

UNCLE PETE MINISTRIES
CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHURCH/ORGANIZATION SACK DAYS
Updated: JANUARY 2019

INTRODUCTION

Planning a sack collection for those in need, usually involves two steps. The first step is getting the empty bags to people and the second step is collecting the filled bags from people. Appointing a point person for these activities is key to success. One of the other assignments for the point person is to communicate with the delivery coordinator throughout the process. This will ensure that we organize the delivery staff and verify availability of sack recipients. Contact information is Carolyn Murphy
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BAGS

OBTAINING BAGS AND PRINTING THE MENU

Bags can be ordered online from www.officesupply.com. (See complete ordering information below) They come 500 to a package. The package costs from \$10 to \$25. Most organizations give bags in packets of two. With each packet of two bags, there is a menu sheet. The menu sheet lists what is to be put in the bag and what date and time it is to be returned.

Menu instructions can be printed two up, four up or in single sheet format. These can be produced using the church/organizations copiers or they can be done at an outside service. An example is:

Please make up **two** Sack Dinners – each one should contain:

- 2 sandwiches (meat) on white or wheat bread
 - (NO condiments or cheese)
- 2 hard-boiled eggs in SHELLS
- 1 SMALL bag of chips
- 1 piece of fruit – (NO bananas)
- 2 or 3 cookies (or a small bag) or a small candy bar
- 1 SMALL 8OZ water or juice box
- 1 paper napkin

Sack Dinners may be dropped off at the front of Church on **Sunday, April 9th**, before the 9:00 AM and 10:30AM Services.

Thank you for your support and generosity!

ORDERING BAGS

From experience we have learned that #12 with 40lb paper weight bags work the best. These are typically sold in packages of 500. The cost is usually from \$10 to \$25 for a package. The best source we've found is officesupply.com. They usually deliver in 2 days. The complete URL to order is:

https://www.officesupply.com/office-supplies/mailing-shipping/packing-supplies/shopping-bags/general-brown-paper-grocery-bags/p322680.html?ref=pla&cid=ad-pla-non-brand&product_id=322680&adpos=1o3&creative=82620379833&device=c&matchtype=&network=g&gclid=CNzWy6C1g9ICFVy4wAod52oGhw

PREPARING THE BAGS FOR DISTRIBUTION

Usually people make a decision to handout two bags with a menu sheet at a time. Prior to the day when handing out bags, the bags are assembled by sliding one of the flat bags under the flap/bottom of another bag. The instruction sheet is tucked into the flap as well. Packets are put into groups of 50 and secured with a rubber band. These can be put into plastic bins or boxes. The grouping of bags helps to keep track of the number of bags that are distributed.

DISTRIBUTING THE BAGS

Based on the facilities and practices of an organization, bags can be handed to people or placed on tables for people to take, as they exit services. There is no need for sign up. In addition, people should be encouraged but not forced to participate. This is a gentle balance but will produce a better return rate at collection time.

If you are setting up tables to distribute your bags, bags should be placed on all the tables at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the service. This is to accommodate those individuals who wish to get their bags on the way in. The tables should be restocked at least ten minutes before the service ends so bags are available for those who may need to exit the service before it's over. Volunteers should be stationed at each of the exits so that receiving bags is easy for people as they exit the facility. The number of exits then determines the number of volunteers that need to be recruited. The work is simple and lasts only about 15 minutes as people leave.

You may find it helpful to track the number of bags that are handed out after each service. Over time, this gives a good indication of how many will be returned and helps in planning the routes for delivery.

The total number of bags distributed needs to be communicated to the delivery coordinator. It aids in determining how many vehicles might be needed, as well as how many locations can be targeted to receive sacks.

COLLECTION OF FILLED SACKS-THE SECOND STEP

In preparation of the day the sacks are to be collected, apple boxes need to be gotten. **The delivery coordinator will arrange this for you if you would like.** Ten sack dinners are boxed in an apple box.

Apple boxes are open on the top and come doubled. The two need to be separated and each is filled with ten sacks (the top will be open). Usually the sacks are arranged as follows: 4 in a row, 3 along side, and three on top of the others on their back.

On drop-off day, as people give their filled sacks, there is no need to check if everything on the menu is in the bag. The sacks should be placed directly into the apple boxes. The boxes will be loaded directly into a delivery vehicle or carted to a delivery vehicle. It is good to have multiple carts on hand to make this step easy.

If the delivery will not take place right after collections, the sacks need to be refrigerated, either at the donating location or at a location designated by the delivery coordinator.

Post-delivery, the delivery coordinator will send an e-mail indicating the places the sacks were taken, including the mission of the recipient. This is an opportunity for the point person to communicate to the community the number of sacks delivered and where they went. See Communication below for further information.

The number of volunteers needed for collection is usually the same as the number needed for the distribution of bags. All entrances need to be covered or instructions need to be given on where to return the filled bags. **Generally, the number of volunteers for collections needs to be coordinated with the delivery coordinator since she/he will bring volunteers as well.**

COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE PROCESS

The first step is to get the necessary approvals for this event to take place. Then the point person needs to coordinate a date and time with the delivery coordinator. This can be done by phone, email, or text.

After the necessary approvals have been received and a date has been determined, communication to the congregation needs to be planned. There are three points in the process for communication: prior to bag distribution, between bag distribution and bag collection, after the sacks are delivered.

PRIOR TO BAG DISTRIBUTION

Prior to the day of distribution, information on what goes in the bag and when it is to be returned needs to be in existing communication vehicles. These include, bulletins, newsletters, websites, e-mails, etc.

BETWEEN BAG DISTRIBUTION AND BAG COLLECTION

Any vehicle that is used to remind people can be used. There are generally follow-up questions when people begin to make sacks. These usually come into the office as questions. Leave a few bags in the office for people who stop by and need bags. See note below for typical questions. Be sure to post the menu and return date and time on the website, bulletin board, or thru e-blasts.

POST COLLECTIONS

The delivery coordinator will send an e-mail stating the number of filled sacks that were collected and where they were taken. This needs to be shared with the people in gratitude for their participation. The point person also needs to thank the volunteers who handed out bags and helped with collections.

Here are the types of announcement texts.

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT-INTRODUCTION

Uncle Pete Ministry
SACK DINNERS FOR THOSE IN NEED
“For I was hungry and you fed me”

Please make 2 Sack Dinners---each one should contain:

- 2 sandwiches (meat) on white or whole wheat bread
(NO condiments or cheese.)
- 2 Hardboiled eggs in SHELLS
- 1 SMALL bag of chips
- 1 piece of fruit—(NO bananas)
- 2 or 3 cookies, or a small bag of cookies, or 1 small candy bar
- 1 SMALL 8OZ water or juice box

You can pick up bags and additional information at the Church entrances after all the Masses on (insert dates)

Your FILLED sack dinners may be dropped off BEFORE the Masses on (insert dates)

Thank you for your support. May God Bless You.

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT-THE REMINDER

Uncle Pete Ministry
SACK DINNERS FOR THOSE IN NEED
“For I was hungry and you fed me”

Filled Sack Dinners may be dropped off after Masses this weekend
(EXCEPT the 7:00PM Mass)

THIRD ANNOUNCEMENT-THANK YOU

Uncle Pete Ministry
SACK DINNERS FOR THOSE IN NEED
“For I was hungry and you fed me”

Thank you for your generous response. Parishioners prepared (insert number of sacks dinners).

There were delivered to : (insert delivery points and explanation of each)

The recipients were grateful. We appreciate your generous support.

ANNOUNCEMENT AT THE SERVICE

If possible, announcements at the service should ask for participation. The concept is easy and the following points need to be made.

- This is a ministry to feed those in need.
- Any age can participate.
- You are being asked to fill two sacks with menu items that cost about \$3-5 a sack.
- Pick up bags today upon exiting and return them on the appointed day.
- Together we can make a difference.

EXAMPLE OF ANNOUNCEMENT FOR REPEAT SACK EVENTS

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR EACH OF THE MASSESS:

April 22-23

Uncle Pete's Sack Dinner Ministry is underway! Last month we collected and delivered over 500 meals to those less fortunate in the Chicagoland area – Thank you! Brown bags and menu guidelines are available at tables as you exit the church today. You simply need to fill the bags and return them here on Tuesday, May 2nd. Volunteers will deliver them where needed. Your involvement would be greatly appreciated so please consider being a part of this very worthwhile ministry - ... it's easy.

INFORMATION REQUESTED BETWEEN BAG DISTRIBUTION AND SACK RETURN

In the time between when the bags are distributed and then collected, the usual questions and answers that occur need to be communicated to the office that handles questions, such as the church office. The typical questions are

- When do I return the sacks?
- Where do I return the sacks?
- May I include items not listed on the menu? Answer No
- I need more bags; may I use a plastic bag? Answer yes
- May I write a check? Yes, to Uncle Pete Ministries
- May I give cash? Yes-This can be given to the delivery coordinator for UPM sack making events. It can also be used by the church to purchase bags for the next sack event.

VOLUNTEERS

There is a need for volunteers to handout bags and to collect filled sacks. This usually is 5 to 10 people. They are needed after the services on bag distribution day and before the services on sack collection day. The number is dependent on two items; how many entrances are at the facility and how many services are held.

UNCLE PETE MINISTRIES-SACK DINNERS

INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION-JANUARY 2019

WHY SACK DINNER MINISTRY?

How did the sack ministry come about?

-Trips to the westside of Chicago showed there were more and more people who were homeless, in shelters, or living on less than adequate wages to support their families.

-It is hard to see people so in need, and not respond. There had to be a way to mobilize the community so each could do something to contribute a small amount that adds up to a significant impact on the daily lives of people who are hungry.

-Uncle Pete organized the St, John Brebeuf community in Niles to make sack dinners once per month for eight months of the year. He built relationships with people, mainly from the west side and Uptown areas of Chicago and planned how to get them a sack dinner.

-He knew that he wasn't solving the problem of hunger but rather alleviating some of the challenges of getting thru the day for those who are less fortunate.

-He began to ask other organizations and parishes to join in. Today, we have over 15 Churches, over 20 groups including sports teams, scouts, guilds and youth groups, 12 public and private schools, individuals hosting sack making parties, as well as businesses, all making sacks. In 2018, we collected and delivered over 26,000 sacks. This sounds like a large number but we go to 30 different places and probably could use 40,000, if we were able to visit each place once per week with sacks. There is a great need.

WHAT IS IN A SACK ?

-HOLD UP A BAG-two sandwiches, two hard boiled eggs, small bottle of water, a piece of fruit, a bag of chips, a treat such as candy bar or cookies

-But there is much more in a bag. There is a sense of caring, a sense of concern, a realization that in a small way anyone can reach out to those in need.

WHERE DO THEY GO?

In addition to families in need across Chicago's West Side, those who we serve include:

Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens

St. Martin dePorres, Our Lady of Angels, Marillac Center, St. Stanislaus Kostka, St. Sylvester, Mother Teresa Sisters of Charity and Cornerstone Community Center

Shelters and Housing Facilities

Franciscan Harrison Shelter, Eddie Beard Veterans House, Grace House, St. Leonard's House, The Boulevard, Covenant House, Pioneer House, the Franciscan Day Program

Women and Children

Deborah's Place, Madonna House and House of the Good Shepherd, Marillac Project Hope, Sarah's Circle

Senior Programs and other

Our Lady of Angels, Marillac Center, YMCA residences

EVENT VS. A MINISTRY

-Sack dinner making is meant to be a ministry not an event. You might think of an event as a car wash to raise money. A ministry tries to focus on the why of the activity while doing it.

-The first characteristic would be a sense of community. Those like you would invite others to participate.

-The second characteristic would be to position the work to be done by acknowledging the presence of the Lord. This is usually done thru a short prayer, composed by one of you, recognizing what the work is and who is to benefit, asking God to bless the work and the recipients.

-The third component is to get organized, assign responsibilities, and most important, be accountable for your personal contribution.

-Lastly, when the work is finished, to remember the work has just begun. A member would give a short presentation on where the sacks are to be taken and help everyone to feel the dignity of the people you serve.

-In addition, one of the characteristics of ministry is that it is done multiple times. Creating a habit of behavior, is the essence of our constant care for humankind. Thru repetition, we change who we are.

HOW CAN I ORGANIZE A SACK EVENT

Sacks can be made together as a group in one location or they can be made at home and brought to a collection point.

When done as a group, the menu items need to be purchased and this needs to be funded. When done at home, each person/family buys the menu items for a few sacks which spreads the cost.

Details for leading either type of event are on the website where 'Consideration documents' are available.

<https://www.osbchicago.org/unclepeteministries>

WHAT MAKES THIS APPEALING TO PARISHES, SCHOOLS, AND CHURCHES

The parish/church/school incurs no cost except the cost of bags-less than \$25

All ages of people can participate

Sacks get to people in need within 24 hours

The delivery is handled by Uncle Pete Ministries volunteers

Information on where the sacks are taken is shared within 24 hours

Any number of sacks will work- 20 to 1200

WHAT IS NEEDED

A point person needs to be identified to organize the sack event.

The first step is to decide on whether the sacks will be made as a group or made at home and brought to a destination, i.e a church, a school, etc. See consideration documents

Additional skills include learning or knowing the communication channels such as how to put things into a bulletin or newsletter, how to put info on YOUR website, how to use blast, etc. OR SOMEONE WHO KNOWS SOMEONE WHO DOES THESE THINGS.

Ability to recruit volunteers , 5-6, for passing out bags and collections