18) that we hear proclaimed on Ash Wednesday. The

answer can only be found if we are willing to spend the forty days of Lent, not only putting on ashes, but also sitting in ashes, grieving some of the things we have done or lost and sincerely praying to be transformed, **prayer**. And then there is a need to turn the fruit of the prayer into action, and so, the need to uproot from our lives whatever may be holding us back from living our baptismal commitment, **fasting**. Last but not least, **almsgiving**, heightening our awareness of our need to be constantly concerned about others, especially our less fortunate brothers and sisters, by sharing our very selves, as we have heard so often, sharing our time, our treasure and our talent.

Trying to sincerely live the season of Lent could become for us a Cinderella experience. Cinderella, because the name Cinderella literally means, a young girl who sits in the cinders, in the ashes, before being introduced into a new and more glorious kind of existence. And hopefully the same will be true for us. The ashes of Lent will be transformed into the glory of Easter. This is why we pray in the introduction to the Eucharistic Prayer during Lent, "**Each year You give us this joyful season when we prepare to celebrate the suffering death and resurrection of Jesus with mind and heart renewed.**" And so, with this in mind we wish you all, **Happy Lent!**

From the Executive Director's Desk... *Port Ministries Awarded!*

"Not infrequently, our staff receives kind words from well-wishers, complimenting Port Ministries on its work for 'social justice.' It's important, I think, to understand that our mission here at the Port is *not* to work for social justice; our mission is to authentically live the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to love God and love our neighbor through loving service to the poor. Not surprisingly, 'social justice' may often be the result of our work, nevertheless, it remains a 'by product' of our efforts to live the Gospel. It's the difference between having served 100,000 meals, and having

loved Christ 100,000 times!

This weekend, **Port Ministries will be honored to receive one of the Coordinating Board Awards from the Association of Chicago Priests.** The award is given in recognition of the Port's faith-based ministry to poor families and children; it is a testament to the selfless service of our staff and volunteers, who strive to live the gospel through loving service to God's poor. Congratulations...and **Thank You** to our dedicated staff and army of volunteers! ~ *Mary Armato, Executive Director*

"Many people mistake our work for our vocation. Our vocation is the love of Jesus."

~ *Mother Teresa*

Ministry Updates...

MANTLE FAMILY CENTER...

Fun Fair 2011:

On February 12, **fifty members of the SAI group came and hosted a Fun Fair for the Mantle families. Sixty-six women and children from the neighborhood participated in the Fair.** Some of the volunteers were matched one-on-one with the ESL adults to help them practice their English. In addition to playing educational games, constructing buildings from marshmallows and raw spaghetti, and singing, those who attended the Fun Fair made Valentines for parents and other loved ones. All of our women and children had a wonderful time and **we are truly grateful to the SAI group for their time and generosity.**

Pilot Program in Nutrition & Health...

As mentioned in our previous newsletter, the Mantle is seeking to meet a great need in our neighborhood pertaining to family nutrition and health. We are happy to announce that in March, we will begin a pilot program in nutrition. **Nutrition**

classes will be offered to neighborhood adults. As part of the program, participants will learn about proper nutrition, experience new foods, and learn about healthy movement and exercise.

Lots of things are happening at the Mantle... Some are big...like the Fun Fair and Nutrition Classes. Others are "small"... like a five year old finally learning to tie her shoes or a Spanish-speaking mother learning how to sing the ABC's in English. Big or small, all are important. When we asked one of our older after-school tutoring program students why he continues to come to the Mantle he said: *"I come to the Mantle because I want to be someone and be a successful person."*

We have many great things happening at the Mantle, which means we also have many needs (see list below). Foremost, we need more people to volunteer a most precious gift: their gift of time. Our morning and afternoon children's programs are in need of dedicated and loving adults to come and be positive role models for our children; to offer quality time to listen and care. We need mentors whose presence will bring hope and can help reassure the young man mentioned

above that he already "is someone" and that all of our children and families are important and loved. ~ *Kris Biegel, SFO, Mantle Coordinator*

BREAD TRUCK...

We have added a 6th stop to our regular winter route because of the great need in that area. In spite of the heavy snow and cold, the numbers of meals served per night are at "least" 150 and as many as 350. We appreciate the dedicated volunteers who come and endure the winter cold in order to serve those in need. Thank you also to all those who prepare and deliver the hundreds of meals weekly; all making this ministry a reality and a constant compassionate presence in this neighborhood. Are you being called? Come and Volunteer! ~ *Anthony Brown, Bread Truck Coordinator*

PORT FREE CLINIC...

Thanks to the dedication of our volunteer doctors, nurses, assistants and receptionists, the Port Free Clinic continues to meet the medical needs of the poor and uninsured residents of our neighborhood. We can always use more help, so anyone with medical experience: please call us and answer the "call!"...to serve the poor in Jesus' name!

THE EMPTY BASKET...

Port Ministries relies entirely on donations to meet our daily needs. Some items are desperately needed at this time. These are the current "most needed" items:

❖ **MONETARY DONATIONS**

❖ **HAMS (BUTT, SHANK OR WHOLE)**

❖ **FILLED EASTER BASKETS**

❖ **GROCERY/FOOD GIFT CARDS OR CERTIFICATES**

❖ **CANISTER VACUUM**

❖ **INDUSTRIAL SHOP VAC**

For pick-up & delivery info. please call: 773-778-5955

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

- ❖ Plastic soup spoons
- ❖ Apples or oranges
- ❖ 8oz. hot cups
- ❖ Plastic sandwich bags
- ❖ Anti-bacterial hand wipes
- ❖ Diapers - sizes 3, 4, 5
- ❖ Baby wipes
- ❖ Adult & Children's cold & flu med.
- ❖ Sanitary pads
- ❖ Paper Shredder
- ❖ Underarm deodorant
- ❖ Tempera paint: primary colors
- ❖ Construction paper: all colors
- ❖ *Elementary School Age: size 6 & up...*
- ❖ White school uniform shirts: boy & girl
- ❖ Tan & navy school uniform pants
- ❖ Children's white T-shirts: all sizes

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Port Ministries, P.O. Box 09168
Chicago, IL 60609

Phone: (773) 778-5955

Fax: (773) 778-2451

E-mail:

info@theportministries.org

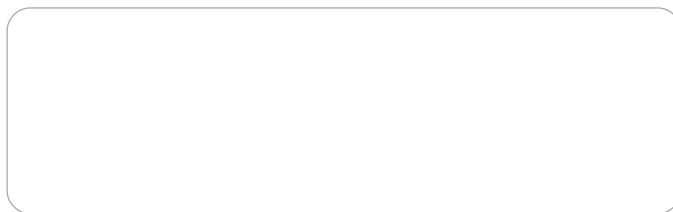
Website:

www.theportministries.org

**DONATE
ONLINE NOW!**

*It's completely safe, secure and convenient for you and for us!
Just click and donate!*

ord by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free! You are the Savior of the world!



PORT MINISTRIES
5013 S. HERMITAGE AVE.
CHICAGO, IL 60609
P.O. BOX 09168



You Are Invited!... **UPCOMING EVENTS**



SAINT JOSEPH'S TABLE

"LA TAVOLATA DI SAN GIUSEPPE"

**Saturday,
March 19th**

Come celebrate the feast of St. Joseph by setting a table of hospitality for the poor...

Mass: 8:45am at 5009 S. Hermitage Ave. (Ring driveway doorbell).

Food prep. and fun activities with our Mantle children at 10am, followed by buffet dinner for our families at 1pm at 5017 S. Hermitage Ave.



24TH YEAR...

GOOD FRIDAY STREET STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Come walk & pray with us!

**Friday, April 22nd, Noon to 3pm
Begins & ends at 5017 S. Hermitage Ave.**

ALLELUIA! HE IS RISEN! EASTER SUNDAY

April 24th: Celebrate the Risen Christ with us... in service to the poor!

Food Prep.: 10am to Noon followed by Easter Dinner with our families at 5017 S. Hermitage Ave. from Noon to 2pm. Volunteers Needed! Pre-commitments only; please call ahead at 773-778-5955.

