



MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

A Christian ministry of loving service and education

Along The Way

September 2014

Our Mission To Bring the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ to those we serve.

We deliver furniture, food, and Christmas assistance free of charge to local families in need. We have no prerequisites for service.

"We're just the delivery people. This is the man who sent you the furniture."

Fifteen years ago, summer was a quiet time at My Brother's Keeper as many of our volunteers took time off to go to the Cape or spend more time with family. Today, summer is one of our very busiest times. Student volunteer numbers rise dramatically from May to August, we offer ministry internships to seminarians and we also run two major fundraisers.

What does this mean to families we serve in Christ's name? More families served with a higher level of excellence than ever before! Furniture deliveries, for example, are up 38% this summer compared to last. Enjoy this newsletter which shares the beauty of Summer 2014 at My Brother's Keeper.

"Amongst the Dry Bones, You Have Brought Me to Life!"

By Jim Orcutt, Co-Founder & President Emeritus



The four of us, Dave, our newest staff member, a mother, Lori, and her teenage daughter, Jillian, and I were sitting in the delivery truck at My Brothers Keeper in Dartmouth.

Although Jillian had been on a delivery previously, it was Lori's first time and she was quite excited. As I was about to put the truck in gear,

Lori spoke up from the back seat: "Would it be alright if I said a little prayer before we start off?"

I told her that would be great!

Lori asked God to give us open hearts and minds and help us to be instruments of His love with the people we served that day. After an "Amen," we were on our way to Fall River to deliver furniture to Sherry, a young mother coming out of a homeless shelter with her one year old daughter, Angel.

Arriving, we saw that Sherry's apartment was empty except for a couch and a crib in Angel's room. But, from the moment we arrived, Sherry continued to tell us how grateful she was to God for all that He had done for her.

As her beautiful little girl tottered around after us, Sherry said, "I was on the street when I was carrying Angel, but even then I knew God was with me. Finally, I managed to get into a shelter. After I had Angel, I was in a halfway house. This is my first apartment. God has carried me through it all."

Dave and I brought in a long dresser and after attaching the mirror we carried in the full bed, night stand and lamp. Lori and Jillian followed with the kitchen set and a television for the living room. Amazed at what had been provided, Sherry could not stop marveling at the quality of the furniture and praising God for His goodness.

Suddenly she said, "Can we stop for just a minute? I'm so filled up right now I'd like to sing you a song I made up. It's a song I wrote for God, to tell Him how much I appreciate all He's done for me."

We stood quietly, the four of us, as Sherry sang in a clear, soft voice:

*"Jesus I'm grateful for all you have done.
Your many blessings make me shine like the sun.
Amongst the dry bones, you have brought me to life.
Jesus I'm thankful for your sacrifice."*

Following her song, we gave Sherry the crucifix with our message that "He is the one who sent you the furniture."

She simply smiled and held it to her breast.

Time and again, in the twenty-six years since God started My Brothers Keeper, I have set out on a delivery to fulfill our mission: "To Bring the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ to those we serve."

And, time and again, I have discovered that Jesus was already there before we arrived.



SPECIAL RAFFLE INSERT **Cruise or Cash!**

7-Day Boston-to-Bermuda Cruise, or \$3,000 Cash

It's your choice! Prize Donated in Full. 100% of Proceeds Benefit My Brother's Keeper

Jack Shaughnessy

Ever Faithful to Christ and My Brother's Keeper

Before his passing in November 2013, Jack Shaughnessy of Milton was one of our ministry's greatest friends and most devoted supporters. He remained ever faithful to Christ and My Brother's Keeper through his last, most generous gift which came this summer—our first major bequest and the largest single donation ever given to My Brother's Keeper.

"It is with great pride and great humility that we accept Jack's legacy gift," said Jim and Terry Orcutt, co-founders of My Brother's Keeper. "With great pride that our dear friend believed so deeply in our work for Christ and families in need. With great humility because Jack's generous gift requires the strongest stewardship on our part—our best efforts to use his donation in ways he would support."

Jack notified My Brother's Keeper of his intended gift which gave our Board of Directors the opportunity to give clear, thoughtful direction on the best use of unrestricted major gifts like his.

"After months of careful planning, our Board of Directors enacted a cash management policy to ensure Jack's gift and others like it in the future will be used effectively to do the most good," said Erich Miller, president of My Brother's Keeper.

"It's important to note our board affirmed our commitment NOT to have any kind of endowment.

We decided, first and most importantly, that major gifts will help us serve local families in need in Christ's name now. Second, major gifts will help make My Brother's Keeper stronger in the long-run by helping us create a 3-month operating reserve, fund special projects to advance our mission and meet our future capital needs. This would be especially important to Jack since he was chair of our Capital Campaign Committee when the Easton facility was built."

In keeping with Matthew 6:3—"Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing"—Jack always preferred to keep his charitable giving private with one exception: when he believed his leadership could inspire others.

Jack deeply loved the mission of My Brother's Keeper and one of his hopes in making this gift is that it would encourage others to remember My Brother's Keeper in their will. If you would like more information on making a bequest of any size to support our work, please contact Vin Shea, Mission Advancement Director, at 508-238-7512.



Amazing Grace

By Delilah Johnson, a sophomore at Bishop Stang High School from Little Compton, RI



One of the most poignant deliveries I've made at My Brother's Keeper happened quite recently and the character of the person we served left quite an impression on me. His name was Peter and his

optimism was astounding considering the hand in life he had been dealt. Peter is a man of courage and faith who lost his wife not too long ago. Even the littlest things have become a great challenge for him since her passing but he still managed to

cope with his fate and keep God's grace in mind.

Peter was extremely grateful for the bed we delivered to him, and he might even consider the volunteers at the Dartmouth facility heroic. But without a doubt, I would also consider Peter a hero. He needed a bed from My Brother's Keeper because he had the courage to graciously give away his own bed to a couple that had nothing to sleep on. He chose to sleep on the floor for the sake of others. He is truly his brother's keeper.

The grace of God is defined as the free and unmerited favors of God. Like Peter, we can be inspired to perform spontaneous acts of kindness without yearning for a reward in return. This grace also helped

Peter recognize the humility of My Brother's Keeper and happily accept the crucifix we give at the end of each delivery.

Peter's story reminds me of the famous song, Amazing Grace, which reflects on the beauty of God's saving grace and the strength that comes from believing in Him even during times of distress. The song declares an important message of tribulation and personal triumph through the guidance of God:

*"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis Grace that brought me safe thus far
and Grace will lead me home."*

May the grace of God continue to enliven service and generosity in our daily lives.

New Project Launched The Power of One Volunteer Spotlight

In mid-September, My Brother's Keeper will launch The Power of One, an online series which will highlight a different member of the My Brother's Keeper family every two weeks.



The project is the idea of Sam Gignac, a long-time volunteer who is a senior at Boston College and the student member of our Board of Directors. Sam will be the first volunteer highlighted and she will be the editor of The Power of One going forward.

When asked about her inspiration for The Power of One, Sam said, "I'm majoring in Communications and I've been trying to think of ways I can contribute and give back to the My Brother's Keeper community. The people at

My Brother's Keeper are so incredible, not only the ones we serve but also the ones who volunteer. I really wanted to give volunteers a chance to tell their stories and have their stories shared."

The Power of One volunteer spotlights will be sent out to our E-Mail List, posted on our website and linked on our Facebook page. With the click of a button, readers will be able to donate, contact staff about volunteering and share articles with family and friends.

Want to join our E-mail List and receive the Power of One articles? Visit us at www.MyBrothersKeeper.org to sign up.



Future My Brother's Keeper Volunteer

How cute is he? Little Andrew Voci models our new 'Future Volunteer' onesie and he can't wait to help make his first delivery! Andrew is the son of Matt and Liz (Ruginis) Voci who both volunteered extensively at My Brother's Keeper while attending Stonehill College.

Is there a new member of your family who would enjoy a My Brother's Keeper onesie?

Just send us a birth announcement and we'll gladly mail one to you... our small way of celebrating your joyous occasion with you and welcoming the newest members of the My Brother's Keeper family.

New Hearts and Hands for Christ

It's an exciting time at My Brother's Keeper. Some long-time members of our staff are enjoying happy transitions in life: Beth Collins is expecting her first child in September and John DeAngelo became a grandfather in April. Both are changing from full-time to part-time staff to spend quality time with family. At the same time, new hearts and hands for Christ came aboard in August. God always provides and He sends My Brother's Keeper the very best!



Dave O'Connor joined our Dartmouth staff as a full-time employee. As a Direct Service Staffperson, Dave will supervise volunteers on pick-ups and deliveries of furniture. Dave grew up in Long Island, New York and graduated in May from Providence College with a degree in Public and Community Service Studies. While at PC,

Dave co-founded Friar Food Rescue, a program which transports food that normally would be discarded from campus dining halls and delivers it to those in need.



Lisa Edwards joined our Easton staff for one year as a full-time volunteer through a post-graduate program called Stonehill Service Corps (SSC). As part of SSC, Lisa will live in a house in Brockton with 8 other recent Stonehill grads. The program has 4 focal points or 'pillars': Service, Spirituality, Community and Simple Lifestyle.

Lisa graduated from Stonehill College in May with degrees in Marketing and Studio Art. Her work at My Brother's Keeper will primarily focus on direct service and supervising volunteers but she will also help out administratively and with in-house programs.



Maureen Strong joined our staff as a part-time employee who will work in our offices alongside Heather and Beth. Maureen is originally from Deer Lake, PA and graduated from Boston College with a degree in Accounting. She lives in Easton and is the proud mother of two daughters. Maureen has been volunteering at My

Brother's Keeper since 2009.

WELCOME ABOARD, DAVE, LISA AND MAUREEN!
CONGRATULATIONS, BETH AND JOHN!



Summer Fun(draising)!

Bringing the My Brother's Keeper Family Together This Summer... Not Once, But Twice!

In the span of 30 days, My Brother's Keeper hosted not one but two major fundraisers this summer: our 5th Annual Family Walk at Stonehill College and our 8th Annual Golf Tourney at Foxborough Country Club. Many things make them both special events:

- They're run by volunteer committees who invest tremendous time and effort. They want the excellence of our events to mirror the excellence of our daily work.
- They bring more than 1,000 supporters together.
- They include 'mission moments.' Whether people are first-time guests or long-time attendees, they learn something new about My Brother's Keeper, hear delivery stories and leave inspired by our mission.
- They garner significant corporate support—more than 150 business sponsors combined, especially remarkable for a faith-based organization. (see listing on back page)
- And, last but not least, they raise significant money to help us serve local families in need in Christ's name: a total of \$349,000 net from the two events!



5th Annual Family Walk, June 14th

We've been blessed with perfect weather the last four years but this year it rained all day Friday, Friday night and into Saturday morning. Thankfully, the skies began clearing about an hour before the prayer service. God is good!

The day's 'mission moment' was provided by Owen Leary, a recent graduate of Bishop Stang High School who talked about his life-changing experiences volunteering at our Dartmouth facility. He noted that Christ can be discovered in each individual we encounter: *"we are truly working alongside God on each delivery we make; as we tell each person to whom we hand a crucifix, we really are doing His work. Christ is the reason we must do service, He is the means of carrying it out, and most of all He is the face which we may observe at every point along the way."* Beautiful words from a student who knew nothing about My Brother's Keeper one year ago!

Our biggest crowd ever attended this year's Family Walk thanks to the efforts of a newly established Participation Committee—a group of 20 volunteers from around the area who each set a personal goal of bringing 10 new people to the Family Walk. Would you like to be a part of next year's Participation Committee? Contact Vin Shea at 508-238-7512.

8th Annual Golf Tourney, July 14th

The tourney was a sell-out again this year! As you'd expect at a My Brother's Keeper function, players were welcomed with wonderful hospitality: a full breakfast, a prime rib dinner, and Peaceful Meadows ice cream on the 10th hole... a perfect treat on a hot summer day!

For the 'mission moment,' Erich Miller, president of My Brother's Keeper, shared a special delivery story about a grandmother we helped named Sue who unexpectedly took custody of her three grandkids. Among her many challenges, Sue struggled with reliable transportation to get to and from work. Two golfers, Steve Lameiras and Eddie Coolbrith, own S&E Auto Sales in Weymouth and they were moved to help her out with a high-quality, low-mileage vehicle. Again, God is good, and so are you, Steve and Eddie!



Starting College on the Right Foot Getting Off Campus and "Into the Streets"

Many colleges emphasize service as part of freshman orientation—a strong statement to first-year students that getting off campus and 'into the streets' is an important part of the college experience. The week before Labor Day, My Brother's Keeper hosted 70 students from five area schools: Stonehill College, Roger Williams, Providence College, Salve Regina and U-Mass Dartmouth. It's a great example of why we call My Brother's Keeper a 'ministry of education' as well as a 'ministry of loving service.'



FIVE SEMINARIANS from the University of Notre Dame spent the summer volunteering at My Brother's Keeper as part of their formation with the Congregation of Holy Cross. The outstanding young men—Tom Bodart, Jim Maslar, Joe Pedersen, Pablo Quan, and Tim Weed—hailed from around the country and around the world: Michigan, Ohio, Iowa, and Guatemala.

In the words of Joe Pederson (pictured right), "Thank you for an incredible experience. I learned so much from both the people I served and those I served with. I'm confident this experience at My Brother's Keeper will inform much of my ministry for years to come." Tim Weed, in his first year of temporary vows and Masters of Divinity studies, wrote the following reflection.



Just the Delivery Guy By Mr. Timothy Weed, C.S.C.



One of the most remarkable things about the ministry of My Brother's Keeper isn't the massive amount of furniture or food that they deliver to people in need. It isn't the warm hospitality of the staff and volunteers. Nor is it the enormous amount of hard work that goes into each and every delivery.

No, it is the faith-filled conviction to their mission of spreading the love and hope of Jesus Christ to those they serve. Each and every furniture delivery ends with a gift: a crucifix. The Man on the Cross is the one who gave the furniture. It is a powerful moment of faith and hope that can leave the recipient stunned or quiet, joyful or tearful. It is truly a remarkable faith experience.

The Keeper wants to serve anyone and everyone that they can without judgments. There are no forms, no standards to qualify, no need too great or too small for the Keeper to offer its services. The gift of the Crucifix

symbolizes that self-gift and self-emptying that must take place in each member of the team. It also reminds me that this is the standard to which each Christian is challenged to meet. The ultimate moment of gift and sacrifice was the moment when Jesus Christ was nailed to the Cross to assume the heavy burden of the world's sins.

Whether the person receiving the Crucifix understands the significance or not, it has a powerful effect on the members of the delivery staff. Each one of us is reminded that it is not about us or what we do. Instead our actions and words should lead others to Jesus Christ. We need to bring that hope and love to a world that sorely needs it.

When you walk into an apartment on the third floor of a building in downtown Fall River or Brockton and see that it is empty of the most basic furnishings and amenities, you realize just how frivolous our own complaints can seem. Yet these people that seem to have nothing often have the greatest faith because in some cases that is all

they have. There is nothing else but their faithful belief that God will hear their cry for help and answer their prayers.

We are instruments of Christ in the world. We are the Body of Christ, and we must be the ones who are willing to conform ourselves to His way of life. We must be prepared to take up the Cross that is offered to us, and we must be willing to help lighten the Crosses of others.

We often complain that the world is such a dark place filled with violence and destruction, but the worst thing that we can do is sit idly by and watch it happen. If there is no action taken, then Christ cannot heal the world.

When we offer the Crucifix to someone on a delivery we are reminding both them and ourselves that it is Christ who provides for the world. We are only His instruments, His tools in helping reconcile God to man.

Christ is the answer to the prayers of the poor, and we need to be just the delivery people.



2014 Family Walk and Golf Tournament Sponsors

Thank you to our 2014 sponsors who helped make these events the most successful yet!

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