

Deo Gratias Annual REVIEW

DEO GRATIAS MINISTRIES DETROIT DECEMBER 2023 ISSUE 2

A Message from Our Leaders

Pantry days are always busy. The Deo Gratias building buzzes with activity as guests with appointments arrive for their opportunity to shop in the Food Pantry. Guests who have finished their Pantry visit push shopping carts full of groceries toward the parking lot, many stopping in the Café for snacks, drinks, perhaps even lunch before heading home. Volunteers move throughout the Pantry, office, Café and hallways, greeting one another and the guests as they hurry to perform their tasks. In the Café, guests gather at the tables in pairs or groups, sipping drinks and eating their chosen snacks, many also partaking of the take-out lunches provided by the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Some take advantage of the library, browsing through the shelves for books to take home for themselves or their children to read. Children work busily at the craft table, using crayons and felt markers to bring coloring book pages to life. Other children play on the activity mat with the Legos and other toys provided to help stimulate their imaginations. In the art room down the hall, volunteers help guests express themselves using paper, canvas, brushes, paint, sometimes even sequins and glitter, as they produce works of art that may end up adorning the walls of the building's hallways.

On one such typical day, Sister Shelley was in the kitchen, talking to John Kanitra. John was the very first volunteer to join the Sisters when they began Deo Gratias Café in January 2020. During the past three and a half years, he has donated countless hours of time and talent to the work of Deo Gratias, helping the Sisters build the place of welcome that they envisioned back in 2015. John has been there through the successes and struggles, the disappointments and the delays, part of the evolution of Deo Gratias Ministries and a trusted friend to so many of the volunteers and guests. He confesses, "I just love working here." And he is loved and appreciated in return.



Sister Felicity Marie



Sister Shelley Marie

Deo Gratias Ministries Detroit is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. We minister at 15879 E. Seven Mile, just west of Kelly Road, between St. Jude Catholic Church and Regent Scholars Charter Academy.

Our mission is to provide unconditional hospitality to those in need. We work to nurture a safe, welcoming, faith-inspired community that promotes the dignity of each person and all creation in disadvantaged areas of the city. With those we serve, we strive to find solutions to problems, making communities safer and happier places to live as we attend to physical, social, and spiritual needs.

OUR CORE VALUES ARE:

RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

We believe that each person and all creation is created and loved by God and, therefore, has inherent dignity. Each is treated with due regard and courtesy.

HOSPITALITY

We extend a warm welcome to everyone, as they are, without conditions or questions. We offer a safe space, serve basic human needs, and provide an open, attentive, non-intrusive presence for human interaction.

COMPASSION

We strive for a sensitive awareness and understanding of others' needs. We express this compassion in our caring words and actions.

SOLIDARITY

We recognize our oneness with all people and all creation. We appreciate our interdependence and take responsibility for the effect our words and actions have on one another. We put the needs of our most vulnerable brothers and sisters first.

TRANSFORMATION

Personally and corporately, we support continuous improvement of the person and the ministry. We are open to new ideas, new calls for service, and change.

A Message from Our Leaders (cont.)

During a lull in their conversation, John and Sister Shelley could hear the bustle of the Café. People were talking and laughing with one another as guests and volunteers interacted. John turned to Sister Shelley with a smile that contained just a touch of wonder as he said, “This is what you hoped for, isn’t it? This is what you wanted to build.” And he was right. When we started our ministry in Detroit, we didn’t have a lot of definite plans because we knew the activity of the ministry had to grow in response to the need of the community being served. We did have an instinct, however, that no matter what else might be needed, a place for people to come together was a good start.

In this neighborhood, it’s not unusual for people to live side by side, rarely interacting with one another. Part of this is because many people are quite transient, staying in one place for only a short time before moving on to another. Part of this isolation is also a matter of personal safety; in a tough neighborhood with a high crime rate, sometimes keeping your head down is a good idea. Deo Gratias provides a safe, welcoming space for people to come and build relationships. In the Café, which is open five days a week, we have witnessed friendships form between people who otherwise would likely never have met or spoken to one another. Stopping by the Café has become a regular part of many people’s daily routine. We have heard people tell one another, “I’m at the church”, “It’s so peaceful here”, “There’s a lot of love in this place,” and even, “It’s the place to be!”

As we continue to develop Deo Gratias Ministries in northeast Detroit, we are so very grateful for the many people who work with us as volunteers, donors, and partners. All that we do is done in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi, as a response to our Foundress Blessed Mary Angela’s admonition to “Serve where you are needed,” and, most of all, to show God’s love revealed in Jesus to the people we serve. We are so very grateful for this opportunity to serve and for those who make it possible. Thank you all so very, very much. Deo Gratias!



Sisters Re-Launch Food Pantry

The original vision for Deo Gratias Ministries did not include a food pantry. At first, the Sisters planned to have a café and a community garden where they could visit with guests in the neighborhood and establish a presence to connect.

When COVID-19 hit in early 2020, they had to shift their efforts to meet the community’s need for food. As the spread of COVID subsided, their engagement with the community led them to discover the ongoing need for access to fresh and non-perishable food, especially as economic inflation added a further level of financial strain on the working poor and senior citizens in the community.

In early 2021, Deo Gratias began to negotiate with St. Jude Parish to purchase the parish center building in which the ministry was operating. During the talks, the Pastor

asked Deo Gratias to take over the work that St. Jude Food Pantry had begun years before.

After St. Jude closed its food pantry in January 2022, the Sisters and volunteers from Deo Gratias devoted time and effort to explore different models of food pantry service. They visited the Capuchin Food Pantry located in the Capuchin Services Center on Medbury Street in Detroit and discovered a system that was consistent with Deo Gratias’ mission of hospitality and respect for the dignity of all persons. A smaller version of the Capuchin Food Pantry was created at Deo Gratias. It was set up like a small grocery store, where guests can select the food items they want and need. The Food Pantry includes a reach-in freezer containing a variety of meat and frozen food; a reach-in refrigerator with milk and (sometimes) eggs, cheese, and yogurt; a large selection of fresh

OUR BOARD MEMBERS

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produce; shelves of baked goods and non-perishable packaged food, and small 'departments' of household and health and hygiene products.

Guests shop by appointment, assisted by attentive and friendly Food Pantry volunteers who pack and weigh their food items. The guests are very grateful for the food they receive and for the warm, hospitable experience that the Food Pantry provides.

Through the grace of God and the generous help of many people, Deo Gratias Food Pantry served 1,858 households in its first year of operation. It provided 98,073 pounds (almost five tons!) of food for 4,933 people. With grateful hearts for the support of our donors, partners, and volunteers, we offer a sincere "Deo Gratias" to all who help us help so many people in need through Deo Gratias Food Pantry.



A food pantry guest is happy about getting some radishes

Meet Sister Agnes Maria Trojnar, CSSF



Sister Agnes holds a rescue kitten

Sister Agnes Maria Trojnar moved to Detroit in August 2022 from the Felician Sisters' convent in Mississauga, Ontario. Sister Agnes had been ministering to the retired Sisters at Holy Name of Mary Convent and to the guests at St. Felix Center in Toronto for two and a half years before being assigned to minister at Deo Gratias Ministries Detroit. Originally from Strzyzow, Poland, she moved to the United States soon after she graduated from high school. She lived with a family in New Jersey,

working as a nanny for their three young boys. Eventually, she followed the call in her heart and joined the Felician Sisters in 2016.

After she moved to Mother of Perpetual Help Convent in Detroit, she began ministering with Sister Felicity and Sister Shelley at Deo Gratias as the Café's barista. She has become an invaluable part of the ministry of presence that is central to the work of Deo Gratias Ministries. Very soft spoken, Sister Agnes uses the skills she developed as a nanny to gently but firmly ensure that guests abide by the rules of the Café, even as she takes special care for guests with particular needs. The regular Café guests love and respect her and ask

for her on the days when she is not serving in the Café.

After several months, Sister Agnes expanded her ministry at Deo Gratias and uses her artistic talents in the Art program. A skilled drawer, she prepares canvases for guests, young and old, to paint during the program hours, Tuesday and Friday, 11:30 am until 2:00 pm.

Sister Agnes is known for her straightforward approach. Recently, a regular guest came to the Café looking for food. Sister Agnes told her that lunches would be available in about an hour's time, at which point, the guest responded, "An hour! I'm not going to hang around waiting for an hour." Sister Agnes gently advised her, "You can do what you want but if I were you and I was hungry, I'd stay for a free meal. It's not like you have anything else you have to hurry to, do you?" The woman reconsidered her decision; she stayed and enjoyed a very good lunch prepared by the Capuchin Soup Kitchen staff. Before she left, she stopped to tell Sister Agnes, "You know, you were right. I like you. You tell it like it is." Well done, Sister Agnes!



Sister Agnes oversees art projects

VolunteerPROFILE

Detroit newcomers seize challenge to support DGM



Standing are volunteers Mary Ann Lajoie and Beatriz Munoz

Two young volunteers stepped out of their comfort zone, travelled from their respective communities, and came to Detroit. Their mission? To dedicate ten months as participants in the Felician Sisters' Volunteers in Mission program and to support the work of Deo Gratias Ministries Detroit. Beatriz Munoz heard about the mission from her sister in Roanoke, Virginia. MaryAnn Lajoie from Grand Rapids, Michigan discovered the need for volunteers from the Catholic Volunteer Network. Both young women had little or no connection to Detroit but wanted to donate their time and talent to a worthy cause. They found it at Deo Gratias.

In October 2022, they moved into the volunteer house, then located on the campus of Ste. Anne de Detroit

Basilica in the Mexican Town district. Beatriz and MaryAnn knew very little about Detroit but learned to love it as they explored the area and got to know the community better. They navigated a new terrain of living together in a new city, in a new neighborhood, with new colleagues and friends, like champs. They confessed that they were a little apprehensive about their new adventure, but with time they found themselves loving the people they served.

Following the Gospel, Beatriz and MaryAnn planted seeds in the community garden. They worked in the Pantry and Café and helped ensure that all the guests were served with love, respect, and humility. While serving, they listened to the guests and made them feel important. Beatriz said, "I love the ministry of presence." Although they were younger than the other volunteers, they embraced the daily interaction, the camaraderie, and the diversity of their new friends. They spent many hours helping organize the donations Deo Gratias receives – food, household, and hygiene items – and they sorted through thousands of donated books for the library and tutoring program.

Both volunteers discovered that volunteering in Deo Gratias not only changes the community; it also impacted their lives. Before they completed their service, they talked about the lessons that they will take with them as they go on with their lives. Living in the city, they saw the beauty in people who are left behind the economic prosperity. Their time in Detroit gave them new perspectives and helped them realize their own privilege. Both said, "This humbles us and makes us appreciate what we have." They experienced the real and positive impact Deo Gratias is making in the neighborhood they serve. They believe that volunteering is one of the best ways to show a sense of social responsibility and loyalty to the community. MaryAnn said, "Volunteering ... is one of the secrets of success in all aspects of life. I came to help others and I found out that is a real investment in my growth."

BECOME A VOLUNTEER!

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about the Felician Sisters' Volunteers in Mission program, please visit: www.feliciansistersna.org/join-us/volunteers-in-mission/ or contact Julie Darocha by telephone at 313-500-9410 or by email jdarocho@feliciansisters.org.

PatronPROFILE

Ritchie driven by ministry's spiritual nourishment

Richard "Ritchie" Boykins welcomed the arrival of the Deo Gratias Café with an open mind and open heart. He is a disciple of Christ and is deeply spiritual.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, he would arrive before the Café opened for the day in order to lead the staff and volunteers in an opening prayer. Ritchie still loves talking to the Sisters and volunteers when he comes to the Café and Food Pantry, not only to receive food, but also to touch base with the neighborhood. He believes the community where Deo Gratias is situated is in dire need for these services. The people in the neighborhood need more than physical help; they need spiritual help as well. "The Deo Gratias staff and volunteers don't only give us food for our nutrition, you feed our spiritual needs," Ritchie said. He keeps coming to the mission because he feels the presence of Christ among the staff and the guests. "I hope what the Sisters do at Deo Gratias spreads all over the universe," he said.

He is grateful for the work being done in his neighborhood. The staff and volunteers are the "fishermen of men," Ritchie says. "I can't give enough credit to them." He and his friends find joy in coming to the center and witnessing the lively collaboration by everyone. "I come here with a heavy heart; you work like an octopus. You're reaching out to everyone to include them in your fold. That is an art.... it could only happen with the grace of God." Ritchie sees the difference that the Deo Gratias Mission is making in the neighborhood. He hopes that the mission will be an impetus to rebuilding the neighborhood where no one is left behind.



Richard and his wife Gail

EmployeePROFILE

Compassionate, committed care defines Lucy's work



Lucy is very passionate about her work

Deo Gratias is composed of many individuals that make this small organization work. Case worker Lucy Avery-Walk is one such contributor.

Lucy was born to be a social worker. She loves helping vulnerable people. She has a smile that lights up the room. She is assured of her mission and performs her daily tasks with love, compassion, care, and emotional sensitivity.

She treats every individual as if she is treating a member of her family. "I don't know what set of problems I will need to solve when a client comes to my desk," she said.

The guests who come to Deo Gratias have many challenges. Lucy understands that she cannot solve every problem, but she works with each individual to find solutions to the issues the guest is experiencing. She steps in each guest's shoes and works without judgment to help the problem of the day as she assists them in finding the resources they need. "With the

high cost of food and economic instability, it is essential to pave paths for the clients by working with them on solutions," she noted. She has stacks of nonprofit agencies' business cards at her finger tips and frequently uses them to help the people who come for help.

Lucy intentionally chose to be a social worker. Before she came to Deo Gratias, she oversaw the feeding of 400 clients at a soup kitchen. She said that her career is humbling and rewarding at the same time. She did not know anything about Deo Gratias before she came to work here, but she likes that the ministry offers a hand up rather than hand out. This type of service helps people help themselves, rather than have them rely on others. Lucy does not know what awaits her each day, but her contributions provide an important element to the many successes Deo Gratias has achieved.

The Ministry of Presence

A big part of Deo Gratias' ministry is what we call "the ministry of presence." In some ways, the ministry of presence is very simple. *Presence* is the key. Just 'being' with another person is the essence of how we 'do' this ministry. Taking time to be with someone – to set aside other activities and concerns in order to pay attention to them, listen attentively, wait patiently, and respond compassionately – is the heart of this ministry.

The ministry of presence is subtle because it calls for us to be available, but not intrusive. Its aim is not problem-solving but recognition and affirmation of the dignity of each person. It begins with a warm greeting. We try to learn the names of our guests because being called by name is in itself an experience of validation of our individual dignity. Sometimes, guests react with surprise when we address them as "sir" or "madam", words of courtesy which some disadvantaged people rarely hear directed to themselves. The greeting itself is part of the ministry of presence, telling the guest, "I see you and respect you as a person." It sets the tone for the interaction, however brief the encounter may be.

In the ministry of presence, our words and body language invite our guests to say as much or as little about themselves as they want to reveal. A smile and simple conversation starter like, "How's your day going?"

can initiate conversations that usually are very brief but still uplifting. Sometimes guests will unburden their hearts, telling us about their struggles and sorrows. People who are marginalized have often faced challenges that we find almost unimaginable. Some of us have heard truly heartbreaking stories of loss and loneliness. Taking time to be fully present to what the person is saying, listening without judgement, without rushing in to giving advice or jumping in with stories of our own similar experiences, can be difficult. It is important, however, just to be and let the other speak, to weep if they need to, and to respond with words of compassion and sympathy.

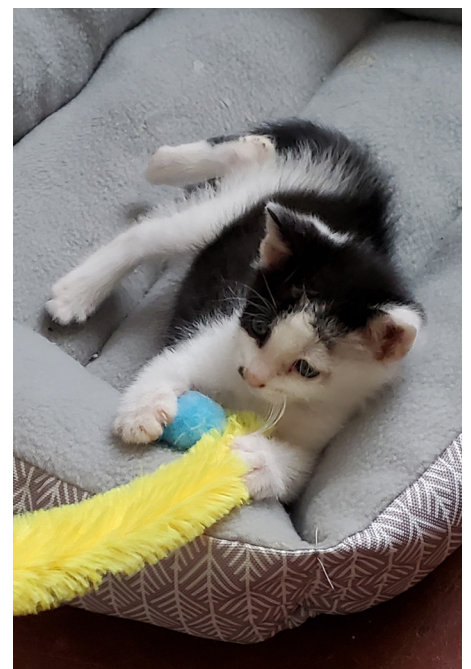
When the person is finished speaking, sometimes we can gently offer some help, such as a suggestion to speak to our case worker for community resource help. Very often, however, the ministry of presence is enough in itself; when someone feels heard by a compassionate listener, the burden they carry becomes lighter. And we, who have had the privilege of entering into the experience of another person, will find our hearts changed. It is very humbling to know that God has used us to reach out to his hurting children and to be an instrument of his love and healing for a brother or sister in need.

Respect for Creation

One day in late May 2022, Sister Shelley was talking to 'Marty', a regular guest at Deo Gratias Ministries. Marty, who lives in the neighborhood, stopped in for a visit at Deo Gratias Café and was telling Sister Shelley about his day when he suddenly asked, "Do you know someone who would like a kitten?" Marty explained that that very morning, he had found a tiny kitten in his backyard. He said the kitten fit in his hand and had one "bad eye." Marty had walked up and down the street, attempting to find its home, before he left it with a neighbor whom he knew fed stray cats in the area.

Sister Shelley couldn't forget Marty's story after he left, concerned about how a very small kitten would fare without a lot of attention. She talked to Beatriz Munoz, one of the volunteers, about her concern, and they decided to pay Marty a visit so that they could check to make sure the kitten was in good hands.

With Marty's help, they located the house where the kitten was staying. As they approached the door, they could hear urgent kitten cries and when the door was opened, the tiny animal attempted to escape. Sister Shelley scooped it up and held it as they talked to the kind woman who had taken





Thomas helps with paperwork

the kitten in earlier that day. The woman explained that her daughter planned to take care of the kitten but, since she also had to go to work, she did not have a lot of time to devote to it. Sister Shelley and Beatriz offered to take the kitten with them to ensure it got the care it needed, and the woman agreed, giving them the small bottle and the kitten formula that she had already purchased for it. As they drove home shortly afterward, Sister Shelley fed the white and grey kitten using the bottle. After it had eaten hungrily, it settled down with a loud kitten purr for some petting.

The next day, volunteer MaryAnn Lajoie and Sister Shelley took the kitten to a veterinary clinic where they were told it was about three weeks old and underweight. They were advised that such a young kitten should be fed every two hours. For the next two weeks, the kitten, named Thomas since it was a male (tom) cat, stayed every night with Beatriz and MaryAnn at their residence. He came to Deo Gratias each day to spend his time in the book storage room where he received lots of love, attention, and regular feedings of kitten food mixed with formula. The antibiotic provided by the veterinarian quickly cleared up his eye infection and his lovely blue eyes stole hearts as he was taken to visit guests and volunteers.

As he grew bigger and stronger, Thomas become very playful and curious, entertaining Sister Agnes endlessly as she went to the book room for “kitten time.” MaryAnn persuaded her fiancé’s friend to become Thomas’ forever “kitten dad” and he now lives happily in a home with lots of love, food, and purring.

Thomas is the fourth kitten that we at Deo Gratias Ministries have been able to rescue and rehome. We try to support families with pets by partnering with the Michigan Humane Society, who donate cases and large bags of cat and dog that we distribute through the Food Pantry. In the first year of the Food Pantry’s operation, we gave 101 people food for their pets. The neighborhood Deo Gratias serves also has many stray cats and dogs living in its streets and abandoned houses. During the next year, in keeping with our mission to protect creation, we would like to develop ways that will help us feed, shelter, and provide basic health care for some of these animals. If you would like to help us in this endeavor, please let Sister Shelley know. You can call her at 313-743-0477 or email sistershelley@dgmddetroit.org. Donations of funds, food, and other pet supplies are, of course, gratefully welcome.

Community Garden Soars in First Season

As the first growing season of the expanded Deo Gratias Community Garden draws to a close, it is hard to believe all that has been accomplished since the early spring. Deo Gratias Ministries purchased the vacant lot across the road on Maddelein Street from the Detroit Land Bank in September 2022. Sister Shelley hired a local company to custom-build a rail fence to demarcate the garden area; however, the work on the fence only got underway in March 2023. In the end, the delays were forgotten as the completed fence has drawn approval from the neighborhood residents as well as the guests and volunteers at Deo Gratias.

As soon as the fence was built, Tom Thompson, a volunteer builder who works with various non-profit groups to construct buildings in Michigan and other parts of the country, got to work, hauling onto the site the wood needed to build the raised garden beds.

Within a short time, Tom built twelve sturdy four-by-eight-foot boxes, six of which are 36 inches off the ground.

Around this time, Sister Shelley was contacted by a young man who was looking for a project to complete for his Eagle Scout award. Parker Davis and his father, Tim, met several times with Sister Shelley to plan the scope of his project and complete the various parts of it. Parker was responsible for getting a group together over two weekends to move the garden boxes into an orderly display, and to fill them with 12 yards of garden mix soil. With help from some members of this group, Sister Shelley planted the first crops in mid-May. Later, Parker designed, built, and installed four strong benches for the garden site as well as the compost bins located at the back of the garden lot. He also installed the posts and wooden backing for the garden’s sign and a bird

Community Garden (continued)

house that was placed on the fence. All the materials he used in building were paid for by funds he raised as part of his project. When the cement pad for the shed is ready, Parker is committed to helping assemble the garden shed as the final phase of his Eagle Scout project. His work was essential to the establishment of the garden this year.

Jon Francois, a regular volunteer who is part of the Deo Gratias Food Pantry crew, also helped the garden get established by locating a 275-gallon water tank for garden irrigation. There is no water source on the lot itself, but Sister Shelley and her volunteer helpers were able to link several garden hoses together in order to fill the tank from a faucet on the Deo Gratias building. Jon also persuaded a carpenter friend of his to build a tower for the tank to rest on, to improve the flow of the water from the tank into watering vessels. This watering system, made possible as always with the help of many willing volunteers, was invaluable during the dry spells of the growing 2023 season.



Parker Davis and his family and friends helped fill garden boxes as part of his Eagle Scout project



Eagle Scout volunteers fill the raised garden beds



Volunteer Jon Francois helped locate a 275-gallon water tank to irrigate the garden

With a lot of help from the two Volunteers in Mission, MaryAnn Lajoie and Beatriz Munoz, Sister Shelley planted numerous crops from seeds and transplants obtained through Keep Growing Detroit's Garden Resource program. The VIMs helped Sister Shelley keep the plants watered and weeded as they began to take root. They waited anxiously for the first shoots to appear and were not disappointed. Some crops were ready for harvesting within four weeks while others took more time to become productive. All of the produce that was harvested was placed in the Deo Gratias Food Pantry for the guests to take with their monthly groceries. Lettuce, spinach, mustard greens, kale, collard greens, radishes, beets, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, zucchini, summer squash, beans, tomatoes, hot peppers, and various herbs were successfully grown and harvested this year. Along the way, a local resident and experienced gardener, James Cole, dropped in every week to offer his help and advice, much appreciated by Sister Shelley, who was new to vegetable gardening. Through trial and error, and with James' wisdom, she learned much about successful urban farming this year and looks forward to making improvements in the coming years.

Next year, the 20-foot space between the sidewalk and the garden fence will be developed by planting shrubs and flowers to beautify the garden. It will take a lot of work to improve the heavy, hard clay soil in this space that volunteer John Kanitra and his son, Michael, broke up with a rototiller this summer. Also next year, Sister Shelley plans to have an open-sided pavilion constructed along the eastern edge of the garden lot. This would provide a space for community members to gather, take a break from working with the garden, or visit with one another at the picnic tables that will be placed under the pavilion roof. In the end, Deo Gratias Community Garden will be an attractive space for local residents to grow healthy food, work together, and build relationships that will enrich the community in which they live.



The community garden in bloom



Deo Gratias garden sign



The garden features new fencing accepted by the neighbors



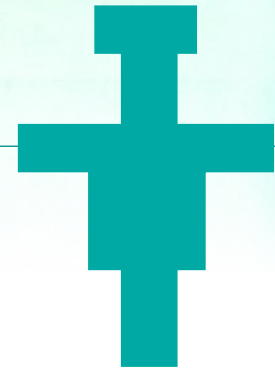
Volunteer Beatriz Munoz harvests first spinach while volunteer MaryAnn Lajoie waters the plants



Sister Shelley with radishes harvested from the garden

We greatly appreciate your generosity that enables us to serve our brothers and sisters in need. Know that you are remembered in our daily prayers

Our First Annual Appeal



December 2023

Dear Friends,

At this holy time of year, gift-giving expresses our appreciation and affection of the important people in our lives. It honors each person with special attention as we select, pay for, and prepare each gift for presentation. Throughout the year, we give the gift of unconditional hospitality to each guest who comes to Deo Gratias. We honor the human dignity of every person. We try to make them feel welcome, safe, and respected.

Through the generosity of our donors, we help our guests keep a roof over their heads and food on the table as we provide a week's worth of groceries to our Food Pantry visitors. This includes non-perishable items, baked goods, fresh produce, and meat. This food helps people stretch their income to cover basic necessities, but the Food Pantry also provides a friendly, enjoyable experience of personal attention as they shop for the items they want. On average, we serve 50 families per week, each receiving 60 pounds of food. Because of the number of people requesting Food Pantry appointments, our guests wait six weeks for a return Pantry visit.

Much of the food we give away is purchased from Gleaner's, a food distribution organization that serves many non-profits like ours. Because Gleaner's food is heavily discounted, we are able to make the most of our funds and, therefore, serve more families. The financial cost of providing all the food our guests receive during a Pantry visit averages **\$15.00 per family**. The price of the warmth our staff and volunteers give each visitor, and the peace of mind knowing that, for a week, they have good, nutritious, healthy food for their families, is incalculable.

We invite you to join us in feeding families in need here in north-east Detroit. **Please consider a one-time gift or a sponsorship for a week, month, or year for a family.** We accept checks, on-line payments, or cash. Please see our website at www.dgmdetroit.org for details on how to support our ministry.

We greatly appreciate your donations to help us continue to serve our brothers and sisters in need. Know that you are remembered daily in our prayer. May you and all your loved ones be blessed most richly during this season and throughout 2024.

Yours most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Felicity Marie Madigan".

Sister Felicity Marie Madigan
Co-Director
Deo Gratias Ministries Detroit

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sister Shelley Marie Jeffrey".

Sister Shelley Marie Jeffrey
Co-Director
Deo Gratias Ministries Detroit

Thank you to all our partners for continued guidance and support!



Help in the **D.**



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Eastpointe, Michigan (586) 776-1464



Contribute to Our *Deo Gratias* Box



Our neighborhood blessing box is a small extension of Deo Gratias Food Pantry in the Piety Hill neighborhood of Detroit. We provide "portable food" to the transient poor who pass by our house as well as many neighborhood children. If you'd like to contribute specifically to our Deo Gratias box, below are some of the items we need.

- Bottled Water
- Shelf-stable milk
- Individual Snacks (Oreos, Crackers, Fruit Roll Ups, etc.)
- Individual Chips (Doritos, Potato Chips, Cheetos, etc.)
- Tang Instant Drink / Country Time Pink Lemonade
- Canned Spaghetti O's, Ravioli, Beefaroni, etc.
- Canned Chicken and Tuna Salad
- Single Slice Spam
- Individual peanut butter cups
- Individual Cereal / Oatmeal cups
- Ramen Noodles (Instant Noodles)
- Hand sanitizer wipes
- Hand warmers

Take what you need, give what you can. Above all be blessed!

Deo Gratias
MINISTRIES



DETROIT

15879 E. Seven Mile Road
Detroit, Michigan 48205

How We Serve Our Neighbors

Café

Deo Gratias Café is open Monday through Friday, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. Snacks, baked goods, and drinks are available to the guests, free of charge. Hot meals are served on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday, beginning around 11:30, while quantities last. The meals are prepared by the Capuchin Soup Kitchen.

Food Pantry

Deo Gratias Food Pantry is open on Tuesday and Friday, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. Guests are served by appointment only. Appointments can be scheduled by calling 313-743-0477.

Art Program

Art opportunities are available on Tuesday and Friday, generally between 11:30 am and 2:00 pm. This program is drop-in style; adults and children can come and go when they prefer. Students can work on canvas or rock painting and wood burning. Resin art and stained glass are also available.

Tutoring Program

Individual tutoring for adults who want to improve their reading and writing or Math skills is available on a flexible schedule. Individual tutoring in reading, writing, and Math for children in elementary and middle school is offered after school Monday - Wednesday until 5:00 pm. All tutoring participants must register for the program.

Social Services

Guests in need of community resources can talk with the Case Manager at Deo Gratias Ministries Detroit, anytime Monday through Friday between 8:30 am - 4:00 pm. Drop in or make an appointment by calling 313-743-0477.

Community Garden

Deo Gratias Community Garden is located at 15865 Maddelein Street, Detroit, just across from our ministry building. The garden consists of 15 beds. Different vegetables and herbs are planted in the spring through early fall. Anyone interested in volunteering or learning more about the garden can call Sister Shelley at 313-743-0477.

Faith and Fellowship

Monday at 11:00 am we gather for about 40 minutes to listen to and discuss a passage from Scripture or other inspirational source and to offer prayer for our intentions.

Deo Gratias Ministries Detroit

operates at 15879 E. Seven Mile, west of Kelly Road, in Detroit, MI 48205.

All correspondence should be sent to our mailing address: 720 Atkinson Street, Detroit, MI 48202

Need more information?

Call us at 313-743-0477 or visit us at www.dgmDetroit.org