

## ST. FRANCIS PRAYER CENTER

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## Deb's Corner

### Too Familiar?

True enough, those who lead or preach to others often realize the malady of being the 'too familiar' one. It seems when we are most in need of some kind of healing (physical, emotional or spiritual) is when the shackles go up and we become resistant to the one who can help us. In Mark 6:6, Jesus is trying so hard to heal them, but because He is familiar to them, they don't have the faith they need to believe. How often that happens in our own families, and with our spiritual lives! As the article below indicates, we hold on and hold on to our ways, our troubles, our opinions and points of view, until they gag us ... or others. Resistance won the round, there is no room for healing here...

However, God, in His mercy has a plan! I love what Jesus does at the point of this resistance—He redirects Himself and the disciples, to go to plan B, another town, and first to teach and preach repentance to those who would come. The familiarity was not an issue; they come to understand and accept in 'faith' that he is who He says He is—and they are healed.

These are strange times for us. We need to 'redirect' too. Hopefully it isn't the Covid Virus we are dealing with, but there are other virus's that are equally as dangerous or even deadly. Our 'redirect' can be an honest examination of our own selves. The Virus of Indifference makes our heart like stone instead of flesh, the result is broken relationships and eyes that are entirely blind to heartaches of others. It keeps the most vulnerable among us on the periphery—and forgotten. The Virus of Self-Righteousness keeps us thinking we have all the answers and those answers are the right ones, it leaves no room for compromise or another's viewpoint. It stifles the spirit of the other, and reflects a lack of value.

We can accomplish so much with a heart that is humble. In John's gospel the Lord says, "do not let your heart be troubled, trust in God."

When we live this out, we see the 'other' as God sees them. This quality predisposes us to look with 'eyes to see.'

#### Heavenly Father,

I give you permission to 'redirect' me, to give me 'eyes to see.' It is our desire to let go of any resistance that is in us, to let go of any pre-conceived idea's that reflect a Virus in our life. **Help me live the gospel, not just talk about it. Let my eyes really see those that need me to be kind, understanding, and patient. Teach me the humility to just listen without a comment, without an answer, to the one who needs me. Help me to let go of whatever I am holding onto ... it is heavy enough to paralyze me, and prohibit my own healing.**

As Faith comes from Hearing your Word, (Rm. 10:17), drench me Father in that Word, that my faith will open the doors of change in myself, and I be transformed in You, free of any Virus, and lack of humility, and uncharitable thought. **Make me like your Son, Jesus, and give me eyes to see myself and the 'other,' as You see us.**

Amen

### Food For Thought...

A psychologist walked around a room while teaching stress management to an audience. As she raised a glass of water, everyone expected they'd be asked the "half empty or half full" question. Instead, with a smile on her face, she inquired: "How heavy is this glass of water?"

**Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. to 20 oz.**

She replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, it's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my arm. If I hold it for a day, my arm will feel numb and paralyzed. In each case, the weight of the glass doesn't change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

She continued, "The stresses and worries in life are like that glass of water. Think about them for a while and nothing happens. Think about them a bit longer and they begin to hurt. And if you think about them all day long, you will feel paralyzed – incapable of doing anything."

**Remember to put the glass down.** Author Unknown

### St. Francis Prayer Center Mission Statement:

Secure in God's love, the St. Francis Prayer Center, Flint, exists to serve all people, especially our poor, our parishes and our diocese through the ministries of prayer, evangelization, healing, formation, direct services and social justice.

# Adopt-A-Family Programs

## For Thanksgiving...

The Prayer Center handed out Thanksgiving Boxes to everyone who came during our regular Food Pantry days. We had 40 boxes prepared including those from St. Jude, DeWitt. We soon ran out, then handed out some quickly made up food boxes that included meat. We served a total of 58 families. These boxes had enough food to last up to a week.



St. Jude, DeWitt friends, Deb & Jean.

## For Christmas...

This year was a challenge! Those willing to adopt needed the list of names ASAP! We did not have face-to-face contact with people. They took the **Christmas Wish List** forms and returned them. They didn't always come back in a timely manner. Juggling the 2 was interesting. BUT, the Lord works in mysterious ways and, guess what? **All was accomplished as He would have it done.**

Gifts were picked up Dec. 21 & 22. Our thanks to Ted Zahrfeld for helping carry packages out!

Many thanks to all who adopted families or gave gift cards to be used. Some were used for purchasing gifts for the late families adopted; some were used to give to the VERY LATE families we called to offer them a way to get "something" for their children. The last day the Prayer Center was open, Jean contacted 2 more families to give them gift cards.



Our thanks to St. John, Fenton for adopting some of our families again this year. What a blessing to those who Adopt as well as those who are Adopted.

Amy O, at left, wrapping gifts for families. These 2 families below represented some of our "adopted" families.



## Special Thanks to...

**Rosemary Ingram**, for doing a Facebook Fundraiser to raise \$300 to purchase 100 pillows – thank you! She also has donated paper products.

**Jill Claron** who was in town for the holidays and gifted us with knitted hats for older boys or men. So thoughtful!

**Evelyn Mazolla** for her help with Thanksgiving food. She also adopts a family for Christmas!

**St. Jude, DeWitt** for food to fill 25 Thanksgiving boxes – even in the midst of this very trying time!! They also brought numerous bags of home-made quilts! *Thanks.*

**St. John Fenton** members for once again partnering with us at Christmas by adopting families. We thank you on behalf of them!!

**Gerry Rose** for donations to the food pantry!

**Dan Jackman** for donation of quilts for Bed Ministry.

**The Wescotts** for the donation of comforters & crib bumper pads for our Bed Ministry.

**Joanne Clor** for the donation of food pantry items.

**Harlan Rose** for food pantry donations & coats.

**Lisa Hayward** for setting up a "Room" on Facebook to sell items we have on hand – \$600 or so to date!

**ALL** who made face masks for us to hand out!!

**Wow!** So many thoughtful people in our community!

*If anyone you know is in need of a bed, please contact the Prayer Center @ 810-787-5330.*

## Food Pantry Update

During Covid time, the Food Pantry continues to help anyone who comes – even if they are outside our zip code area. There has been an increase in the numbers of NEW people and, because of this, we began offering food, paper products, cleaning supplies & personals every other month – January, March, and May. Food Only months are February, April, June. I

*Could you donate* •TP, •shampoo, •laundry detergent, •deodorant, •hygiene for men, •sanitary items for women.

Total households reached in 2020 was **1,275** including **380** new families. The number of people helped – **3,791**.

Some families do not have cleaning items, so we held our first **Fall Cleanup-for-Clients** drive & giveaway – included mops, brooms, dust pans, bags of rags, old towels, various cleaning supplies. We will do another this **Spring!**



## Bed Ministry Update

The year 2021 was off to a great start with delivery of beds. There is a wait list for bed requests. If a family is outside our Zip Area (48505, 48506, 48458), we accept bed requests by an agency referral.

**There is a critical need for full and queen size beds!**

We are always thankful for the many individuals and businesses who help keep this ministry going. The donations of beds, dressers, night stands, lamps – anything for a bedroom – has been a blessing! **They are blessed by you!**