



MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

A Volunteer Christian Ministry

November 2009

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."

Recession Ends but Pain Continues in Our Community



Economists say the recession has technically ended but we know the pain hasn't.

Across America, millions are without jobs, struggling to pay their rent or mortgage and put food on the table. The same is true in Massachusetts. *The Enterprise* recently reported:

- The state's jobless rate is at 9.3%, a 33-year high.
- From 2008 to June 2009, the number of residents enrolled in the Food Stamps program increased 39% in Norfolk County and 37% in Plymouth County.

A letter from **Maureen** in **Braintree** puts a face to these statistics:

I'm writing today to see if I can get assistance this Christmas. My husband and I have three children ages 11, 6, and 2. I was just diagnosed with a mental disability and lost my job after two hospitalizations in the last two months.

This has been very hard on my kids because I've always been there for them. My husband is still working but not bringing in nearly enough to support our family of five.

At this point in my life I feel like everything is falling apart, but I know we have God looking over us. I ask him everyday to keep me strong and out of the hospital. We're trying hard and doing the best we can but we're really in need of help. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. If you can't help, I understand.

When confronted with this pain and hardship, what does this mean for us, the Christian community of *My Brother's Keeper*?

Our answer lies in **Christ's** words, **Matthew 25:40**: "*What ever you do for the most humble of my people, you do for me.*" Like **Christ**, we are neither deaf nor blind to the suffering of others. We can help families like **Maureen's** and we will help.

Last Christmas, *My Brother's Keeper* served **1,986** families —**5,285** children and **2,772** adults—living in **58**

communities from **Boston** to **Fall River** and **Cape Cod**. 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**. We will continue to be good stewards of all donations entrusted to us (*see Outstanding Stewardship below*).

A special reminder... the Christmas effort starts each year, in prayer, with our **Annual Gratitude Mass** always the Friday night after Thanksgiving at 7:00 P.M. (*see below*). Many have made this Mass a wonderful family tradition. Last year we had a record 650 people present! We hope you can join us.



**My Brother's Keeper
Annual Gratitude Mass**

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

Start a Family Tradition! Kids all ages welcome!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27th

7:00 P.M.

at MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

Principal Celebrant

Rev. James M. Mahoney

Pastor, St. Bridget Parish, Abington

Reception following Mass

Priests & Deacons, please bring alb & stole to concelebrate

**Outstanding
Stewardship
At
My Brother's Keeper**

Management & General 5.8% **Development 4.1%**



From One Generation to the Next



Barbara Imbriani and Granddaughter Elizabeth

My Brother's Keeper is special in many ways...
the unique services we provide,
the quality of our care and concern,
the symbol of **Christ** which accompanies each delivery.

Important to many parents and grandparents is the opportunity to volunteer with their children and grandchildren. Service at *My Brother's Keeper* offers special 'teachable moments.' Through experience, younger generations learn that service is a privilege and a joy.

We hope you and your family will join us this Christmas.
As **St. Francis** said, "It is in giving that we receive."



The Harrington Family from Hanover

Haitian Novice Serves Those in Need in the U.S. ... and is Served Herself



Co-founder Jim Orcutt and Limetez Pierre-Gilles, a Novice with the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

Limetez Pierre-Gilles is a Novice, the third stage of the discernment process to become a Catholic nun. She came to the U.S. from Haiti five years ago. As part of her formation with the School Sisters of Notre Dame, she is serving at My Brother's Keeper from September to December.

As a Novice, I volunteer at *My Brother's Keeper* twice a week delivering furniture and food to those in need. Memories of the families we serve wind through my mind every night. Just before I sleep, their stories replay themselves like a movie on a big screen. I find a loving, transformative message attached to each of them.

And while I am grateful for the privilege of service, I am more grateful to discover the reciprocity of our work: those we serve at *My Brother's Keeper* serve us as well. The enrichment is mutual.

One morning we met **Rosa**, a grandmother from **Puerto Rico**. She had been living in her apartment with nothing in it—no bed, no furniture at all. I wondered to myself, How many more women are sleeping on the floor? While we worked, **Jim Orcutt** talked to **Rosa** to put her at ease. We listened to stories about her family and her father who is still in **Puerto Rico**. When her brand new bed was put together, she thought that was it, and said, "Thank you! Thank you so much!"

However, there was one more thing, one more gift: a crucifix. "This is the man who sent the furniture to you," we said. The tender look on Rosa's face while looking at the crucifix was filled with loving gratitude to her **God**. Days and nights of prayers were now answered! No wordy prayers can ever replace that moment. Rosa's deep contemplative look set me thinking about my own way of praying.

Another morning we visited **Paul**, a father who needed only a twin bed for his son. I have seen men who are too proud to ask for help. This father wanted to do the right thing for his son—to make sure he would never sleep on the floor again. As I served **Paul**, memories of my own father, now in heaven, filled my thoughts. My father would do *everything* to provide for his children. Whether it was paying tuition or putting food on the table, he was never afraid or ashamed to knock on some doors. That day I prayed for **Paul's** child... that when he becomes a man, he will remember how much his father loved and cared for him.

That day I felt grateful not just for my own father, but for all those who work to assist those in need; those who help to build better communities for our sisters and brothers so that they too can "reach the fullness of their potential as individuals created in God's image." (from **You Are Sent**, the constitution of the **School Sisters of Notre Dame**)

The people we serve—single mothers, single fathers, married couples, black or white, immigrants or not—are always very grateful for the help we give. Some silently, some effusively share their faith. The privilege of experiencing their joy, their faith and their gratitude helps *me* grow in faith, hope and love. It broadens my horizon and confirms my belief that **God** is present in everybody and in everything.

Isn't that also a great service to me?



(Hand) Made with Love



Each Christmas, *My Brother's Keeper* runs short on gifts for mothers. These gifts are important because they show we value everyone in the family and it's important children see their parents open gifts on **Christmas** morning.

For years, several groups of women have taken the initiative to make beautiful, crafty 'mother's baskets' to help fill the void. This year a group of volunteers took this great idea one step further. Since early summer, many talented seamstresses have worked tirelessly and joyfully sewing aprons (*left*) and fleece shawls (*right*) for mothers we will serve this **Christmas**.



It's just one more example of **Christian** community. We each contribute our own special gifts, talents, and resources. Together we bring the Love and Hope of **Jesus Christ** to those we serve.

Our mission accomplished...

We received the following thank you letter from Mary Lou Comlin, a social worker at Old Colony Hospice who entrusted her patient, Cathy, to our care. Mary Lou's words affirm our mission. My Brother's Keeper delivers furniture but also something far more important: "God's love."



1ST ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD VOLUNTEER DAY

The My Brother's Keeper Development Board is an active, engaged group of Christian leaders who use their personal and business connections to raise funds to support our work for Christ. The Board spent the day volunteering at My Brother's Keeper on Thursday, October 8th.

Standing left to right, board members Bob Rossini, John Danehy, Leo Morrissey, Jim Burke, Jack O'Donoghue, Joyce Donadio, Steve Wessling, Lori Grant and Executive Director Erich Miller. Kneeling left to right, co-founders Jim and Terry Orcutt with Brian Concannon, Chair of the Development Board. Not pictured: Tom McDonald, Bob Barry, and Donna Lane.

The Development Board independently plans and runs events like the Million Dollar Hole-in-One Shootout in September, a tremendous success netting \$70,000. The board secured sponsorships and contributions from 65 corporate donors, 40 of which were at a level of \$1,000 or above.

Our special thanks to the volunteers who helped staff this event and to the Development Board who work so hard to support our mission in their own special way.

Sept. 23, 2009

I want to thank you for your kindness & generosity in assisting one of my patients during her final days. Her name is Cathy and she lived in Quincy. She was having increasing difficulty getting in and out of her chair. I suggested she call My Brother's Keeper, as they might have an electric lift-recliner. Not only did you have one, but it was delivered the next day. Cathy's Christian faith was very important to her and she definitely felt God's love that day. She had nothing but good things to say about the delivery men and your organization.

Sadly, Cathy died on September 8th. She was only 52. Her death was peaceful and she was ready to go to the Lord.

Know that Cathy made good use of the chair, which helped her maintain some independence for a time.

May God continue to bless you in your ministry.

Old Colony Hospice

One Credit Union Way
4th Floor-Harbor One Bank
Randolph, MA 02368
(781) 341-4145

Sincerely,
Mary Lou Comlin
LCSW ACHP-50



Annual Gratitude Mass
Friday, November 27th at 7:00 p.m.
Christmas Volunteering
10:00 a.m. – 8 p.m. daily
beginning Saturday, December 5th

Officers

James H. Orcutt, Sr., **President**
 Theresa Orcutt, **Secretary**
 John C. Danehy, C.P.A., **Treasurer**

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Erich E. Miller

Mission Advancement Director

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 James H. Orcutt, Jr.
 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

Development Board

Brian P. Concannon, **Chairman**
President and CEO
 Haemonetics

Robert B. Barry, *President*
 Bostonian Cleaning &
 Restoration, Inc.

James M. Burke, *Territory Manager*
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 My Brother's Keeper Volunteer

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 Wessling Architects

CenturyPlus Club

Joyce M. Donadio, **Co-Chair**
Senior Vice President
 Putnam Investments

Peter S. Donadio, **Co-Chair**
Chartered Financial Consultant
 Business Planning Associates

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.