

Your Treasure Is Blessing to Us

And Helped Us Meet Our Holiday Needs
October 1, 2009 through January 31, 2010

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Tom Brinker & Helpers
Helaine Brown
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Chester Charter School
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Carrie Cliffe
Congregation Ohev Shalom
Mr. & Mrs. Richard S. Curry
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Jane Goldberg
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Harlee Manor
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Connie Kopko
Commander Bill Kranyak
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Dale Lauletta
David & Marilyn Lemmerman
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Dolores & Debbie Luniewski
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Magellan Health Services
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James McCabe
Mr. & Mrs. Craig McHugh
Margaret McIntyre
Jackie McKenzie & 2nd grade class
Mr. & Mrs. Charles McLaughlin
Joan McLaughlin
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Our Lady of Charity Parish
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Mary Schwartz
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Magellan Health Services
St. John Chrysostom Parish
St. John Chrysostom CCD
St. Kevin Parish
St. Madeline Parish
St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Parish
St. Mark Catholic Church
St. Mark in Broomall
Sunoco
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TE Middle School
TEFAP - Government Program
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USCI Affinity
David & Maria Valentin
VanGaurd Group
Villanova University
MaryKay Weldon
Wells Fargo
West Council Telecom Pioneers
Chris Wheatley
WWEM Church

Tonia Perseveres A Bernardine Center Client Makes Good



Obstacles are a normal part of life but how we deal with them is another matter. Tonia Brown is a wonderful example of jumping many hurdles to reach her goals.

Born and raised in Wilmington, DE, Tonia worked in various jobs throughout her life. A job at the Tri-State Mall is what brought her into the Chester, PA area. Unfortunately that job ended in 2002 leaving her with no income, five children to care for, and the need for supplemental food. A friend told her about the Bernardine Center so Tonia began coming to the food pantry and the brunch program over the next few years. Being jobless did not stop Tonia from reaching out to others. While unemployed and raising her children, Tonia cared for an individual with paraplegia and another man afflicted with Alzheimer's disease. It was while caring for these friends that Tonia began thinking about nursing school. Obstacles presented themselves: no money for tuition, lack of computer skills, and transportation barriers; having been away from school for many years would add to the challenge.

Tonia attempted on her own to learn to use a computer but not having one at home made learning more difficult. Library computer labs were crowded and "Career Link" was too far from her home. In January, 2010 Tonia heard that the Bernardine Center was offering free computer classes and she jumped at the opportunity seeing it as a step toward her goal of becoming a nurse. She utilized the computer lab at Bernardine Center on a regular basis, practicing typing skills and learning to browse the Internet. She sought out "New Choices" in Springfield to help her with writing a resume and developing interviewing skills. Having gained more confidence, Tonia went to Delaware County Community College and inquired about its nursing program. With the help of an adviser, she enrolled into three preparatory classes and obtained a tuition scholarship. Tonia still comes to the Bernardine Center regularly to use the computer for homework always improving her computer skills. She is so proud of her accomplishments and continues to overcome obstacles as they occur. Tonia believes, "It is never too late if you have a goal or a dream. There is a lot of help out there but you have to be the one to stick to it." She certainly can be an example for many of us.



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Stamp



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SPRING 2010

THE Bernardine Center A NEWSLETTER OF THE BERNARDINE CENTER TIMES

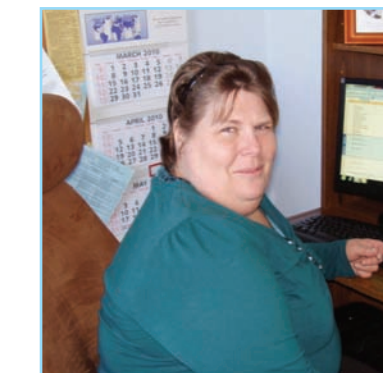
A Ministry of the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters

Marylou Laboy Our Staff Profile

Mrs. Marylou Laboy is the energetic woman behind much of the Bookkeeping and Food Pantry work at Bernardine Center. She keeps track of all the incoming and outgoing food for the Food Pantry. Marylou handles the ordering from PhilAbundance, T.K. Harvin, Chester Food Co-Op, Government Food, and the many local organizations who so willingly donate food and supplies from their parishioners and coworkers. Add to that the documentation of the numerous people who send in individual cash donations which support our services to struggling families in the Chester and surrounding areas. She also can be seen driving about the city ensuring that infirm seniors get their monthly box of groceries. Meeting new and diverse people; serving their needs; laughing heartily; crying quietly; and firmly hugging them is her great joy.

You would never imagine that Marylou leads a double life! She is the wife of Ramon and the mother of three young women who are busily starting out on their careers, one of whom is in college preparing to be a meteorologist; another is a pharmacy assistant; and a third is the mother of 4-year old Angel and 2-year old Joshua. Yes, Marylou is indeed a loving and affectionate Grandmom! Angel, it seems, is headed toward a career in social services, for she prefers coming to work with Grandmom rather than going to kindergarten.

Taking weekend trips with her husband, meeting new people, and seeing new places rounds out Marylou's life. We all, staff and clients, certainly value Marylou's generous service to Bernardine Center.



Mission Statement

The Bernardine Center provides a helping hand to low-income Cheseter area residents by distributing emergency or supplemental food and supplies.

The Bernardine Center also offers educational, spiritual and advocacy programs to help clients build better lives for themselves, their families and communities.

All the ministries of the Bernardine Center are rooted in Franciscan hospitality and the social teachings of our Catholic Christian tradition.



From Left: Shira Tillman had her birthday presents made into Christmas donations for children at BC. Eastern University students paint the Brunch Room during their MLK Day of Service. Members of Kimberly-Clark Corp. provide a full day of service cleaning BC from wall to wall.

Food That Nourishes Body and Soul

Bernardine Center offers West Side Brunch every Monday, Thursday and Friday from 10:00 AM until 12:00 Noon to anyone in the area who is in need of a brunch meal - usually a warm meal. During this past year, more groups have offered their service in preparing and in serving the meals to our clients under the hospitable guidance of Sister Carolyn Muus, our West Side Brunch chef and dishwasher.

Every couple months members of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Social Service Committee, known by our clients as "the church people," bring a delicious brunch and serve it to our clients.

The food procession of cars makes its way along Rte. 291 with crock pots and large foil containers filled with every sort of tasty and healthy meal - sometimes, it's picnic-style foods; other times it has been a special holiday meal, a spaghetti dinner, hoagie sandwiches or a hot breakfast buffet-style spread. The committee members love coming to BC. They all enjoy cooking and each has her specialty to share. It is the gracious gratitude of the beneficiaries of these meals that keeps the Social Service Committee members coming back again with another meal. When they experience the gratitude of individuals, they recognize the many faces of hunger

around them, and they are eager to volunteer service in other ways as well. Our clients are frequently heard asking, "When are the church people coming again?"

We too, as BC staff, are filled with appreciation to: Father Orth, Deacon Ryan, Lucy Gicristoforo, Mary Cummings, Tom Klecha, Grace Walsh, Joan and Gil Bardsley, Dolores Luniewski, Sue Betsch, Shirley Kluska, Helena Cribb, Judy Esposito, Judy Gould, and Terry Moller, who is also our Volunteer Coordinator at Bernardine Center.

More Food for Thought

Several other groups have also enjoyed sharing their cooking and serving skills with Bernardine Center. Among them

are various groups of our own Bernardine Franciscan Sisters who eagerly come all the way from Reading, PA every other

month to serve meals they have planned and prepared themselves.



(L) Srs. Roberta Ann and Mary Joseph dish out Shepherd's Pie while, (R) Sr. Madonna Marie serves a bowl of tossed salad to a BC client.



Sr. Sandra receives check from Thomas Roletter of Sons of Ben

Gratitude for All Monetary Donations

October 1, 2009 through January 31, 2010 That Helped Us Meet Our Holiday Needs.

We are grateful to Connelly Foundation and Claneil Foundation for generously funding Bernardine Center Programs and to United Way of Southeast Delaware County for assisting BC to receive food funding through the Emergency Food and Shelter Program.



Members of St. Margaret Mary's Parish serve hot breakfast foods to clients eager for brunch.



Members of St. Mary Margaret's Social Committee pose while waiting for brunch to begin.



(L) Srs. Michele, Lorentia, Jean and Helene prepare to set out their meal of hot dogs and baked beans, and (R) Srs. Michele and Jean socialize with clients.



(L) Srs. Veronice, Agnesita, Charlene, and Anna served their meal of chicken, rice and beans and are ready to return to Reading, while (R) Srs. Nora, Jean, Karen Anne and Michele dish out their specialty - spaghetti and meatballs



(L) Dennis & Marley Riehle and daughters, Andrea, Emily and Natalia prepared and served delicious meals for WSB. (R) The "WSB Women" who provide brunches on a very regular basis, Mary Ann, Pat, and Sr. Carolyn



Members of St. Mary Margaret's take turns dishing out a meal for clients.



Members of St. Mary Margaret's gather for a chatty lunch after serving the clients their meal.



George & Rose Mary Alexander
Vincent P. Anderson
B.A.C.A.
Bernardine Sisters
James & Diana Billinger
Fred Bilotta
Mr. & Mrs. John Bonella
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Helen Donaldson
Kent & MaryAnne Drake
Andrea Duchovnay
Anna Mae Duncan
Family & Community Services
Mary Farley
John & Theresa Fetrow
Bob & Mary Fitz
Gene & Nancy Foehl
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Foltz

Fresh Baked Theatre Co.
Clifford Gabrellas
Tom & Tish Gallagher
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Stuart Green
James & Karen Grugan
Robert & Maura Gustafson
Fred & Doris Haase
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Leon & Patricia Harenza
Doreess A. Harris
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Harry & Philomena Hundermark
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Cathleen Jillson
George & Peggy Kau
Deborah Kelly
Barbara Keosayan
James & Mary King
Andrew & Geraldine Kiszka
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Newcomers & Neighbors Book Club
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Dennis & Cheryl Orlewicz
Sarah A. Owsiany
Anthony Pileggi
John & Lisa & John Luke Pileggi
Polish American Club
Norbert J. & Carmella Poloncarz
Geraldine Randall
John Rim
Sacred Heart Convent-Reading
Carol Seeley
Adam & Janis Sendek
Carl & Janet Sharer
Elaine Shull
John J. & Loretta Smith
Edna Soltanuk
Sons of Ben
Sr. Doloria Sitnik, OSF
Sr. Domina Oszmianska, OSF
Sr. Gemma Legel, OSF
Sr. Maria Christine Keller, OSF
Sr. Marinetta Harenza, OSF
Sr. Mary Elena Sabalausky, OSF
Sr. Shaun Patrice Malone, OSF
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St. John's Boy Scout Troop # 605
St. John Vianney Convent
St. Joseph's Guild
St. Joseph Villa - Reading
St. Thomas Aquinas School
St. Thomas More
Veronica Stengel
Frances Rhoda Stier
Lillian Stuart-Whistler
Joseph Sullivan
Swarthmore College
Tabernacle Of Praise Worship Church
Unity Center
USCI Affinity
Villanova University
Mary Kay Weldon
Wells Fargo Community
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Clara Zukowski