

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY FOOD PANTRY



A portion of the proceeds from the “Woman of the Year Banquet” will go towards Our Lady of the Rosary Food Pantry

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY FOOD PANTRY is located in Fox Point, one of the oldest neighborhoods in Providence, Rhode Island. The population, with increasing numbers of Hispanics, is largely Portuguese and Cape Verdean lower to middle income families living in two- and three-family homes. Almost thirty percent of the population has an income below the poverty level, and the cost of housing is sixty-two percent higher than the citywide average. Established in 2000, **Our Lady of the Rosary Food Pantry** addresses some of the needs of the people in this neighborhood.

WHO?

Most clients are immigrants to the United States, many of them recent arrivals. Large numbers are unemployed due to lack of skills, language barriers, or health issues. Those who do find work generally clean houses or do landscaping, but most do not have the financial stability or the wherewithal to make ends meet. **Our Lady of the Rosary Food Pantry** fills an important need in these families' lives.

The number of people in need of food assistance has been steadily climbing. In 2000, The Food Pantry served 10 families with an average of four children: about 40 to 50 individuals. In 2004, 450 needy individuals, including 255 children, received more than 20,000 pounds of food from the Pantry. Today, more than 120 families, over 500 individuals, receive food and other services each month. The demand is ever growing and always surpasses our current resources.

WHY?

Our Lady of Rosary Food Pantry's mission is to improve the quality of life of all the needy individuals in Fox Point and in the surrounding communities by providing food, clothing, and furniture. We serve people without regard to their race, gender, ethnicity or religion. We are one of the few such agencies in Fox Point.

WHEN?

One day, in the fall of 2000, as **Matilde Amaral** was on her way to church, she saw a beggar on the front steps of the church. Matilde noticed that as the man approached people on their way into church, he was ignored by all, as if he did not exist, as if he was not human. Matilde, likewise, ignored the man, not wanting to act differently from the rest. During the mass, Matilde was overcome with guilt. "I could not get this poor man off my mind," she recalls. "His face was disfigured and his body was very thin." She felt the urge to give him a donation. After Mass, when she went to find him, he was gone. Matilde felt a deep pain in her heart, and at that moment, she made a promise that she henceforth would do what she could to help the poor, believing as Jesus instructed, "Whatever you do to the least of my people, you do unto me."

WHAT?

In addition to providing food, **Our Lady of the Rosary Food Pantry** offers additional programs and services to the community:

- Clothing and Furniture
- A Back-To-School Program, providing school backpacks with school supplies and Clifford the Dog books in Portuguese and English to pre-school children
- Care Packages for the Homeless
- Thanksgiving Meal Packages
- Christmas Meal Packages
- Holiday Giving Tree
- Adopt-A-Family Program

The Pantry also offers opportunities for youth to become involved in The Food Pantry programs to instill in them a sense of responsibility, self-worth and pride. However, the greatest mission is to develop the awareness that they can make a difference in the community in which they live.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Your Financial Support:

- To purchase food from the Rhode Island Community Food Bank and other sources
- To underwrite the Family Health Fair, Care Packages and other Programs

Your donated items:

- Gift Cards (Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter, especially)
- Appliances for The Pantry (freezer, humidifier, air conditioner)
- A copy machine
- Shelving
- Coffee grinder
- Food scale
- A stock of toiletries for men, women, children, and teens
- Blankets for the homeless

WE BELIEVE that FOOD is a basic human right. No one should have to go hungry in a country as rich and great as ours. We know that we cannot eradicate poverty in America, but this is one way we can make a positive difference in our community. As Mother Theresa once said, "We can do no great things, only small things with great love."

We believe that we are truly making a difference in the Fox Point community by helping needy individuals, especially the Portuguese immigrants who find themselves unable to provide adequately for themselves and their families due to their low incomes. You may also participate as partners in this important work by making a contribution to our cause.

Please make checks payable to: **Our Lady of the Rosary Food Pantry**
463 Benefit Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

For volunteer opportunities at the food pantry or to arrange a drop off of your gift items please contact Matilde Amaral at (401) 421-5621, or e-mail ROSARY463@AOL.COM.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY.