

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