

# The Net Worker



FALL 2010

## THE NET WORKER

*The Newsletter of  
St. Peter the Apostle Parish  
River Edge, New Jersey*

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## INTRODUCING.... THE FAMILY SHELTER MINISTRY AT ST. PETER'S

BY BARBARA GALLAGHER

Housing and shelter have always been a need in the State of New Jersey, and with the economy affecting more people today on all social and economical levels, it has become a priority. Together with the former Interreligious Fellowship of Bergen County (IRF), St. Peter's had provided shelter for individuals for many years through the Overflow Shelter program, which our parish hosted on Wednesday evenings during the month of June. With the recent opening of the Bergen County Shelter in Hackensack, which provides shelter and services for individuals, the Overflow Shelter program was discontinued.

A greater need arose that could not be met by the Bergen County Shelter: shelter for families, including children. The IRF joined forces with Family Promise, which is an interfaith non-profit organization committed to helping low-income families nationwide achieve lasting independence. This is accomplished by providing shelter, meals and support services for homeless families and through programs designed to redress the underlying causes of homelessness. Family Promise was founded on the belief that Americans are compassionate people who want to make a difference, thereby linking those in need with those who want to help. The IRF has changed their name to Family Promise of Bergen County to align the organization with Family Promise and their mission.



## THE NEW FAMILY SHELTER MINISTRY

As a result, the Family Shelter Ministry was created about a year ago. St. Peter's was chosen as a "host congregation" which means that our parish will provide meals, shelter and activities for up to 4 families with children (a total of 15 people) for a 7-day period. A core team of parishioners, Mary Ellen Burns, Paul Kazanecki and Barbara Gallagher have been meeting for a year to attend Family Promise meetings and shape the new ministry at St. Peter's. Parishioners from St. Peter's have assumed the following roles:

<b>Program Coordinator:</b>	Barbara Gallagher
<b>Host Coordinator:</b>	Paul Kazanecki
<b>Meal Coordinator:</b>	Mary Ellen Burns
<b>Activities Coordinator:</b>	Noreen Scala

For the congregations that did not have the room to host but wanted to "support" this ministry, Support Congregations were formed. St. Peter's is fortunate to have the following congregations supporting the Family Shelter Ministry:

**Temple Avodat Shalom  
First Congregational Church  
St. Joseph's in Oradell**

The Parish Center will be transformed into four "Guest Suites" during a hosting week, which will have a theme: "Home Suite Home". Each Support Congregation and St. Peter's will take responsibility for furnishing one Guest Suite and will have "Naming Rights" for their suite! (This could be an opportunity for a contest here in the parish for the name of our Suite...) St. Peter's will host families for three separate weeks during a 52-week period. A typical week will include the following:

"Guests" will arrive on a Sunday evening around 5 pm. An orientation will take place whereby guests will be acclimated to the parish environment, procedures and the upcoming week. A welcome dinner will be served and a member of each Support Congregation will be present to welcome our guests. Guests will settle into their Guest Suite after preparing the lunches for their family for the following day. TV is permitted after 8 pm. "Lightsout" will be no later than 11 PM.

Breakfast will be served in the morning and the Family Promise van will transport guests to the Family Promise Day Center in Ridgewood. If guests have jobs, they will go to their jobs from the Ridgewood location. School age children will be transported to the school they attended in the community in which they resided prior to becoming part of the Family Shelter Ministry. Non-working guests will receive support services during the day and showers and laundry facilities will be available to them in the Day Center. At approximately 6 pm, all guests will be transported to St. Peter's for dinner each evening.

Guests will leave St. Peter's the following Sunday morning after breakfast and move to another host congregation within Bergen County.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



To provide meals, shelter and activities for four families during a 7-day period will require over 70 volunteers each hosting week. There will be many opportunities, including:

**2 Overnight volunteers:** (1 male, 1 female) each evening (sleeping is permitted)

**Food preparation and serving volunteers:** approximately 4 people each night to prepare well- balanced, nutritional meals, including dinner, lunch, breakfast and healthy snacks

**Set-up and breakdown** of guest suites on both Sundays

**Volunteers for activities,** games, movies, puzzles, homework (possibly)

## PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

While our Parish Center provides meeting space for all of our busy ministries, Ministry Leaders have been very generous in agreeing to give up their meeting time during a hosting week. Without their support, the Family Shelter Ministry would not have been possible in St. Peter's.

All three of our Support Congregations have enthusiastically embraced their roles in bringing the Family Shelter Ministry to people in need. Each congregation will purchase and/or obtain the furnishings and accessories (very basic) for their Guest Suite. They have also indicated that they will take one 24-hour role in providing dinner, breakfast and lunch. They have also agreed to launder and store linens and furnishings for their Guest Suite.

**THE QUILTERS OF ST. PETER'S** are already working towards the completion of lovingly made warm quilts for each of our guests who will be able to take their quilts with them to their next "home".

The Pastor of the First Congregational Church has arranged with an organization to provide free blankets for our guests.

## NEXT STEPS

The Family Shelter Ministry team has been formed with representatives from St. Peter's and each Support Congregation. Monthly meetings have been scheduled to prepare for the first hosting week.

Family Promise of Bergen County is coordinating a calendar for hosting congregations throughout Bergen County. At this time, we do not have a date for the first hosting week, but we anticipate that it will occur somewhere between November 28th and early January 2011. Once a date has been confirmed, there will be an aggressive recruiting effort to enlist volunteers from our parish to share their time and talent as we provide shelter to families who are in need.



## REMEMBER THE TURKEY DRIVE

### Saturday, November 20th

The Thirteenth Annual St. Peter's Thanksgiving Turkey Drive will be **Saturday November 20th**. Please, please, help out the food pantries and donate your frozen turkey. This year, the need is greater than ever. I know, I know, we say that every year, but this year it really is.

Our turkey drive is one of St. Peter's most successful out-reach programs. Every year, the Community of FoodBank of New Jersey collects about 2,100 turkeys from 18 New Jersey counties. Our parish typically contributes approximately one-fifth of that number.

Here's what to do to – it could not be easier! Make sure you read your Shoprite coupon carefully and don't forget to pick up your turkey. You can drop it off SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20, between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. The truck will be waiting in the St. Peter's parking lot, and there are always ample volunteers from the Youth Group and local Boy Scout troops, to help you remove the large, chilly bird from your trunk.

Check with your friends to make sure they've used their Shoprite coupons – make sure no one leaves a turkey unclaimed. Times are truly tough for many people now, so let's make sure all New Jersey families can feel the warmth and comfort of a big meal, and the compassion of their fellow man.

Thank you!

# GIFT GATHERINGS BEGIN

By Eileen Hanrahan

Last month, St. Peter's had the first of the GIFT gatherings. GIFT (Generations in Faith Together) is a Faith Formation program that brings families together to explore the gospel in an informal, group setting. Families will meet other times throughout the year in this manner, sharing their faith with each other, hopefully creating a dialogue and an awareness of Christ in our daily lives that will carry over into their regular family lives.

Here are some initial reactions from the first meetings:

## REACTIONS FROM FATHER MIKE:

For the first time in my ministry as a priest I had the opportunity to see how true formation in our faith can happen. As families gathered for Mass together and then shared a meal, talked to each other about their faith, I knew what Jesus meant when he told his disciples to go out to all the world and tell the good news. That is exactly what happened here at St. Peter's last weekend.

## REACTIONS FROM ATTENDEES:

1. Thank you for a wonderful evening. It is all I imagined my daughter's introduction with Faith would be. I have chosen to raise my children in the Catholic Faith, hoping I would be satisfied with the message they were hearing and hoping and really praying they would find a way to connect with that message. Having an opportunity to really talk with my children about serving others, something so fundamental to our faith, was truly a GIFT for me! I look forward to the future, and this wonderful new approach to "CCD".

2. My family and I attended the Saturday evening retreat. We all thought it was wonderful. It clearly required a lot of preparation and work, but it was well worth it. We thought it was educational, and a good bonding experience for our family as well as an opportunity to meet other families.

We are glad to have the opportunity to participate in this new program.

3. It was great to see a completely packed church. Bringing GIFT to St. Peter's is a fantastic endeavor and a blessing for the parish. It is an empowering feeling to know that our community is choosing to share God's love and is willing to try new ideas.

## REACTIONS FROM THE SOME OF THE CORE TEAM OF GIFT:

1. It was a pleasure to see two parents holding each side of the bible, with their 12 year old son squished in the middle reading aloud from it, all completely engaged!

2. I loved seeing my own daughter's enthusiasm prominently displaying the [Xerox of the] footprint, and thinking each day how she will go about serving others.

3. A little boy approached me asking me when the next gathering would be held. I told him next weekend, and he asked if he could come back!

4. Great to see how many fathers came and engaged in the activities with their children.

5. I was struck by all the families taking this seriously and recognizing the importance of gathering as a parish family to share their faith and create catholic memories.



We would like to bring to your attention the new bookshelves in the far left corner in our library.

You will find two categories of books -

**"Healing"** - PINK TAPE and  
**"Social Action"** - BLUE-GREEN TAPE

We have a number of new books in both these categories.

**"Healing"**  
**HEALING WOUNDED EMOTIONS**

PADOVANO

**WHEN GOD SAYS NO**

LANAHAN

**WHEN CHILDREN GRIEVE**

(for adults to help children)

JAMES & FRIEDMAN

**THE EUCHARIST**

**- THE GREATEST HEALING GIFTS -**

RUANE

**and more.**

**"Social Action"**  
**LED BY FAITH and LEFT TO TELL**

ILIBAGIZA

**ROMERO; A LIFE**

BROCKMAN

**CARE FOR CREATION**

(a Franciscan spirituality of the earth)

DELIO

**AMAZING GRACE**

(The lives of children and the conscience of a nation)

KOZOL

**and more.**

PLEASE VISIT ST. PETER'S LIBRARY AND CHECK OUT ALL THE NEW BOOKS TO BE FOUND THERE.

## DAY CARE CENTER FOR SENIORS, RIGHT HERE ARE ST. PETER'S

By Clare Elton

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark opened a Social Day Care Center for Seniors on July 7, 2009. The program is located at what used to be the senior residence/convent location at St. Peter's parish in River Edge at 415 Fifth Ave. It is open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To date the program has had 19 clients enrolled. Breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack are provided and transportation may be available. If enough interest is generated, we would certainly be more than happy to open more than two days a week.

**Here is a story provided by one of our clients:**

**C. is an 84 year old widowed woman who has been diagnosed with the early stages of Alzheimer's disease. C. was born in Europe and visited many countries throughout her life. She speaks a few languages. She is in good medical shape but she can be forgetful and has a tendency to mix different languages. C. lives with her niece who is her caretaker and who brought her to Catholic Charities Social Day Care Center in River Edge NJ which is open on Tuesdays and Fridays.**

**At home, C. feels lonely and depressed. Her niece works full time so C. is alone most of the day watching TV and saying her prayers. She needed socialization and interaction with other people as well as the opportunity to improve her fine motor skills. C. has never missed a day since she started coming to the Day Care Center and complains that two days are not enough for her. After attending for one full year C. feels very comfortable and at home. She is able to tell her life stories to other people and make jokes; she loves to participate in all the activities. Being a part of a group makes C. feel important and significant. She gets attention from others that she misses when she goes home. It makes her believe that her life has not ended and that it can still bring some happiness. Coming to the Center gives her a kind of routine that she lost when she retired.**

**C. dreams of the opportunity when she can come to the Center every day. She says that it keeps her alive.**

On an average day we have 8 clients, 2 staff members and one volunteer. Both staff members have master's degrees in social work and one has 14 years experience in the field.

Please call Tamar at 201.265.3840 x226 for more information. If financial requirements are met, clients may be eligible for Global Options which could pay for their slot into the program. Otherwise, the private fee is \$65/day.

Here is a "one free day" coupon.

Redeem this coupon for

**ONE FREE DAY**

at Catholic Charities

Senior Social Day Care Center

(located on St. Peter's Church Property)

425 Fifth Ave

River Edge, NJ 07661

## POETRY CORNER

Your fall schedule is in full swing, isn't it? You have list of things to do, and obligations to meet, and goals that you want to achieve before the end of the year. Perhaps, like me, you feel frustrated because you are constantly being knocked "off course" by life's interruptions. Here is one of my favorite poems of all time, by a Greek poet named Constantine P. Cavafy. I first became acquainted with it when it was read on television as part of the funeral of Jackie Onassis. I instantly connected with it, and feel it has a deep lesson for all of us.

### ITHACA

CONSTANTINE P. CAVAFY

When you set out on your journey to Ithaca  
pray that the road is long,  
full of adventure, full of knowledge.  
The Lestrygonians and the Cyclops,  
the angry Poseidon-do not fear them:  
You will never find such as these on your path,  
if your thoughts remain lofty, if a fine  
emotion touches your spirit and your body.  
The Lestrygonians and the Cyclops,  
the fierce Poseidon you will never encounter,  
if you do not carry them within your soul,  
if your soul does not set them up before you.

Pray that the road is long.  
That the summer mornings are many, when,  
with such pleasure, with such joy  
you will enter ports seen for the first time;  
stop at Phoenician markets,  
and purchase fine merchandise,  
mother-of-pearl and coral, amber, and ebony,  
and sensual perfumes of all kinds,  
as many sensual perfumes as you can;  
visit many Egyptian cities,  
to learn and learn from scholars.

Always keep Ithaca in your mind.  
To arrive there is your ultimate goal.  
But do not hurry the voyage at all.  
It is better to let it last for many years;  
and to anchor at the island when you are old,  
rich with all you have gained on the way,  
not expecting that Ithaca will offer you riches.

Ithaca has given you the beautiful voyage.  
Without her you would have never set out on the road.  
She has nothing more give you.

And if you find her poor, Ithaca has not deceived you.  
Wise as you have become, with all your experience,  
you must have already understood what these Ithacas mean.