



POVERELLO NEWS

MAY 2016 (559) 498-6988
WWW.POVERELLOHOUSE.ORG



People who know me know that I'm kind of a mixture of skepticism and gullibility. On one hand, I've been around the block a few times and have pretty good street instincts. On the other hand, I'm still a soft touch in many circumstances. So I guess you could say that there are two facets of my personality that are constantly at war with each other. Sometimes that makes it hard to know what to think

when I encounter a Poverello situation.

Recently, I experienced this conflict regarding one of the men in our drug program. I was in the dining room, and I saw him hiding his face. He was a fairly new guy, and I approached him thinking that he must be ill. As I got closer, I saw that he was crying. I was about to ask him what was wrong, when he looked up, threw his arms around me, and sobbed, "Oh, Papa Mike!"

Now, I'm not exactly a touchy-feely kind of a guy, so I was a little uncomfortable, and more than a little shocked. He held on and cried for a short time, and I awkwardly patted his back until he finally let me go. Naturally, I was curious, so I asked what was going on.

His explanation was that he was overcome with gratitude to be in the program. He said that he felt as though he'd been rescued from the Titanic. He also said that I resembled his father, so I guess that might have prompted some of the emotion, too. I guess things

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out there had gotten pretty bad for him, and he was realizing that this was an opportunity to stop his self-destructive behavior and begin life anew.

At some level, I can understand what he was going through. My own experiences in the 1960s left me spiritually and emotionally exhausted, and when Father Simon offered me a ray of hope, I was immensely relieved. However, gratitude came to me gradually; for this young man, it hit him like a load of bricks.



Having seen men come and go in our Resident Program, I was a little doubtful, however. I wondered if this emotion was a temporary fix that would be of little help when he really started facing the wreckage of his life. I'm happy to say that he's still here, and that's a good sign.

Many of us get good and sick of the things we're doing that are hurtful to others or ourselves. We try to change, but eventually fall flat on our faces. When I was diagnosed with diabetes many years ago, I immediately resolved to change my eating and exercise habits. I did—for a while. Then, I ended up lapsing back into patterns that were as familiar and comfortable as my own skin. Needless to say, I still have diabetes.

It's the same with drug addiction. Even the most sincere desire to quit using can fall prey to old habits. Behavior and thinking patterns can be almost impossible to change. That's why we have a program. It gives men structure, support, and encouragement. It points them to a higher power, without whose help most are doomed. It also provides a constant reminder, through group meetings, counseling, and serving people whose addictions have led them into homelessness, that each man in the program is just one drink or one hit away from losing everything.

Common sense, and studies of human behavior, lend credence to the idea that working together with others is more productive than working alone. In the case of making lifelong changes, the support

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of fellow sufferers is almost always essential. We're hardwired to need other people, and sometimes the hardest step toward change is accepting this fact; for some reason, whether it is due to pride, fear or just plain old human nature, we like to think we can whip our problems by ourselves. Thank the Good Lord that there are places people can go, such as our rehabilitation program, that help people move from lonely failure to supported success.

Mike

Dinner with Elvis!

Elvis may be running for city council this year, but he still has time to swivel his hips for Poverello House! On Friday, May 6, 2016, join us from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Pardini's (located at 2257 West Shaw Avenue, Fresno 93711) for another **Dinner with Elvis**, featuring the FABULOUS Jeremy Pearce! Tickets for the event are \$50.

Lots of food and fun will accompany the music of The King. There will be a raffle and silent auction. The raffle tickets are \$2 each, or six tickets for \$10 (what a bargain!). The prizes for the raffle are \$500 for first place, second place \$250 and third place \$100.



Don't miss this great annual event sponsored by the Amici Del Poverello Guild. All proceeds go to help Poverello House feed the hungry and provide services to the homeless. RSVP by April 20, 2016 to Mary Lou Cancio, 658 W. Ashcroft Avenue, Clovis 93612, or call Mary Lou at (559) 291-8375.



Granville Homes introduced the Home of Hope fundraiser in 2006 as a way of raising money to provide food, shelter, health care and education to those in need.

Granville Homes along with the help of many trade partners donates a beautiful new home as the grand prize. 100% of the proceeds are donated to local non-profit organizations.

“The Granville Home of Hope fundraiser has helped over 1 million Valley families by raising more than \$3.5 million for charities.”

Your support continues for:

Poverello House

Hinds Hospice

Assistance League

Community Food Bank

Renaissance Scholars (Fresno State)

Foundation for Central Schools

Foundation for Clovis Schools

Foundation for Sanger Schools

EPU Children's Center

Fresno Police Chaplaincy

when you purchase a \$100 raffle ticket

for the Granville Home of Hope.

“Since 2007, Poverello House has received over \$469,345 from this wonderful and charitable fundraiser.”



**Poverello
House**

By the Numbers

43 years ago, Poverello House was built to serve the hungry and homeless of our community.

Poverello House serves

1,600

hot meals a day.

36,229

nights of shelter were provided through the Community & Village of Hope.

279,525

onsite meals and

236,213

offsite meals were served during 2014-2015.

25,818

shower and laundry services were provided for those in need.

\$469,345

The amount received by the **Granville Home of Hope** fundraiser since 2007.

24% of the population in Fresno lives below the poverty line.

Poverello House provides a

28-bed

men's residential alcohol and drug rehabilitation program.

10,373

volunteers completed

34,176

hours.

A Fundraiser to Help Support Local Organizations.

Don't Delay!

CUT HERE



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____

Email*: _____

Quantity of tickets _____

No limit on the number of tickets purchased per person.

A maximum of 5,000 total tickets will be entered into the drawing.

Credit Card: VISA MasterCard

American Express

Credit Card # _____

Exp. Date: _____ CVC Code: _____

(Security code on credit card)

Billing address if different than mailing address:

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Make checks payable to **The Granville Foundation**

Checks must be postmarked by July 5, 2016

Mail to: Poverello House

PO Box 12225 Fresno, CA 93777-2225

For more information and to view rules and regulations
visit: www.gvhomeofhope.com or call **559.440.8388**





*“ Thank you . . .
for all your support. ”*



Poverello
House

The More Things Change...

...the more they stay the same. At Poverello House, the aphorism is often on the lips of people who have been around here for many years.

Few would deny that the process of change has accelerated in our lifetimes. With computers, the internet, smart phones and quantum leaps in all other kinds of technology, the world has become smaller, faster, and in some ways, more confusing and frightening.

Yet, in spite of dizzying change, human nature seems to remain constant. The poor are with us always, as Jesus said, and their needs for food, shelter, medical care and compassion are the same as they were when Christ walked the roads of the Middle East.

A more local example is how the street drugs have altered throughout the years. From heroin to methamphetamines, addictions have changed with each introduction of newer, cheaper drugs, but the needs of a homeless drug addict are constant: structure, accountability, support, spiritual guidance, and hope are the ingredients necessary to a new life, whether one is addicted to cheap wine or crystal meth.



Poverello also has changed tremendously in its forty-plus years of existence.

However, a seemingly immutable aspect of Poverello House has been Mike McGarvin, “Papa Mike” to everyone around here. Our founder’s role has evolved over the years, but Mike’s vision for Poverello has never wavered, and his warm, personal one-on-one contact with the homeless has been a hallmark of our organization from its humble beginnings until the present.

But none of us are immune to Father Time. Age and health issues are forcing changes on Mike, and thus forcing changes at Poverello House. His physical presence is no longer as ubiquitous as it once was, and while he still greets people in our dining room at mealtime, it is often for much shorter times than in days past.

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Mike's wife Mary spoke recently about him slowing down. She said ever since she's known Mike, he's been a "homeless magnet." They always seemed to run into homeless people, and Mike would inevitably strike up conversations and help out when he could. She said that now that Mike doesn't drive or even get out much, she tries to think in terms of "What would Mike do?" She stops to talk and listen to homeless people, something that Mike has always instinctively known to be vitally important to the homeless.

While Mike has set a standard, it's comforting to know that Poverello still strives to live up to that standard. We have a solid staff that embraces our mission, and virtually thousands of volunteers who embody Mike's love for the poor. Even from those earliest days, when Mike was serving on the streets, he wasn't alone for long. Volunteers, wonderful volunteers, came beside him and caught his vision, helping him to keep going and expanding the work he began.

So again, we have to say that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Mike is still doing as much as he can, and his presence here will always be inspirational and significant, but he's less able to do as much as he used to. As Mike's life changes, though, it's good to realize that his mission is ongoing, unchanging, and carried on through dedicated employees and volunteers. May it always be so.

5K Run for Meals: Get Ready, Set, Go!

There is still time to be a part of Poverello's 5K Run for Meals on Saturday, May 14, 2016! You can pick up a registration packet Thursday and Friday, May 12th and 13th, at **Sole to Soul** in Riverpark, 160 East Paseo Del Centro in Fresno, 93720, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Although we encourage you to pick up your package before the run, we will have them available on race day.

So please join us Saturday, May 14, 2016 at Woodward Park for the fourth annual 5K Run for Meals. Registration will begin at

6:30 a.m. the day of the event, or you can preregister online right now at www.poverellohouse.org/5krun. The 5k run will take off at 7:15 a.m. and the walk will begin at 7:30 a.m.

Each participant will receive an event T-shirt and refreshments following the run/walk.

Join us for a pancake breakfast at Applebee's (8430 N. Friant Road) after the race. Purchase a \$10 pancake breakfast ticket and enjoy pancakes, eggs, sausage, juice and coffee.



When you purchase this ticket you will be providing an additional fourteen meals to those in need. Breakfast will be held from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. If you can't run or walk, this is a great way to still get involved and help us raise money for the food program at Poverello House. Refreshments will still be available at the park after the race.

What could be a better way to spend a Saturday morning than indulging in a good cardiovascular activity like running and walking, while simultaneously helping Poverello's mission to the homeless and poor? Don't miss out! Register now or later, but please come by and enjoy the fun!

May Wish List

Men's t-shirts * Copy paper (8.5" x 11") * Eggs

To donate online, visit our website at www.poverellohouse.org

Remember, we now take credit card donations. Please see the enclosed envelope for instructions.

Poverello House

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(559) 498-6988

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

Who Are We? A nonprofit, nondenominational organization.

Our Mission: Believing in the dignity of every person, at Poverello House we work to enrich the lives and spirits of all who pass our way by stewarding the resources made available to us through Providential and community support.

Governance: We have been operating since 1973 and are governed by a Board of Directors, consisting of local volunteer men and women.

Future Goals? To provide additional facilities for increased services.

How Are We Funded? Primarily through private donations from individuals, churches, businesses, and community organizations. Rules for acceptance and participation in the programs of Poverello House are the same for everyone, without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability.