



MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

A Christian ministry of loving service and education

Along The Way

February 2017

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."



This stunning 15-foot stained glass window graces our prayer room in Easton and beautifully depicts the mission of My Brother's Keeper.

The face of Jesus, top center, represents our loving God. With hands outstretched, He hears the prayers and feels the pain of His child in need (right). He answers these prayers by touching the heart of another child who is willing to help (left). The Eucharist exchanging hands (bottom center) symbolizes the Love and Hope of Christ being passed from one to another.

This living out of our mission is most vibrant during the Christmas season. In December, an estimated 4,000 volunteers came through the doors of our two facilities. With their help, we served 3,032 families in Christ's name—12,383 children and adults!—living in 93 towns all over eastern Massachusetts from Lawrence and Boston south to Fall River and Cape Cod.

Filled with gratitude, a mom from Quincy sent us this note:

"Thank you for being a blessing to our family. Being out on maternity leave had me a bit worried, but my faith never wavered. I thank God for you and My Brother's Keeper. I look forward to being a giver to the organization in the future."

Because Christ is at the heart of each delivery, service at My Brother's Keeper is a sacred, faith-filled experience for both the giver and the receiver.

For the receiver, Christ's words come to life from the Gospel of Matthew 6:26-34. Our Father will always provide just as He does for the birds of the air. Are we, His children, not more valuable?

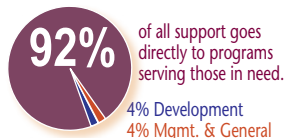
Those who have the privilege to serve can only marvel at the faith of our more humble brothers and sisters.

This dynamic happens thousands of times each year at My Brother's Keeper and profoundly touches tens of thousands of lives. (see A Year in Review, bottom left) As we continue to grow as a ministry, be assured that our commitment to our mission "To bring the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ to those we serve" will always stay strong. It will always be at the heart of who we are and what we do.

As one expression of this commitment, a duplicate of the stained glass window above will also grace the prayer room in our new Dartmouth facility. Our special thanks to Jack Hurley and his team at Custom Stained Glass whose talent and generosity will make this possible.

2016 Assistance Programs – A Year in Review

Christmas	3,032 deliveries	12,383 served
Furniture	1,675 deliveries	5,572 served
Food	4,376 deliveries	19,969 served



TOTAL: 9,083 deliveries serving 37,924 children and parents ...
all in Christ's name!

My Brother's Keeper Heating Assistance Program

The nights are awfully cold even during mild winters. Can you help provide heating assistance to local families in need?

See special insert.





Dartmouth Building Project Moves Forward!

The mild winter and lack of snow has allowed us to make great progress on our Dartmouth Building Project.

The foundation was completed in November, including below-grade insulation and waterproofing. The structural steel was erected in December and the roof and metal siding were both fully installed by the end of January.

We are currently excavating for rough plumbing and framing out the front wall and side returns which will provide the structure behind the brick façade. When the framing is complete, the building

can be made weather-tight, temporary heat will be added, and the slab can be poured.

Our target completion date remains June 2017.

Two points of interest about the new building: the main warehouse has no interior columns, ideal for logistics and storage rack set up. The mezzanine of the Dartmouth building is 5,000 square feet, 65% bigger than the Easton facility's upstairs space.

Fundraising is also progressing very well under the leadership of Capital Campaign co-chairs Deacon Brian Kean and Jim Orcutt. To date, we have raised \$2,300,000 out of the \$3,400,000 needed—68% of our goal. This includes in-kind donations of professional services valued at more than \$500,000.

Of note, we have also secured project financing from Mutual Bank in Whitman to help with cash flow. Our loan acts like a line of credit allowing us to draw funds as needed to help ensure construction progresses smoothly.

Obviously, the more donations we receive, the less we have to borrow which saves My Brother's Keeper money and allows us to do a better job serving local families in need. If you have not supported the Dartmouth Building Project yet, please consider making your contribution today!



For more information, contact
Vin Shea, Mission Advancement Director, at
508-238-7512 or vshea@mybrotherskeeper.org



Beyond Presents by Ben Williams, Staff



Christmas at My Brother's Keeper is about much more than toys, clothes and bikes, but when we deliver them by the thousands, it can be easy to lose sight of that. One delivery in particular this Christmas brought things back into perspective for me.

In early December, I took a call from a woman named Jenna from Fall River.

She was flustered and very emotional. She asked me about the status of her Christmas order and if we had any extra bikes. She had forgotten to request them for her three daughters when she originally called. Jenna was overwhelmed having just settled into her apartment after being homeless for a number of months. On top of that, she had just recently received a diagnosis of terminal stage 3 cancer. She hadn't told her daughters yet because she wanted them to have one more perfect Christmas.

Well at My Brother's Keeper, that is not a request we can say "no" to.

Less than a week later, I was heading out on deliveries with staff from Portsmouth Abbey's Office of Development & Alumni Affairs. Jenna's order was loaded on to our truck, complete with three beautiful brand new bikes.

I hinted ahead of time to my volunteers that Jenna's

delivery would be special, but I didn't give them the full details just yet. We had a wonderful time when we arrived at Jenna's home, smiling and talking with her family, laughing with her sister, and sharing quite a few hugs with Jenna herself. Jenna was beaming when she saw the bikes come in, and she let us know that after going on a retreat over the weekend, she was surprised to find that some of the effects of her cancer had cleared up!

After we had left, and Jenna had hugged us all one more time, I told my crew the full story about Jenna's diagnosis and how she was keeping it from her children. There was total silence when I finished. When I turned to look at the volunteers, I saw tears in all of their eyes. They were all parents themselves. In that moment they had connected with Jenna on a much deeper level than just "delivery people" and "a recipient."

But what will always stay with me is the look in Jenna's eyes as we left. There was no sadness there. She was no longer thinking about having one last perfect Christmas with her children. Instead, there was joy and strength in her eyes. The gift we brought her went far beyond presents: it was Hope. Jenna knew that prayers do get answered and that nothing, not even a terminal diagnosis, is impossible for God... that with Him, she just might be there to celebrate many more perfect Christmases for years to come.

"Love and Hope Lasts Far Longer than Any Toy"

by Paul Martin, Volunteer, Somerset, MA



Paul Martin is a MA State Trooper who took 2 weeks' vacation to volunteer at My Brother's Keeper this Christmas. Throughout the year, he serves 1-2 times / week at our Dartmouth facility.

Students from Providence College and Bishop Connolly High School joined me one day for Christmas deliveries in the Fall River area. We arrived at one of our stops and a mom, Janice, met us at the

door followed quickly by two very excited young boys. She invited us in and asked us to place the big bags of gifts in the living room.

The room was not very large so fitting all the presents, the student-volunteers, and her family wasn't easy but we made it work. Right away I noticed a beautifully decorated Christmas tree. "Whoever decorated this tree did an awesome job!" I told her. She pointed to her two young boys and said, "They did all the work."

One of the two young boys whispered something to his mother and then began counting down, "5..4..3..2..1!" He did this multiple

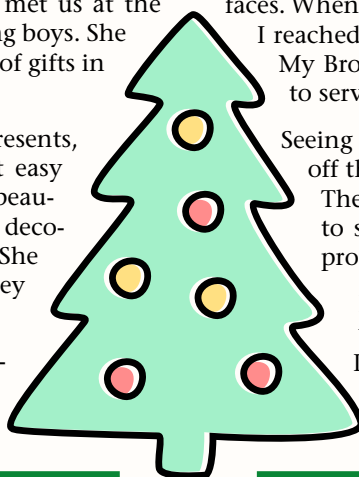
times and I could see his mother working frantically under the Christmas tree. Each time the young boy got to the number 1, he would say, "Come on, Mom!" "I'm working on it," she kept telling him. Finally after about the fourth time, the tree lit up and the two young boys cheered with excitement, happy to show off their hard work.

I then asked Janice if the students and I could sing a Christmas song to her family. She agreed and we sang a few lines of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." I could see the joy in all their faces. When we finished, Janice started crying and thanking us.

I reached out, gave her a hug, and thanked her for calling My Brother's Keeper for help, for giving us the privilege to serve her.

Seeing this, the two young boys took some candy canes off their Christmas tree and handed one to each of us. The boys were so appreciative that they were willing to share the decorations from the tree they were so proud of.

I know the Love and Hope we delivered that day will last far longer than any toy in the gift bags. I know this because I still feel the love Janice and her sons shared with us that day long after I ate that delicious candy cane.



6th Annual Hungry Men Event—Biggest & Best Ever!

On Monday, November 21st, more than 300 men gathered for a night of faith and fellowship at Granite Links in Quincy for our 6th Annual Hungry Men event—a sold-out, full house crowd!

In past years, the event has been held at smaller venues, such as Black Rock Country Club in Hingham, but the event's soaring popularity required us to move to a bigger space.

Paul Quaranto, President and CEO of Boston Mutual Life Insurance, acted as the Master of Ceremonies and Erich Miller, president of My Brother's Keeper, offered the "mission moment." Auctioneer Jim Wells from Abington lightened up the room with his



quick wit and created a lot of interest in the great auction prizes including a Boston POPS Holiday Concert, Patriots, Celtics, and Bruins game packages, and tickets to "The Voice" in LA and "The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon" in New York.

"The event raised more than \$85,000, so important as My Brother's Keeper kicks off the Christmas Program," said Joyce Donadio, chair of our Development Board which runs the event.

"The real impact of the night is much greater though. The opportunity to bring so many faith-filled, generous men together to celebrate about our mission is priceless."

An Unexpected Gift

My Brother's Keeper hosted our 6th Annual Hungry Men Event at Granite Links Golf Club the Monday night before Thanksgiving (see story above). A couple of weeks later, a Christmas volunteer gave us an envelope with this beautiful letter and a generous, heartfelt donation. Her words and sacrifice are a wonderful affirmation of the way God uses My Brother's Keeper to touch the lives of those we serve AND those who serve with us. What an unexpected gift she gave us as a ministry!



I have been volunteering at My Brother's Keeper the past five years. I was first brought by a dear friend of mine who was once helped by your services. She was a single mother with seven kids. She was so appreciative of your help that she invites & introduces people she meets to come and join your volunteer program. I am so honored that she picked me to be a part of this family.

Every year since then I have brought many friends and family members to experience this amazing program. Last year I brought my boyfriend and his daughters. I can't even tell you how much joy it brings to me that at the age of nine, his daughter was able to understand what My Brother's Keeper is about. And then on Christmas morning, she thought of all the families we had wrapped gifts for and was hoping they all enjoyed their Christmas. She's been talking about coming back to help for the past few months. I am so grateful for all the people that you help and even more grateful that through your program, you have instilled the love of God in so many people's hearts.

I work at Granite Links and I had the pleasure of working the night of your fundraising event. I would like to give back the money that I was paid for that job. I just don't feel right accepting this pay and I hope that maybe you can use it to help someone in need this Christmas. Thank you again to you and all the members of this organization for all that you do.

Thanks,
A very appreciative volunteer

How do People in Need Hear About My Brother's Keeper?

More than half the people we serve are referred to us by a friend, a family member, or a neighbor who has also received help from My Brother's Keeper. Many are also referred by staff at area nonprofits and churches.

Wherever a referral comes from, we view each one as a tremendous compliment—a sign that we are trusted in the community to serve with dignity and respect.

Janet Trask, a member of the Brockton Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, recently contacted us to help a large family in need of 6 beds. She sent the following thank you afterwards:



Thanks so very much for all you did for this family in need. They were very appreciative of everything you provided.

Mom was truly touched, as the Delivery people probably noticed. She told me that she was given a Cross, and that meant the world to her! She also told me that the Delivery people were wonderful.

I have seen the beautiful beds, along with the sofa and chair. You really outdid yourselves with so many little and big extras!! I can't tell you how much I appreciate all you did for this family.

Your kindness will long be remembered. May God continue to bless you as you do His work.

Janet Trask

Urban Plunge 2017

Each January for the last 20 years, My Brother's Keeper has hosted a 3 ½ day service retreat called "Urban Plunge" for college students home on winter break. 13 students joined us this year from Notre Dame, Stonehill College, Providence College, Salve Regina, Bridgewater State, and UMass. The students slept at our Easton facility, attended daily Mass, delivered furniture and food, volunteered at a homeless shelter or a soup kitchen, and reflected on their service each evening. Each student wrote a final reflection and some of their thoughts and feelings are expressed below.

"As Jim Orcutt often says, 'You can survive for a long time without food, you can survive without heat, you can survive without lights, but if you have lost hope, then you have lost it all.' We must therefore work to ensure that the poor never lose hope and always remember that they are loved."



"My Brother's Keeper doesn't deliver across the whole world, but love is contagious and when it catches fire there is no way to contain it. I can't wait to see how far the fire travels!"

"While I was out making deliveries, I was surprised at people's reactions when they received their crucifixes. I saw tears well up in the eyes of adults, and I heard them gasp with emotion when we presented it to them."

"As a society, we have lost our ability to have meaningful interactions with one another, and we should strive toward a more expressive and understanding existence. I will choose to deliver hope and love to whomever I am talking to or listening to."

"Jesus is a huge part of my life and to be able to volunteer for an organization that makes Jesus its first priority inspires my heart and soul."

"You can't drop off Love and Hope. It takes time to connect with people and live the mission of My Brother's Keeper."

"My immersion experience seriously challenged my thinking on the place of religion in society and in my own life."



Christmas 2016



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