



Good Shepherd Residents Meet Pope Francis



As Philadelphia prepared in great anticipation for the historic visit of His Holiness, Pope Francis, the residents and staff of the Good Shepherd Program at Saint John's Hospice were themselves preparing for a very special opportunity to share in this event. Just days before the Pope's arrival, GSP was overjoyed to receive the news that

they had been chosen to send two representatives from their program to present the offertory gifts to Pope Francis during the mass which was scheduled to be held the day of the Pope's arrival at the Basilica Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul. (The Good Shepherd Program, founded in 1995, provides shelter and support to homeless, medically fragile men). Faced with the difficult task of choosing two representatives from the twelve residents currently living at GSP, Program Supervisor Barry Martin devised a plan. "How could I possibly pick two men over all the rest?" asked Martin, since "they were all worthy of this honor." So he thought of the only fair way to choose—drawing names out of a hat. "I took the names of all the men who wanted to be considered for this opportunity, put them in a hat, and had our Resident Aide, Cece, pick two names. That's how Eduardo Betancourt and Craig Street were chosen." Eduardo

recalls this moment. "This was a once-in-a-life-time event so I decided to put my name in the hat. When Barry pulled out my name, I said, 'You're kidding me!' Craig also shared the excitement of this very special honor. "I was first in disbelief—that I was homeless and now an going to be bringing up gifts to the Pope at the Basilica Cathedral. It was unbelievable." Eduardo and Craig presented the Pope with the Alms of the Poor, special intentions for the poor and needy. Both men reflected on their lives as it related to this event. They were deeply touched by this opportunity to represent the homeless, poor and suffering of our nation. Eduardo reflected on this moment: "I felt that after all the bad things that I had been through in life and all I had done to be where I am, that I was not worthy to be in his presence." However, after meeting Pope Francis, Eduardo replied, "My impression of the Pope is that he cares about the poor — he does not want to leave us to suffer alone."



From Saint John's Hospice Program Director David Stier



There is a shiny, red Christmas bow sitting on my window sill. I placed it there twelve months ago. I wanted to be reminded of the wonderful spirit of love that was felt by our residents during the Christmas party that Saint John's Hospice threw for them last December. There were plenty of big smiles, lots of loud singing, and many joyful faces all around the room. Staff members knew that this was something really special for our men. We knew that many of our residents have never had a good Christmas, and we sensed something special in the air.

The beauty of that evening, and of the entire Christmas season at SJH, was no accident. As we planned the event, the staff and volunteers agreed that we wanted to be very deliberate about our approach: we wanted to be of service to the men, to focus exclusively on making it a joyous evening for them.

Just as important, we had the generous support of the whole Philadelphia area and even beyond. Many individuals and groups from local schools, parishes and other organizations had contributed a great deal to the men during the Christmas season: gloves, shirts, boots, toiletries, coats, and many other items. Some groups even sponsored special meals or found other ways to make the season wonderful for our residents or our day service clients.

Of course, we know that it is not merely the receiving of gifts that made Christmas so special last year. After all, SJH provides clothing and other items for our residents all year long. What made the difference is that the residents knew that **they** mattered. Someone remembered them. As a resident once told me, "When you are out there [on the streets] sometimes you feel like you don't exist."

The support you provide goes way beyond an acknowledgement of their existence. You help us to show the men that they are actually loved. As a former resident put it last year, "What you do for the residents at Christmas time totally blows the mind."

Thank you for your ongoing support of our men and our mission. Your generosity is humbling, not just during the holiday season, but throughout the whole year. Your contributions to the SJH Annual Appeal, Annual Boot Drive, ongoing casserole program, and clothing and toiletry drives continue to astound us, year after year. On behalf of the staff, residents and day service guests of Saint John's Hospice and the Good Shepherd Program, I would like to thank you all for your commitment and service to Saint John's and to wish you God's blessings during this holiday season and beyond.



**Saint John's Hospice seeks to be
a community grounded in faith and service
where homeless persons find dignity,
respect, nourishment and
opportunities for new beginnings.**

Saint John's Hospice Events of 2015

SJH Fall Fling • Saint Luke & the Epiphany Church • September 19, 2015



**SJH Gathering of Leaders Holiday Celebration
The American Catholic Historical Society • November 21, 2015**



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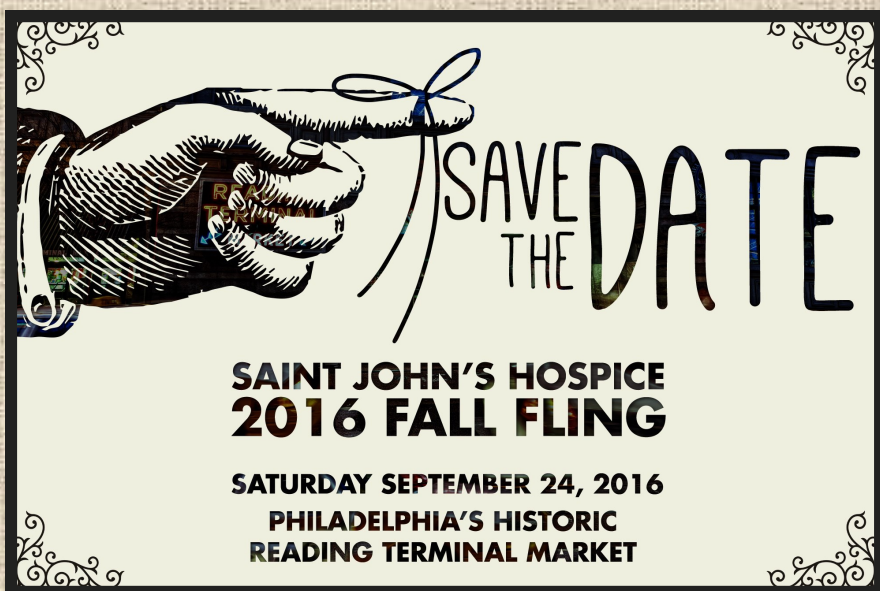
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at Saint John's Hospice?**

**Contact Kris Jaeger
kjaeger@chs-adphila.org
215.563.7763**



Program Director Dave Stier welcomes Clara Callahan of The Spring Garden Soup Society.

Saint John's Hospice 2015-16 Annual Appeal

Help Us Reach Our Goal of \$425,000



Many of you have already contributed to our 2015-2016 Annual Appeal, with **gifts already totaling in excess of \$250,000**. We are pleased and excited to hear from so many more of you who are planning to make your gift during this holiday season. To one and all we say, "THANK YOU!!!" Your contributions enable Saint John's Hospice to continue to provide life-sustaining services to homeless men of our city—it is what we have done for the past 52 years. For more information on our programs and how your donation can truly make a difference, contact Kris Jaeger at **215.563.7763** or **kjaeger@chs-adphila.org**. If you have not yet done so, please join us as our partner in mission!



In Loving Memory of Our Friends and Donors.... *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.*

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Spotlight on Our Volunteer Family

In Loving Memory of Beth Bresnan 1934-2015



Beth Bresnan, a long-time volunteer, employee and supporter of Saint John's Hospice, passed away on October 14, 2015, at the age of 81. For all who knew her, it was obvious that Beth was passionate about Saint John's Hospice. As the Volunteer and Community Relations Coordinator from April 2004 until January 2008, Beth dedicated her time to creating opportunities for conversation, education and interaction between the volunteer community and the SJH residents. She facilitated events for volunteers and residents to spend time together playing board games, listening to music or just hanging out. She also established the aftercare program for Good Shepherd in which volunteers could build relationships with the residents that lasted throughout their stay and beyond. This program is still going strong today. Four years prior to that, Beth had been a dedicated SJH volunteer herself. For Beth, it was all about the SJH men and mission. Beth was a charter member of the Saint John's Hospice Advisory Board, formed in 2010. Her love and enthusiasm for Saint John's and its mission was overwhelming. In her own words, "This place is a blessing to those who receive and, just as much, to those who give." Beth, we will miss you.

SJU Dragon Boat Team Rallies Together for SJH



On November 7th, on the banks of the Schuylkill River, St. Joseph's University alumni and friends gathered for a day of racing, rallying and fun at the Philadelphia International Dragon Boat Festival. As part of the festivities, the SJU Dragon Boat team recognized SJH as their official charity for the event for the second consecutive year. All the unused food and beverages, as well as personal donations from the team, were donated to SJH at the close of the event. When asked why SJU chose Saint John's as their designated charity for this event, SJU team coordinator, Rich Brennan referred to a quote from Pope Francis – ***"Among our tasks as witnesses to the love of Christ is that of giving a voice to the cry of the poor."*** SJH would like to thank the St. Joe's team for their generosity and ongoing support. **GO HAWKS!**

Mason Wartman Receives the Saint John's Hospice 2015 Partner in Mission Award

This past September 19th, at the SJH 2015 Fall Fling celebration, Saint John's Hospice was proud to honor Mason Wartman as this year's recipient of the SJH Partner in Mission award. This honor is given each year to an individual or group who reflects the SJH mission and shares in

its efforts to care for the homeless of our city. Mason is the owner of ***Rosa's Fresh Pizza***, which is ***located at 25 S. 11th Street in Philadelphia*** and creator of the ***pay-it-forward pizza project***. One dollar buys a 'slice' that you get in the form of a post-it note, which a person in need can then take off the wall to get a slice for free. Many of you may recognize Mason from newspapers, magazines and television programs such as the ***Ellen DeGeneres Show***. Mason and his customers provide thousands of meals for the homeless and hungry each year. SJH was overjoyed to have the opportunity to acknowledge Mason and his good work. Mason is pictured above with the ***SJH 2014 Partner in Mission*** recipient, Tootsie D'Ambrosio, owner of ***Tootsie's Salad Express located in the Reading Terminal Market***.



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*May God bless you this holiday
season and in the New Year.*

Seasons Greetings

From the Saint Johns Hospice Family

