



St. Mary's Drop-In Centre



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

TWO Year Anniversary Edition!

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.

TWO Amazing Years!

Through prayer, the generosity of our supporters, and over 10 000 hours of volunteer effort, we have had two incredible years at the Drop-In Centre! We have survived multiple waves of the pandemic, and through it all we continue to improve our services for our guests. Thanks be to God for giving us such an edifying and joyous mission to serve the poor in Kingston. Please read the full newsletter for information, updates, and celebrations from this incredible year!



You're Invited!



to celebrate our 2nd birthday party!

You are invited to our anniversary Mass on **February 24 at 12:10PM!** Afterwards we are hosting an Open House from 1-4PM in the Drop-In Center if you are interested in supporting our mission and seeing what we do. Cake and ice cream will be provided!

For our second "birthday", we will be having a thanksgiving Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral celebrated for the Drop-In Centre. Afterwards, cake and ice cream will be served to our guests, and Father Shawn will offer a blessing for our ministry and patrons.



We focus on building strong, loving relationships with our guests.



Our volunteers and guests can't wait for another fun and busy summer on St. Rita's Patio!



Our oldest volunteer, Bernie McDonald, hard at work in the kitchen.



Brand new cabinets to store our food!

Drop-In Centre Updates:

Our numbers have increased steadily and consistently over the past two years. We currently serve 45-50 guests each weekday afternoon from 1-4PM. Close to 22 000 meals have been served since February 24, 2020. Our services offered have grown since opening, such as our shower and laundry facilities which are used on a regular basis by guests. We now distribute sleeping bags, tents, blankets, and clothing as needed.



Celebrating RJ's birthday with our volunteers, he has been a guest since Day 1 of our opening!

We try to make our guests feel loved as they are all children of God. We do this by having birthday celebrations, building strong relationships between guests and volunteers, and hosting many events including art workshops, and holiday parties throughout the Liturgical calendar.



Dorothy McDonald, a long-time friend of the Drop-In Centre recently facilitated an art class with our guests!

Our events have had great turnout, such as our Christmas Day dinner which transitioned to take-out this year due to COVID restrictions. In spite of this and in freezing rain, we were able to serve 125 people. Some of our events include annual St. Patrick's Day and Easter celebrations!



Thank you to the Knights of Columbus (KofC) at St. Mary's and St. Joseph parishes for your generosity

We have been blessed by significant donations from our community. Two new freezers were donated by the St. Joseph's KofC, as well as an industrial conveyor toaster from St. Mary's KofC. We also can't forget about the support from the students and staff from local Catholic schools, including our own Ecole Cathedral students!



Food items collected by Ecole Cathedral students

Updates Continued

We were fortunate to receive a recent award from the Davies Charitable foundation to provide free on-site foot care and haircutting services once COVID restrictions permit.



Mental Health and Addictions training for our leaders

Often, the individuals we work with have significant mental health and addictions concerns. To equip our team to deal with these challenges, we brought in Sherry Lachine, founder of Broadmind Strategies for Mental Health. In November, she facilitated a full day training workshop on Mental Health and Addictions for our Team Leaders.



We had two successful vegetable markets, raising \$1704.65!

Soon we will begin the process of caring for our community garden plots again. 25 volunteers made the gardens possible last year, as you may have seen the vegetable markets held in 2021. Our Italian Nonnas cooked and froze soup for use this entire winter with the 3500 lbs of produce from the community garden. Our donated freezers accommodated the extra soup from the increased harvest of veggies, and the surplus vegetables we produced were donated to our community partners running other local food programs.



Our community garden and Cooking with Nonna program go hand-in hand!

We were informed that St. Mary's Drop-In Centre is the fourth largest food program for the poor in Kingston. It is incredible what God will provide in such short time. We could not have accomplished this without dedicated volunteers. If you are able to help in one of our ministries, please contact Ann Lyng. Not able to serve in person? We are in need of prayer warriors to join our Guardian Angel program. We match "Guardian Angels" to individual guests or volunteers so they can receive daily prayers for their needs or ministry. Prayer is so important to us, so please continue to pray for our ministry!



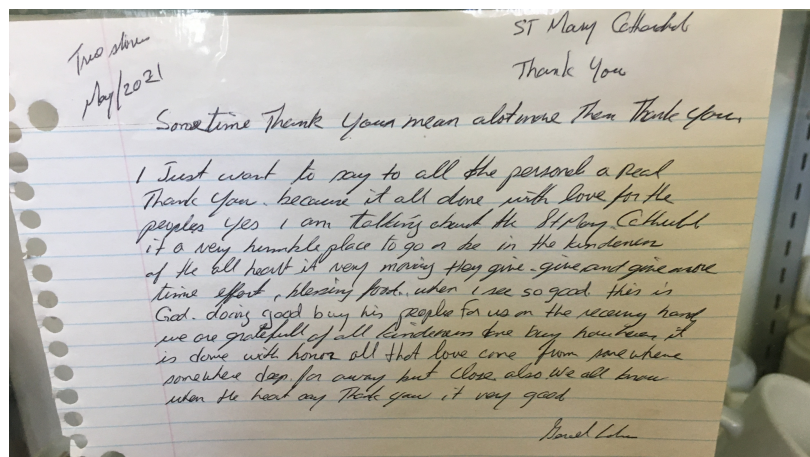
"Together with our guests we are learning about the gospels 'preferential option for the poor'."

-Deacon Blaine Barclay

Deacon Blaine leading our volunteers in prayer to close the shift

Testimonials:

Please consider joining our roster of 70 Drop-In Centre and 25 community garden volunteers. Read the testimonial below from one of our guests, Gerald, to see the impact you can have!



"St. Mary Cathedral Thank You May/2021

Sometime thank you mean a lot more than thank you.

I just want to say to all the personnel a real thank you, because it all done with love for the peoples. Yes I am talking about the St. Mary's Cathedral. It's a very humble place to go and be in the kindness of the all heart it very moving they give, give, and give more time, effort, blessing, food, when I see so good this is God doing good buy his people for us on the receiving hand we are grateful of all kindness it is done with honor all that love come from somewhere deep far away but close. Also we all know when the heart say thank you it very good."

-Gerald Labre



And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me.'

Matthew 25:40

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. Contact Ann Lyng if you can help.
- ➔ 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.
 - Online at Canada Helps: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/119110443RR0033-st-marys-cathedral/campaign/dropincentre/>
- ➔ 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, blankets, and sleeping bags.
 - Please contact Ann Lyng to inquire if we are in need of something you can donate.

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

ministries@stmaryscathedral.ca

(613) 546-5521 Ext 5