



Brother Benno's Newsletter

“Uplifting The Dignity of Those We Serve”

Volunteers Making a Difference

May 2020



BROTHER BENNO'S AWARDS SIXTEEN SCHOLARSHIPS

by Jim O'Connell

The Brother Benno Scholarship Committee awarded sixteen \$500 scholarships in February to students in the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) at Mira Costa College in Oceanside. These scholarships were funded with the help of a grant to the Brother Benno Foundation from the David Copley Foundation.

EOPS is a state and college funded program designed to assist students with economic, linguistic, and educational challenges to enroll and succeed in higher education. Comprehensive support services are provided to promote access to college, and, once the student is enrolled, to increase retention and/or transfer to four-year universities and colleges. The program is available

for all ages of people who wish to further their education.

On February 13, Mira Costa College held a reception for the scholarship recipients. **Dennis and Suzy Martinek** attended as representatives of the Brother Benno Foundation Scholarship Committee, and they handed the checks to the recipients and congratulated them on their accomplishments.

The Committee received thank-you letters from all recipients in which they expressed their gratitude, and many said they hoped to “pay it forward” in the future.

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BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD GO ANY OF US

by Frank Doherty

We recognize that many people have legitimate concerns regarding homelessness, and there has been a negative focus on homelessness coming from the blogs and social media. This article is directed at channeling the focus "from fear to love," and addressing what our volunteers experience in showing kindness, hospitality, and unconditional love to those in need.

Brother Benno's serves the community by providing the basic needs of the poor, the vulnerable, and the marginalized; to acknowledge the sacredness of the human person; and to accompany those we serve on a journey toward achieving their full potential.

We all form judgments about the world around us by what we hear and see. As volunteers, we see the faces of our Guests and begin to see them as individuals, each one of whom has a story and is a child of God. The more we get to know them, the more we realize the pain that many are going through, the difficulties of poverty, mental illness, and addiction. The more we see the poor as individuals, the more we see them in light of Matthew 25; and we can be the light in the world, the source of consolation, love, and hope.

Harold Kutler, Founder of Brother Benno's, reflecting on his life in his dying days, said that in the final analysis, life is all about love. We as volunteers experience that it is in giving that we receive, and that what we receive is an unbelievable feeling of joy and meaning as we serve the poor.

Eighty percent or more of our Guests are families, seniors, and the working poor. We provide a great variety of services to them, including many hundreds of food boxes. Our focus is to help people living on the margin, just getting by, or on the brink of disaster. Our drug and alcohol recovery program is but one example of how we serve those on the margin. The end result of our work is often recounted by individuals whose lives have been saved or who have been helped at a critical time in their lives when they were unable to help themselves.

As volunteers we "learn how to see," to notice the pain and misery some people are going through as they enter our doors. All of a sudden

we realize that we can't label or broad-brush the poor with a single word: "homeless." We see the poor as individuals, as God's children. We see the poor as beautiful, and we wish we could do more to help them. We cease to fear the poor, and instead, realize, "But for the grace of God go I."

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A STORY FROM THE PAST

(From August 2015). A single mom with an infant came to the Center to get food. She left the baby's stroller on the sidewalk, and when she came out later the stroller was gone—presumably stolen.

One of our volunteers went to a local estate sale warehouse, where he found a nearly new stroller. It was unpriced, and the warehouse owner said she'd get back to him with a price. She called the next day and said the stroller was ready to be picked up; it was being given to us as a gift. Turns out that the manager of the warehouse bought the stroller herself so she could donate it to the mom. Our volunteer said, "What an angel!" The mom was delighted with the new stroller.

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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) _____

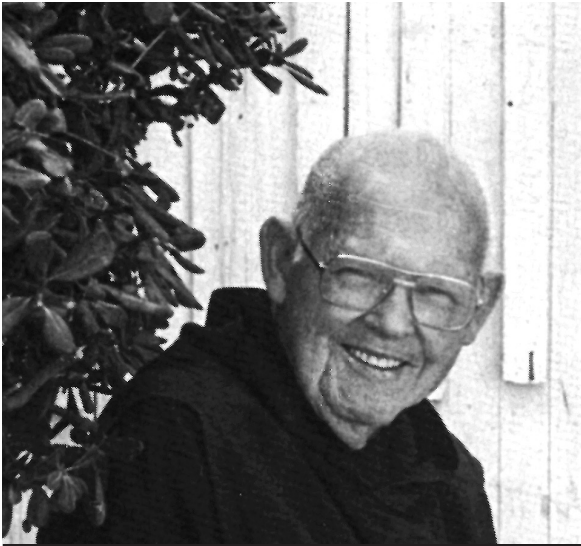
For a special occasion (birthday, anniversary, etc.):

Send a card to: (name) _____
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Or, donate online at <http://brotherbenno.org>

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P.O. Box 308, Oceanside, CA 92049

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Brother Benno's Thrift Shop

(Helping the poor, one sale at a time)

Clothing, Household Goods, Furniture

Store Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10-5; Donation Hours Tuesday-Friday 10-4, Saturdays 10-2

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:

	March 2020	Our 36th Year		March 2020	Our 36th Year
Meals	9,876	4,490,628	Loads of laundry	23	28,628
Nights of lodging	1,018	317,045	Food packs	844	352,801
Articles of clothing	2,283	1,416,931	Blankets	111	48,373
Showers	508	271,001	Tarps	74	6,007
Haircuts	0	22,827	ID Vouchers	22	9,928
Bus passes	78	85,985	HUGS	1,800	1,011,244