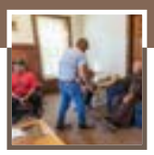
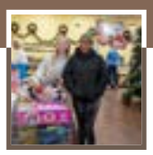
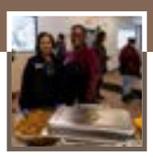
Capuchin Soup Kitchen

Breaking Bread *Newsletter*

Feeding Bodies, Nourishing Spirits, Strengthening Communities

November 2026

Jefferson House Celebrates 50 Years of Life-Saving Ministry





▲ *The Jefferson House recently hosted a 50th Anniversary Open House. Former clients, supporters, staff and friars shared a meal and renewed friendships as they celebrated so many men achieving and maintaining sobriety.*

"I am told ***you saved my life*** all the time by people who have gone through our addiction and recovery programs at Jefferson House," Br. Gary Wegner, Ministry Director, Capuchin Soup Kitchen, said. "To think we're celebrating the 50th anniversary of Jefferson House's founding, it's an incredible accomplishment."

While agreeing with Br. Gary about the accomplishment, Amy Kinner, Director of Residential Services, said those who have gone through the program get one thing wrong: "They did the work, not us," Amy clarified. "They saved their lives. What we do is take them to places emotionally and intellectually so they can do that work successfully."

Jefferson House was founded in 1976 after several earlier attempts at establishing a treatment program. Amy explained, "In the mid-1980s, the friars were able to earn CARF accreditation and were licensed by the State of Michigan. We have served 1,271 men so far. We can't trace them all, and some have passed, but many did achieve sobriety."

"We accept up to 10 men per program. They have already done detox and two weeks of treatment. Another treatment program must refer them. We're a secondary treatment program. Our program runs about 10 months, and we know that the longer people can stay sober, they have a better chance to achieve long-term sobriety."

Therapies used include:

- Individual Therapy
- Learning Classes
- Process Group
- Six-Week Relapse Class
- Work Therapy at CSK sites
- 12 Step Programs – 3 x per week
- And other strategies

Amy added, "Trauma and addiction are very highly correlated. Many of the men here have been victims of or witnesses to violence. They have often lived unsafe lives and known poverty and hunger."

Br. Gary added, "I am often asked, 'Can you really intervene in the cycle of poverty?'" He paused and said, "I tell folks that we do that at Jefferson House. Amy and her staff are highly educated and quite skilled at helping so many men struggling with life-or-death addictions."

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*

SCAN ME

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

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

On the Rise Bakery:

- Assist in making baked goods
- Wrapping and labeling baked items
- Help with cleaning tasks as needed

The People Matter Most



by Br. Gary Wegner, OFM Capuchin Executive Director

Besides the many building projects at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, it is always good to remember that it is the people who matter most, whether guests, volunteers, donors, staff, or Capuchin friars. We are fortunate to have welcomed a new friar to the CSK staff. Br. Mike Dorn is now the Manager at the Capuchin Services Center. Recognizing that Br. Mike brings a wealth of experience to the position, Br. Fred Cabras, Director of Social Services, stated: "I am encouraged by Br. Mike's presence and gifts in helping the Capuchin Services Center continue to support our guests as they face barriers to food security." Br. Mike said of his new role: "I'm excited to be part of the Capuchin Services Center team, bringing my background as a farmer, social worker, brother, and priest to the community."



▲ *Br. Gary Wegner, OFM Cap., leads a tour of the Refettorio Detroit. Story on page 3.*

Speaking of Br. Fred, he was elected to chair the Board of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD), which works closely with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to ensure people with disabilities can fully participate in the Catholic Church. Br. Fred will lead the board and guide the executive director in advancing NCPD's mission and setting standards for full and active participation of people with disabilities. He brings valuable sensitivity and experience from his work with people with disabilities to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, especially the Services Center.

In late September, Capuchin Br. Bob Malloy and Gerry Brisson received the Brindisi Award, given annually to alumni of our St. Lawrence Seminary High School in Wisconsin who have best exemplified the values of St. Lawrence. Br. Bob was the longtime chaplain at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Gerry Brisson, who began his career at the Soup Kitchen, went on to serve for twenty years as the Executive Director and President of Gleaners Food Bank, one of CSK's closest partners in serving Detroiters facing food insecurity. Gerry is also a member of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen Advisory Council. Congratulations, Br. Bob and Gerry.

Deo Gratias Ministries, founded by the Felician Sisters, has become an important partner with the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Recently, I was honored to deepen this partnership by serving on their Board of Directors. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve this wonderful ministry.

A Ministry Not Standing Still





▲ *In late September, we hosted members of the media for a first look at Refettorio Detroit. Br. Gary, Jill Conklin from Food for Soul, & Michael Ferlito from The Ferlito Group spoke with the press about the project & shared more about Refettorio Detroit's vision. Then, we toured the progress so far on the Meldrum Community Center building. We are grateful to everyone who joined us & to all those involved for their hard work, which made it possible!*

"Standing still is the fastest way of moving backward in a rapidly changing world" are oft-quoted words of the late, great actress Lauren Bacall. Through the years, the Capuchin Soup Kitchen has never stood still.

Recently, the pace of change seems to have picked up. Some days, it feels like a funnel in which several significant initiatives have come together and are rapidly pouring through the funnel's narrow spout.

The first of these is Refettorio Detroit: Capuchin Soup Kitchen. The construction company assures us that the renovation of the Meldrum dining room and kitchen will be completed by the end of January with meal service commencing on February 15. When the doors open, we will begin serving our guests in a new three-course style: a starter (soup, salad, or hors d'oeuvre), a main entree, and a dessert.

Refettorio Detroit will be the 13th in an international network. On Wednesday, February 24, 2027, we will host a walk-through from 2:00 to 6:00 PM for donors, volunteers, neighbors, and guests to see the results of your generosity. Archbishop Weisenburger will join us for the blessing and dedication. The schedule will be posted on our website closer to the event.

The second initiative is in the planning stage. We hope to build a much-needed indoor shower facility to serve our guests at Conner. We know there is a need because we sometimes serve nearly 30 guests in the portable showers that we moved to Conner from Meldrum. Our facilities department is doing a good job of keeping them going, but we know they are approaching the end of their lifetime.

Blessed Solanus helped inspire the Capuchin friars to change with the times, moving from serving the men who came to the door of St. Bonaventure Monastery a sandwich to opening the Capuchin Soup Kitchen and serving meals to thousands of guests. With all that is happening, we are not standing still!



◄ *We want to congratulate Br. David Preuss, OFM Cap., who received the Detroit Catholic Pastoral Alliance's Lifetime in Ministry Award on September 23 at its annual Harvest Dinner. Present at the dinner to support Br. David was former Director Br. Jerry Smith, Sr. NancyAnn Turner, Br. Bob Malloy, Br. Gary Wegner, Br. Tien Dinh, Br. Mark Joseph Costello and Capuchin Vicar Provincial Minister Br. Nick Blattner. The award recognized his faithful pastoral service in the city of Detroit.*

Silver Soup Bowl Awardees at SOCK Dinner

The Capuchin Soup Kitchen honored the following for their commitment and generosity to our mission at the recent SOCK Dinner.



Michael and Nancy Long have shared their time, talents, and voices with the Capuchin Ministries, including the Capuchin Soup Kitchen in ways that reflect a deeply personal commitment to service. Most recently, they have championed Refettorio Detroit, lending their voices and inviting others to help provide tables and chairs to welcome guests to this new ministry. Nancy has also volunteered in our sewing room for 15 years, while Michael has generously cared for the gardens at the Solanus Casey Center. Together, Michael and Nancy embody a spirit of service that extends wherever there is an opportunity to help, strengthen our community, and bring others into the mission.



Chef Bobby Nahra has been a tireless champion of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Rooted in a deep faith, Bobby supports our mission in countless ways and encourages others to join him. From serving as a SOCK co-chair and leading food recovery efforts to his involvement with Refettorio Detroit, Bobby has generously shared his time, culinary talents, invaluable relationships, and needed resources. More than a supporter, he has been a joyful ambassador for our work, never hesitating to open a door, make an introduction, or ask others to be part of what is possible.





The Sacred Heart Dearborn Parish Community has built a remarkable tradition of putting faith into action in support of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Parishioners regularly come together to volunteer at our Capuchin Services Center and meal program sites, generously giving their time to serve our guests and neighbors. That spirit of service extends to the parish's festive, delicious, and treasured Chili Cha Cha, an annual event that brings the broader community together around good food, fellowship, and giving. Through hands-on service, generosity, and years of partnership, Sacred Heart has become a meaningful part of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen's community. Fran Helner, pictured above volunteers at the Capuchin Services Center and chairs the Chili Cha Cha as a parish member.

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

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 48214
313-331-8900

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