

Justice Herald

"It is a scandal that there is still hunger and malnutrition in the world! It is not just a question of responding to immediate emergencies, but of addressing together, at all levels, a problem that challenges our personal and social conscience, in order to achieve a just and lasting solution."

-Pope Francis (10/16/13)

October 2017

WHY FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN?

by: Fr. Bob Kabat



In October of 2016 Barth and Mary Jo Wolf invited members of the parish staff and Justice and Human Concerns Committee to "come and see" the Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) Mobile Pack at Green Bay Community Church. The Mobile Pack at the time was organized by eleven Christian Churches in our area.

A number of us went and were part of an amazing Mobile Pack and had lunch at Jimmy John's in Howard to reflect on the experience. We agreed that St. Matthew Parish is a generous parish and anchored in social justice principles, that Feed My Starving Children, which feeds starving children throughout the world, was a perfect fit for us.

Now looking back after raising money for FMSC during this past Lent and Easter and having so many parishioners being part of the 2017 Mobile Pack, I could not be more proud of our parish's involvement in this amazing event to help children. We will continue to support FMSC as a partner church and hope others join us. **Come Follow Me!**



Make sure you go to the parish Facebook Page to view all the hairnet photos!

The Justice and Human Concerns Committee of St Matthew Parish, meets every third Tuesday at the parish center at 6:30pm. If you are interested in joining the committee please contact Jackie Thiry at jackiemthiry@yahoo.com

Feed My Starving Children; Our Journey

by: Mary Jo Wolf

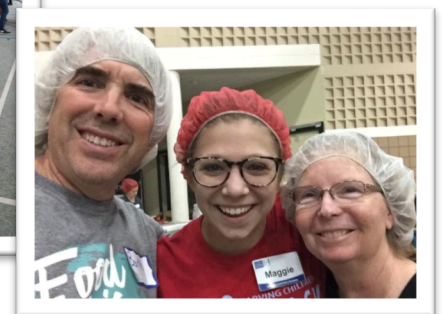
Our journey with Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) began five years ago. Barth was reading an article in the newspaper about a food packing event at Green Bay Community Church which was where Mary Jo's sister worshipped. We ended up packing meals there with her sister's family and were struck by how impactful this event was. Not only for the children who will be receiving the food but for those who packed the food. When we retired and starting spending our winters in Florida we looked for a FMSC event to pack at in Southwest Florida. Finding none, we came to the realization that we should look into hosting one ourselves. After meeting with FMSC staff to find out what was involved in hosting an event we approached our church in Cape Coral and met with enthusiastic support. So, after never running any type of major event we set out to raise \$22,000 and find 500 volunteers for our event at which we packed over 100,000 meals. It went great and we are now on our third year this year and have added two partner churches. We are thrilled that St. Matthews joined the Green Bay MobilePack this year. We were one of 12 partner churches from many different faith traditions that packed food at Green Bay Community church October 2-5. We can all be proud that we helped our Green Bay event not only be successful but to increase the meals from 500,000 last year to over 552,000 meals this year.

For those not familiar with FMSC it is a Christian based non-profit who's goal is to end starvation in the world. They rely on volunteers to pack all the meals they produce and to fundraise for all the ingredients packed. Each meal costs only \$.22 and this year FMSC expects to pack over 300 million meals. The meals are a scientifically balanced mix of rice, soy, vegetables and vitamins. They are packaged in sealed pouches containing six meals in each pouch. Simply add water and heat up and these meals provide a very nutritious meal for those who otherwise often go without a decent meal for days at a time. FMSC gives these meals at no charge to partner organizations in over 70 countries around the world.

In April of this year we traveled with FMSC staff to Haiti on a Food In Action trip where we got to meet the local partners who get the food, help distribute it and meet, interact with and feed the

children who receive it. We have seen first-hand how the meals we packed this October will truly make a difference in children's lives. One small miracle that resulted from our trip was after we returned Fr. Leveque was speaking at St. Matthews about fundraising for a new school in Noyau, Haiti that our Hands and Hearts with Haiti group was working with him on. After learning about his school's need for food like the FMSC ManaPack meals we contacted a person we met in Haiti who distributes food to small schools and orphanages. They provided Fr. Leveque a several months supply of ManaPack and other food supplies on a trial basis and we are working to try and make this a permanent source of food for the school children in Noyau.

It has truly been a blessing for us to be involved with FMSC both here in Green Bay and Florida. We thank everyone who has supported us at St. Matthew and encourage you to help us again next year. We hope to grow the Green Bay event again next year and you all can help make this happen. Whether you pack food, contribute monetarily, or pray, we thank you for helping us with FMSC's motto – "Until All Are Fed."



The Most Fun You Can Have in a Hairnet!

by: Mary Vanden Boomen

The concept sounded pretty appealing: joining with other community members to pack food that would provide meals for starving children all over the world. That's what we are called to do, isn't it? And when do we have an opportunity that comes straight to our doorstep to feed the hungry on a global scale? Not very often. After reading the literature and hearing about the Feed My Starving Children MobilePack scheduled in Green Bay at the Green Bay Community Church, my husband Glen and I signed up.

When we arrived at our designated time, it was immediately apparent that this event was not going to be a solemn occasion, as evidenced by the 2 dozen or so young cheerleaders in the registration line. Their lime-green hair bows showed through their hairnets. There was such electricity in the room—as we were welcomed and given a short orientation. It was there that for the first time I heard the phrase, “It will be the most fun you will have ever had in a hairnet”, as we were encouraged to dance, sing, and cheer with our packing group.

After some quick introductions, our “mixed” packing group was comprised of people of all ages and backgrounds: middle-aged folks, a family with two high-school boys who towered over me, some “seasoned” citizens, and we even got a half-dozen of the little cheerleaders! Glen and I became a “sealing team” as I positioned the bag under the sealer and he pressed it down, then passed the pouch to the packer. It didn't take long to get a rhythm established as the two tall boys patiently passed each prepared pouch

down. Occasionally, I would look up and see the concentration on the faces of the very youngest of our team as they did their very best work. As each box was completed, we cheered as a warehouse worker carried it away.

Time flew by and soon we were told our packing session was coming to an end. We completed the box in progress and cleaned-up our packing station. A final briefing by Maggie from Feed My Starving Children gave us the information many were waiting for—the numbers! As a group we had packed 258 cases which converted to over 55,000 meals! We were invited to join in prayer over the pallets of food already shrink-wrapped and ready for the truck. It was a poignant scene as people laid their hands on the boxes and prayed for those who would receive it. Exiting the building, I reflected on how grateful I was to be able to participate in such an impactful event—and it WAS the most fun I had ever had in a hairnet!



Quick Facts about Childhood Hunger in America

- 1 in 6 kids in America live in households without consistent access to enough food; that's 13 million children.
- 22 million kids rely on free or reduced-price school lunches
- 12 million kids rely on free or reduced-price school breakfasts
- 4 million kids rely on free meals in the summer when school meals aren't available.
- 3 out of 4 public school teachers say that students come regularly hungry to school
- 44% of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly food stamps) participants are children. That's nearly half.
- The average SNAP benefit per meal is \$1.46.

https://www.nokidhungry.org/pdfs/Fact_Sheet-2016.pdf

What'ya Think?

by: Mike Westenberg

One of the unique aspects of the MobilePack experience for our parish was that families and student groups had the opportunity to participate. Middle schoolers from Fr. Allouez school were able to go during the school day, while participants in Generations of Faith were able to go to the Wednesday evening sessions. We asked some of our GOF students and adults what they thought of the experience – here's a sampling of what we heard back:

“It was cool.” – Brett, Grade 10

“I liked it. It was meaningful for me, because it felt good, and I knew I was helping people. Packing the food was the best part. We watched a video, showing how it impacted people's lives. It made me think more about my faith. I would do it again. I think others would like it too.” – Luke, Grade 7

“This was about teamwork to help others survive. I loved the team work! I love volunteering to help others!” - Madison, Gr 3

“Being a part of the mobile meal packing was a lot of fun. It was nice to seeing people at the event. This is something that I would do again because I was able to help others.” – Lilly, Grade 7

“The MobilePack experience opened my eyes to just how easy and fun it is to help those in need. Our daily lives sometimes blind us to the fact that there are those in need, and skew our perception of just how much effort it might take to provide assistance. By simply spending 1 hour of our time, our session packed enough food to feed 1,200 children for one entire year! My daughter and I got to meet new people from other parishes, interact with them, and joke around and generally have fun, all while spending just a little time helping starving children. This was an experience that everyone should take part in, regardless of their faith.” – John (dad)

This was a very fun experience. I got to yell numbers and stamp bags closed. It was pretty great! To me, the best part was the competition aspect. I was really impacted by the big numbers. It was awesome to see how many people we fed in total! It felt really good to help people in need. (continued on next page)

It was pretty cool to see all these people from different churches come together. I hope I get the chance to do it again, and I think others should experience this as well because it's a great experience.” – Elizabeth, Grade 8

“I thought it was fun. I liked scooping. I like to volunteer because I am lucky I have so much. This was a fun way to help others.” – Lauren, Grade 3



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“For me this experience was amazing. Words cannot express how good it felt to know that only an hour of my time helped so many children. It was extremely humbling and renewed my feeling of good things happening in today's world. There is so much hate and sadness these days, but seeing people come together for such a wonderful cause was really special. It was also an excellent experience for our children and I think they felt the impact they had. I would LOVE to do this again and I hope we do. I think everyone should experience this - make a difference.” – Karen (mom)

“The best part of the experience as learning how many people we were able to feed during the time that we worked. The experience was important because we are able to assist with feeding children. This is an experience that others should participate in because it is important to help others.” – Abby, Grade 10

“Everything was so organized and so fun! After I heard the two girls tell of their experience teaching and seeing the mobile packs in their school, I really felt like we were doing something to help real children and families. But I enjoyed working with fellow parishoners just as much! We sang and danced and talked and just had a lot of fun. My 6th grade daughter participated and she loved it; she is now looking for other opportunities to help those in need. How cool is that!?” - Ellen (mom)

“I thought it was a really good experience because we got to have races against other teams which I loved. Of course other people should do it. It was awesome and we got to help feed others in need!” – Emma, Grade 6

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What hunger looks like in Wisconsin?

- In Wisconsin, 633,170 people are struggling with hunger - and of them 219,280 are children.
- 1 in 6 children in Wisconsin struggles with hunger
- Poverty line for a family of four as of Feb 2017 is \$25,600 or less
- The Minimum cost to feed a family of four for a week is \$128.60
- Total calls to 2-1-1 (call center for services) that were related to lack of food needs being met 32.2%

<http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/wisconsin/>
https://www.hungertaskforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/QuickFacts_Feb2017.pdf



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“Being a part of the mobile meal pack was very rewarding as it demonstrated a sense of purpose and ability to help those in need. During the event there was so much team work and joy in the room as everyone came together for the purpose of giving back to others. There were jobs for everyone of all ages and abilities making the event beneficial and participative. Being able to use the gifts that are given to me to help others through the mobile meal pack resonates with the message of giving five more. It is important to be good stewards through using the gifts from God to bring others hope. – Kim (mom)

“I liked this opportunity to have one community helping another. I was so amazed watching our young adults step up; one that is quiet was our cheerleader. One that tends to not focus all the time in GOF was keen on working so hard to fill the most bags possible; One of our quiet leaders set us up so we knew what to do (and he corrected me gently a few times). It was an opportunity to see our youth at their best. Was also a wonderful activity as a family. I mean c’mon the hairnets were priceless :)” – Kat (mom)

St Matthew Parish Ongoing Food Collection; Donate your extras to help combat hunger locally.

There is a drawer in the cabinet in the Gathering Space of St Matthew Parish that goes to a local food pantry; St. Patrick’s Pantry.

Weekly food lists are found at the donation center and food donations are placed in St. Pat’s drawer.

So next time you are coming to the gathering space, make sure you drop off some nonperishable food items for a local pantry.

You could also.... Assist at the pantry with food distribution. Volunteers staff the pantry every Wednesday from 1 to 3 p.m. A rotation of staff is maintained so that volunteers work once every 4 to 6 weeks. Address 505 Clinton Street, Green Bay 54301

Where are our meals now?!

From October 2nd – October 5th 2017 we were able to pack 552,096 meals, which will feed 1,512 kids for a full year! Where are our meals now?

1188 boxes—256,608 meals—were shipped straight from the event to [International Children's Fund](#) in Neenah, where they then loaded the container and sent the meals to Liberia. [Children's Hunger Fund](#)ivers hope to suffering children by equipping local churches for gospel-centered mercy ministry. CHF has distributed FMSC meals in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central America and South America and works primarily through local churches to serve children and families.

648 boxes—139,968 meals—went to Honduras through our partner [Food For The Poor Inc.](#) Food for the Poor links the church of the First World with the church of the developing world in a manner that helps both the materially poor and the poor in spirit. FFTP has distributed FMSC meals through its extensive network of partner organizations in the Caribbean, Central America and South America.

432 boxes—93,312 meals—went to Cuba through our partner [Outreach Aid To The Americas](#). This was part of a special shipment to aid in relief from Hurricane Irma.

The last 288 boxes—62,208 meals—went to Haiti through our partner [Love A Child, Inc.](#) Love A Child is a non-profit Christian humanitarian organization, serving the needs of children in Haiti through schools, feeding programs, an orphanage and medical outreach. LAC distributes FMSC meals to its schools, remote villages and more than 60 missionary organizations in-country. Love A Child is the organization that takes care of Nelson, who was showcased in our closings.

If you would still like to donate, go to www.fmsc.org to contribute today!