

From Bro Alan's desk...

Peace and Goodness! Once again we are celebrating the single most significant event in Christian history, the Easter event! Everything everywhere seems ready to burst forth in its fullness. As we attend Easter services we will hear the familiar and comforting story of Jesus' resurrection.

As we recall, Jesus was laid in an unused tomb which was sealed by a large stone rolled in front of the entranceway. I would like to draw our attention to that stone. From scripture, we know that it was large and heavy as it took an earthquake to move it. We also know from scripture that it was placed to prevent the theft of Jesus' body.

It also represents the attempt to bring to an end any hope that Jesus would rise, that his renegade followers would disperse and the "Good News" would never be preached. In the crucifixion story, we see a culture-wide rejection of good and truth; which leads to a horrific injustice. However, it is tempting for us to fail to see how this story of injustice and scape-goating is alive and well today, in our own cities and towns.

In our society that stone comes in many shapes and sizes, including personal size. Each of us has ample opportunity daily to put our own interests before someone else's thereby protecting our own needs and sense of power. Each of us makes choices as we participate in society that sometimes supports social structures which in turn prohibit others from becoming self-determining participants in society. In doing so we not only roll a stone between each other but between ourselves and God as well.

An inability to fully participate in society and be self-determinate often causes people to fall prey to feelings of helplessness and disempowerment. It is then that the stones of despair and feeling useless gather with stones of substance abuse, codependency, selfishness, materialism and others to create a stifling and oppressive wall.

Yet, through his resurrection Jesus gave to the world an inextinguishable light! In this season of resurrection and the rolling away of stones, we invite you to let something die—something that will rise in new form. Let a tendency to criticize die into a habit of praise; let a tendency to disbelieve die into a vision of hope and possibility; let a tendency to tell your side of the story die into a desire to listen deeply to another's story; let a tendency to take care of your own needs before the needs of others die into radical acts of charity.

The Risen Christ continues to call us, therefore, we will continue to help our poor brothers and sisters roll away the stones in their lives. As we do, each one of you will also be remembered with gratitude and in prayer for your part in the ongoing support of our outreach to the poor.

We wish each of you and those you love an enjoyable and blessed Easter season +

Bro Alan



Capuchin Outreach to the Poor was founded in 1987 by the Capuchin Franciscan Friars with the vision of creating a faith community with the poor by providing direct services that seek to enhance the sense of human dignity of those who are in need.

St. Francis Table serves on average 250 meals a day, six days per week in Toronto's Parkdale community. Patrons are asked to make a \$1 donation towards their meal and are provided with full restaurant service in a comfortable and pleasant environment. Soup, a choice of entrees, followed by dessert and coffee or tea are the everyday fare of St. Francis Table.

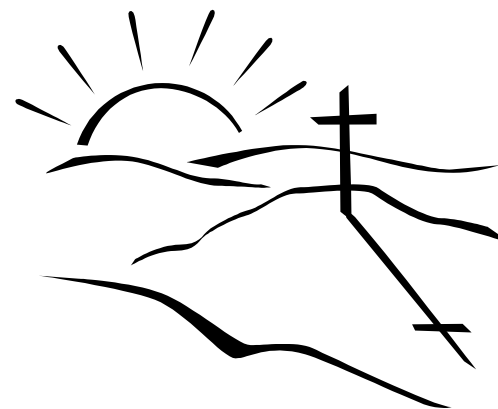
The St. Clare Centre, next door to 'The Table', is a drop-in centre and tearoom for our patrons. St. Clare Centre also hosts a weekly Alcoholics anonymous meeting, as well as everyday chess and cribbage games.

The Capuchin Outreach program provides direct service and supportive advocacy to those who are in need. Services offered include: housing, personal budgeting, community service referrals, and pastoral counseling.

Capuchin Outreach to the Poor is a registered charitable organization (#11883-7970-RR0001). We receive no government or direct United Way funding, instead relying on the charity of private individuals and businesses for our income.



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Greetings from Parkdale!

I'm happy to report that St. Francis Table continues to be a source of hope and joy for our patrons, volunteers and staff alike. The number of people dining with us has remained high since Christmas time and Sam and Dominic- our kitchen team- have steadfastly met the challenge with the help of our dedicated volunteers as well as our Capuchin Associates. The 'CAP guys' as they are affectionately known, are young men who are considering Franciscan community life and live with the friars while working at St. Francis Table as volunteer co-ordinators as well as at the Outreach office listening and responding to individual patrons' concerns and situations. Paul Perri is the newest Capuchin Associate, coming to us after first encountering St Francis Table as a student volunteer while attending Fr Bressani high school in Woodbridge. We welcome him and at the same time say goodbye to Stephen Van Massenhoven who has taken a position with Poverello charities, which is run by Capuchin Friar Joe MacDonald. Working with the Capuchin associates and volunteers is a great source of

hope for me - witnessing those

who give so much of themselves for those who have so little. Please continue to pray for our community as we pray in thanksgiving for your continued support and generosity.



Peace,

Gerry McGilly

Administrator

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One of our Patrons taking some time for prayer in our chapel. Located behind St Clare Centre, our chapel was built thanks to the generosity of the Knights of Malta and provides a space for personal prayer and reflection for our guests and volunteers.



One of our many volunteers serving dinner to a family at St. Francis Table. Restaurant table service is a hallmark of St. Francis Table, bringing dignity to our guests and a chance for volunteers to try out their waiting skills!



Brother Alan meeting with a patron at the Capuchin Outreach office. The Capuchin Outreach program provides one on one assistance to individuals with regard to personal life management, budgeting, housing, as well as addiction and illness.

Happy Easter from St. Francis Table!

