



MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

A Volunteer Christian Ministry

November 2010

Our Mission

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

We deliver furniture, household items and food free of charge to those who seek assistance. There are no prerequisites for service.

“We’re just the delivery people, this is the person who sent you the furniture.”

Serving Families in Need for Christ —“In Good Times & In Bad”

by Erich Miller



People often say, “My Brother’s Keeper must be getting more requests than ever in this economy!” Yes, we absolutely are but, unfortunately, there’s always a waiting list for our services—in good times and in bad.

Why? Because no other charity on the South Shore delivers furniture and groceries free of charge as core programs and fewer charities than ever offer Christmas assistance.

One of the biggest changes we have seen is more calls for help from the places where we usually pick up donations.

You and I may not realize it as we go about our daily lives but those who are in need... those who are hurting and in despair... are often right around us, living in our own towns and neighborhoods.

Here’s an example from our ministry’s hometown, a request from an **Easton** mom for Christmas help:

“I’ve heard about your Christmas program and was wondering how I go about getting my kids on the list for this year. I lost my job and I don’t know how I’m ever going to be able to give them a Christmas.”

Our Christmas program is just beginning but we’ve already received more than **1,000** requests like this from parents in **47** different communities, including towns you might not expect like **Braintree, Bridgewater, Mansfield, Milton, Norwood, Scituate, and Walpole.**

As you can see, today’s need in our local community is not just deeper: it’s wider too.

As Christians, we should recognize that increased need gives us an increased opportunity: the opportunity to live out the **Gospel** in ever-greater ways... to bring more people closer to **Christ** by serving them with dignity, love, and respect in their time of need. What a tremendous privilege which **God** affords us!

Last Christmas, *My Brother’s Keeper* served **2,262** families—**9,175** children and adults—living in **59** communities from towns as far north as **Peabody** down to **Fall River** and the **Cape**. With your help, we will serve even more families this year.

Please be a part of this year’s Christmas effort by returning the enclosed cards for our **Adopt-A-Family Gift Program** and our **Loaves and Fishes Food Program.**

A special reminder... the Christmas effort starts each year, in prayer, with our **Annual Gratitude Mass** the Friday night after Thanksgiving at 7:00 P.M. Please join us.

We’re beginning a new effort this year to include all the children present in the liturgy. We invite each family to bring one unwrapped gift which children will bring forward to the altar during the offertory.



My Brother’s Keeper **20th Annual Gratitude Mass**

“We come together in family and community to thank God and ask His blessing on this year’s Christmas effort.”

NEW TRADITION!!!
WE INVITE EACH FAMILY TO BRING ONE UNWRAPPED GIFT FOR CHILDREN TO BRING TO THE ALTAR

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26th @ 7:00 P.M.
at MY BROTHER’S KEEPER

Principal Celebrant
Rev. James M. Mahoney
Pastor, St. Bridget Parish, Abington

Reception following Mass
Priests, please bring alb & stole to concelebrate

CONGRATULATIONS TO WAYNE AND LINDA THOMAS OF AVON WHO WON OUR ‘CRUISE OR CASH’ RAFFLE. OUR SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED: \$10,000 WAS RAISED TO SERVE FAMILIES IN NEED!

My Brother's Keeper 'Christmas Gift Crafters'

The Christmas program at *My Brother's Keeper* has become a year-round project, with many volunteers working hard even during the summer months to provide special gifts for mothers and teens, an area where we're always short.

For years, ladies like **Mary Belanger, Debbie Barry, Kathy Jones, Mary Lou Jackson, Patti Stokinger, Ann Marie Gill, Diane Dias** and **Sue Male** have led groups assembling beautiful gifts baskets filled with soaps, lotions, make up, and perfumes. A void still existed last year so seamstresses led by **Maeve Paul** and **Roberta Hobaica** began sewing aprons and fleece shawls.

This year, to help meet the ever-increasing need, **Maureen Savoie** assembled a group of creative women to knit hats & scarves and make tote bags using fabric donated by **Howie Bernstein**, owner of **Sam's Drapery** in **Readville**.

Working together, the group made more than 150 stylish bags which will be filled with things like matching coin purses, candles, lotions, and other nice gifts. The colorful hats and scarves will also make wonderful gifts and keep moms warm this winter. Members of the local chapters of the **Window Covering Association of America** contributed to the tote bag project and one volunteer, **Susan Chapman**, knitted more than 100 hats herself!

We give a special thanks to all these volunteers who gave so generously of their time, talent, and love. Their efforts will be deeply appreciated by those we serve, especially the selfless mothers who do not expect gifts, only wanting their children to be happy.



"Ministries within The Ministry"

2,000 volunteers serve at *My Brother's Keeper* annually, each offering their special gifts and talents to serve others in Christ's name.

Over the years, this has led to many 'Ministries within the Ministry': small groups of dedicated volunteers who joyfully work together in community on special tasks.

This is an ongoing series sharing the beauty and impact of our volunteers' work.

Local Charity Gets National Attention



Guideposts, one of the top 30 magazines in the United States with a circulation of 2.1 million, featured an article about the founding of *My Brother's Keeper* in its September issue.

We were highlighted in their "Reel Stories" series which focuses on true stories of hope and inspiration relating to films. It was 'God Bless the Child,' a made-for-TV movie portraying a mother and daughter's struggle with homelessness, which inspired our founders **Jim** and **Terry Orcutt** to begin serving families from the cellar of their home in 1988.

Here are some of the e-mails we received as a result of this national exposure:

"You are doing a wonderful service for all the impoverished families in your area. I have recently dedicated my days off and my free time to helping fellow people in need in my community and have been inspired by your actions. Keep up the great work and God bless you for everything you have done and will do." Sincerely, Spenser

"Can we do something like this in Colorado???? We live near Denver and I was reading your article in the Guideposts magazine and thought it was awesome. Just wondering." Thanks, Marcia

"Your story struck such a chord with me because I, too, was deeply moved by the same movie. What's sad is that 22 years later, the movie still applies today. I also find great joy in helping others and my daughters have grown up knowing that community service is part of what we do. I plan to share your story with them as another example of how two people can make such a difference for others. Thank you for being who you are." Blessings, Laurie

To read the full story online, visit www.MyBrothersKeeper.org/Guideposts

Serving Those Who Served Our Country

By Beth Sheehan, Staff

It was **Mike's** first time calling *My Brother's Keeper* and he seemed a little nervous. Although we serve without prerequisites, people who call our Helpline often feel the need to explain their situation and tell us why they need help. **Mike**, 33 years old, offered, "I'm a veteran. I heard about your food program from a friend at the VA Hospital." When I thanked him for his service, **Mike** said it was "a pleasure and an honor."

After taking down his address and phone number, I told him we'd send a food delivery that afternoon between 3-5 p.m. Each year, *My Brother's Keeper* makes 3,500 food deliveries like this one. All of them are delivered the same day food is requested, within just a couple of hours of the call! Our staff member **John DeAngelo** loaded up the van with **Stonehill** students **Andrew Quinn**, **Ryan Diamond**, **Sean Kennedy**, and **Garrett Alofs** and hit the road to deliver to **Mike** and many others in need.

At 5:15 pm, my phone rang again. It was after hours but I recognized **Mike's** number on the caller ID so I answered it right away. **Mike** said, "I just wanted to thank you guys. The staff and volunteers that just visited me were wonderful. I knew you'd send canned goods but I wasn't expecting to get things like milk, eggs, vegetables, and meat. I was totally out of food so I really appreciate it."

"You're very welcome, **Mike**," I told him. "Feel free to call us again if you need more help." Without hesitation, **Mike** asked "When I get back on my feet, is there anything I can do for you—donate time or food or money?"

With **Veterans Day** approaching, we pause to remember and appreciate the tremendous contribution our men and women of the armed forces have given to us and our country. **Mike** is just one example of these many selfless individuals with a heart of service. It's our privilege and honor to serve them.

"True Christian Service"

By Andrew McDonough, Sophomore, University of Notre Dame



Andrew McDonough, University of Notre Dame summer intern from Arlington Heights, Illinois.

This summer at *My Brother's Keeper* was the best summer of my life. I found the answer to my question, "What is true Christian service?"

On my last day, we delivered to **William**, a man living in a one-room apartment who had just been released from the hospital. When **William** called on the phone to ask for help, he was gruff and concerned about the quality of the furniture. "Did it come from a dumpster?" he asked. He obviously didn't know our mission.

The furniture we brought **William** was some of the nicest I'd delivered all summer. The coffee and end tables were a matching set without a scratch on them. The small kitchen table fit perfectly in his tiny apartment and he loved the beautiful black leather couch.

After the delivery, **William** was close to tears, a sharp change from his curt demeanor on the phone. I handed him the crucifix before we left and said, "This is the man who sent you the furniture." **William** looked closely at it and said, "I used to be a Christian." We told him, "No matter how difficult the circumstances are, **God** is always there for you."

Upon hearing this, **William's** barriers came crashing down—he opened up and shared with us the past tragedies of his life. He was very bitter about the things he'd endured and I got the feeling we were one of the first he'd ever told this.

We must have spent twenty minutes listening to **William's** story. When he finished, he stopped, looked at the crucifix, and admitted, "Maybe **God** does have a plan for everything." He began to speak of **God** as a friend and, again, I had the impression this was the first time he'd done that in years. As we left, **William** told us, "If you're ever in the area again, stop in to see me and have a soda."

The change in **William's** demeanor was striking. He was transformed from a bitter man who said "God hates me" to a man who had **Hope**. It was **God** working through everyone at *My Brother's Keeper*... from the staff member answering the phone... to the volunteers who picked up the beautiful furniture... to those of us who had the privilege to make the delivery. Every person did their part, just as if they were serving **Christ** himself. This is true Christian service and its power to change lives.



Our special thanks to the Notre Dame Alumni Club of Boston which helps make this summer internship possible each year by providing housing, support, and a stipend for students who often come from out of state.

Golfing for God ...



As part of our fundraising philosophy, we believe in hosting a variety of events which appeal to different groups of people, rather than asking everyone to support each event.

Our two golf fundraisers are good examples. The *My Brother's Keeper Golf Tourney* at **Foxborough Country Club** attracts supporters in the plumbing and construction industry whereas our **Million Dollar Hole-in-One Shootout** invites the general public to support our work.



Both events benefit from generous corporate donors (*listed below*). Proceeds from these events are critically important to our effective operation because as a matter of policy, *My Brother's Keeper* does not sell any donated furniture to generate revenue.

The **Hole-in-One Shootout** raised more than \$70,000 and is headed by the *My Brother's Keeper Development Board* (*listed on back of newsletter*). The **Golf Tourney** raised \$55,000 and is led by a committee which includes **Michela Camiolo, Gary Cedrone, Leo and Joyce Cooney, Bill & Julie Lane, Frank Monroe, Glen Schlager, Rick Shaw, and George Trethewey**. We are very grateful to the men and women who work hard to plan these events, to our volunteers who run them so capably, and to **John and Margarete McNeice** who fund a generous challenge grant associated with our **Golf Tourney** each year.

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**List does not include individual donors*

A New 'Saint' at My Brother's Keeper



Our newest truck: **St. Peter.**

Northeast Distributors, a commercial refrigeration company in **Whitman** owned by the **Peterson** family, recently donated a 12-foot GMC box truck in excellent condition to *My Brother's Keeper*.

"My Brother's Keeper is very special to our family, with three generations of Petersons involved. Only through the blessings bestowed to us from God are we able to do this and it is our pleasure to be able to help," said **Ken Peterson**, president of **Northeast**. *"We're delighted to know our truck will be used to serve thousands of local families in need in the coming years."*

In keeping with our mission to deliver **Christ's** love and hope, the *My Brother's Keeper* tradition is to name our trucks after saints. In honor of the **Petersons**, this truck will carry the name **'St. Peter.'** It joins our other trucks **'St. John'** named in honor of **John McNeice** and **'St. Ann'** in memory of **Ann Casey**, the mother of **Ed Casey**.



Partners for Christ

Massachusetts Knights of Columbus & My Brother's Keeper



The MA State Council of the **Knights of Columbus** recently visited *My Brother's Keeper* to learn more about the unique way we serve others in **Christ's** name.



Left to right: Mission Advancement Director Vin Shea receives a \$4,000 donation from Knights of Columbus State Deputy Mike Baldner. The MA Knights have generously pledged a donation of \$20,000 over 5 years to help purchase crucifixes.

Bill Donovan, outgoing **State Deputy**, recognized that both organizations share a Christ-centered approach towards service. The **Knights** were particularly inspired by our practice of giving a crucifix to every furniture recipient as a gift for their home. As a result of their visit, the **State Council** invited *My Brother's Keeper* to submit a multi-year funding proposal to help purchase crucifixes.

"The timing was perfect," said new **State Deputy Mike Baldner**, pictured at left. "The theme of this year's national convention in Washington D.C. was 'I am My Brother's Keeper,' focusing on the Gospel's call of charity to all."

The **MA Knights of Columbus** pledged a \$4,000 annual gift for the next five years to help purchase crucifixes, representing about 1/2 our annual costs.

The image of the suffering **Christ** on the cross is central to the work of *My Brother's Keeper*—a powerful reminder that **Jesus** understands our pain and **He** responds to our needs. We are deeply grateful for the **State Council's** leadership and generous support of our mission "To Bring the Love and Hope of Jesus Christ to those we serve."

"A Picture of Where We Hung the Cross..."

SHANNON AND JUSTIN SENT THIS BEAUTIFUL NOTE AND ACCOMPANYING PICTURE TO THANK THE COMMUNITY OF MY BROTHER'S KEEPER FOR THE HELP THEY RECEIVED.

Please accept this thank-you card on behalf of Justin and myself (Shannon) to show our sincere appreciation for the amazing furniture donation which you delivered. Enclosed is a picture of where we hung the cross to be a part of our daily routine and it reminds us in our hearts the truly good people that were there for us in a time of need. There is no limits to what people can do for each other and meeting all of you reminded us of that.



THANK YOU, SHANNON AND JUSTIN, FOR YOUR UNIQUE, PERSONAL AFFIRMATION OF OUR MISSION, FOR GIVING YOUR PERMISSION TO INCLUDE YOUR NOTE AND CARD IN OUR NEWSLETTER, AND FOR GIVING US THE PRIVILEGE TO SERVE YOU!



PLEASE JOIN US!

**20TH ANNUAL GRATITUDE MASS – FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH AT 7:00 P.M.
CHRISTMAS VOLUNTEERING BEGINS SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4TH**



MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

P.O. Box 338, Easton, MA 02356-0338

Furniture Assistance... 508-238-4416

Donations / Business 508-238-7512 – Fax 508-238-3613

(501 (c) (3) tax-exempt)

www.mybrotherskeeper.org

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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.