

**Our Mission:**  
"To bring the Love and Hope  
of Jesus Christ to those we serve."

# Along the Way

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

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

NOVEMBER 2024

## A Christmas Story [ Recipients names changed for confidentiality ]

**Maritza is a single mom to three kids and is struggling to make ends meet.** She couldn't keep up with rent so she and her girls had to leave their home. They're currently living with a relative in Brockton until they can get a place of their own again.

Maritza hopes they will be in an apartment by December. If so, it will be their first Christmas in their new home.

Maritza has three girls: Avery age 12, Diana age 3, and Mercy, just 3 months old. Avery could use a winter coat and enjoys reading books, Diana would like a baby doll and loves music and dancing. Mercy could use a snow-suit, infant toys, and diapers.

When we asked Maritza about a present for herself— if she likes perfume, candles, or needs a winter coat— Maritza explained that anything for the home like towels, bedding, or cookware would be the biggest help. "I don't really think about myself. Things for our family and our new home would be most appreciated."

At the end of the call, Maritza said, "Thank you so much. This means more to me than you can ever know. God bless you and yours."

What's remarkable about Maritza's story is that, sadly, it's so common to our staff and volunteers conducting Christmas intakes.

We may not see it with our eyes but families all around us are hurting behind closed doors. Parents like Maritza carry the weight of the world on their shoulders. They're doing the best they can to provide for their children's most basic needs like housing and food. There's little room in the budget for anything else, especially presents at Christmas.

Christmas should be a joyful celebration of Jesus' birth. Without our help, it becomes a major stressor for struggling parents and a big disappointment for their children... another reminder of the overwhelming challenges they face.

That's why our mission "To bring the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ to those we serve" is so important.

Parents need our help and they also need Hope. They need to be reminded that God loves them and that He hears and answers their prayers.

This is the great privilege God affords us as a ministry each Christmas: the opportunity to remove this stress and anxiety from those who reach out to us for help and to replace it with joy, excitement, and peace in His name. This is the true spirit of Christmas...loving one another as a sign of our love for Him.

My Brother's Keeper will again serve more than 3,000 families in need this Christmas living throughout eastern

Massachusetts— 12,000+ children and parents! To join us in this wonderful effort, please return the enclosed cards for our **Adopt-a-Family Gift Program** and **Loaves & Fishes Food Program**.

A reminder that our Christmas effort starts in prayer each year with our Gratitude Mass the Friday night after Thanksgiving. Please join us!



Sally Blair Ames Sports Complex • Stonehill College  
124 Belmont Street, North Easton, MA  
Friday, November 29th at 6:00 pm • **NEW Earlier Start Time!**

**Presider** Rev. Tony Szakaly, CSC  
Director, Campus Ministry, Stonehill College  
Chair, My Brother's Keeper Board of Directors

**Homilist** Fr. John Denning, CSC, President, Stonehill College

Reception following Mass  
Priests, please bring alb and stole to concelebrate.

We invite you to bring one unwrapped gift per family  
for children to bring to the altar.

# “If God needs a judge, he’ll go to probate court”

By Erich Miller, President

Our first furniture delivery on Board Day of Service was to Mario, a 45-year-old single father living with his four kids in Brockton. Board members Jim Philbin, Ryan Gelly, Nick Barishian, Laura Walsh-Leclair, Steve Sypek, and I were bringing new beds for everyone, a kitchen table with 6 chairs, dressers for each bedroom, 5 boxes of household items, 3 bags of linens, and a week’s worth of groceries.

We knocked on the door of Mario’s apartment, eager to get to work. No answer. He wasn’t there.

I reached Mario on the phone and could hear he was driving— never a good sign when someone’s supposed to be home for their delivery. “I just dropped one of my kids off at school and I’m getting ready to turn into the complex.” After a pause, he said “No, that’s not true! I’ll be there in about 5 minutes.” I knew he meant 10 minutes, of course. Haven’t we all told that little white lie when we’re running late?

“No problem at all, Mario. We’ll see you when you get here.” It was a beautiful, warm fall day and we’ve learned to be patient and flexible doing the work of My Brother’s Keeper. The lives of the families we serve can be complicated, especially for a single father of four. Who can be upset with a dad taking his child to school?

Mario greeted us warmly when he got home and apologized for being late. He was a stocky, muscular guy with a big smile, a tight haircut, and tattoos on his arms, neck, and face. He walked us through his modest apartment showing us where things would go.

The first thing that jumped out in his living room was the meticulously folded clothes piled high on the couch, chair, and tables. Incredibly neat but totally out of place. You could tell it was important to him to take good care of his kids and it was obvious why they needed the dressers.

The kitchen was the most remarkable room in the house. Every inch of every wall was covered with his kids’ artwork, inspirational quotes, and their certificates of achievement from school.

“When they come downstairs for breakfast every morning, I want to remind them how special they are and how much they’re loved,” Mario told us. “Plus it’s cheap,” he laughed. “It only cost me tape!”

Halfway through our delivery, another My Brother’s Keeper delivery vehicle came to the complex to make a food delivery.



Bill Suneson, Chris Cavanaugh, Bill Ohrenberger, Amanda Dean, and Rheannon Swire were done with their deliveries for the morning so they jumped in and gave our crew a hand.

It was a sight to behold... eleven My Brother’s Keeper staff and board members moving back and forth from our truck in bright yellow safety vests. We were carrying furniture but Mario delivered the line of the day: “You guys are like bed bugs. You just keep multiplying!” I’d never been affectionately compared to a bed bug before!

As the old saying goes, “many hands makes light work” so it didn’t take long

to carry the furniture in, set the beds up, and wrap up Mario’s delivery. We all gathered around and gave Mario our last and most important gift, the crucifix, along with our message “We’re just the delivery people. The furniture is from Him.” Mario’s reaction was as beautiful and affirming as his kitchen walls.

On the way to our next delivery, our small group had a chance to talk in the truck and reflect on our beautiful delivery. I shared a private conversation I had with Mario. When he and I were talking in the kitchen, I complimented him being a good dad and he said, “Thanks. It’s important to me to be there for my kids. I never had a dad in my life. I had my problems when I was younger but I’ve grown up, worked hard to cut out the nonsense and just focus on being the best dad I can. I don’t even go out anymore. When the kids are gone, I love just staying home and cleaning the house.”

Mario had certainly come a long way. He also shared he’d been in prison for 2½ years in his early 20’s. Not too long after his release, he was accused of murder and ultimately found innocent.

As I listened to Mario, I remembered one of Jim Orcutt’s favorite sayings: “Do not judge. If God needs a judge, he’ll go to probate court and get himself a judge. He needs lumpers... workers.”

Just help people and love them, Jim always encouraged us. One thing we can be sure:

God will never condemn us for being too generous.

There is an inherent goodness and purity about My Brother’s Keeper— we do not judge, we serve in Christ’s name. It’s a big part of what makes our mission so powerful and it draws people to our work like a magnet.

**“When they come downstairs for breakfast every morning, I want to remind them how special they are and how much they’re loved”**



# Board Day of Service October 24, 2024, Easton Facility



Since 2009, My Brother's Keeper has held an annual Board Day of Service when the members of our Board of Directors and Development Boards come together to pray, serve, and break bread with one another.

The day is an expression of our organizational philosophy that "to lead is to serve." We believe our leadership team should be out in the community serving local families in need to stay connected to the daily work of My Brother's Keeper to inform their decisions. The day began with Mass celebrated by Fr. Tony Szakaly, chair of the Board of Directors. The boards then made 25 furniture and food deliveries followed by lunch and an inspiring group reflection.



## "Do We Get to Keep the Beds?"

By Josh Smith, Director - Dartmouth



Our annual Board Day of Service has always been my favorite day of the year at My Brother's Keeper.

Bringing such a committed group of people together to serve means our board members show up ready to work. (Our biggest challenge is usually slowing them down!) The fact that everyone is fully present and ready to minister to those we serve means these are some of our most moving deliveries of the year. This year was no exception.

That morning I drove down to Taunton with a full crew: Terry Orcutt, Laurie Hubbard, Rich Kendall, Paul Key, and Jeannette Watka. A full crew was definitely needed because our delivery was to a family of seven and everyone needed a bed.

Mandi welcomed us inside and we introduced ourselves to her and her husband, Paulie. No surprise, they opened up to Terry immediately, sharing that they had been homeless for the past five years. This would be an incredibly long time for anyone but I couldn't imagine what this

had been like with five children. Their youngest two were four and five years old, making this their first home.

The kids were away at school that morning but Mandi relayed their only question to us: would they get to keep the beds? I was taken aback by the sadness contained in this question but, of course, it was a very reasonable question given the majority of their lives had been spent moving from shelter to shelter.

It was clear the family had been through a lot. You could see how hurt Mandi was that even her children's cousins made fun of their being homeless. We were shocked to hear their laundromat charged \$8.25 per load – easily \$50+ a visit for a family of seven. No doubt it had been a challenge to keep the children's clothes clean for school each day too.

However, it was also clear that Mandi was leading her family through this trial as best she could. Racks of inexpensive shelving full of neatly folded laundry lined many of the rooms.

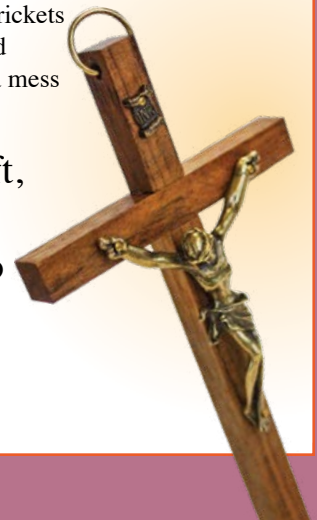
While the bedrooms were quite small, we miraculously managed to fit all six beds and a dresser for every bedroom.

You could picture the family making this apartment work.

Terry then explained that we were just the delivery people that day and Mandi instinctively pulled the crucifix in towards her body. This was the final thing their new home was missing.

I was most impressed by how upbeat this couple remained, despite life's challenges. Throughout the entire delivery, they happily chatted away with Terry as if long-time friends. Before we left, Paulie and Mandi acted out the funniest story I've ever heard on a delivery: the time the kids accidentally tipped over the container holding 1,000 crickets for their bearded dragon! It was a mess for the ages.

What a gift, to be able to serve so joyfully.



# Delivery Results – Easton Building Project



My Brother’s Keeper completed a major renovation of our Easton facility in November 2023. The goal of the project was to increase our ability to deliver much-needed services to struggling local families. The building was constructed in 2002 and had reached maximum operational capacity.

Under a moderate growth assumption, we estimated the renovation would allow My Brother’s Keeper to make an additional 167,000 deliveries valued at more than \$53,000,000 over the next 20 years—deliveries that never would have been made.

Easton Food and Furniture Deliveries January 1 – October 31		
Year	Deliveries Completed	% Change
2022	8,428	–
2023	8,705	3%
2024	10,863	25%

✳️ Through the first ten months of 2024, deliveries from our Easton facility have increased 25% so far this year, surpassing our predicted growth. That’s 2,158 additional deliveries completed with an estimated value exceeding \$450,000.

More families are receiving essential services in Christ’s name from My Brother’s Keeper than ever before.

## Words of Appreciation for our Food Assistance Program

My family and I love My Brother’s Keeper so much. They are very respectful and I feel like they are family to me. May God multiply the number of people who help others through this organization.

My Brother’s Keeper is the best in nutritional assistance. God bless you!

I’m overwhelmed and blessed to have reached out to My Brother’s Keeper. I broke down in tears when they were at my door. May God bless all of you that help others in need.

I pray to God to bless you every day for everything you did for us.

I always get veggies and good food. Thank you for existing.

It was my very first time receiving help with food from My Brother’s Keeper and from the phone call to the food delivery, you were incredibly good. You showed me love and gave my family a chance to have weeks of food. I pray the Lord Almighty blesses you all. May He guide you in helping more people in need.

Everyone was so nice and did not make me feel awful or less than them for reaching out for help.

Food donations from My Brother’s Keeper are a very big help especially during this time of inflation. The food is fresh and healthy and the people who have helped us have been respectful and pleasant. I can’t thank My Brother’s Keeper enough for the help and wonderful service.

If it wasn’t for My Brother’s Keeper, I’d stay hungry for most of the week.

I would like to thank everyone for the support and love. Thanks to My Brother’s Keeper, my family is able to have meals on the table and can save some of the grocery money and use it to pay our utility bills. The person on the phone and the people who deliver are always kind and happy to help. Thank you. May God bless you all.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to the food program for delivering food to my home. When I had nothing, your support was a true blessing in my time of need and I’m incredibly thankful for your service. It has made a big difference in my life and I am forever grateful.





# Event Updates

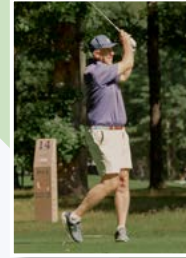
## 18th Annual My Brother's Keeper Golf Tourney

Our 18th annual golf tournament was held on Monday, September 9th at Foxborough Country Club. The weather was absolutely beautiful — 75 degrees and sunny — and it was sold out as usual.

The event has been a tremendous success, year in and year out, because it's primarily supported by companies in the plumbing and construction industries. The businesses are very generous to My Brother's Keeper financially and many also played important roles in building our Dartmouth facility and renovating our Easton facility.

This year's event netted more than \$130,000 thanks in great part to our lead sponsors, Atlantis Comfort Systems, F.W. Webb, Keith Construction, Plumb House, and Superior Plumbing.

Special thanks to our fantastic committee: event founder and honorary chair, Bill Lane Sr., John Anderson, Dave St. Cyr, Norman Fine, Gary Grillo, Billie Klegraeffe, Tom Lanahan, Bill Lane Jr., Frank Monroe, Nancy Monroe, John O'Rourke, Glen Schlager, Andy Sheehan, and Brent Trethewey.



Thank you to our generous Annual Sponsors


The Payton Family	The Wessling Family	Brian & Grace Concannon	John & Janine Higgins	The Kendall Family	The Ogozaly Family	The Philbin Family	The Walsh Family
The Cavanaugh Family	Mark Roman	Steve & Christine Sypek	The Witkowski Family	Jane M. & Paul V. Walsh Jr. and Family	In Loving Memory of Jean Marie Lank	An Anonymous Friend	

## 6th Annual South Coast Soiree

Our Dartmouth community has had an extraordinarily difficult summer after our accident in Fall River which took the life of volunteer Jean Revil and injured volunteer Jim Flynn.

Our South Coast Development Board had a serious, very thoughtful conversation about whether we should even hold the South Coast Soiree this year. As a leadership team, we came to the conclusion that coming together in family and community would be an important part of the healing process.

Our community responded to our invitation and it ended up being our best attended Soiree to date.

Deacon Paul Key, our Chief Development Officer, offered a beautiful mission moment which remembered both Jean Revil and Jim Orcutt, beautiful souls we lost this year who each touched so many lives. Guests were invited over the course of the night to illuminate a votive candle and say a prayer for Jean, Jim, or anyone in their life who needs prayers.

The event is always held at our Dartmouth facility in order to bring our work and mission tangibly into the evening.

This year's Soiree raised a record \$146,000. Special thanks to Annual Sponsors and our lead Soiree sponsors John and Janine Higgins, First Citizens' Federal Credit Union, and Bristol County Savings Bank.



# Our Facilities



**EASTON**



**DARTMOUTH**

## My Brother's Keeper Prayer

Lord—

*When I have food,  
Help me remember the hungry.*

*When I lie in my bed,  
Help me remember those who sleep on the floor.*

*When I have a warm home,  
Help me remember the homeless.*

*When I have work,  
Help me remember those without jobs.*

*When I experience the joy of giving to my children,  
Help me remember the agony of those who must  
watch their children go without.*

*By remembering,  
Help me destroy my indifference,  
And arouse my compassion.*

*Make me concerned enough to act in your name,  
To help those who cry out to you for that which I so  
often take for granted.*



## MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

A Christian ministry of loving service and education

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### Dartmouth Facility

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