

# St. Mary's Drop-In Centre

NEWSLETTER OF THE ST MARY'S DROP-IN  
CENTRE AT 260 BROCK ST. KINGSTON

## Our Mission Statement:

St. Mary's Drop-In Centre is a ministry of St. Mary's Cathedral living, in imitation of Christ's washing of the disciples' feet, His commandment that: "I have set you an example that you should also do as I have done to you" (John 13). Recognizing the dignity of each individual, through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy (Matthew 25:32 ff), we care for the material, emotional and spiritual needs, of the homeless and those most in need in the city of Kingston.



*Deacon Michel Quenneville and Deacon Blaine Barclay*



*The popular "St. Rita's Cafe", our outdoor patio*

## Dealing with COVID:

During Stage 2 of Ontario's COVID re-opening plan, establishments could only serve food and drink outdoors. We wanted to be able to offer a place for guests to relax, socialize (with physical distancing), and eat a nutritious meal, so we opened an outdoor patio. Named the "St. Rita's Cafe", our patio on Brock St. continues to be open Monday to Friday, 1-4PM.

We remain vigilant regarding our COVID protocols, including frequent disinfecting and sanitizing, physical distancing and mandatory masking indoors.



We have been blessed with abundant donations



We are so grateful for our wonderful volunteers



Thank-you to Lionhearts for a brand new chest freezer!



Some of the nutritious produce grown at the Marian Garden



## Drop-In Centre Updates:

The summer has brought with it new guests, volunteers, and challenges as we adapt to the pandemic. Our usage rate has continued to increase, currently we see over 500 guests per month. One of the highlights of this summer has been our Marian Donation Garden. A group of 25 dedicated volunteers care for the garden, who have harvested ~1000 lbs of 12 different vegetables so far!



*Thank you to Herman and Susan Overvelde for the sign*

We have been using the produce from the Marian Garden to make healthy meals for our guests, with any surplus donated to other community groups. Some of our local Italian ladies have started "Cooking with Nonna", using produce from the garden to make soup for our guests. Extra soup is frozen to be used in the coming months.



*"Cooking with Nonna"*

The pandemic has also presented the opportunity to spend more time getting to know our regular guests. Every few weeks we will have a birthday celebration, as many of our guests want to spend their birthday with us. Prayer continues to be integral to all of our works, especially at the end of every shift and frequently with guests.



*One of our regular guests receiving her birthday surprise!*

Throughout the summer, the Lord has continued to provide us with faithful and compassionate volunteers. We are always in need of more volunteers, particularly to staff the shifts at the Drop-In Centre and to provide pastoral care to our guests. If you are interested in volunteering, please email Ann Lyng at [ministries.smc.279@gmail.com](mailto:ministries.smc.279@gmail.com) or fill out the volunteer form on our website at:

[www.stmarysdropin.ca/volunteer-with-us/](http://www.stmarysdropin.ca/volunteer-with-us/)



*Pastoral Care of our guests is the core of our mission*



## Summer Testimonials:

Please read through some recent testimonies about our work at the St. Mary's Drop-In Centre.

### From our guests:

"I like coming here in the afternoon for coffee, fellowship and support." -Anonymous

"I love coming to the Drop-In Centre. The volunteers are wonderful. I enjoy our conversations and the warm and welcoming atmosphere at the Centre. People here really care about me." -Alex

"The Drop-In Centre provides a sense of community and heartfelt support. I like that we discuss Jesus and pray together. I keep being drawn here by the loving care of the volunteers. I feel at ease and it is easy to talk about the challenges I face because no one judges me here. Coming here is a temporary refuge from my daily struggles." -Ivan

### From our volunteers:



"I find my work here at the Drop-In Centre to be incredibly spiritually uplifting. I love having the opportunity to serve our guests, who often have many struggles in their lives, with good food, and more importantly, through conversation."

-Aidan Scott



*Congratulations to the newly ordained Deacon Michel Quenneville! We have been blessed to have Deacon Michel as a volunteer as a summer. He will be missed this year when he returns to seminary in Toronto. Please read through his reflection about the Drop-In Centre:*

"I have been truly blessed in the past two months to spend part of my diaconal service at St. Mary's drop-in centre. I think that this is a truly anointed apostolate among the poor and homeless of the City of Kingston. Not only does it accomplish an important corporal work of mercy, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty and clothing the naked, but it also sets the scene for an even more important encounter, a human encounter, by listening, comforting, journeying and even praying with the men & women that come each day.

I am truly edified by the volunteers that do not shy away from encountering each person in the fullness of their dignity as children of God, with true love and compassion. Keep St. Mary's drop-in Centre in your prayers! I pray that it may always be faithful to its call to encounter and minister to Christ in the poor."

-Dcn. Michel Quenneville

## More Updates:



*Thank you to Christopher Neely for the Fresh Food Stand!*

More summer highlights:

- Celebrated our 6-month anniversary on August 24th!
- Opened our "Fresh Food Stand", providing our Marian Garden produce to guests.
- Installed a shower facility for guests to use.
- Released our website at [www.stmarysdropin.ca](http://www.stmarysdropin.ca)
- Received two chest freezer donations, one from Lionhearts and another from an anonymous donor.
- Unveiled a beautiful new crucifix in the canteen.
- Continuous donations from Tim Hortons (20 lbs of bread weekly through the Second Harvest Food Rescue program), Metro (2000 grocery bags), as well as from parishioners across the Archdiocese.



*Our newly installed shower in the Parish Centre*

## How to support us:

To continue providing much-needed services to the poor in Kingston, we need your support:

- ➔ Prayer and fasting for our mission
- ➔ Volunteer your time to help one of our teams:
  - We need your help with staffing shifts, collecting/organizing donations, working at our Community Garden, and fundraising.
  - Go to [www.stmarysdropin.ca/volunteer-with-us/](http://www.stmarysdropin.ca/volunteer-with-us/)
- ➔ We rely completely on the Providence of God. We do not accept funding from the government so that we always keep our Christ-centred mission based on Catholic social teaching. As such, financial support from the local Catholic community is crucial. Income tax receipts will be issued for all donations over \$20. You can support us through (please specify that **your donation is intended for the St. Mary's Drop-In Centre**):
  - Cheque made out to St. Mary's Cathedral
  - E-transfer to [smarys@cogeco.net](mailto:smarys@cogeco.net)
  - Online at Canada Helps: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/119110443RR0033-st-marys-cathedral/>
- ➔ Food and clothing donations can be dropped off Monday-Friday, 1-4PM at 260 Brock Street:
  - Soup cans, crackers, canned chicken and tuna, pre-sliced cheese and deli meats, white/brown bread
  - Juice boxes and water bottle cases
  - Granola bars, maple cookies/chocolate chip cookies
  - Gently used or new clothing and furniture
  - Please contact Ann Lyng to inquire if we are in need of something you can donate, or for an expanded list of items we need.

If you have more questions or want to know more about how you can be involved, please contact:

**Ann Lyng**

Coordinator of Ministries at St. Mary's Cathedral

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