

A Volunteer Christian Ministry

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.*

MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

"We're just the delivery people, this is the person who sent you the furniture."

The Power of the Cross

By Jim Orcutt, Co-Founder



In 1989, a year after **Terry** and I began *My Brother's Keeper*, I was driving our old truck north along Route 138 heading for a delivery in **Brockton**. As I passed the race track in **Raynham**, I noticed a sign nailed to a tree just off the road. Hand-painted on a weathered board, the bold letters proclaimed to all who passed: **"THE POWER OF THE CROSS."**

The fifteen-mile trek to **Brockton** was a daily routine, so I formed the habit of checking to see if the sign was still there every time I passed. I wondered who put it there. "Probably some born again," I thought to myself. After all I was Catholic. We didn't go around nailing **Jesus** signs to trees. We delivered beds and such to the poor and gave them a crucifix and told them, "**Jesus** is the one who sent you the furniture." It was presumptuous and haughty thinking on my part.

Now, looking back twenty years, I tend to be more forgiving of my high and mighty attitude. After all, we had just begun serving people in **Christ's** name and I had yet to learn just how much I didn't know.

A few months after first seeing the sign, I delivered a kitchen table and four chairs to a woman with three children. They lived in a run-down second floor apartment on Montello Street in **Brockton**.

I brought in the chairs and laid the table top upside down on the floor. After attaching the legs I turned it right side up. A chorus of *Abhh's* and *Ohhh's* came from the mother and three young children as they examined their new family gathering space.

Hesitantly, the mother expressed her gratitude, "Thank you... thank you...so much."

Taking a small box from my pocket, I removed the cover. The crucifix lay gleaming up at our little group. Pointing to the table and chairs I said, "No...no...**Maria**. They're not from me. Here...this is a gift for your home. This is the man who sent you the furniture."



Left to right, Terry Orcutt, Dee Trethewey, Ethel Monroe, Linda Thomas, and Deb Martin put the finishing touches on the Balloon Raffle Contest at the 3rd Annual My Brother's Keeper Golf Tourney. The weather was beautiful and the event was a sellout, raising \$50,000 to serve families in need in Christ's name.

Holding the little box and looking at the cross, her eyes filled up and tears ran down her cheeks.

Then an amazing thing took place. It was almost as if I were a spectator at a play watching the mother with three children gathered at her skirt. One of the children reached up and pulled his mother's hand down so he could look into the little box. Staring at the crucifix he asked, "Who's that, Ma?"

"That's **Jesus**," she answered. "Why's **He** like that, Ma?" "They nailed him like that," she said. "That's wicked awful. Why'd they do that?" the boy asked.

She didn't answer right away. Then she said, "Because **He** came to tell us **God** loves us but they were afraid of **Him**."

They were quiet for a moment. Then the boy turned to me and said, "Mister, can I have one for my room?"

Driving home I thought of the great gift **God** had given me. I had been afforded the privilege of witnessing a mother explaining the story of **Jesus** to her children for the very first time.

It was the beginning of my understanding the power of the cross to transform a simple act of kindness into the love and hope of **Jesus Christ**. It was the beginning of my understanding how much I didn't know.



*See our Special Inserts!!!
Million Dollar Hole-in-Shootout on September 11th-13th
and Boston-to-Bermuda Cruise Raffle*



1st Annual Mission Appeal a Resounding Success ...and still ongoing!

“Christ-centered mission” rated #1 value

Response has been strong to our first annual **Mission Appeal**. Hundreds of community members have given generously and more than **\$139,000** has been raised to date, led by a very generous gift from a private foundation.

Community members—whether they chose to donate or not—were also asked to rank what they value most about *My Brother's Keeper*. By a 2-1 margin, the top choice thus far is “*Christ-centered mission: delivering a crucifix and His Love and Hope.*”

Running dead-even, the second and third-leading results are “*Furniture and food provided free of charge to families in need*” and “*Quality of care, concern and dignity shown to those we serve.*”

Many found it difficult to choose just three and wrote in wonderful comments such as “*Wow, that was tough!*” and “*Too many good choices! Can I rate them all #1?*”

Please know the **Mission Appeal** is ongoing: gifts and survey responses are still welcome. Your support is critical because *My Brother's Keeper* is a 100% privately-funded organization working hard to bring the Love and Hope of **Christ** to more families than ever during these difficult times. (SEE CHART BELOW)

Values Survey

We need your opinion. What do you value most about My Brother's Keeper?

Please rank your top three choices by writing in the numbers 1, 2 and 3.

Return your survey in the provided envelope—whether you are able to contribute at this time or not.

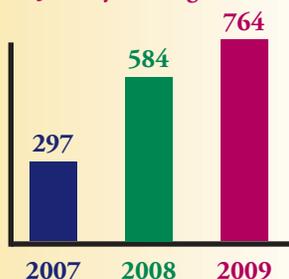
Thank you!

- Sense of Community: shared values and friendships
- Furniture and Food provided free of charge to families in need
- Christ-centered mission: delivering a crucifix and His Love and Hope
- No prerequisites for service: not judging families in need
- Hands-on, multi-generational Christian service for individuals/families
- Emphasis on daily prayer and community prayer intentions
- Good stewardship: effective use of donations and volunteer efforts
- Student involvement: educating “tomorrow's leaders” to be compassionate
- Quality of care, concern and dignity shown to those we serve
- 100% privately-funded: no government support, no furniture donations sold
- Thanksgiving Mass and Christmas Assistance program
- Personal relationship with, and trust in, the staff and founders
- Other:

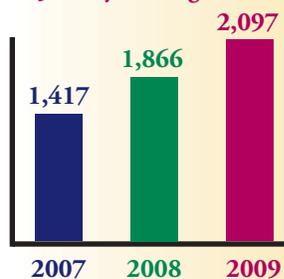
OUR GROWTH CONTINUES...

Through YOU, God continues to provide the resources we need to help more families than ever before, so important during these difficult times.

Furniture Deliveries January 1 – August 15



Food Deliveries January 1 – August 15



2 YEAR INCREASE

Furniture Deliveries: ↑ 157%

Food Deliveries: ↑ 48%



“Neither snow nor rain...”

By Josh Smith



Delivery staff and volunteers at *My Brother's Keeper* are like mail carriers in at least two ways. For one, we usually know our way around town. And more importantly, we follow the post office credo: “*Neither snow nor rain...*” will keep us from our work. Our deliveries are too important to those we serve.

On a recent Thursday morning, **John Kearney (BC High)**, **Owen Steele (BC High)**, **Matt Dooley (Cohasset High)**, **Colin Burke (Montana State)** and I were driving to make a furniture delivery and it started getting darker, not brighter, as the day passed. Sure enough, it was pouring by the time we arrived at our first stop in **Dorchester**.

Jasmine was so glad to see us, to know we'd come despite the rain. She'd moved into her apartment a few weeks earlier without any furniture. Her three-bedroom apartment was very small but it was home to six family members spanning three generations. Nothing about the apartment was ideal—it didn't even have a living room—but being on disability, it was the only place **Jasmine** could afford.

A sad truth of our work is that we can bring people we serve the nicest furniture in the world, but sometimes their apartments just aren't big enough to accept it. In this case, we made sure to find places for beds, dressers, a kitchen table and chairs, and even a couch since **Jasmine's** bad knee only allowed her to stand for short periods. “*What a relief,*” she sighed as she eased onto her new couch. When she saw her thick new mattress, **Jasmine** exclaimed, “*I wasn't expecting the stuff to be so nice!*”

Between the rain and tight quarters in the apartment, the delivery took much longer than normal but our extra effort was clearly appreciated. I couldn't help but think of **St. Francis** who said: “*Preach the Gospel at all times. When necessary, use words.*”

Of course, we saved the best part for last: the crucifix. **Jasmine** clearly understood our mission before we even stated it and thanked **God** for answering her prayers. As she hung the crucifix above the door, we only asked that she pray for the work of *My Brother's Keeper* on this rainy morning. She gladly agreed to support our work in her own special way.

“Because of you, my babies can come home.”

By Beth Sheehan

My sister, **Kate**, had a baby at the beginning of July making me an aunt for the first time. She and her husband were as prepared as any first-time parents can be—she’s an RN, they’re both healthy and employed, have a roof over their heads, have family nearby, and received all the necessary ‘baby things’ at the shower.

Despite all these advantages, having a newborn is still a challenging time for them as it is for all new parents. My nephew has helped me better understand all the things an infant requires and better appreciate parents who struggle just to provide for their babies, especially single mothers.



The last phone call I took Tuesday before we closed the Helpline was from a young woman named **Alicia**. She was timid and anxious about asking for help. *“I don’t know if this is a stupid question, I mean, I don’t even know if you help with these...”*

Alicia explained that she purchased two cribs for her 10-month old twin boys but couldn’t afford to buy the crib mattresses for them. *“The money I make goes straight to the rent and utilities. There’s nothing left over!”*

I put **Alicia** on hold to check our delivery schedule and saw we were going to her town in just a few days. When I asked **Alicia** if she’d be home Thursday between 11-1 P.M., she replied, *“So wait—does this mean you’re going to bring me the crib mattresses... for free?!”* Before I could finish saying yes, she began sobbing. *“I didn’t have a safe place for them to sleep so they’ve been staying with others. I’m so grateful for your help. Because of you, my babies can come home.”*

It’s been a gift for me to witness all the precious moments between my sister and my nephew since his birth—I can’t imagine the pain **Alicia** must have felt not being able to have her children with her. **Alicia** was so grateful and so was I. What a privilege it was to help bring her family together.



“Special Delivery”

Left to right: Paul Bower, Rev. Michael Bastian, and Elaine Ojala from Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Easton deliver much-needed diapers to Co-founder Jim Orcutt to accompany our food deliveries. As part of their Outreach Program, a pack of diapers was the price of admission for Movie Night at Holy Trinity.

Thank You’s...

We can count the ever-growing number of deliveries but how do we know our mission for Christ is being accomplished? These cards give us our answer!

“THANK - You”

I just want to thank the brother's keeper for bringing me furniture. I was so happy, everything ~~was~~ is so nice. Sometimes I need to know how much God loves me and

receiving all of that really made me see His love is everpresent in my life.

*Thank - you also for the crucifix it is something I treasure. Sincerely,
Deane*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

*Shouting it from the hills!
Thanks for everything!*

*My grandchildren love their beds, blankets and sheets and the little extras you sent. I can't thank you enough and we can't thank God enough. The kids say their prayers every night and the cross of Jesus is hung over their wall.
Cute*

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST	Monday, August 31 Stonehill College Into the Streets Freshman Volunteer Day
SEPTEMBER	Friday–Sunday, September 11–13 – 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Million Dollar Hole-in-One Shootout – Golf Country, South Easton
OCTOBER	Thursday, October 8 Development Board Volunteer Day
NOVEMBER	Friday, November 27 – 7:00 p.m. 20th Annual Gratitude Mass – My Brother's Keeper

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Brendan M. Sullivan



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 to remember the hungry.

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

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

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

When I experience the joy of giving to my children,

Help me to remember the agony of those who must watch their children go without.

By remembering, Help me to 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.