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August, 2023

Dear Friends,

The doors of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen have been open to any and all since November 2, 1929. No guest, volunteer, or donor has ever been asked whether they are Catholic, non-Catholic, or ex-Catholic. To paraphrase the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, all of God's children—men and women, black and white, Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants, believers and unbelievers are welcome. That said, there is no doubt that we Capuchin friars are Catholic. Our ministry originates in our commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our Catholic faith, and the Franciscan tradition.

I am grateful that the leaders of our Capuchin Province of St. Joseph have assigned more than a few friars to serve in the ministry. This allows us to provide a robust pastoral presence throughout the ministries of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. It is with gratitude that I am able to welcome Br. Brenton Ertel to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Previously, Br. Brenton served in our sister ministry at the Capuchin Community Services in Milwaukee. He will be working as a Volunteer Coordinator and Chaplain for the evening meal at our Conner Kitchen and Saturdays, as well as Volunteer Coordinator for our Bakehouse. Br. Brenton is a native of Racine, Wisconsin, thus becoming the third Capuchin Cheesehead (Br. Rob & myself) presently serving in the Soup Kitchen. Welcome Br. Brenton.



▲ Br. Brenton Ertel, OFM Cap. has joined the ministry

Br. Igor de Bliqy is another friar of the Province of St. Joseph whose primary ministries are as our province's Communications Director and at the Solanus Casey Center. Over the past year, Br. Igor has worked with Amy Kinner, Director of Residential Services, to provide monthly spirituality presentations to the men at Jefferson House and in the ROPE program. Born in South Africa, Br. Igor was a diocesan priest in Belgium before joining the Capuchins in that country. He has since transferred to our province and will make his Solemn Perpetual Profession in September. Although part-time, we are grateful to have Br. Igor put his considerable skills to work serving the men in our residential programs.



▲ Br. Igor de Bliqy, OFM Cap. serves part-time

Over, Please

Tap below to make a gift online:

Dear Br. Gary & Br. Tien, Please accept my gift of \$_____ in support of Capuchin Soup Kitchen and the Capuchin Province of St. Joseph, and their many ministries serving those most in need.

Payment Type: Check (Made payable to Capuchin Soup Kitchen)

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard Discover AMEX (Your credit card statement will read Province of St. Joseph)

Name on Card: _____ Signature: _____

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____ CVC Code: _____

Another Cheesehead who will be indirectly serving the Capuchin Soup Kitchen is Capuchin Br. John Celichowski. He is a former Provincial Minister of our Province and just completed a term as the Director of Novices in California. Novices are those in their first year as Capuchin friars. Br. John is abandoning the sun and surf of California to become the Director of Provincial Ministries and Human Resources for our Capuchin province. In other words, Br. Tien and I will report to Br. John. This is a big job. We look forward to working with Br. John.



▲ Br. John Celichowski, OFM Cap. will supervise our ministry among others

Br. John's arrival also means that we at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen and our various other Capuchin ministries must say goodbye to Mr. Jeff Parrish. Jeff has served the ministries of our province for over 20 years. Jeff has been a thoughtful, wise, and generous minister to the province's ministries. He will be missed. May the Lord truly smile upon Jeff and his wife Lori in retirement.

Peace and all good,

Br. Gary Wegner

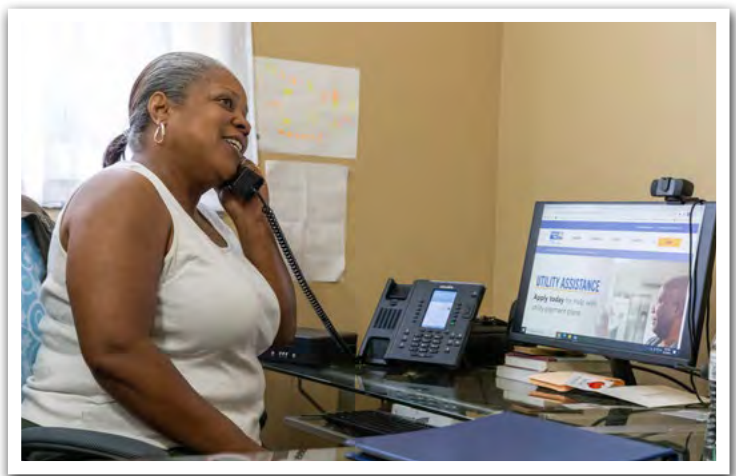
Br. Gary Wegner, OFM Cap.
Executive Director



P.S. Your gift today will help us to sustain the many aspects of our ministry to our neighbors throughout Detroit. Please be generous!



▲ Jeff Parrish provided CSK with wise guidance for more than two decades



▲ Lucy Avery-Walk is a social worker and employee of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen placed at Deo Gracias Ministries

“He said to them, “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.”
- Luke 10:2



Breaking Bread Newsletter

Feeding Bodies, Nourishing Spirits, Strengthening Communities

August 2023

Capuchin Soup
Kitchen



Earthworks Team Shares to Give Hope

Ministry Distributes Produce to Community & Soup Kitchen

While the Capuchin Soup Kitchen continues to connect with those in the community to provide them with meals, food, clothing, help with housing, and more, Earthworks Urban Farm supplies fresh fruits and vegetables. With greenhouses, they can get a head start on cultivating plants even when Michigan winter weather lingers into spring so that a variety of produce can be offered to guests and used in meals at the Soup Kitchen.

The team at Earthworks works together, also with volunteers, to go from seeds to fresh produce. One collective focus of the group is that of giving to the community. It's what motivates them to take those seeds, plant them, and nurture them into the plants that provide good quality nutrients to the guests at the Soup Kitchen.

The Earthworks' Director, Wendy Casey, has been with Earthworks in multiple capacities over the past ten years. The connection to the community is something Wendy enjoys and allows her to feel that she's "in the right place," and she said, "Knowing that what we grow gets incorporated into the meals, it warms my heart." It's what also keeps her engaged in serving the community and maintaining the legacy of the urban farm and the mission of the Soup Kitchen—to nourish people with physical and spiritual needs.

Farm Manager, Tyler Chatman, began his experience working with Earthworks as a

young boy when Br. Rick ran the kids' program. He then attended the Earthworks Agriculture Training (EAT) program and eventually became a crew leader before joining as a staff member at Earthworks Urban Farm.

What kept him engaged with Earthworks was, "It kept me out of trouble," but it also provided a focus on "something entertaining and productive." Tyler also works closely with volunteers Wednesday through Friday, with Saturdays added during the summer months. Volunteers provide another connection to the community and help cultivate, harvest, and prepare produce for guests and the Soup Kitchen locations.



▲ Left to right: Tyler Chatman, Wendy Casey, Darryl Howard and Herb McLean

Darryl Howard, Maintenance Worker has been

a part of Earthworks for 11 years, starting as a volunteer, where he met Br. Bob, Br. Ray, and Br. Jerry, who helped him learn about the EAT program to help him with employment. Darryl has been a community member all his life and finds meaning in his work at Earthworks, especially when guests he used to go to grade school with and others he knows visit the Soup Kitchen. He said it "gives them hope that they can come here and receive the services" because with "all of this beauty here, why not share what God has given us all?"

While the team has a passion for agriculture, Herb McLean, Earthworks' Farm Hand, has been passionate about it for a long time, interested in studying it at an agricultural school. He found his way to Earthworks in 2015 when he attended the

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WORKS OF MERCY

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Capuchin Soup Kitchen depends on others in the community who share our concern and commitment to people in need. You can view and sign up for the volunteer opportunities below here:



<https://ofmcap.cc/CSK-Vol>

Capuchin Soup Kitchen – Meldrum & Conner locations:

- Preparing food & trays for guests
- Wiping and sanitizing dining room tables and chairs
- Special events & projects

Capuchin Services Center:

- Sorting and organizing clothes
- Stocking and organizing food items
- Special events & projects

Rosa Parks Children & Youth Program:

- After school tutoring assistance
- Art therapy program assistance (no art skills required)
- Special Events & Seasonal Activities
- Volunteers are asked for a weekly commitment per academic semester

Earthworks Urban Farm:

- Mixing soil/making soil blocks or germination trays
- Planting/seeding/thinning seedlings
- Cultivating/weeding beds & flipping compost
- Other tasks related to gardening or farming



Volunteers Share Ministry's Impact

by Br. Gary Wegner, OFM Capuchin
Executive Director



I meet so many wonderful people wanting to help serve our brothers and sisters in need each day. Here are three short updates about groups that have been critical to our success.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians Supported CSK for Decades:



October 27, 2019, marked the 28th Annual Souperbowl sponsored by the Ancient Order of Hibernians – Father Solanus Division and the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians – Ethel Kennedy Division. The Hibernians would sponsor this fundraising event for the Capuchin Soup Kitchen each year. Guests at the event enjoyed a variety of soups and breads. Since the first “Souperbowl”, the Hibernians raised over \$350,000 for the Soup Kitchen. As their membership has grown older and fewer, they are no longer able to support this fundraising event. Thank you to the Hibernians for your 28 years of hard work and generosity!

R.I.P. Bill Galen & Thank You!



The Ivanhoe Café in Detroit is the home of the “World Famous Polish Yacht Club”. Operating since 1909, the Ivanhoe is a fixture in what was once the vibrant Poletown neighborhood of Detroit. The most recent owners

of the Ivanhoe are Pattie Galen and her husband Bill. Sadly, Bill Galen passed away suddenly on Monday, December 12, 2022. Bill was a retired Detroit police officer and a good friend of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Over the past several years, these donations have amounted to \$7400. We are grateful for the generosity and we will miss sitting at the bar and chatting with Bill. May he rest in peace.

John W. Smith Oldtimers – 81 Years of Giving to the Soup Kitchen



Since 1987, the John W. Smith Oldtimers have donated \$142,534.75 to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. This money has been raised through an annual Polish Dinner and Reverse Raffle, Bowling Tournament and a Golf Outing. However, the relationship between the members of the J.W. Smith Oldtimers and the Capuchin Soup Kitchen goes back to the club's origins in 1942. An association of tavernkeepers, the owners of numerous bars in Detroit, would keep a donation jar on their bar counter. Patrons were invited to drop donations into the jar to support the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Br. Albert Sandor, co-director of the Soup Kitchen in the late 1960s, remembers regularly visiting the various taverns to collect donations for the Soup Kitchen.



We Keep on Serving

As I was passing through the kitchen at our Conner site, I stopped to chat with Tamika, the manager of our meal sites. Tamika was preparing chicken wings for lunch. She asked me if I wanted one. I hesitated; it was only 10:00 in the morning. Finally, not wanting to disappoint her (and I really like chicken wings), I said “Just one.” She retrieved a small container filled with three plump chicken wings and handed it to me. I looked at her and said, “Flunked that math class I see.” We both laughed. Of course, Tamika can count. What this demonstrated was Tamika’s natural generosity, a generosity that reveals itself in her care for our guests and a desire to provide them with as much as we can and as good as we can.



▲ Br. Gary fist bumps Earthworks employee Tyler Chatman while visiting a meal.

One part of the Mission Statement of our Capuchin Province of St. Joseph reads “We attend simply and directly to the spiritual and other basic human needs, especially those of the poor and disenfranchised...” Providing food is how we best do this at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, but not just food. We do it by wanting to provide our guests with the best.

The number of guests coming to our two meal sites and to our Capuchin Services Center has been rising. This will come as no surprise to anyone who makes weekly trips to the grocery store. The number of guests seeking our services

is rising. So are our costs. As Br. Tien mentions in this issue, we are also providing meals for the guests who come to the Felician Sisters’ Deo Gratias Ministries.

When we revised our brochure, we added “Serving Guests for Nearly a Century: “The poor you will always have with you, and whenever you wish, you can do good to them...”” The quote is from Jesus in the Gospel of Mark. Whenever I become uneasy with the idea of marking a century of serving those who come to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, I reflect on those words of Jesus.

We also make a difference. Sometimes yesterday’s guest is today’s donor. Recently, Ray Tejada, the assistant manager of our Conner Kitchen site, shared with me the story of a former regular guest at Conner. She now has a steady job at a Detroit casino. She stopped in, gave Ray a bag of money, and told him that once a month she wants to give back by donating all of her tips for the day. Anyone who has ever worked in the hospitality business knows this means she is basically giving us one day’s wages. This is gratitude that has inspired generosity.

Peace and all good, Br. Gary

Earthworks Team Shares with All (continued from pg. 1)

EAT program and became crew leader the following year before becoming Assistant Coordinator in 2019. Four years later, he was asked to return as a staff member. He loves to pull weeds and said, “I can weed all day.”

Herbert has designed the planting layout to, as he said, “Keep it neat; keep it organized and professional.” His passion



▲ Volunteers sift soil to nourish the fields

for farming teaches him “how to survive when hard times come.”

The work at the fields and greenhouses changes as the team moves through the seasons; as the soil is prepared, plants grow and produce food, seeds are given a head start, and then the ground is prepared and ready to give to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen community again.

Continuing with Deo Gracias

by Br. Tien Dinh OFM Capuchin
Assistant Executive Director



In the Winter 2022, the Capuchin Soup Kitchen partnered with Deo Gracias Ministries to extend our outreach to serve people in the Regent Park neighborhood. It has been a successful partnership that has helped many guests who are coming to Deo Gracias to find resources that they need.

Our partnering with Deo Gracias continues to expand as we now deliver hot meals from our Meldrum Kitchen to the guests who are coming to their



▲ Br. Gary, far right and Br. Tien, second from right visit the sisters and staff at Deo Gracias Ministries.

sites for help twice a week.

In June 2023, Br. Gary and I with other staff visited and toured Deo Gracias Ministries to see in person the many good things that they are doing and to continue our efforts in supporting their mission to others.

The Capuchin Soup Kitchen is grateful for the opportunity to assist the Felician Sisters and their volunteers at Deo Gracias Ministries as they serve the needs of the people in their Detroit neighborhood.



CAPUCHIN SOUP KITCHEN

CSK Conner Meal Site:
4390 Conner
Detroit, MI 48215
313-579-2100 ext. 4216

CSK Meldrum Meal Site:
1264 Meldrum
Detroit, MI 48207
313-579-2100 ext. 2205

Spiritual Care:
Offered at both CSK Conner & Meldrum Meal Program Sites
313-579-2100 ext. 2209

Capuchin Services Center:
6333 Medbury St
Detroit, MI 48211
313-925-1370

Rosa Parks Children and Youth Program:
4390 Conner
Detroit, MI 48215
313-579-2100 ext. 4224

On The Rise Bakery & Cafe:
1780 Mt Elliott St
Detroit, MI 48207
Phone: 313.922.8510

Earthworks Urban Farm:
1264 Meldrum St.
Detroit, MI 48207
313-579-2100 Ext. 2204

Jefferson House:
8311 E. Jefferson
Detroit, MI
313-331-8900

Friars Elect New Provincial Council



▲ L to R: Capuchin Brothers Nicholas Blattner, Tien Dinh, Mark Joseph Costello, Biju Parakkalayil and William Hugo

The friars of the Capuchin Province of St. Joseph elected a new provincial council in June. The friars hadn't been able to meet in chapter in-person due to the pandemic for 5 years. Capuchin friar Mark

Joseph Costello was re-elected to a second term as provincial minister. The provincial minister, with the help and advice of the other councilors leads the province for the next three years. Blessings Brothers!

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 **YouTube**
[YouTube.com/CapuchinSoupKitchen](https://www.youtube.com/CapuchinSoupKitchen)