



Brother Benno's Newsletter

“Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve”

Volunteers Making a Difference

August 2020



GROUP JOINS BROTHER BENNO'S IN SPREADING THE LOVE

Every Saturday, a group that calls itself “All About Love” sets up tables on the sidewalk in front of the Brother Benno Center, which they load up with all kinds of food. They know that we are closed on Sundays, so they decided they would supplement the nourishment that we provide during the week with offerings they buy or make themselves.

This outreach was started about four years ago by just one person who made a few sandwiches, brought bottled water as well, and started handing them out with the blessing of Brother Benno's staff. She mentioned what she was doing to a few friends, and now there are at least a dozen people who contribute food like oatmeal packets, cookies, granola bars, chips, V8 juice, fruit, canned beans and spaghetti, and soup packets. Some in the group also make sandwiches and fresh burritos that they wrap in foil.

“Auntie,” one of the members of the group, said, “Our team may vary with people from different religious affiliations, but everyone believes in God loving us all, no matter what our background. Our intention is to help our sisters and brothers who are in need. That's why we always hold hands with the people closest to the tables before we begin distributing, and a different person says a simple prayer of serving each other. (One time) a man in the food line asked if he could say the prayer. The answer was, ‘Of course you may.’ And it was sweet, too.”

Often the people receiving the food offer to help set up the tables or clean up afterward.

continued on page 4....

NEW BOARD OFFICERS

The Brother Benno Foundation Board of Directors held its election of officers on July 17, as Father Charles Wright was stepping down as President. The new officers are: Kathleen Diehlmann, President; James Napier, Executive Vice-President; Father Charles Wright, Secretary; and Daniel Boone, Treasurer. Other Board members are John Blasier, Dr. Patrick Gilligan, Mary Holguin, Helen Parsons, and Dr. Richard Shlemmer.

Ω

THRIFT SHOP IS OPEN!!

Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Temperature checks at the door and masks are required. Dressing rooms are closed, and no reusable bags allowed at this time.

The Thrift Shop is again **accepting donations on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.** We do not have washing machines, so we ask that you launder any clothing before it is donated. For a list of items we are unable to take due to health department regulations and space constraints, see the Brother Benno website: www.brotherbenno.org

We need furniture! – good, clean, re-salable furniture with no tears, stains, or broken pieces. To schedule a pickup, please call 760-967-7507 and leave a message. We are currently scheduling pickups on Wednesday and Friday between 11 and 3.

We're **looking for volunteers** to help process donations and keep the Shop neat and stocked. Please call 760-967-7505 and leave a message for Helen Parsons. We think you will love being part of our team!

Ω

Benno's

by Rick Cicero

This place they call Benno's
of which I'm a part,
has cleansed my soul
and opened my heart.

To think this all started
with two gracious men
whose love and whose kindness
we freely extend.

A hand up
not hand out
would become the creed
for so many families and people in need.

When they come in
we see the despair.
We clothe and we feed
and show them we care.

To give them some hope
with respect and a smile,
things they might not
have had for a while.

So how does this blessing
continue to grow
from the unselfish kindness
of so many we know.

For without the donor
or caring volunteer
this thing that was started
would all disappear.

God put us together,
it's not just by chance,
for He plays the music
and we merely dance.

So thank you to Benno's
for this new start,
for filling my soul
and touching my heart.

Rick was a graduate of the Brother Benno Recovery Program, and sadly he died about two years ago. We are happy to share his kind thoughts.

Ω

THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO LOSE HOPE

by Frank Doherty

We are in a very scary and discouraging time. It is only natural that we become fearful. Our poor have even more to worry about due to loss of jobs, food insecurity, lack of health care coverage, and the shutting down of some basic services usually provided by Brother Benno's.

When fear comes knocking on our door, "Having faith is the answer." Having faith allows us to realize that we are not alone, and we can turn our fears around, replacing them with courage, love, and hope. Since fear is something that we can control within our minds, it can be helpful to understand and take action to confront what is making us fearful. We can then determine what actions we can take to reduce or eliminate our fears. For instance, we can limit how much news we watch or listen to; communicate more often with family, friends, and neighbors; work on staying healthy; view religious services online; and focus on helping people who are in need of something as simple as a phone call to boost their spirits.

If there ever was a time the poor need help, it's now. We just cannot turn our backs on them. We must continue to let them know they are not forgotten. A good example of this is a group of volunteers who come to the Center on Saturdays to provide food and other items. (See article on page 1). They are joyful to have the ability to serve in this way. Staff members at the Center also continue to provide bag lunches daily and distribute food boxes and bags to people in need on selected days during the week.

Confronting our fears with faith and recognizing that we are not alone will take some introspection and will contribute greatly to relieving our fears and reducing our stress levels. Find ways you can help others, and in so doing, you can use love in order to let go of fear. We can use this difficult time to grow in our dependence on our higher power and to better love and serve the people around us.

Ω

THE TALE OF THE TOMATOES

by Father Charles Wright, O.S.B.

Having lived with Brother Benno for 31 years, I have been on more of his “love” expeditions than I can count. One in particular stands out.

It was tomato season in the farmlands on the way to Bonsall, and Brother Benno had made a “deal” with a farmer to pick up all the tomatoes he was unable to process by the end of the work day.

We picked up about a dozen crates of big red juicy ones, put them in Brother’s pickup truck, and headed to the part of town called the barrio. As soon as people saw the familiar truck, they’d come out into the streets to welcome us. Brother would be elated at the sight of so many needy people to whom he could give his treasure.

As people were helping themselves, filling bags and small boxes, Brother turned to me and said, “We have to save one crate for a woman who really loves tomatoes.” So I made certain to set one aside.

He told me where to drive so we could deliver that last crate. When we pulled up to the curb at one of the houses, a little old lady came out and invited us in. I was reluctant to go in for fear of embarrassing the woman because of her meager possessions, but Brother Benno always accepted hospitality—and everything else, no matter how insignificant. He taught me that when people need to give, we need to accept. One lesson well learned.

The lady and Brother, her apparent idol, went into the house, and I carried the heavy crate into the back yard. There, I found three crates of rotting tomatoes against the back fence. Apparently she would do anything to get Brother to visit her, and she may have feared that if she refused anything from him, it could jeopardize future visits.

When we got back into the pickup, I mentioned to him that she probably had enough tomatoes for a while. I guessed that he knew she appreciated his company more than any tomatoes, and he sensed that I had figured out their innocent secret. With a smile and a wink, we drove off; and not another word was even spoken regarding those tomatoes.

(Father Charles is Emeritus Abbot of Prince of Peace Abbey in Oceanside and a member of the Brother Benno Foundation Board.)

Ω

LOOKING BACK AT BROTHER BENNO

Brother Benno Garrity died on October 29, 1992, after years of debilitating illnesses. The Blade-Citizen newspaper in Oceanside published the following editorial on November 2:

“Farewell, Brother Benno. Perhaps it was his final challenge to us in this, the most divisive political season in many years. Brother Benno Garrity, the North County Benedictine monk famous for serving the poor, died Thursday night, leaving behind a legacy of accepting others that cannot help but serve as a model of tolerance and forgiveness.

“Like Mother Teresa, Brother Benno cared for those whom society—the rest of us—wanted no part of. For three decades, Brother Benno fed, clothed, and loved the homeless, the jobless, the destitute.

“On a daily basis, Brother Benno showed us all—liberal and conservative, believer and atheist, Republican and Democrat—what true social activism and family values are all about, and that any program for improving our community must start with each individual caring enough to make a difference.

“Each day, simply by getting up and going about his life of service, Brother Benno made a more radical and profound statement about human dignity than all the political movements put together. Even those who do not share Brother Benno’s religious faith stand in awe of the overriding power that his love for his fellow citizens, his sense of duty to help them, and the spirit of selflessness that guided his giving lent his life.

“In these days of cynicism and despair, when the term ‘Christian’ too often designates political activists or is used as an insult, we would do well to reflect on the example set in our own midst by a humble, egoless monk.

“If Brother Benno were still here, he would no doubt remind us that no matter who wins in tomorrow’s many elections, the true challenge will remain—the challenge to love one another, to come together as a community and heal our political divisions, and to make our society one in which all are welcome.

“Goodbye, Brother Benno Garrity. You’ll be missed.”

Ω

AUXILIARY NEWS

by Joyce Cerimele

Things are still at a standstill for the Auxiliary right now, although the Board continues to meet via Zoom as issues arise. All work parties are suspended until they can be done safely, following CDC guidelines.

We discussed the possibility of restarting our monthly meetings, and by vote we might do this in September. The safety of our members is paramount; and since the Center is still closed, we have some time to move forward with this plan for a "safe" meeting.

Even though it's August, we are **still accepting gift cards** from Walmart and Target for our "Christmas in July" event. These cards will be given to the parents of children whose families are registered at Brother Benno's and can be used to buy Christmas gifts for the family. If you prefer to donate cash, please make your check out to Brother Benno Auxiliary and mail to Brother Benno Auxiliary, P.O. Box 334, San Luis Rey, CA 92068.

Usually at this time of the year we are getting ready for the election of new officers and Board members. However, with everything still in question, it was decided to suspend these elections until next year. All of our current Board members are willing to stay in office for another year.

The Golf Tournament is still going ahead for Friday, October 2. Check the Brother Benno website (brotherbenno.org) for information about making reservations and/or becoming a sponsor. As this is one of the few events we are holding this year—and because it's so much fun—we are very excited about this tournament!

Hopefully you are all staying safe, and we look forward to meeting new members in the near future.

Ω

....continued from page 1

"This attitude of helping really makes us all feel like a family," Auntie said.

She added, "Thank you to Brother Benno's for your 'open heart' acceptance of our team to be given this opportunity to help serve those less fortunate, but helps make the world a little better with the spirit of God in everyone."

Ω

Brother Benno Foundation
Recovery Program for Men and Women
 760 439 1244 ext. 101
 Changing people's lives through the 12 Steps
 of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Your donation enables us to do all the wonderful things we do

My enclosed tax-deductible gift is: \$ _____
(make payable to: Brother Benno Foundation)
 In memory of: _____
 Please send a card to:
 (name) _____
 (address) _____

For a special occasion (birthday, anniversary, etc.):

Send a card to: (name) _____
 (address) _____

Or, donate online at <http://brotherbenno.org>

Soup...Soap...Hugs...Hope:

The Story of Brother Benno's Life-Changing Soup Kitchen

This book is offered as a gift to donors who contribute whatever their budget allows...The important thing... is that you have one...

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip Code _____

Donation \$ _____
Number of copies _____

Memorials

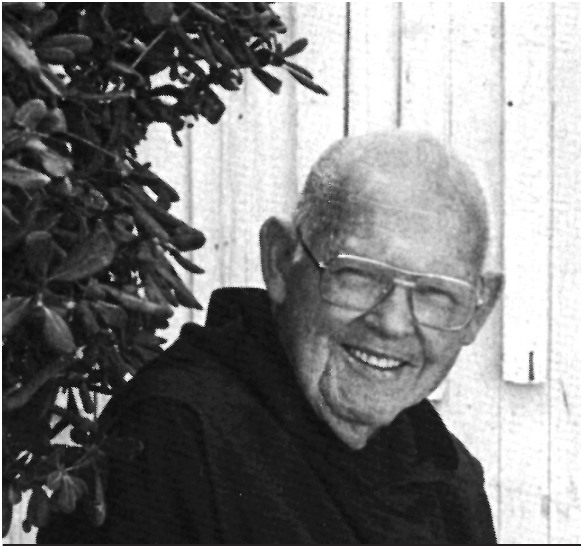
Ron Alexander	Bob Gleason	Mary Pullman	Douglas Sahlin
Dixie & Lou Bales	Chance Hales	Catherine L. Quinlan	Peg Reilly
Frank Barnet	Tom & Louise	Dora Ramirez	Roger & Louise
Brother Benno	Hayward	Dick & Terry Riley	Oullette
Edith Blaiser	Elizabeth Holms	Margaret Rossini	Alva & Frances
Andrea Boersma	Alice Jordan	Ann Sauer	Snider
Roland Bond	Ben Kouns	Nick Sauer	Robert Buchach
Bill Boster	Richard Kurtz	Mary Shankle	Mary Baker
Agnus & Joan Boyd	Carole Kutler	Naomi Shelton	Steve Kocheran
Bill Buckner	Harold & Kay Kutler	Bernice, Samuel &	Dorothy Schroeder
Deacon Art & Mary Carr	Bill & Louise Lakoff	Milton Silver	H. Edward Smith
Anna Correia	Ben E. Lewis	Will Skinner	Family
Don & Dorothea Daybell	Helen Lucas	Ann Grier Smith	Hank Stromski
Phyllis H. Dierlam	Bill & Joan Maloney	Alva & Frances	Jack Bloes
Frank S. Dolley	Helene McGill	Snider	Hugh Murphy
Anita H. Donahue	Michael & Monty	Squirrell Family	
Dorothy M. Donahue	Nares	Mike Stendahl	BIRTH OF BABY
Fr. Luke Dougherty	Zeferino & Dancy	Margaret Stephan	Hollyn Malee Hawkins
Roseanne Dreibelbis	Nares	Virginia Sylwestrzak	
Fr. Abbot Claude	Mary Nordstrom	Harold Thompson	
Ehringer, OSB	Nysewander Family	Carol & Herb	
Myron Eichen	Bud & Blanche Ogle	Thornberg	
Richard Farhquar	Ben Osgrove	Rosemary Tucker	
William & Vennita	Kathryn D. Pent	Walter Ulloa	
Flanagan	Mary Peterson	June Williams	
Louise Foussat	Jane Pfau	Fred Williamson	
Joe & Ida Friend	Ruth Hazel Pierson	Andrew & Jane	
Mary Gerrity	Alan Port	Yandura	

NEEDS

small bags of chips
 fruit cups
 protein bars
 crackers
 bottled water
 small juices
 Gatorade

Brother Benno Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 308, Oceanside, CA 92049

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 Oceanside, California
PERMIT NO. 166



Brother Benno's Thrift Shop

(Helping the poor, one sale at a time)

Clothing, Household Goods, Furniture

Store Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.;

Donation Hours Wednesday, and Friday – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

We welcome your saleable furniture items. Please call 760-967-7507 for free pick up. Stop by to check out our Daily Specials!! 3955 Mission Ave. (East of Albertsons) 760-967-7505

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your tax-deductible donation to the Brother Benno Foundation. If you are viewing this online you can donate by going to brotherbenno.org and click on Donations. This will allow you to make a secure donation using PayPal or a Credit Card.

Your donation is used each month at our main center and eight operational houses to provide: meals, clothing, personal hygiene items, blankets, showers, laundry facilities, bus vouchers, nights of lodging, medical and mental health referrals, prescriptions, ID replacement, mail services, Social Security, and veterans' issues, food packs, men and women's drug and alcohol recovery program, rent and utility assistance when funds are available. We thank you for your continued support. 100% of your contribution goes directly to assist those we serve. Our modest administration costs are paid for by our Thrift Store revenues.

www.brotherbenno.org



Brother Benno's Services:

	June 2020	Our 36th Year		June 2020	Our 36th Year
Meals	9,674	4,516,797	Loads of laundry	0	28,628
Nights of lodging	804	319,604	Food packs	510	355,331
Articles of clothing	832	1,418,703	Blankets	69	48,442
Showers	0	271,001	Tarps	20	6,027
Haircuts	0	22,827	ID Vouchers	0	9,928
Bus passes	0	86,006	HUGS	0	1,011,244