



# Poverello News

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**Zack Darrah,**  
Chief Executive Officer

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

During this worldwide crisis, my prayers have been filled with requests for wisdom. In the Bible, James 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you." In times like these, wisdom is essential as we encounter uncharted territory. We have never found ourselves in a worldwide pandemic like this before. As we continue to work through this crisis, I am seeking wisdom from above, wise counsel from local experts, input from our fantastic team and more, so I can lead Poverello House in the best direction possible.

From the very start of this crisis, I knew that there would be difficult decisions I would have to make about how we would respond. After consulting with our team, our Board of Directors and partners, I enthusiastically decided that Poverello House would remain open and operational. The hungry, homeless and hurting that we serve are particularly

vulnerable during a crisis such as this. Due to safety concerns, there are fewer places able to provide services during this time. Poverello House will continue to be a place of hope even during the hardest of times. I am proud to report that 100% of our workforce is reporting to work to serve the most vulnerable amongst us during the crisis. The team here at Poverello House is a true inspiration.

We are doing everything we can to adhere to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines and are in regular contact with the Department of Public Health to ensure that clients, staff and residents are safe. We have implemented many safety measures throughout our food services, shelters, MAP Point and other programs. We have been able to do so without having to stop providing the vital services we provide daily.

More people than ever before are coming to Poverello House during the crisis. They are coming to seek a hot meal, an emergency food bag, shelter or a connection to available resources in the community. We are experiencing the need for thousands of additional hot meals. We had an over 300% increase in requests for emergency food bags. We are opening more beds for those needing to be off of the streets and increasing our hours of operation to help support the community. Of course, this all comes with the need for more resources. I am confident that our community will support Poverello House as we continue on the front lines of this crisis until the end. I hope you will consider walking alongside us as we passionately live out our mission during the hardest of times. Truly, we need you now more than we have ever needed you before!

Blessings,

Zachary D. Darrah  
CEO, Poverello House

## MEET OUR NEW SOUS CHEF MAX

Poverello House is excited to announce that we have a new Sous Chef, Max Alcantar. Max was looking for a job in the restaurant industry that was different than what he had done in the past. "When I saw the job posting, I knew I wanted that job. It was an opportunity to give back." Max was also excited to work with his old mentor, Chef Emery Bish. Max has been in the culinary field since 2004 and worked in well-known restaurants, including Mad Duck Craft Brewing. Max is eager to teach the men in the residential rehabilitation program the skills he has learned throughout the years. Max is married, has four boys and hopes to be a role model for his sons and the men in the program.



*Sous Chef, Max Alcantar*

## MORE BEDS AND RESOURCES FOR THE COMMUNITY DURING THE CRISIS

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, Poverello House has increased access to necessary services for the homeless community and others in need. We have opened an additional 34 beds on our campus. We are providing 24/7 access to bathroom facilities and handwashing stations for the Santa Clara/Chinatown community. This is a vital resource that follows Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance for homeless encampments during the crisis. Poverello House has also opened our MAP Point program during the weekends. This ensures that anyone in need of community resources during this time can work directly with a case manager who can link them and support them during this time (MAP Point is now open daily!). All of this is only possible through collaboration with the Fresno County Department of Social Services and the Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health. We are proud to provide these resources for our community during their greatest time of need!

### APRIL WISH LIST

#### Poverello House

Bottled Water

Blankets

Towels

Diapers Size 4,5,6

Canned Soups

Packaged Snacks

Pasta Sauce

#### Donations are accepted

Monday - Friday

8 am - 5 pm

Saturday - Sunday

8 am - 1 pm

#### 412 F. Street, Fresno

Donation lane located on G Street between Ventura and San Benito

### POVERELLO HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### CHAIR

Stephanie Negin

#### FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Victor Salazar

#### SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Curtis Davies

#### SECRETARY

Paula Capozzi

#### TREASURER

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#### PAST CO-CHAIRS

A. Thomas Ferdinandi & Rob Veneski

Nick Amendola

Charles Farnsworth

Christopher Hansen

Constance Jones

Tony Mehrtash

Adam Mendes

Tim O'Neill

John Pardini

Prashant Patel

Andrew Slater

Stacy Vaillancourt

James Walls, Jr.

# SAVING LIVES ONE PERSON AT A TIME



*Pictured left to right: **Gavin Larson, Greg Stanton, Daniel Maldonado, Leticia Martinez, Charles McCall and Ciprano Saldana***

Under the best of circumstances, homeless outreach is difficult. During a pandemic, it can be life-saving for those who are living on the streets. As the crisis began, the state and local community leaders worked together to determine the best strategy to keep those experiencing homelessness safe during the crisis. It was determined that all efforts would be made to provide shelter to as many individuals as possible. Many new shelter beds were immediately made available to do so. This meant there would be a lot of work to do to ensure that the unsheltered community was aware of this newly available resource! As the COVID-19 crisis hit Fresno, Poverello House, with other community organizations, hit the streets of Fresno County to bring the homeless into shelters. In two weeks, our team brought over 50 homeless clients into the shelters. Many of these individuals were more than 60 years of age. This age demographic was prioritized due to being at a higher risk of health complications if they were to contract the coronavirus. The Poverello House outreach team will continue to outreach to the homeless and assist in finding them shelter and resources throughout this crisis and beyond.



## 2,500

Additional meals being served on-site at Poverello House during the COVID-19 crisis



## 300%

weekly increase in emergency food bag distribution since the start of the COVID-19 crisis



During the COVID-19 crisis, the entire Poverello House community has come together to meet the needs of our clients. These efforts would not be possible without the men in our Residential Rehabilitation Program. The men in the program have selflessly served from the beginning of this crisis. They are providing the workforce on campus that allows for operations to run smoothly. This group of men has been preparing food in the kitchen, serving meals in the dining room, providing campus security, doing laundry for clients, sanitizing the entire campus (to keep everyone safe during COVID-19) and so much more. They have selflessly continued to do so throughout this crisis. We would like to recognize their work and courage during this crisis to ensure that the most vulnerable in our community continue to receive vital services at Poverello House!

