



# Breaking Bread

A Newsletter of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen  
1820 Mt. Elliott Street • Detroit, MI 48207

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www.CSKDetroit.org

## Notes from Br. Jerry

### *Teamwork makes it all happen*

Teamwork and so many people working faithfully behind the scenes are concepts that I want to highlight as we continue to remember the 90-year history of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. As I visit our modern-day soup kitchen sites, I am humbled by so many people working together to support an environment where our brothers and sisters who could use a hand can be supported in their short-term emergency goals as well as with their long-term goals in life. I wish I could respond personally to each good person working towards their goals and each good person who reaches out with monetary donations, in-kind donations, volunteering, or any of the other multiple ways we all work together to make this effort possible.

An example of a group that has worked behind the scenes and was instrumental in getting the Capuchin Soup Kitchen started in 1929 is the Secular Franciscans. Fr. Celestine Bittle, in his 1933 history, *A Romance of Lady Poverty*, writes about the soup kitchen only a few years after its start. Surprisingly, Fr. Celestine does not speak about Fr. Solanus Casey even though he was instrumental in the beginnings of the soup kitchen. Instead he speaks of the local Secular Franciscan group, along with Fr. Hermann Buss who

was helping them.

Who are Secular Franciscans? In the 1200's, St. Francis did not intend this Gospel-based movement to be restricted only to men living in consecrated life. He felt that this style of living out the Gospel could be carried out through other states of life as well. So, members of the Secular Franciscan Order might be single or married, female or male, or diocesan clergy. They usually lived in their homes but come together frequently for charitable work, prayer, and meetings. It was in a Secular Franciscan meeting hall next to St. Bonaventure Monastery where the soup kitchen began in 1929 because the friars' kitchen could no longer keep up with hundreds of people in need of emergency meals. The Secular Franciscans did a huge share of the work in those early years, and they continue to be involved today. There were so many others involved in those days such as farmers, volunteers, food market owners, and business owners who helped pull everything together so that the community could respond to the needs of the times. And so we all continue this effort today.



*Br. Jerry Johnson*

***You can support the team at Jefferson House!  
We will soon be installing 21 new energy- efficient windows for our  
Jefferson House Program.***

***The average cost for each window replacement, including all ex-  
penses, will be over \$1,000 each.***

***If anyone is able to contribute in a \$1,000 increment towards the  
cost of these windows, that would be a huge help to us.***

***If you are interested, please see the letter and reply envelope in-  
cluded in this edition of Breaking Bread.***

***I'm very grateful for everyone, Br. Jerry Johnson***



# “We hope for better things, it will rise from the ashes.”

## *Family gets help, fresh start after fire*

The great fire that wiped out Detroit in 1805 was so utterly devastating, that Fr. Gabriel Richard, the pastor of Ste. Anne de Detroit Parish, reportedly said in Latin: “We hope for better things, it will rise from the ashes.” And rise the city did.

On March 1, Ashia’s life was upended by a disaster. When we think of a disaster, a large-scale natural or man-made catastrophe might come to mind, such as a hurricane, earthquake or tsunami. At the household level though, a disaster like a fire is every bit as destructive as an earthquake or flood.

Ashia’s disaster started when a charger plugged into an electrical outlet sparked a fire in her son’s bedroom. The heat and sparks ignited a nearby mattress, and from there the fire quickly spread out of control. Thankfully, Ashia and her 10 children fled the house to safety. The Detroit Fire Department responded quickly and extinguished the fire, but the house was severely damaged. It would take months to repair the damage. “It was devastating,” said Ashia. “I never expected this to happen. It was just the worst possible thing.”

A referral from the American Red Cross led Ashia to the Capuchin Services Center for help putting the pieces back together. “The Capuchins were very helpful with getting through the process of getting clothes, food, beds and everything like that,” said Ashia. In addition to essentials like food, clothing and toiletry and household items, Capuchin Services Center provided a stove and refrigerator to replace the damaged-beyond-repair appliances in Ashia’s home.

“There are items we can provide such as pots and pans, and there are other things that maybe we don’t provide, but we can provide a referral to another agency for those things,” said Denise Johnson, manager of the Emergency Assistance Department at Capuchin Services Center. “We typically have around 24 or so families come to us for assistance following a fire or similar type of disaster.” In addition, counseling and spiritual support from friars, chaplains and social workers are available to disaster victims.



The number of structure fires in Detroit has been declining in recent years, which is a welcome trend. Nevertheless, for families suffering a catastrophic fire, the Capuchin Soup Kitchen is there to provide support in a time of crisis. Emergency assistance can prevent a single crisis from snowballing into a series of misfortunes that can trigger homelessness. According to researchers from New York University, in a tight housing market, “any bad luck may precipitate loss of housing.”

Through supporting the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, benefactors help provide needed disaster relief, offering a lifeline for families so that they can “rise from the ashes.”

Note: The names of Capuchin Soup Kitchen guests have been changed to protect the anonymity of those we serve.



# A big “THANK YOU” to Capuchin Soup Kitchen volunteers!

The ministries of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen would not be possible without the work of so many dedicated volunteers who work in each of the Soup Kitchen’s seven programs across five sites. Volunteers were invited to an appreciation dinner on April 10 at the Conner meal site. The evening included dinner, a short prayer service and music from the Capuchin Soup Kitchen Choir.



*Sr. Nancyann Turner, OP, program manager for the Rosa Parks Children’s Program, with guests*



*Names were recited and a candle was lit in remembrance of volunteers, guests, friars, friends and family who were called home in the last year.*



*The Capuchin Soup Kitchen Volunteer Coordinators (Left to Right): Candice Wroblewski of the Capuchin Services Center, Gayle Koyton and Maxwell Morrison of the Conner meal site, Rita Johnson of the Meldrum meal site, and Wendy Casey, Earthworks Outreach Coordinator*



*The Capuchin Soup Kitchen Choir performs prior to dinner.*

# Earthworks Urban Farm springs into growing season

Longer days and warmer temps mean the start of growing season at Earthworks Urban Farm, a program of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Earthworks is one of Detroit's pioneering urban agriculture sites, with a USDA-certified outdoor organic farm, as well as a greenhouse, hoop house and orchards. Organic produce supplies both Capuchin Soup Kitchen meal sites, with kitchen scraps going back to Earthworks in the form of compost.



Earthworks began in the late 1990s when Br. Rick Samyn recognized a need to reconnect neighborhood youth with the earth.

As Earthworks has grown and evolved, the Earthworks Agriculture Training (E.A.T.) program was developed to provide opportunities for community members to learn the ins and outs of sustainable urban farming.

In addition, the public can purchase fresh, seasonal, organic produce, along with jams and jellies, as available, at Meldrum Fresh Market. The market pops up every Thursday from 11am to 2pm from mid-May to mid-November in the parking lot of the Meldrum meal site at 1264 Meldrum, Detroit, MI 48207.

The incoming 2019 E.A.T. class will take what they learn and apply it in urban gardens and small agricultural enterprises around the city, helping to build Detroit's sustainable agriculture capacity. Past participants have gone on to start their own businesses and work at farms throughout the area, helping to grow Detroit's sustainable food economy.

A cornerstone of the Earthworks mission is educating the community about sustainable agriculture.



# Meet the 2019 E.A.T. participants:

## Brandon

“I’ve been interested in farming since I was a little kid. My grandmother grew up on a farm... and I helped her growing up. Years later, I realized that growing food was calling me.”

Favorite fruit or vegetable: Greens. “You can do a lot with them. It’s kind of a survival food in that you can get everything you need out of it, but it still tastes good.”



2019 Earthworks Agriculture Training participants, from left to right: Brandon, R.C., Dennis, Valerie and Tamika.

## Dennis

“I was looking to get into farming and farm-to-table food and started volunteering at organizations around the city. I really enjoyed the atmosphere and attitude at this program in particular.”

Favorite fruit or vegetable: Tomatoes. “A homegrown tomato and a tomato grown in the store, they’re not even the same thing.”

## R.C.

“I’ve been growing at home for the last three years, but I’m here to learn the right way... There are a lot of resources available here.”

Favorite fruit or vegetable: Tomatoes. “I could eat tomatoes every day!”



## Tamika

“I want to get gardening back into the schools for the children. That’s a goal of mine.” Favorite fruit or vegetable: String beans. “I always have loved string beans. But I love all green vegetables, really.”

## Valerie

“I had no clue about the program. I’m glad I’m in it. I enjoy

learning different ways of planting, and I look forward to coming back next year to hopefully be a team leader.”

Favorite fruit or vegetable: Broccoli. “I just love broccoli, cheese and rice!”

Be sure to follow Earthworks Urban Farm on social media to stay up to date on what’s growing.



# On the Rise Bakery and Café celebrates 10 years on Gratiot Avenue



## *Faith. Hope. Love.*

These are the ingredients baked into every item on the menu at On the Rise Bakery Café, a program of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen on Detroit's east side.

The bakery, located at the corner of Gratiot Avenue and Rohns Street, was started by Br. Ray Stadmeyer in 2006, and in the 13 years that have followed, has not only provided delectable baked goods to the community, but has cultivated an environment of support for marginalized community members. As 2009 marks 90 years of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen serving the community, it also marks 10 years for the On the Rise bakehouse at Gratiot Avenue near the Ford Freeway.

Initially founded as a part of the R.O.P.E. (Reaching Our Potential Everyday) program through the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, the bakery's underlying focus is rehabilitation. The bakers employed here are men who are re-entering the workforce, as well as society,

after being incarcerated, as well as those who have successfully completed a rehabilitation program to overcome substance use disorders. In essence, On the Rise gives ex-felons and recovering addicts a second chance at life.

“We have about 100 men who have went through the program and only two have went back to prison. So, that's a pretty good percentage”, said Br. Ray. “We needed to do more than just feed people. We needed to continue to work on their recovery.”

On the Rise has become a holistic support system for the men it employs. There is an air of camaraderie as each man is responsible for reaching back and supporting the newer members through their journey of rehabilitation.

“It's a culture”, Br. Stadmeyer added. “It's a culture where people actually want to see you succeed... and that for me is the basis of this. It's great to have a bakery, but the bottom line is that the ministry is changing lives.”

In addition to their location at 8900 Gratiot Ave., On the Rise Bakery Café makes frequent visits to parishes across the metro-Detroit area.

For more information about On the Rise Bakery Café and for a schedule of upcoming parish sales, visit the Capuchin Soup Kitchen website: [www.CSKDetroit.org/bakery](http://www.CSKDetroit.org/bakery)

## Calendar

### **June 13th from 11 AM to 10 PM**

Celebration of the Feast of St. Antonio  
Antonio's Cucina Italiana Locations

Celebrate the Feast of St. Anthony at one of four Antonio Cucina Italiana restaurants: Canton, Dearborn Heights, Farmington Hills, and Livonia. The restaurants will be devoted to the mission of St. Antonio...helping those less fortunate. At one of four Antonio Cucina Italiana restaurants: Canton, Dearborn Heights, Farmington Hills and Livonia. A portion of the proceeds benefits the Capuchin Soup Kitchen.

[www.cskdetroit.org/events/celebration\\_of\\_the\\_feast\\_of\\_st.\\_antonio](http://www.cskdetroit.org/events/celebration_of_the_feast_of_st._antonio)

### **June 22nd at 7:30 PM**

38th Annual Capuchin Souper Summer Celebration  
Comerica Park, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit, MI 48201

Join us for a night of live music, dancing and attractions. Food will be available for purchase; there will be a cash bar, live entertainment, and fireworks! Dressy summer attire is suggested.

All are welcome to attend who are 21 years of age or older.

[www.cskdetroit.org/ahee/](http://www.cskdetroit.org/ahee/)

### **August 25th 5:30 PM to 11:00 PM**

26th Annual Benefit on the Bay  
MacRay Harbor, Harrison Twp., 30675 N. River Rd., Harrison Township, MI 48045

Join the Capuchin friars for the 26th Annual Benefit on the Bay! Enjoy a beautiful evening at MacRay Harbor on Lake St. Clair. Tickets are \$75 which includes appetizers, dinner, beer/wine, music, dancing and complimentary valet, as well as a chance to bid on items in a live and silent auction.

[benefitonthebay.org/](http://benefitonthebay.org/)