

Father Woody's Newsletter

Volume 1, issue 5

November, 2007

Father Woody's Haven of Hope
operated by The Franciscan Friends of the Poor
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OPENING OF NEW BUILDING IS THE "BEGINNING OF OUR JOURNEY"

We cannot pray to the Lord
and reject the ones He loved
the most."

—Msgr. C. B. Woodrich
(Fr. Woody)

"You mention Fr. Woody's
name and people immediately
smile."

— Governor Bill Ritter



I believe Fr. Woody would
remind us that the open-
ing of this building is not
the end, but rather the
beginning of our journey.
As part of our celebration,
we all should renew our
commitment to serving
those in need."

—Cass Cronan, Executive
Director Haven of Hope



"I call this the miracle on Lipan Street."

—Jay Gould, volunteer and board member, Haven of Hope

Miracles do happen.

On a sunny October morning, just about a month before Thanksgiving, a group of around 300 volunteers, donors and homeless guests joined Gov. Bill Ritter outside an adobe-colored three-story building at 7th and Lipan. They were celebrating the opening of the new Haven of Hope. And whether they actually ever knew him or not, that morning they were all friends of Fr. Woody.

One of the homeless guests who cut the dedication ribbon told the *Rocky Mountain News* that while he knew Fr. Woody "just by association" the opening of the new facility "is a big load off the mind. I live in a van, but you can't shower there. The new building will let me get a shower. That's a big deal."

Showers are only one of the services afforded to the poor at Fr. Woody's Haven of Hope. Breakfast, hot lunch, clothing and laundry are just some of the ways that hundreds of people are helped each day. And with the opening of the new building – and the coming of winter – the needs are growing day by day.

"Some days, we are serving twice as many lunches in the new dining room as we used to serve in the tents outside. It is such a blessing that people are able to come inside and be warm even for the short time they are eating," said executive director Cass Cronan. "We are also seeing an increase in the number of homeless women and children who are coming to eat lunch; people who didn't necessarily feel comfortable in the other environment."

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The increased demand also presents a new challenge: Finding the resources to help those in need.

“It is only through the kindness of our donors that we are able to carry on the work of Fr. Woody,” said Haven of Hope Board President Don Gallegos . “The new building was made possible by donations from over 1,600 caring individuals. Some donations were large, some were small, but every penny made a difference. Now we’re counting on our donors for their continued support so we can carry on Fr. Woody’s mission of helping the poor.”

Along with meals, laundry and showers, other services at the Haven of Hope include phone and internet access, assistance with rent and utilities, and donations of clothing, toiletries and other hygienic necessities.

“What you have built here is so much more than mortar and wood,” said Gov. Bill Ritter. “It is a place of hope. I believe even Fr. Woody would be surprised at how his message of service continues to inspire so many people years after his death. I think it is because his message of love and service is timeless and so badly needed in our world today.”

Before the opening of the new building, the Franciscan Friends of the Poor (founded in 1998) had been helping the homeless from a tiny old house on the adjacent corner. The small space severely limited the services that could be provided.

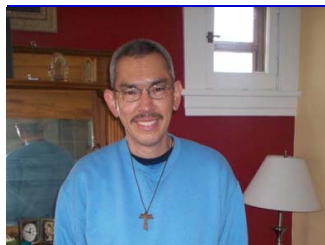


Now, while space is no longer a concern, the fact is financial resources always will be.

Every hot meal is served because someone was kind enough to make a donation. Every shower, every article of clothing, every bus token is made possible by someone’s contribution. And the demand is especially acute during the winter.

As you gather around the table this Thanksgiving, consider this thought from Fr. Woody: “They can’t pay rent. They can’t find any work. They’re on the road, and not by choice. You’re going to drive home to a place tonight. So am I. We don’t have any idea about what it’s like not to have a home. The whole world is full of people who need help.”

We are truly thankful for your support in the past and we pray for your continued help as we strive to serve “the least among us.”



UPDATE ON “BROTHER B”

Baldemar Garza, our last remaining “brother”, has moved to Boston to join the Little Brothers of Saint Francis. While we are sad that he has left us, he is very happy to finally be in formation for the religious life. We have named one of our offices in the new building in his honor, in gratitude for his seven years of service here to the poor.

Baldemar writes, “I say goodbye to all of you and especially to our homeless brothers and sisters. These years in Denver were our Lord’s way to prepare me for Boston to be a Little Brother of Saint Francis. This religious community is more than I ever dreamed of.”

If you wish to write to him Baldemar’s address is: Baldemar Garza, Little Brothers of Saint Francis, 785-789 Parker Street, Mission Hill (Boston),MA, 02120.





MEET JAY GOULD — VOLUNTEER

What did you do before you became involved with Fr. Woody's?

I worked for 40 years for Joslins Department Stores. I was a store manager when I retired and had a great career.

Why did you decide to become a part of the Franciscan Friends of the Poor?

I was at Mass one day, a year after my wife had passed away, and the priest looked right at me and said, "Sell all and give to the poor." So I gave all to my children and moved to the Franciscan Friends of the Poor and lived here for three years.

What is the most rewarding thing you do at the Haven of Hope?

The most rewarding thing is meeting both sides: the homeless and the rich. At one time, April 2004, we were \$14,000 in the hole. By December 2006, we had \$900,000 to \$1,000,000. The largest donation was \$200,000; the smallest was change from the poor. The amount of in kind donations was well over \$200,000 in building materials, etc. The generosity of people was overwhelming.

At the dedication you called the new Haven of Hope building "the miracle on Lipan Street." What did you mean by that?

Why I was placed in this position, the priest calling to me at Mass, calling me to this place. I feel I was placed at the right time to do the most good in my life. It was a miracle to me.

Tell us about your family and what you do to enjoy life when you're not helping at Fr. Woody's

I met my wife Marge at a secular Franciscan meeting in August 2006 and married in December 2006. She was widowed nine years and I was five years. We both enjoy volunteering and helping the less fortunate and we also like to travel.

Mission Statement

To provide food, shelter, clothing, counseling, rehabilitation and hygienic services to the homeless and indigent.

**Father Woody's
Haven of Hope**
Operated by the Franciscan
Friends of the Poor

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Nonprofit org
US Postage Paid
Denver CO
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**"We are here to serve not to judge."
Rev. Monsignor Charles B. Woodrich
"Father Woody"**