



MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

A Volunteer Christian Ministry

January 2012

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.”

“WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING US, YOU HELPED US”



No snow... 2,500 hard-working volunteers... thousands of generous supporters... and most importantly, a deep commitment to serve struggling families in Christ’s name.

Put all of these things together and you have the makings of our most successful Christmas program ever: 2,662 deliveries completed in 67 communities—10,500 children and adults served!—all in just 21 days.

Each family received personally selected Christmas gifts for every member of the family—teens and parents too—plus a \$40 Shaw’s gift card and a ham or a turkey to provide a nice Christmas meal.

One mother’s heartfelt words express the appreciation of parents who would otherwise watch their children go without. ‘Maria’ wrote her letter in Spanish and it was translated by our bilingual staff:

I hope the Lord blesses you always. My name is ‘Maria.’ This is my second Christmas in this country. It has been a very difficult year, but thankfully, people like you exist and my children will now have a much better Christmas.

In past Christmases my two girls would see other children around the world receiving gifts, but they would get none. We have taught our girls that the true meaning of Christmas is not found in toys and gifts but in the birth of our God.

My husband, my girls, and I are so thankful that without even knowing us, you helped us. We are so appreciative and happy.

Please excuse that this letter was not written in English. But I am not worried because I know that language cannot be a barrier to the enormous thanks that I have for you. God bless you forever!

Please know the enormous thanks that we have for you too: that you are part of the My Brother’s Keeper family and that you helped us bring the love and hope of Jesus Christ to so many children and parents in 2011!



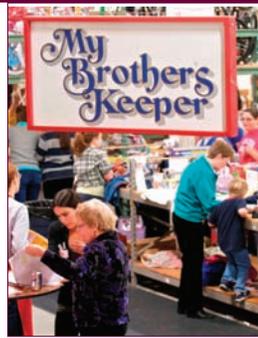
“Hospitality”... Co-Founder Jim Orcutt offers Santa’s elves some kielbasa cooked by volunteer Kenny Kostka of Easton.

2011 ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS... A YEAR IN REVIEW

CHRISTMAS:	2,662 Deliveries... 10,500 people served
FOOD:	3,617 Deliveries... 14,950 people served
FURNITURE:	1,014 Deliveries... 3,373 people served
TOTAL:	7,293 Deliveries serving 28,823 children & adults
ESTIMATED BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:	\$1,735,650

67 TOWNS SERVED – CHRISTMAS 2011

Abington	Fall River	Pembroke
Allston	Foxboro	Plymouth
Attleboro	Franklin	Quincy
Avon	Harwich	Randolph
Boston	Holbrook	Raynham
Braintree	Hull	Revere
Bridgewater	Hyde Park	Rockland
Brighton	Jamaica Plain	Roslindale
Brockton	Kingston	Roxbury
Cambridge	Lakeville	Somerset
Canton	Malden	South Boston
Centerville	Mansfield	Stoughton
Charlestown	Mashpee	Taunton
Chelsea	Mattapan	Walpole
Dedham	Medford	Waltham
Dennis Port	Middleboro	Wareham
Dighton	Milton	West Bridgewater
Dorchester	New Bedford	West Newton
East Boston	Norfolk	West Roxbury
East Bridgewater	North Attleboro	Westport
East Falmouth	Norton	Weymouth
Easton	Norwood	
Everett	Onset	



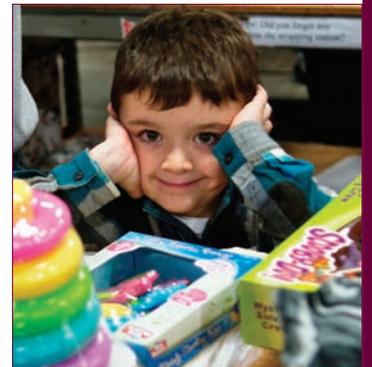
“THE JOY OF SERVICE”...
a letter from a volunteer

Dear My Brother’s Keeper Family,

It was my first year being involved with this incredible mission. A very caring friend of mine brought me here while helping my family and me get back on our feet along with helping me regain a true relationship with God.



I was not in the building five minutes and there were tears flowing down my face uncontrollably. Being part of something so great and loving is yet another gift from God. It is undeniable that God has been working in my life for the past several months in a way I can’t begin to explain.



One night during Christmas, my 12-year old son was running around the warehouse hugging anyone who would accept one. He begged me every day after that to come back.



Thanks to My Brother’s Keeper, my family met so many wonderful people, was reminded of how blessed we are, and we have the true meaning of Christmas back in our hearts. I don’t have the words to explain how grateful I am to My Brother’s Keeper for adding my family to the list of those whose prayers you helped answer.



Love, Brian





A SOBERING CALL

By Terry Orcutt

"Hello... My Brother's Keeper. How can I help you?" I answered the phone.

"Is this the My Brother's Keeper Christmas line?" In those eight words, I could hear both stress and a tremendous feeling of relief on the other end of the line.

"It is," I answered. *"What would your kids like for Christmas?"*

"My four kids all asked for only one thing: beds to sleep on," Michelle from Dorchester told me. *"They're tired of sleeping on the floor, especially in this cold."*

My heart sunk. While most kids ask for toys, games and clothes, these kids only wished for something we all take for granted: the warmth, comfort and security of a bed and a good night's sleep. No child should have to ask for a bed for Christmas.

"You'll have brand new ones for everyone delivered by Christmas Eve," I was happy to tell her. I silently thanked God for the thousands of supporters of My Brother's Keeper who so generously give us the resources we need to say 'yes' to struggling mothers like Michelle.

"So your kids are 7, 8, 12 and 13," I continued. *"Now that the beds are taken of, what would they like for Christmas?"*

"Trucks, transformers, dolls, books, board games," Michelle told me. That's more like it, I thought to myself. Thank you, God!



A SEASON ON THE BRINK

By Josh Smith



The second floor apartment was exceptionally neat and nicely decorated for Christmas. It was certainly a little small for a family of six but a nice home nevertheless.

It was here that I received the strongest hug of my life.

This was a Christmas season full of families on the brink. On countless deliveries we heard stories of someone losing a job, getting sick, or being forced to downsize. Pauline's story was no exception.

When she opened the door to let us in, Pauline was already smiling from ear to ear. Once inside her apartment though, she began to open up about the family's difficult year. It started with Pauline's husband, Dan, being laid off. Days later, Pauline lost her long-time retail job as well.

While Dan went back to work after a couple of months, Pauline was still looking a year later. Her last position didn't pay much but, in her words, the second income provided them with enough to *"live comfortably."* As if to underscore her humility, so typical of those we serve, Pauline also described her former job as *"very convenient"* since you could walk to and from the bus stops.

No way around it, with four kids to support it had been a difficult year filled with difficult choices. However, it was also apparent that despite their struggles, Pauline's faith was unshaken. *"Through it all we have not lost our faith. He has continued to provide for us."*

Pauline clearly understood that God's help had come in the form of My Brother's Keeper. Getting through to our Helpline for assistance was such a relief that Pauline had immediately broken down into tears. She summed up her gratitude saying, *"I know a lot of people are worse off than we are, but we wouldn't have had much of a Christmas without you."*

Then it was time for the hug. I can't think of a better thank you.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

The Claddagh Fund—the charity established in 2009 by Dropkick Murphys founder Ken Casey—joined forces with My Brother’s Keeper to strengthen the ministry and raise money for furniture and food deliveries to local families in need.

My Brother’s Keeper launched a Facebook page on December 6th and the Claddagh Fund issued a very special challenge grant to add excitement: they agreed to donate \$5 to My Brother’s Keeper every time someone “liked” us on Facebook, up to \$20,000.

To qualify for the full grant, My Brother’s Keeper needed 4,000 “likes” before January 31, 2012. Mission accomplished! We reached our goal three weeks ahead of schedule and we’ve already received the \$20,000 Claddagh Fund donation.

“My Brother’s Keeper is an incredible organization that delivers relief and frankly, joy, to thousands of families in need,” said Ken Casey. *“The Dropkick Murphys and our foundation, the Claddagh Fund, are thrilled to be able to help spread the word about such a great charity and proud to support their efforts financially.”*

Thanks to the Claddagh Fund challenge grant, My Brother’s Keeper (4,043 likes) now has a very strong Facebook presence relative to some of Boston’s most recognized charities such as Pine Street Inn (1,931 likes), Greater Boston Food Bank (2,780 likes) and Project Bread –The Walk for Hunger (5,354 likes). That puts My Brother’s Keeper in pretty good company!

Thank you, Ken and the Claddagh Fund. We appreciate your tremendous generosity which will help kids in need and your vision which has made My Brother’s Keeper a stronger ministry.



Want to “like” My Brother’s Keeper on Facebook? Visit www.facebook.com/mybrotherskeeperMA



URBAN PLUNGE 2012

From January 9th–12th, My Brother’s Keeper welcomed 16 students from Notre Dame, Stonehill, and Providence College for a service retreat called ‘Urban Plunge.’ The students slept overnight at My Brother’s Keeper, attended daily Mass, delivered furniture and food, volunteered at local homeless shelters and a soup kitchen, listened to a guest speaker, and reflected each evening on their service. The group photo includes Fr. Hugh Cleary CSC, Director of Campus Ministry at Stonehill (seated left) who celebrated the concluding Mass.

A Reflection by Meghan Krueger, Notre Dame ’14

My Brother’s Keeper is the best representation of pure Christian service that I have ever seen and I feel blessed I was part of such a selfless, God-centered ministry for a couple days. Through Urban Plunge, I finally learned what it means to truly serve as Jesus has called, something that is captured so wonderfully in the simple words which accompany the presentation of the crucifix, *“We’re just the delivery people. This is the man who sent you the furniture.”*

My first day of deliveries helped me understand the beauty of this philosophy. We went to Joe’s house in the morning to furnish his entire apartment that only had an air mattress. Joe hadn’t told his daughters we were coming so it would be a wonderful surprise when they came home from school. When I found out my van would be delivering food to Joe that same afternoon, I was excited by the possibility that Joe’s daughters would be home and we would see their reaction to their new furniture. When we arrived, however, the girls were still not home and I left slightly disappointed.

But God’s timing is perfect: just as we pulled away from the curb, we saw Joe’s youngest daughter, Alysha, get out of a car and walk up the stairs. I later realized the beautiful consequence that we were not present when Alysha got home. Had we been in the house, we would have seen her excitement and received her gratitude. Instead, Alysha walked into her room, saw her new bed—with our gift of the crucifix hanging above it—and she knew exactly who sent the furniture.

My experiences during Urban Plunge continually reminded me that my service was not about me. Each time we gathered in the prayer room, the image on the stained-glass window served as a reminder that we are just the “middleman” between God and the poor. By humbling ourselves in our service, we allow God’s love to shine bright and His hope to renew.

WORDS OF GRATITUDE FROM THOSE WE SERVE

Dear My Brother's Keeper,

Thank you for the wonderful gifts for Christmas. Thank you for the ham and gift card to Shaw's. Thank you for allowing the Holy Spirit to work through you and allow us to be blessed. We are so thankful and we praise God for His blessings. Thank you for spreading God's love to others. May God bless you and your ministry and increase the good that you are doing!

Blessings,
The W. Family, Taunton



I would like to send my warmest thank you for making our Christmas a happy one. Thank you to all the wonderful people who deliver food and gifts. Thank you for all that you do for people all year long. Happy New Year to all of you and good health to everyone.

Doris & son, Brockton



To The Caring Folks at My Brother's Keeper,

Mere words seem inadequate to express our thankfulness to you. Four warm and jovial individuals came to our home bearing gifts in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. These wonderful Samaritans reminded us that kindness and consideration for one's fellow human beings still exists in this world. My husband and I thank you for the beautiful gifts and for the existence of such a positive force for good as My Brother's Keeper.

Sincerely,
Valerie, Quincy



We would like to take this opportunity to thank you so much for the Christmas gifts. We appreciate your time and efforts in trying to help not only our family but a million of others with needs. Again thanks and God bless.

From Maria, Dorchester

Thank you—

This has been a rough year for our family, the highlight of which was our daughter's Make A Wish trip. We as a family are trying to focus on being together, enjoying the moment and making memories. Thank you for giving us a less-stressful and Merrier Christmas. We wish we could give our kids the world. Thank you for getting us closer to that goal.

These are the days and the moments we will treasure. Thank you and God bless you.

The R. Family, Falmouth



Thank you so much for your help. If it wasn't for you this year, I don't know what I would have done. My employment ended when my mother passed away at the beginning of December and she had no life insurance so I had to pay for all her funeral expenses. Due to that, I couldn't get gifts for my children and with your generosity, my children had a good Christmas. Thank you so much again.

Anna, Fall River



(A candle was given to our delivery volunteers along with this letter:)

To My Brother's Keeper,

Thank you for all the times you've helped me and my family. You've put smiles and giggles on my children's faces and you've filled their bellies too. As we count our blessings, you're always there. Thanks from all the struggling families you help everyday. You provide so much love and warmth to all of us.



Happy Holidays and God bless all of you.
Love from the B. Family, Brockton

PS: The candle is not much but when you light it, the flame will always show the love we have for all of you.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH	Thursday, March 8th – 6:00 p.m. Lovely Ladies Dinner – Thorny Lea Golf Club Call 508-238-7512 for information
APRIL	4th Annual Mission Appeal Mailing
MAY	Thursday, May 17th – Sunday, May 20th 3rd Annual Deacon Plunge
JUNE	Saturday, June 16th 3rd Annual My Brother's Keeper Family Walk www.MyBrothersKeeperFamilyWalk.org
JULY	Monday, July 16th My Brother's Keeper Golf Tournament – Foxborough Country Club

SPECIAL KNITTING PROJECT:

Do you like to knit or crochet?

If so, you can join a group of women who are knitting winter hats and scarves to give to mothers as gifts for our 2012 Christmas Program. If interested, please call Beth Sheehan at 508-238-7512.



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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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The Work of Christmas

By Howard Thurman

*When the star in the sky is gone;
When the Kings and Princes are home;
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins.
To find the lost; To heal the broken;
To feed the hungry; To release the prisoner;
To teach the nations; To bring Christ to all;
to make music in the heart.*