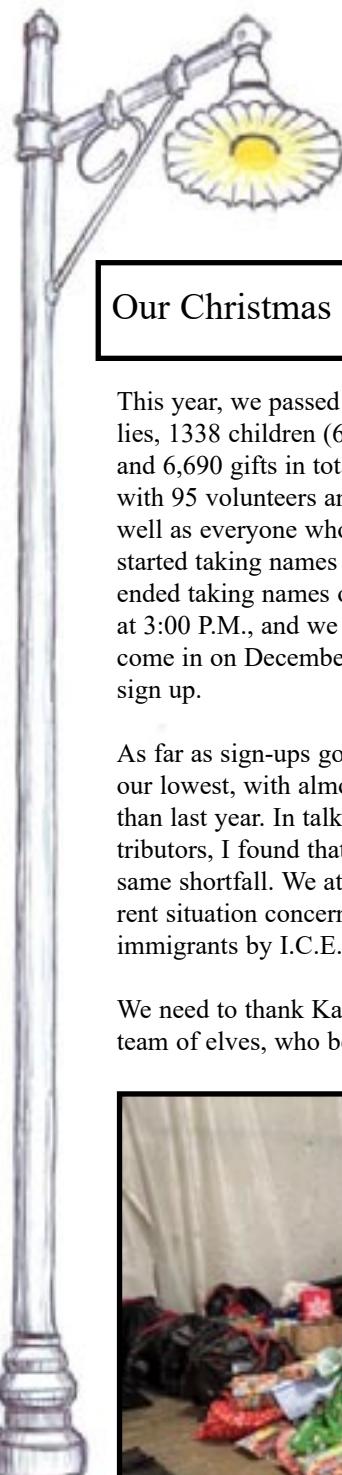


STREETLIGHTS

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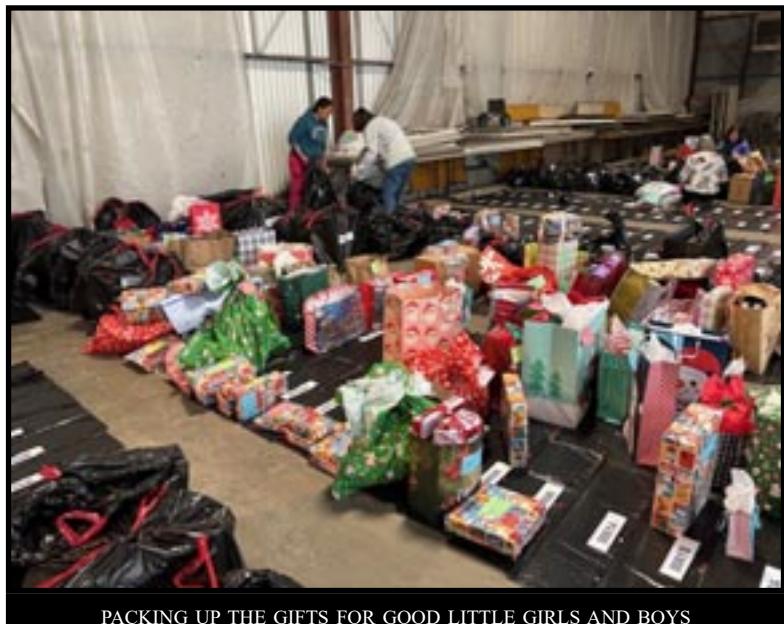


Our Christmas Giving Program

This year, we passed out gifts to 660 families, 1338 children (671 girls and 664 boys), and 6,690 gifts in total. We accomplished it with 95 volunteers and 7 organizations, as well as everyone who works for us. We started taking names on October 4, 2025. We ended taking names on December 23, 2025, at 3:00 P.M., and we still had four mothers come in on December 24, 2025, asking to sign up.

As far as sign-ups go, this year was one of our lowest, with almost 200 fewer families than last year. In talking with other gift distributors, I found that they experienced the same shortfall. We attributed this to the current situation concerning the arrest of illegal immigrants by I.C.E. in the Worcester area.

We need to thank Kathy Trainor and her team of elves, who began organizing gifts



PACKING UP THE GIFTS FOR GOOD LITTLE GIRLS AND BOYS

for distribution last April. This single-handed effort led to one of the smoothest, error-free bagging of gifts. I found only three errors in over 1,300+ bags made up, remarkable!

Our Christmas volunteers are made up of church groups, family groups, and friend groups. They did the majority of the lifting, carrying, sorting, selecting, and tying. They are listed on the Christmas volunteer list in this edition of StreetLights. We had 7 different organizations and 95 individuals who made 213 visits to help get the gifts out the door on time. Without these Christmas elves, there would simply be no Christmas Giving Program. We can't say thank you enough.



VOLUNTEERS PACKING UP TURKEY DINNERS

Boy are we busy!

Welcoming Peter J. Larkin to Our Board of Directors

By Rod Pfannenstiel

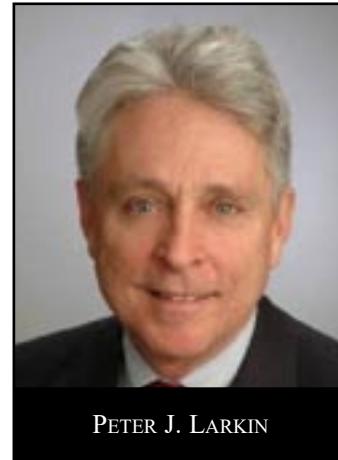
The Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope is delighted to welcome Peter J. Larkin to the Board of Directors. Peter brings a distinguished record of public service, community engagement, and collaborative leadership that has strengthened institutions and improved the quality of life across Massachusetts for more than three decades.

Peter's commitment to community has been a defining thread throughout his career. During his eight terms in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, he championed initiatives that expanded educational opportunity, supported economic development, and advanced environmental stewardship. Many of his efforts—such as pioneering Brownfields redevelopment strategies, strengthening bilingual education, and promoting renewable energy—were “first-in-the-nation” policies that grew directly out of listening to and working with local communities.

Equally important is Peter's long history of hands-on service with educational and community support. He served on the St. Mary's School Advisory Board in Shrewsbury from 2009 to 2013, helping guide school planning and supporting the academic and spiritual development of students. His leadership extended to higher education as well: Peter served on the Berkshire Community College Board of Trustees from 2005 to 2011, including a term as Board Chair from 2010 to 2011. In this role, he championed access, affordability, and workforce readiness—priorities that continue to shape the region's educational landscape.

Peter's dedication to strengthening communities also includes his work on the Berkshire Wireless Learning Initiative, which provided laptops to more than 2,300 middle school students and teachers, and his leadership on the Berkshire Connect Task Force, which expanded broadband access for schools, hospitals, nonprofits, and businesses. His ability to bring together government, industry, and local partners was also instrumental in facilitating a historic environmental remediation agreement in Pittsfield, resulting in the cleanup of former industrial land and waterways. Across every chapter of his career, Peter has demonstrated a deep belief in the power of community partnerships to create lasting, positive change. His experience, insight, and unwavering commitment to public service make him an exceptional addition to our board.

We are honored to welcome Peter and look forward to the leadership and perspective he brings to our mission.



PETER J. LARKIN

Thank You Christmas Volunteers

without you there would be no Christmas at 242!



THE JINGLE BELLS DOING CHRISTMAS UP, JUST FINE

Mr. Michael Conrad of Acton; James Grace of Amherst; Barbara Powers, Maura and Steve Symonick, St. Joseph Parish, Rev. Paul Bomba, Pastor, Mr. Brad Wass, Giving Tree Coordinator of Auburn; M/M Anthony Forgiore of Braintree; Ms. Mary Hough, Heather Hough, Meg Cunningham of Brookfield; St. Mary of the Hills Parish, Rev. Juan D. Echavarria, Pastor, Sr. Ines Almeida, SSA., Giving Tree Coordinator, Mr. Joseph DiCelie of Boylston; St. Joseph Parish, Rev. Robert A. Grattaroti, Pastor, Sandy Woods, Giving Tree Coordinator, Ms. Denise Thomas, M/M Thomas Montville, The Camosse Family Foundation of Charlton; St. Denis Parish, Rev. Nicholas Desimone, Pastor, M/M Eugene Mossa, Amy Phelps, Lauren Phelps of Douglas; St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Rev. Henry Ramirez, Pastor, Bernice Calbetski, Giving Tree Coordinator of Dudley, Mr. Jerome Walczak of Easthampton; Mrs. Monica Bucenec of Fiskdale; St. Aloysius Parish, Rev. James B. Callahan, Pastor, Ms. Lynn St. George of Gilbertville; Our Lady of Hope Parish, Rev. Anthony Mpagi, Pastor, Joan Brown, Giving Tree Coordinator, Paul and Barbara Smith, Kristina Kataeva, Kristy Pouliot, Rebekah Mahoney of Grafton.

Holy Trinity Parish, Rev. Daniel Moreno, Pastor, Robyn Smith, Giving Tree Coordinator, Alice and Greg Williams of Harvard; Avient Corporation, M/M Brendan Donahue, Mrs. Teresa Donahue, Jacqueline Dutton, M/M James Cunningham of Holden; Ms. Christine Aufiero, of Hubbardston; St. Mary's Parish, Rev. Timothy Brewer, Pastor, Diana Comer, Giving Tree Coordinator, of Jefferson; M/M William Madden of Lancaster; Lourdes Larama Silvera of Leominster; Steven & Maryellen Dion, Richard and Cynthia Garabedian of Leicester; St. Boniface Parish, Rev. Charles Omolo, Pastor, Marc Raboin, Giving Tree Coordinator of Lunenburg; Mr. Martin Gabriella, Melanee Russo of Malden; M/M Kevin Doyle of Mansfield; Mrs. Sandra Myrick of Mashpee; St. Brigid and Our Lady of the Assumption Parishes, Rev. Daniel Mulcahy, Pastor, Deacon Ron Buron, Giving Tree Coordinator of Millbury; Avalon, Robin dePina, Giving Tree Coordinator of Natick; Kim Conlin of Northbridge; St. Rose of Lima Parish, Rev. Juan Escudero, Pastor, Susan McGoldrick, Giving Tree Coordinator,

Mr. Paul Morin, Ms. Jane Clark, Mrs. Diane Savarese and Mr. Peter Henry, Mr. Kevin Kieler, Dennis and Christine Gagne, Ms. Melissa Platzman and the Jingle Bells, Michele and Rod Pfannenstiel, Mr. Anthony Pini, Heather Capes, Jace Capes, Joanne Kennedy, M/M William P. O'Toole, Mr. Kenneth Foster, St. Augustine Knights of Columbus Council #5724, M/M Joseph Wyman, M/M Michael Leonard, Steven and Anne Wall of Northborough; Patrice M. Cronin of North Brookfield;

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The Big Bad Bag Party

To ensure we get the right gifts to the right child in the right family, we developed a system. It is a numbering system. Each family gets a number when they sign up. For example, 201 equals the two hundred and first family who came in to sign up for toys for their children. Each child in the family gets a letter. If there are three children in the family, each of them has a letter, i.e., A, B, or C. So the numbers for the children would be 201A, 201B, and 201C.

The challenge is to label each bag with each child's number, and that's where the Big Bad Bag party comes in. This past Christmas, we had 1338 children who each needed a bag for their gifts. We use our Christmas program to generate the bag labels, all 1338 of them. Then they need to be placed on a trash bag at just the right position so that when we lay the bags out on the floor of the shed, the number is visible. There they wait until gifts arrive with a matching number to be placed on and then in the corresponding bag..

Once the bags for a child are full, they are inspected two more times before they are tied up, and then all the children's bags are tied together into a family set, so that a child's bag does not get left behind when the parent comes to pick up the family bags. After all, we don't want to disappoint a good little boy or girl on Christmas morning, do we?

The volunteers at the bag party have to be very diligent when they are applying the bag label. We don't want it applied to the bag so the number is upside down or crinkled, making it hard to read. It takes about 3 hours with 10 to 15 people to get the bags labeled and tied into groups of 50. These are then placed in a banana box. The boxes are then taken to the shed, where they are stored until another group comes in later to lay out the bags in order on the shed floor.

So, you might be asking yourself, "Why are they going through all this trouble?" The simple answer is that this past year, we had only two mistakes out of 1338 bags.

Maybe you would like to join us next year for the Big Bad Bag Party!

Fill-A-Truck

Once again, the wonderful parishioners at Saint Anne Church in Hampstead, New Hampshire, filled our truck to the brim with clothing and small working appliances. We started working with Saint Anne's in 2019, and they have faithfully donated to our ministry every year since then.

I am not sure if I ever told you how this relationship came about. Back in 2017, we hosted a Young Neighbors in Action group from a neighboring parish near Hampstead. After this parish went home, they sang our praises so much that the youth minister at Saint Anne's called us and asked if they could do something with us. "Collect clothing," I told them. "Ok," she replied. A month or so went by, and then one Saturday, five cars loaded with kids and bags of clothing arrived in the LittleStore parking lot. "Hi," they said, "We are from Saint Anne's in New Hampshire, and we got a bunch of clothes for you." I started to laugh and invited them to bring their gifts into the store. After they finished unloading the cars, I gave them a tour of 242 and what we do. As I brought them to the different ministry areas,



WALTER WATCHING VOLUNTEERS LOADING A DONATION OF CLOTHING INTO OUR TRUCK

I could see that they got it, but it wasn't until I brought them into our chapel that I understood what they were really about. Every kid and adult took time to kneel in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. It was a small thing, but it hit me.

As they were leaving to go home, I said to one of the leaders, "You know we have a truck that could come and pick up your donations." She looked at me and said, "Really, you would do that for us, really?" "Yes, we would, we do it for other parishes. We call it our Fill-a-Truck program. Would you like me to send you the information, and maybe next year you could do something?" "Yes," she said, "Do that, and we will make it happen." And the rest is history, as they say!



BAG PARTY VOLUNTEERS LABELLING A BAG FOR VERY CHILD



Thank you Christmas

Volunteers

Without you there would be no Christmas at 242!

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

Christine Judycki Crepeault of North Grafton; Margaret McDevitt and Jim Morrison of Orange; Anna Maria College - Campus Ministry, Joe Jorge of Paxton; St. Scholastica Priory, Ms. Maureen Tynan of Petersham; The Denson Family of Plymouth; Ms. Pauline Lareau of Rochdale; LIFT Fitness - Small Steps Preschool, Chris Mulrey, Giving Tree Coordinator, St. Patrick Parish, Rev. James Boland, Pastor, Chris Mulrey, Giving Tree Coordinator of Rutland; St. John's High School Staff and Students, Jennifer McCarthy, Drs. Thomas and Susan Breen, M/M John Zemaitis Jr., M/M Sang Nguyen, Sharon Connolly of Shrewsbury; Cathy Herrick, Ella Herrick, Mike Ryan of Sturbridge. St. Anne Parish, Rev. Albert Irudayasamy, Pastor, Mrs. Orla Wages, Giving Tree Coordinator of Southborough; St. Mark Parish, Rev.

Michael D. Hoye, Pastor, Karen Matson, Giving Tree Coordinator, Mr. James Geneva, Grand Knight, Bishop Flanagan Council, Knights of Columbus Council #12710, M/M Thomas Gauvin, M/M John Sheehan, M/M Charles Trainor, James Huggins, Ms. Patricia Loughlin of Sutton; Mary, Queen of the Rosary Parish, Rev. William C. Schipper, Pastor, Michele Bouvier, Giving Tree Coordinator, M/M Richard Kirk, Ms. Maureen Hanlon, Robert & Michele McTiernan of Spencer; St. Richard of Chichester Parish, Rev.

Sebastian Sanchez, Pastor, Catherine Elbthal, Giving Tree Coordinator, Lisa Fernandez Del Castillo, M/M Brian Edwards, Lillian A. Luksis Charitable Giving Fund of Sterling; St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, Rev. Steven LaBaire, Pastor; Renee Pond, Giving Tree Coordinator Deb Lazarz of Upton; St. Mary Parish, Rev. Nicholas DeSimone, Pastor, Karen Remillard, Giving Tree Coordinator of Uxbridge; Meghan Matczak of Wales; St. Louis Parish, Rev. Javier Julio, Pastor, Teri Cacciapouti, Giving Tree Coordinator, Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Rev. Lucas M LaRoche, Pastor, Joann Kotkin, Giving Tree Coordinator, Alejandro Ramirez, Jennalessia Campbell of Webster; Bethlehem Bible Church, Mike Abendroth, Pastor, Lisa Huber, Giving Tree Coordinator, of West Boylston; Ms. Brenda Seymour, M/M Kenneth Jones, Mrs. Lucy Cox of Westborough; St. Edward the Confessor Parish, Rev. Juan G. Herrera, Pastor of Westminster.

Ms. Linda Belliveau of Westwood; Mr. Thomas Pilbosian, John Cardinal Wright Assembly Council #1924 of Whitinsville; M/M Paul Sullivan of

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A Christmas Blessing

During the hustle and bustle of our Christmas Giving Program, we have learned that we can sometimes overlook the personal nature of our work. We are more worried about getting the people who are signing up in and out, without making any mistakes doing the data entry, and we forget, sometimes, that these are people who come to us are people full of emotions, fears, and hopes.

As I was packing up Christmas, putting computers away, folding up tables, and packing up the decorations, I came across a thank-you note that one of the mothers had scratched into the plastic tablecloth covering the table. It had a cross and the words "God love u." When I saw it, it stopped me in my tracks. The question started to flood my mind, "Who, when, why, I sputtered. I stood like that for some time, then I decided to take a picture. I want to remember that a person whom we were trying to help wanted us to know that they called down God's blessing upon us!"

What Urban Missionaries Do!

Kathy Doyle

242 Canterbury St. reverberated with congratulations and felicitations to Brenda Seymour as she was inducted as an Urban Missionary of Our Lady of Hope on January 17, 2026, the anniversary of the appearance of Our Lady of Hope in Pontmain, France.



BRENDA RECEIVING A BLESSING FROM WALTER

Brenda is not new to the Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope. She started out helping at Christmas many years ago. She remembers our Main St. site, and so many of the other Christmas sites - Maple St., Walnut St., the famous Plumbing Museum, and, of course, ShBooms! She volunteered at Christmas in that quiet, dependable way. She signed up, she showed up. She gave us extra days, too, but she never show up. After we became the Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope, we asked Brenda if she wanted to join. She was tempted, but her heart was elsewhere then.

Brenda was a former Peace Corps volunteer in Kenya. She then lived in Uganda for three years as part of a lay missionary movement. She's also done shorter English-teaching trips to Honduras and Nepal. Most recently, she completed a stint helping out at a religious-sponsored border program.

But she loved working in Africa and wanted to go back. She finally got her wish with the lay Maryknolls a few years ago. She was thrilled to return to Kenya with a small group. But it was early 2020, and after she had been working there a few months, COVID hit, and all the overseas Maryknoll lay groups were told to return home. Brenda was a little heartbroken. By the time COVID's threat had diminished, she was recovering from a badly broken wrist and could not return.

Then she agreed to participate in the St. Stephen's Housing Initiative as a teacher/trainer for the families in the St. Stephen's House. She worked on developing a curriculum for newcomers in the house and she meets with each family monthly to teach them things like learning their rights and their responsibilities as tenants, how to write checks, how to store food to prevent pests in the house, how to stay safe in the winter (using gas or heaters), learning Worcester's rules for living in the community (noise levels, etc.). She's been doing this for just about 4 years now. With her background as an English as a Second Language teacher, she's a natural for working with families with limited English. The families who have come through the house love working with Brenda.

She also teaches English at the Southeast Asian Center in Worcester, the Keefe School (an online class), volunteers at St. Luke's in Westboro, and gives time to family members.

Brenda's life is full of helping others, which is what Urban Missionaries do. She was beaming throughout the simple ceremony of induction and the luncheon that followed. We were happy to see that some of her family members were able to come, as were other Urban Missionaries and weekly participants of the online Rosary. We all had a great time together until someone said, "Look! It's snowing already!"

We are going to be in a parade

The Doyles, Kathy and Walter, have been selected to receive the Agnes Sheehan Community Service award from the Worcester County St. Patrick's Parade Committee.

"This Award is dedicated in loving memory of the late Agnes Sheehan, a charter member of the Parade

Committee, and the first woman to be chosen as the Parade's Grand Marshal. In keeping with the traditions of Agnes, the Community Service Award recognizes an individual who has given of themselves to help improve the community, a distinction presented annually by the Worcester County St. Patrick's Parade Committee in Massachusetts. With the award comes an opportunity to run a vehicle in the Saint Patrick's Day Parade on Sunday, March 15, 2026. The parade steps off at noon and typically runs for 1.5 to 2 hours. The two-mile route runs along Park Avenue, starting at the intersection of Mill Street and Park Avenue (Webster Square) and ending where Park Avenue meets Highland Street (Elm Park)."

This is an extremely humbling honor for Kathy and me. Most of you know that we are not the "get out in front" folks. We like the shadows, so putting a

light of this magnitude on us is causing some discomfort. But we are being cheered on by the kids and grandkids, as well as our coworkers in the ministry – although we do sense some vibes that they are thoroughly enjoying our discomfort.

Unfortunately, you will have to wait for pictures of us at the Awards Banquet and riding down Park Avenue until our next issue of StreetLights. Can you hardly wait!!!

Spotlight on Immigrants

From My Point of View

Kathy Doyle

Things I've seen recently in my work with refugees and immigrants . . .

A family of six, one born in the U.S. and the other five working hard to become U.S. citizens. Their father, a lawyer in his country, works multiple minimum-wage jobs to support the family. His health is affected by a lack of sleep and his inability to take care of his health as he should. Their mother takes care of the younger children, one of whom requires special needs help as well as significant medical support. She is worried about her husband. They are all either brand new citizens or they are in the middle of the process. Their daily life is grueling, but their family goal is for all to be citizens of America, so they push on.

A man is trying to bring his wife to the U.S. from Ghana. He's been diagnosed with a rare disorder that is slowly robbing him of independence and his ability to care for himself. He could walk when he first filed the paperwork 3½ years ago and even when he completed all the documentary requirements in July 2024. But now he's in a wheelchair, and his wife is still waiting for an interview at the U.S. embassy in his country. After all this waiting, the Department of State has paused all visa issuances in many countries, including Ghana. So, although this man's wife may someday be granted an interview after waiting almost 4 years to join her husband, she will not be granted a visa until the Department of State's review of policy is completed.

The review seeks to ensure that immigrants do not utilize public assistance. This family, along with all the families we see who are trying to bring family members to the U.S., submits financial documentation wherein the U.S. family and/or their family members or a joint sponsor promise to support the immigrant for 10 years (or until they become U.S. citizens) if they are unable to work. They specifically agree to the fact that their immigrant will not receive public assistance during those 10 years or until they become U.S. citizens. Really, most people we see are eager for the opportunity to have a job and earn a living.

...More Ways You Can Help

LittleStore on Ebay

You can purchase items on our eBay site. Yppers, our LittleStore Manager, has successfully designed a process whereby unique items are selected and listed on eBay. So now you can support our mission by perusing these items, and if one or two tickle your fancy, you can purchase them, knowing you are helping the "least, the last, and the left out!"

The
LittleStore
Ebay



LittleStore on Instagram

The LittleStore is now posting select items to our Instagram account, thelittlestoreworcester. Please note that this is a new address. Our former Instagram account, thelittlestore242, has been discontinued. If you followed us on the discontinued account, please follow us on the littlestoreworcester account. Thanks. We hope to see you there. You can use the QR code below to access our new Instagram page.

@thelittlestore-
worcester



Spotlight on Immigrants

CONT'D FROM COLUMN 2

A young woman comes to volunteer. She was a minor when she came to the U.S. alone, looking to find her father. She relates that her mother left her in her home country, so she came to America to find her father in MA. She has regular appointments with ICE, and she has a case pending with immigration. She hopes someday to be able to work and help her father. Meanwhile, she studies English and thinks that volunteering will help her learn English.

We helped a young woman become a U.S. citizen; she came to this country on a diversity visa. She came with her four children. She worked hard at regular, multiple shifts, saved money, and was able to bring her husband here. They worked hard, saved money, and were able to bring the young woman's mother here. Their mother was able, at the appropriate time, to become a U.S. citizen. Now she is trying to bring another daughter to the U.S. The whole family is working together to help achieve these goals. The kids go to school and study hard. They've never been anything but hard-working kids. At the Little Store, we love seeing them walk in.

A man who knew Walter at St. Joan of Arc parish came to apply for citizenship. Then he brought his wife so she could also apply. They each worked a full-time and two part-time jobs - that equals about two full-time jobs for each of them. They did this because one of their children was studying at a Catholic college, and they were doing everything they could so she could continue. They considered a Catholic education an opportunity in America, and they wanted to take advantage of it. Working for it was just the way they lived.

The families we house at St. Stephen's Housing Initiative are delightful. They come to their classes every month and fill us in on their lives, what they hope will happen when they are finished with their time at the house, and, hopefully, own their own homes. We've had two families buy homes by joining with other family members. They pay their rent on time, even if it means walking to the LittleStore in the cold weather to do so. Sure, it's not "Five miles uphill!" but it's a pretty cold walk! They understand and appreciate the opportunity they've been given.

That's what we see: people who understand and appreciate the opportunity they've been given. It sure is a better view than what is presented in the news.

From the Executive Director

Rod Pfannenstiel



Stepping into the role of Executive Director at Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope has been both an honor and a joy. From my very first day, I have been met with warmth, encouragement, and a deep sense of shared purpose. Kathy, Walter, and every member of our dedicated staff have gone out of their way to welcome me, and I am truly grateful for the spirit of collaboration that defines this community.

What has struck me most in these early weeks is the unwavering commitment to service that radiates through every corner of this ministry. Each day, I witness acts of compassion—large and small—that remind me why this work matters. Whether it's a staff member going the extra mile, a volunteer offering their time with a smile, or a donor giving generously to sustain our mission, the collective effort is nothing short of inspiring.

Coming off the Christmas program, I had the privilege of seeing firsthand the extraordinary impact of this community. The outpouring of gifts, the countless hours of preparation, and the heartfelt dedication of everyone involved created moments of joy for so many families. It was a powerful reminder of what can be accomplished when people come together with love and purpose.

As we look ahead, I am filled with optimism. The ministries that Walter and Kathy began 47 years ago continue to grow, evolve, and touch lives in profound ways. Their vision laid a strong foundation, and together—with our staff, volunteers, supporters, and the broader community—we will build upon it with renewed energy and hope.

Wishing each of you a joyful, healthy, and grace-filled 2026. Thank you for welcoming me into this remarkable mission and for all you do to keep its spirit alive.

First Friday Club

First Friday Catholic Men's Club: A Worcester Tradition of Faith and Fellowship

By Rod Pfannenstiel

Over the past six months, Walter and I have had the privilege of taking part in the First Friday Catholic Men's Club in Worcester—a longstanding community gathering rooted in faith, fellowship, and shared values. Each month's celebration begins with the Holy Eucharist, offering a meaningful opportunity to pause, reflect, and strengthen our spiritual lives alongside other Catholic men from across the region.

What follows is a highlight in its own right: an exceptional buffet breakfast that brings everyone together in a warm, welcoming atmosphere. The combination of prayer, community, and good food has made these mornings something we look forward to each month. For anyone seeking to deepen their faith and connect with other committed Catholics, this group offers a wonderful place to belong. The First Friday Catholic Men's Club has been gathering since 1950, carrying forward a tradition of unity and devotion that continues to enrich the Worcester community.

The Club invites all men to join them for Mass and breakfast—complete with a guest speaker—held from 8 to 9 a.m. at the DCU Center. Meetings take place on nine First Fridays each year, from October through June. It's a simple commitment with a meaningful impact, and we encourage anyone interested to come experience it for themselves.

The Book

We have some news for you! We are publishing a book. Yup, a book. We are as surprised as you probably are. Over the years, a number of StreetLight readers have told us, "You need to write a book about all of your stories. We would always brush off the suggestion with, "If we ever have time," or something like that.

About a year ago, Anne Marie Murphy, a fellow food pantry volunteer, showed me a book that she published. "Cool," I said when she told me. "Maybe someday I would like to talk to you about a book idea I have." And that thought immediately left my mind.

Fast forward six months, and I got a call from Ann Marie asking if I was still interested in publishing a book. I told her I was, and she suggested we sit down and discuss. I told her that it would be great because I had about a thousand questions about publishing a book. We set up a date.

The next day, I started going through every prior edition of StreetLights I could find. As far as I could figure out, we started publishing StreetLights in 1982. It started as a bi-monthly publication, but we quickly realized it was going to be too much work, so we switched to a quarterly publication in late 1983. Within a few weeks, I realized we were going to have almost 150 stories. So I decided to sort them into two categories, Christmas stories and non-Christmas stories. I also decided to work on the non-Christmas stories first, so I collected over 70 of them. I pared the list down to 53 stories. Most of the stories are written by me, some by Kathy, and two by contributing authors.

Then I had the bright idea of putting the stories together in a loose-leaf binder and giving it to some of our friends to see if they thought it would be something people would be interested in reading. We sent it out to 22 friends with a questionnaire for them to give us some feedback, good or bad. We asked the following questions:

Questions: Did you read all the stories? Do you think it is worth publishing? Which story did you like best? Which story did you like least? Would you buy this book? What do you think of the cover & title line? Did reading this make you want to help someone?

As you can tell, we were fishing for good results, and here are some of the reactions we received from the reviewers.

Testimonials from Reviewers:

"You did a great job of putting a face on the poor and showing the true definition of being poor."

Paul Morin, Northborough, MA

"The book definitely made me want to do more to help."

CONT'D ON NEXT COLUM

The Book

CONT'D FROM COLUMN 2

Made me more aware of how much is needed, and how, in comparison to that need, only a few are helping. I am so grateful that you have decided to chronicle your journey."

Pat Loughlin, Sutton, MA

"In almost every story, it was easy to wish that I had done some of these amazing things for others."

Lois Gottlieb

"Reading this was like sitting around a table and listening to y'all. We've said for a long time that you should write a book. Well, you've done it. Congratulations!"

Bruce and Leane Pease, Louisville, KY

"Thank you so much for your work and your outstanding chronicle of it!"

Brenda Seymour, Westborough, MA

"Truly so, so, so good! We read front to back in our refectory!"

Mother Mary Elizabeth Kloss, OSB, and All at St. Scholastica Priory, Petersham, MA

This was the first positive feedback that we had received. With this, we started seriously seeking out a publisher. We went back to Anne Marie, the owner of Story Gopher, LLC. Anne came in and gave us a very informative tutorial on what the publisher does and what our responsibilities would be. One of her suggestions was to add pictures for each story. "Each story," I exclaimed. "That's 54 pictures." I said, "I am not sure I can do that in a reasonable time." Anne said, "Ok, how about half?" "Ok," I replied, but my head was screaming, "23, where are you going to find 23 pictures?" "I need to calm down," I thought to myself.

Another problem also came to light in our discussion. The publisher doesn't do the distribution; we have to handle that task. My reaction was simply, "Who is going to do this?" When Anne left, she said that she would send along an estimate for the work she would do as publisher.

I went to Rod to discuss the situation. During our meeting, Rod told me that his brother had published a book, and the publisher did all the work on the distribution. "I'll get the name of his publisher, and let's see what they offer." "OK," I replied. Within a week, Rod sent me the contact information of his brother's publisher, Christian Faith Publishers. I contacted them and was told to send along my manuscript, and it would be reviewed by a panel, and I would hear within a week if the panel thought our book was a go or no-go. "Great," I thought, "Another test."

Three days later, I was contacted by the project manager for the Christian Faith Publisher. She outlined the process we would have to go through and the options we could choose from. I reviewed the package with Rod, and we decided that their program solved the "Who is going to do the distribution?" problem.

At this point in time, all I can say is, "To be continued." Please keep this project in your prayers.



WALTER ON THE WAY INTO THE FIRST FRIDAY CLUB MEETING

Your Continued Assistance Throughout the Year Enables Us to Carry Out Our Mission Thank You!

M/M Stephen MacLean of Athol; M/M Jeffrey Remillard, of Auburn; Robert Hamel, POA Estate of Richard Hamel of Barre; Mr. Daniel Hall, M/M Angelo Guadagno of Boston; Michael Tivnan of Boylston; M/M George Oprica, of Brookfield; Mrs. Beth Tobin, Linda Hickok, Denise Thomas, M/M Robert McMahon, Deacon/Mrs. Wesley Stevens, Joan Guardiani, Barbara Perron of Charlton.

M/M Eugene Mossa of Douglas; Mr. Andrew M. Sherwin of Dorchester; Marilyn Pooler of E. Longmeadow; Mr. Jerome Walczak of East Hampton; M/M George Conrad of Framingham; Mr. William Szymczak of Grafton; M/M Brendan Donahue, Anna Howard, Mr. Brian Carroll, Ms. Eileen Charbonneau of Holden; John Lapointe of Hopedale; M/M Christopher Scholl of Hopkinton; Ms. Christine Aufiero of Hubbardston; Mrs. Fran Gill, Sandra Riddell of Hudson.

St. Mary's Parish, Rev. Timothy Brewer, Christine and Jeff Merlin of Jefferson; M/M Richard Garabedian, Robert White, Mr. John Tite of Leicester; Ina and John Portnoy of Millis; Patricia Galipeau, Michael Swetz Jr. and Barbara Swetz of Millbury; Deacon/Mrs. Lee Packard, of Milford.

M/M James Duffy of Natick; Deacon Joseph McCaffrey, M/M Thomas McCloskey, Mr. Matthew Sherwin, Carol Brennan, Mr. Paul Morin, Mr. John Gallagher of Northborough; Ms. Ellin Clifford of North Oxford; Mrs. Margaret McDevitt and Jim Morrison of Orange; Mr. Richard Granahan of Oxford; M/M Richard Davis, of Paxton; St. Scholastica Priory, Mary A. Forques, St. Mary's Monastery of Petersham; Ms. Lynn Amsden, Deacon/Mrs. Paul Audette of Rutland; Lisa and Andrew Mendelson of Salem.

Mr. Daniel J. Malo, M/M Sang Nguyen, M/M William Walsh, Ms. Martha Serafin, Mrs. Gerri Matraia, Mr. David Ambach, Nick Morana, Meredith Reichheld, Paula Moran of Shrewsbury; M/M Robert Beaudin, Isabelle Bowler, Jeffrey and Lynne Martineau of Spencer; Ms. Francesca Rinaldi, Ms. Pamela Savage, Lisa Fernandez Del Castillo, M/M Brian Edwards, Lillian A. Luksis Charitable Giving Fund, Steve Craig and Mary Bezak of Sterling; Mr. George Volungis of Sturbridge; Bernice Bibeau of South Grafton; Barbara Head of Sudbury; M/M Charles Trainor, Ms. Patricia Loughlin, Knights of Columbus Council 12710, Mr. John P. Terry of Sutton.

M/M Richard Gentili, Ms. Cathleen McElligott, of Upton; Ms. Karen Jordan of Uxbridge; Edward and Joan Wentland of Webster; Nancy Keezer of West Boylston; Ms. Brenda Seymour, Mr. Frederick Dunfey, Susan Fahlund, M/M John McCann of Westborough; Ms. Linda Belliveau of Westwood; Ms. Elizabeth George, Mrs. Dorothy Favreau, Mr. Dennis O'Connor, Carol Johnston, Mrs. Mary Chase, St. Paul's Diocesan High School, Tim Army and the Estate of Eileen Lush, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Bill Talbot, Ms. Lynda Cote, Buduo Trust, Mary Ann Ulevich, Dorothy O'Brien c/o Linda Harvey, Denise Pierre, Mr. Bernato Lima, Jing Jing, Kenneth R. Parrish, Jean's Place, Jean Neale, Bradley Johnson, Joyce Mirow, Ms. Diane Sawin, Mr. Stephen Belton, President and members of Worcester Hibernian Cultural Foundation,

CONT'D ON NEXT COLUMN

Our apologies if we missed your name. Please contact us via email at mailbox@urbanmissionaries.com or by phone - 508-831-7455 and we will publish the correction in the next issue of StreetLights.

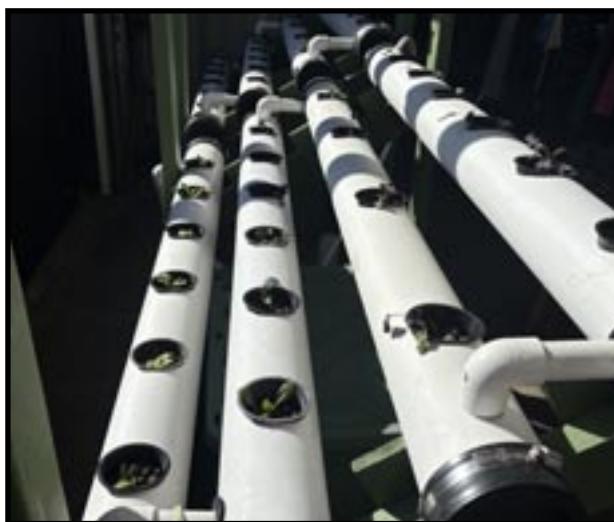
Chris Luikey, Janice Capen, Jim and Irene Slevin, Thelma Agerholm, Mary Dio of Worcester.

Mr. Michael Gray of Rochester, NY; Ms. Jane DeJoie, of Ocean Isle Beach, NC; Mr. Robert Colgate of Jaffrey, NH; M/M Daniel Lambert of Wolfeboro, NH; M/M Stanley Vergnani of Naples, FL;

Mr. David Bartholomew of Hobe Sound, FL; Mr. John Tegan, III of Riviera Beach, FL; Wanda Fontaine of Thompson, CT; The Rota Charitable Foundation of Falls Church, VA; Deacon/Mrs. John Dugan, Goldsboro, NC; Rachel Meketon.

Our Lady of Hope Garden from food insecurity to food sustainability

You are hearing this here first! We are going to do a trial project of growing our own food. We have been exploring ways to ensure that our customers will have a steady, low-cost vegetable option at their disposal. Stefan and Patti Wawzyniecki, fellow Urban Missionaries living in Connecticut, introduced us to a company named Levo, owned and operated by Christian Heiden, that specializes in growing food not in the ground, but in water. It is called hydroponics, and it's been around for a while.



Christian has developed a methodology for growing vegetables on a large scale. He has a very large operation in Connecticut. We had the opportunity to visit his operation and saw for ourselves how productive this kind of growing can be.

After our visit, we decided that this type of operation could be very beneficial to our LittleStore clients, who are always asking if we will be getting any more vegetables. We decided that a project with this much potential would need someone to step forward to take the reins of the project for it to be successful. We have been blessed with not only a program manager, but we also have some seasoned vegetable gardeners in the form of Mary Bezak and Steve Craig, who stepped up to help get the project off the ground. The first hurdle cleared.

We then decided to do a test site where we would house two 6-by-4-foot units and set them up inside the LittleStore so we could learn just how to do the hydroponic farming. The units were installed on January 23rd, and we are watching real closely for that first little green sprout to make its appearance.

If the test is successful, we will have to do a GoFundMe to expand "our garden" into the open space we have at one end of the parking lot. We are not sure how much it will cost, but we hope the rewards will far outweigh the costs, and our customers can rest a little easier knowing that the LittleStore will always have fresh vegetables available.

HONORARIUMS

Honorariums can be given in the name of any person or event by sending a donation to the Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope.

In Honor of:

**Both mothers
by Thiem Luu**

**Reverend Tom Kelleher
Reverend Paul T. O'Connell
by Ms. Eileen Charbonneau**

A letter of notification will be sent in your name, please send the name of the person or event being honored, where the acknowledgement should be sent, and your name and address.

Memorials

Memorials can be given in memory of a deceased person by sending a donation to the Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope

In Memory of:

**Irene Amsden
Rev. James Kerrigan
by Lynne Amsden**

**Blanche Dacier Cross
by Carol Johnston**

**Bev McCaffrey
James McCaffrey
by Deacon/Mrs. Joseph McCaffrey**

**Sr. Yvonne Millman, SSA
Lynn Anne Favreau Marszalkowski
by Mary and Bill Szymczak**

**Mary Mulhern Bartholomew
by David Bartholomew**

**Ted and Barbara Francis
by Karen A Levitre**

**Eileen Lush
by Kenneth & Mary Bejune
by Michael & Brigid Tighe
by Terrence & Mary Kennedy
by Walter and Kathleen Doyle**

**Paul Myrick - on the occasion of his birthday
by Thiem and Marie Luu**

**Irene Healy - on the occasion of her birthday
by Maureen Crowley**

A memorial card in your name will be sent to the family. Please send us the name of the person being remembered, where the acknowledgement should be sent, and your name and address.

Like us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/urbanmissionariesofourladyofhope/>

**Thank you Christmas
Volunteers
Without you there would
be no Christmas at 242!**

CONT'D FROM PAGE 2

Wilmington; Diocese of Worcester, Mr. Raymond Delisle, Chancellor, Giving Tree Coordinator, Qbit Semiconductor LTD, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Rev. Thomas G Landry, Pastor, Mary Ellen Stansky, Giving Tree Coordinator, St. Christopher Parish, Rev. Stanley F. Krutcik, Pastor, Cindy Barnaby, Giving Tree Coordinator, Immaculate Conception Parish, Rev. Edwin Montana, Pastor, Michelle Deignan, Giving Tree Coordinator, Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, Rev. Patrick Hawthorne, Pastor, Sister Irene Moran, MPV, Giving Tree Coordinator, Christ the King Parish, Msgr. Thomas Sullivan, Pastor, St. Paul Diocesan High School staff, students, and parents, Moira Cook, Giving Tree Coordinator, Avenue 50 Salon, Leah Cicero, Ms. Patty Devlin, Ms. Susan Arraje, M/M Andrew Tanacea, Deacon/Mrs. Kevin Deignan, M/M Thiet Ho, Andrea Morin, Ms. Betty George, M/M Ken Hannaford-Ricardi, M/M Richard LaPointe, M/M Donald Pibus, M/M Anthony Zamarro, Michael & Linda Carota, Joe Duggan, Linda Harrington, Bradley Johnson, Deborah Richard, Jenith Charpentier, Ms. Helena Ilvonen, Ms. Linda Harrington, Myrtle Okai, Ralph Weirich, The Lauring Charitable Foundation of Worcester.

M/M Robert Schwall of Boulder, CO; Joseph Charpentier of East Hampton, CT; M/M Stefan Wawzyniecki of Vernon, CT; Matthew and Shelby of Biddeford, ME; M/M Daniel Lambert of Wolfeboro, NH; M/M Steven Glaza of Bay City, MI; M/M Stanley Vergnani of Naples, FL; Richard and Kendra Owen of The Villages, FL.

Arthur Marois, Kevin Hayes, Renee Johnson, Johanna Hackett, Mr. Thomas Higgins, Gianna Dimitry, Phoebe Doyle, Elizabeth Harding, Colin Brissette, Tracy Harding, Christine Doyle, Stephanie Provencal, Mallory Frutman, Olivia Schiavo, Sara Kennedy-Sita, Ava Gilmore, Bella Padula, Violet Padula, Juliette Oberg, Beth Boullianne, Nicole Boullianne, Lydia McDonald, Ching Yim, Marty Pellegrino, Michael Ryan, Barbara Daoust, Kathie Shapiro, Amy Phelps, Suzanne Blalod, Barb Wire, Mary J Gillespie, Chris Dada, Alejandro Ramirez, Arthur Marois, Cheryl LaFortune, Ching Yim, Ella Herrick, Greg Williams, James Huggins, Jennifer McCarthy, Joanne Kennedy, Judy Stevens, Kathie Shapiro, Kim Conlin, Kristina Kataeva, Kristy Pouliot, Lauren Phelps, Lucy Cox, Lydia McDonald, Marty Pellegrino, Michael Ryan, Pasqual Ramirez, Patricia Leonard, Rachel Keyo, Rebecca Katz, Renee Johnson, Ruth Driscoll, Susan Puryear, Vivienne and Tyler Charpentier.

Holiday Dinners

We had a very successful Thanksgiving turkey dinner giveaway. We unexpectedly received 50 turkey dinners with all the fixings from the Hibernian Cultural Center of Worcester. This allowed us to distribute an additional 11 dinners this year to people we knew were in need, and then pass the remaining 39 dinners to St. Peter's Church in Worcester to help them deal with the demand on its Thanksgiving giveaway program. It allowed us to fill a last-minute need for a family who arrived in the LittleStore on Tuesday, looking for help.

We need to say a special thank you to the members of our staff, Priscila, Angee, Maria, and Pat Loughlin, for helping Kathy sort everything and make up the distribution boxes, and then helping the family who came to pick up their turkey dinner carry out the meals to their car.

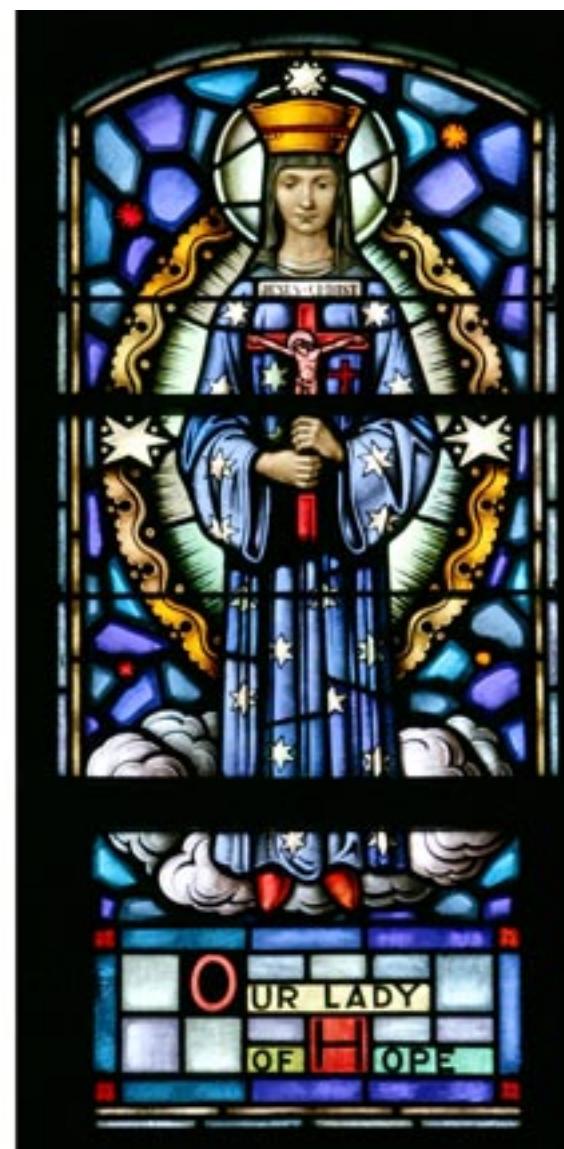
And then, four weeks later, the team did the exact same thing for 11 families who received Christmas dinners. Those were provided by a friend of the ministry as a surprise Christmas present to us.

Becoming an Urban Missionary

for I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me; sick and you visited me; in prison and you came to see me; Matthew 25:35-36

We are a Catholic organization dedicated to "Just helping the 'least, the last, and the left out' since 1979," by fulfilling their needs as given to us in Matthew 25:35-36 "For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome: naked and you clothed me; sick and you visited me; in prison and you came to see me;" supported by the intercession of Our Lady of Hope, a daily prayer life, and a community of like-minded brother and sister Urban Missionaries of Our Lady of Hope.

We cordially invite you to an information session via Zoom, Facetime, or telephone appointment at your convenience. To arrange for an appointment either email us at mailbox@urbanmissionaries.com or by telephone at 508-831-7455. We prayerfully wait to hear from you.



Got Time!



We are asking you to join us in responding to the cries of "the least, the last, and the left out" by performing little acts of charity. You can do this by becoming an active volunteer in some facet of our ministry. You will join over 200 volunteers annually in helping. This is a hands-on, get your hands dirty kind of work. You will come to understand the statement made by one of our high school students as he was leaving after a morning of volunteering, "I didn't know helping the poor was so heavy."

You will be challenged to your very soul to come to understand that the gift is truly in your giving blindly to whomever asks of you. You will come to understand all the different faces that poverty wears as you work among those who need your help. You will also come to know the power of work as prayer. You will be blessed for the work you do for God's poor.

Come and experience the joy of living the gospel by the work of your hands!

We are currently looking for help in the various programs serving the "least, the last, and the left out." We need people to be program leaders for our Christmas Giving Program, The Flea Market, Food Distribution, Immigration, IT services, and Facilities Management. If any of these positions interest you please don't hesitate to contact Rod Pfennnstiel, Executive Director, to find out how you could fit into our organization either by telephone (508-831-7455 extn. 104) or email (rap@urbanmissionaries.com). **I can assure you this and only this: You will feel a lot better about your life simply because the Hand of God will be on you.**

Help Wanted

Because of our ever expanding ministry in the Lord's vineyard we are constantly looking for that special person who hears the cry of the poor and would like to respond.

We are currently looking for help in the following programs and administration of the ministry:

Administrative Manager

Christmas Giving Program Manager

Flea Market Program Manager

Immigration Program Manager

Food Distribution Program Manager

If you find any of these job functions strikes an interest give Charley a call at 508-831-7455. We will be more than happy to discuss the details of the job, number of hours required, and salary.