



# St. John the Evangelist Homeless Shelter

Providing a Seasonal Warming Center

411 St. John Street

Green Bay, WI 54301

(920) 436-9344

[www.StJohnHomelessShelter.org](http://www.StJohnHomelessShelter.org)

December 2009

## GREETINGS FROM OUR DIRECTOR, MARY KELLY

Hello!

Thanks to all of you and the generous Green Bay community, St. John's re-opened the shelter on schedule Nov. 1st. Our Open House on Oct. 28th was well attended. It was great to see so many familiar, smiling faces again. The positive comments about the "new" face to the shelter were great to hear as our "home" is much neater, brighter, safer, and user friendly. How did so much get done in just a few months? A special thank you to the Facility Committee: Rob Kruzynski, Tom Froelich, Fr. Guy Blair, & Dave Dolan-Wallace for coordinating the renovation efforts. That was not an easy task!

After a busy initial two weeks, we are now seeing over 40 guests per night. All are warm, dry, safe, and well-fed during our hours of operation and thoroughly enjoy the new bathrooms and showers. It is so good to know that our guests are in a comfortable and safe environment.

December brings a great deal of activity to the shelter, Christmas donations and decorating, and connecting guests with services and more permanent housing.

We are now working on completing set up and training of our phone system that will include a door bell/buzzer. ..hopefully to be up and running this week.

(see Mary Kelly's Greeting, continued on p. 2)



*Mary Kelly and Fr. Guy Blair do the honors at the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Shelter's October Open House. Hundreds of people attended the event and toured the renovated facility. The project included building rehabilitation work as well as installing a fire suppression sprinkler system and improved toilet and shower facilities that comply with current building codes.*



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## A MESSAGE FROM FR. GUY BLAIR, SHELTER COMMUNITY CHAPLAIN

Dear Friends,

We were just in the middle of tearing down walls and putting on a new roof...and now 'in the air there's the feeling of Christmas'... Someone will need to think about putting up a tree and 'decking the halls with boughs of holly!' At St. John's Homeless Shelter, Christmas is more than a tree and decorations...it is about our 'presents'!

You are the Christmas present that many long for all year long... in a sense, you never are

fully unwrapped because you keep on giving...Christmas and the Feast of the Holy Family are only two days apart this year. We all want to belong to a family, to be loved and have someone looking out for us. You are the family, the arms and the smile that our guests are searching for. You make all the difference in the world to our guests.

It's a beautiful thought that God loved the world so much that God gave us his only Son. I can only stand in awe at the mystery of God, but I know how wonder-

ful it is to be loved. Christmas, more than ever, is a time to show our love because God first loved us and others have generously held us in their arms.

Thank you for being a six month Christmas gift and for your special smile, your friendly mood and your welcoming spirit... you may never have a greater opportunity to be love than at our Shelter! The food, the new amenities are all great, but you are the 'Shelter'... Merry Christmas, Happy Feast of the Holy Family and Blessings to you all.



## THIS CHRISTMAS, BECOME A TRAVELING COMPANION ...

Sponsor a bus pass for one of our guests and give the gift of warmth and safety in this cold Wisconsin weather!

St. John's is a night shelter, so our guests are out in the cold temperatures all day. A bus pass would provide a safe and warmer way for them to reach their daytime destinations. Your donation of \$35 will provide one of our guests with a pass for one month. A donation of any amount would be most appreciated!

To contribute to the Traveling Companion Fund, please send your donation to:  
 St. John Homeless Shelter  
 411 St. John Street  
 Green Bay, WI 54301

Please indicate that your gift is for purchasing a bus pass.

**May all your holiday times and travels be safe and happy ones!**

### ~ RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS ~

#### Giving Thanks

The Downtown Green Bay Annual Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service was held at St. John the Evangelist Parish. Members from nine congregations gathered to pray, sing and celebrate. Items for local pantries were collected and a free-will offering of over \$1,300 was taken up for the shelter. Thank you very much!

#### Attention Hospitality Volunteers!!

Please check the December calendar for openings in the schedule. The shelter will be open ALL DAY on Christmas Day and New Year's Day. On Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, the shelter will open at Noon, so we will need extra volunteers on those days. Thanks for your help!

#### Memorial Service for the Homeless

You are invited to a prayer service in memory of those who have died while living homeless on the streets. The service will be held on Monday, Dec. 21st at 7:00 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Church.

### GREETINGS FROM MARY KELLY, CONTINUED FROM P. 1



*Thank you for all your generous donations of shelter supplies and items for our guests.*

Deep appreciation goes out to all who have patiently stood by the door knocking until someone appeared to let you in and for listening to a voicemail that stubbornly continued to recite "we are closed for the season" despite our NUMEROUS efforts to change it.

In one month, our extremely low supply of shelter and guest items has

risen considerably, thanks to our many generous and thoughtful donors. As the temperature gradually drops, we continue to receive donations of warm gloves, hats, and jackets which are soon seen walking in and out of our door on the hands, heads and backs of our guests. What would they do without your help?

The big hearts within this community continue to amaze me. Knowing that many people are struggling themselves, yet willing to think of others less fortunate demonstrates the goodness of God working through each of you. Bless you all for making this shelter possible.

*Mary Kelly serves as the Shelter's Executive Director*

## A MESSAGE FROM A FORMER SHELTER GUEST

I was a guest at St. John's for two winters until I was able to find an apartment at Port Plaza Towers. While I was (at the shelter), I was treated real nice. The volunteers really cared about everyone. The food was unbelievable, there was so much of it I was amazed at how and why they fed us so nicely.

Before staying at St. John's I felt alone and like I was in a dark hole with no way out. Now I feel good about myself and still can't believe that I live in my

own apartment with my own key to a lock on my apartment door. I stand outside and look at the building and thank God I have a nice apartment. Now that I have my own place, I'm able to understand myself and get the help I need. St. John's shelter is a great thing to have in Green Bay. Everyone that works at St. John's works together as a team and that's what makes it a good place. Father Guy is also awesome.



*This former guest now holds the key to a new home and a new life*

## SHELTER GUEST SHARES HER APPRECIATION

"I have been homeless for eight months and I wish people could understand what a homeless person goes through not having a home or your children with you, the degrading feeling and how it hurts so much. I am a 45 yr. old woman and I am not an alcoholic or a drug user or dealer. I have been at St. John's and they have

helped me out a great deal. Mary Marks bless her soul has gotten me an apartment at Port Plaza Towers. I love my apartment, even the feeling of having a home feels so good. I am very happy and not feeling depressed anymore. A lot of people say I look happy, relaxed, which I am. I have a bed, my bed, my furniture, my apart-

ment. When those keys hit my hand, I didn't want to give them up and I don't have to give them up because they're mine, all mine. All I want to say to those who helped me out is thanx a million. I appreciate everything and am very grateful to all of you. "

*"I am very happy and not feeling depressed anymore...  
I appreciate everything & am very grateful to all of you." -a former shelter guest*



*Our guests are on their feet and on the move most of the day. A good pair of warm boots is critical to weathering the winter in Green Bay*

## BOOT FUND UNDERWAY

Try walking around all winter in shoes or old boots that don't fit well or aren't well insulated and soon you will be dealing with frostbitten toes and major health problems. For the past two

years, generous donors have provided new quality winter boots for our shelter guests.

Once again, the shelter hopes to raise enough funds to purchase boots for each guest. We will

need between \$2,000—\$3,000 to reach this goal. If you would like to make a donation to the Boot Fund, please send it to: St. John Homeless Shelter, 411 St. John Street, Green Bay WI 54301.

~~ **SHELTER WISH LIST** ~~

**TWIN SIZE FITTED SHEETS!!!!**

Items for Guests

Adult hooded sweatshirts (larger sizes)  
and sweatpants

Winter hats, gloves, coats

Slippers and flip flops (for shower)

Backpacks

Jeans (all sizes)

Shelter Supplies

HE Laundry Soap—front load

Anti-septic hand wash and wipes

Paper bowls, large and small plates

Styrofoam cups

49 or 30 gallon garbage bags

Decaf coffee

Fruit Juice

For a complete listing of needed items, please visit our website. Drop off times for donations are: 9:00 a.m. to noon Monday—Friday and 4:00—6:00 p.m. on all days. If these times are not convenient, donations can be left on the St. John parish office front porch up until 9:00 p.m.

**Contact Us:**



Mary Kelly, Executive Director

Mary Ellen Marchant, Volunteer Coordinator

Jan Katers, On-Site Coordinator & Donations

Rev. Guy Blair, scj, Pastor, St. John the Evangelist  
Church and Shelter Community Chaplain

Phone: (920) 436-9344

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