



Poverello News

(559) 498-6988

www.poverellohouse.org

FROM THE DESK OF C.E.O. CRUZ AVILA



Bishop Armando X. Ochoa blessed our Raise the Roof warehouse project at the beginning of construction. In a project of this size and scope, it is almost inevitable that there will be problems along the way. On-the-job accidents are bound to occur, and certainly in the neighborhood where Poverello House is located, one would

expect that tools and supplies would go missing.

We think that the blessing of Bishop Ochoa, and the blessed nature of this project, kept bad things from happening. Our general contractor, Airport Specialty Products, was amazed that in the months of construction, not one person was injured, not one piece of equipment was stolen, and not one bit of warehouse construction material disappeared.

Our construction team might have felt blessed, but the fact that Poverello was also blessed by our contractor is undeniable. They were all *invested* in Poverello House, not just here to do a job. They caught a glimpse of our mission, and wanted to be a part of it. Some of them interacted with clients on the streets and brought them needed items such as clothing and blankets. They even interviewed some of our rehab program residents for jobs, and, as profiled in a previous newsletter, Phillip, a graduated resident, was the point man for all of the plumbing installation.

We want to honor and acknowledge the people who built the warehouse. They put their hearts and souls into the construction, not only because they are skilled tradesmen who strive for excellence, but also because in the process of constructing the warehouse and making the various other facility improvements, they became a part of the extended Poverello family. The companies listed on the right played a vital role in this project, and we are so incredibly grateful for each of them.

Cruz Avila, CEO

Thank You to Our Generous Subcontractors!

B&B Construction
 Art Ramirez Inc.
 Browning Contractors
 Superior Construction
 Allied Dock Products
 CEMEX
 Cold Storage Technologies-
 Duley Landscaping
 Electric Motor Shop
 Foothill Masonry
 Fresno Plumbing
 Glasstech
 Fresno Rack & Shelving
 Spectrum Building Insulation
 Valley Unique Electric
 Yamabe & Horn Engineering
 Ultimate Thermal -
 Cold Storage Construction
 O'Hanian Drywall
 Outback Materials
 Pro-Tech Coatings
 R&S Erection Tri-County
 Sanger Iron Works
 J Berber Painting
 Johnson Fire Protection
 Lawler Excavation & Pipeline
 MAG Engineering
 Meyers Construction
 Forklift Specialties Inc.
 Quinn Company
 Ryteck Doors
 Pro-Screen

CHARITABLE HEARTS

In January, winter has fully set in, and the weather is usually cheerlessly wet, gray and cold. Most of us feel the letdown, and many are afflicted by what psychologists call SAD, or Seasonal Affective Disorder, an exhausting depression that is induced by winter's chill and lack of sunlight. Imagine what it would be like to be on the streets, with such dismal emotions exacerbated by being cold, wet, and physically miserable. That is the situation in which many homeless people find themselves, and coming to Poverello to get a hot shower, have their clothing cleaned and dried, or perhaps getting new, fresh clothing, goes a long way toward easing their suffering.

This time of year, donations of blankets, gloves, knit caps, socks, jackets and even long underwear are items that bring smiles to countless faces. Just before Christmas, a group of children showed their concern for the winter conditions of the homeless by holding a sock drive. The drive was the brainchild of Jerry Vang, who teaches sixth grade at Webster Elementary School in south central Fresno. What makes this group special is that Webster Elementary School has a sixteen-year connection to Poverello House.

The Patty Project is a targeted life-mentoring and recreation program for children living in impoverished neighborhoods, and is a community partnership outreach, using school sites for the program. The Poverello House has provided food for the program since its inception in 2002 and today provides up to 1,500 sack lunches for the Saturday program during the school year. Webster Elementary was the second school to become a site for the project. The school, like all of participating schools in the Patty Project, is located in an area with a high concentration of poverty. The Patty Project is now operating under Every Neighborhood Partnership.

When asked about the sock project, Mr. Vang said, "In my class I wanted to teach my kids about empathy, to think about gratitude... and to think about others instead of themselves... I wanted my kids not to just hear about compassion, but to be about it." Thus was born "Socktober," the October sock drive for Poverello House. He encouraged his class to take ownership of the drive, and the students went all over the school and got other children excited about it. The first year they did it, their goal was to get 50 pairs of socks. Instead, they got 275 pairs donated. This year, they brought in 280 pairs.

Many of these Webster students have difficult lives and very little in the way of material goods, yet they enthusiastically gave of themselves to help others. Poverello House came into being, not necessarily because of people with the financial capacity to give, but primarily because of people who have the capacity within their hearts to give, no matter their financial situation. These Webster Elementary children, guided by a wise instructor, have certainly demonstrated the compassionate depths of their hearts.

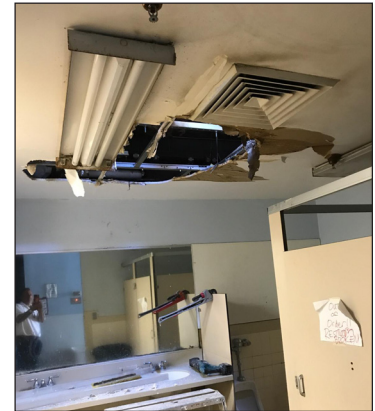


THE GIFT OF CLEANLINESS

As we begin the New Year with our recently finished warehouse, and continue to put the finishing touches on our campus improvements, we are aware that the main structure of Poverello House, where most of our services are located, is now twenty-five years old. When you consider that this means twenty-five years of hard use, 365 days a year, you begin to grasp the accelerated rate of wear and tear the building has gone through.

We were reminded of this fact recently, when an overhead pipe burst in our shower room, causing a great deal of damage. Fortunately for us, we have two employees with specific skills, both of whom are graduates of our drug rehabilitation program. One is a plumber by trade, the other a drywall installer. They fixed the problem in record time and had us up and running faster than if we had used professional services outside of Poverello. Thank goodness for that, because our laundry and shower services are very basic but essential components of our mission here at Poverello House.

If you have ever had to go without a shower and wear dirty clothing for a long time, you know how wonderful it feels to wash the grime off and then put on clean, dry clothes. There is another aspect to this service, and that is



preventative health care. Many homeless people suffer from maladies made so much worse by living without access to cleaning facilities. Small cuts become infected abscesses; scabies and other parasitical disorders get worse when victims cannot wash; fungal diseases can develop and thrive on feet and in other moist places on the body. The doctors and nurses at Holy Cross Medical Clinic at Poverello are very grateful to have someplace to send patients to shower and have their clothes washed, or to get new clothing.

You can directly impact homeless lives by donating warm winter clothing, blankets, laundry detergent, body wash, shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste and disposable razors. Such items may seem insignificant to you, but they make a world of difference to someone living in the streets.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP THIS MONTH

Donate blankets, socks, sweaters, coats, knit caps, gloves.

Donate coffee, creamer, sugar.

Donate toothbrushes, disposable razors, body wash, toothpaste.

Volunteer! The Christmas volunteer rush is over and we need help!

Sponsor a meal with your business, church, or group. Call us at (559) 498-6988 for more info.

Call (559) 498-6988 to arrange a tour.

Your Donations at Work*

6,433 articles of clothing distributed

1,999 blankets handed out

12,594 showers

3,342 client & resident laundry loads

*FY 2016-2017