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- BROTHER ANDREW MCCARTY, CAPUCHIN FRIAR

HOUSING AND HOMELESS SERVICES: Mercy Hospice

FROM SLEEPING IN CARS TO ATTENDING COLLEGE

How Mercy Hospice Can Transform Lives

After 37 years of homelessness, Bernadette eventually found Mercy Hospice. She has spent the past six months living at Mercy, an outreach of Catholic Social Services that assists women in recovery from addiction. Now, Bernadette has started attending Philadelphia Community College and will soon secure her own apartment. She seeks to begin a career in helping others recover from substance abuse.

Bernadette is one of 124 women and 19 children who found a loving environment for recovery at Mercy Hospice last year.

"I realize I have a choice now, and I choose to live differently... Moving here was the best thing that could ever happen to me."

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CATHOLIC HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES: Senior Housing and Parish-based Eldercare Programs

Because of caring supporters like you, we can continue providing vital services year-round for some of the most vulnerable members in our community. These are just a few updates that were only made possible because of you!

CARING FOR OUR SENIORS
New Facilities, Awards and More!

Catholic Housing and Community Services, a service area of CSS, announced plans for an affordable housing facility for independent seniors. St. Rita Place will be located on the 1100 block of South Broad Street and sit adjacent to St. Rita Church and the National Shrine of St. Rita of Cascia.

Featuring 46 one-bedroom apartments, St. Rita Place will be available to income-eligible seniors age 62+. This project has been in the works for years and will add to the long-standing and growing South Philly community.

St. John Neumann Place II recently received the “Innovation in Design” award by the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency.

The award recognized our continued contributions to promoting the sustained health and wellbeing of residents and the senior community. In addition, it recognizes our Wellness Center that provides resources and programming that targets the physical, mental, social and recreational needs of the seniors.

Our Parish-Based Eldercare Programs continue to provide in-home support to more than 1,400 seniors annually. Care managers work within the boundaries of a given parish to address the needs of aging parishioners, from practical help with meals and paperwork, to much-needed emotional support.

These programs also help the parish community come together. As Father Kelley, Pastor of St. Monica Parish states, “The parish becomes what it should be...it’s a group of people united in caring for one another.”

COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES: Martha’s Choice Marketplace

RENEWING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY
Montgomery County’s Largest Food Pantry

Martha’s Choice Marketplace, the largest food pantry in Montgomery County, serves more than 900 families each month. Operated by CSS, the pantry distributes anywhere between 55,000 to 75,000 pounds of food per year.

Rather than simply receiving a prepackaged assortment of staples, Martha’s Choice gives clients the choice to select food they need and want. Struggling families feel a sense of pride when they walk into the pantry, which is set up just like a grocery store. Offering healthy, nutritious food is always a priority since studies have shown that health issues, such as diabetes and heart disease, tend to disproportionately affect those at lower-income levels.

During the last government shutdown, furloughed workers found solace at Martha’s Choice Marketplace. They were able to pick out the same grocery items their family normally purchased at the grocery store.

“ As a basic human requirement, food shouldn’t be an issue of debate, and the more we see each other as brothers and sisters, the less of a problem hunger will be.”

- ELI WENGER, PANTRY MANAGER

YOUTH SERVICES: St. Francis-St. Joseph and St. Vincent Homes

GRADUATION OFFERS A SECOND CHANCE
Thirteen Students Beat the Odds

Durand Ward and Ubaidullah Mohammad are two of the thirteen newest graduates of St. Katharine Drexel School in Bensalem, part of the St. Francis-St. Joseph and St. Vincent Homes. “Given the hurdles many of the students have faced, earning a diploma is remarkable,” says principal, Terrance Hudson. Most students have been out of school for six months to a year; taking care of siblings because their parents were absent or battling their surroundings made attending school nearly impossible.

Coming from challenging inner-city neighborhoods, these teens find safety while developing financial literacy, strengthening job skills and preparing for life after graduation – an opportunity that may not have existed without St. Katharine Drexel School.

“These caregivers make you feel independent...I feel like I’m able to stay in my own home, knowing they’re so much help to me. It’s a whole bunch of little things; they go to the store for me, start dinner if I’m not feeling good, lift my spirits if I’m feeling low.”

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“It gives them another perspective, one they haven’t necessarily had in their previous schools. I present myself as a model to them and to my staff, and I work to remind them that we are here for a purpose.”

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