

REFLECTION ON OUR HOMELESS OUTREACH

By Katie Denecke

“Let me ask you a question, do you have any socks?” Last Tuesday night St. Joseph’s participated for the first time in Homeless Outreach in downtown Rochester. Luckily, we came prepared and were able to offer socks, underwear, basic toiletries and a bagged dinner to the 25 men we met. One man named Karl opened up his bag walked right over to the curb, sat down, and changed his socks immediately. I felt a tiny spring of joy, like when you give a gift you know the other person loves.

For me, Homeless Outreach is a rollercoaster ride of emotion. First, it’s adrenaline and excitement as we’re greeted by the people staying in the parking garage. Everyone is introducing themselves, handing out food and other goodies and building rapport. As the social workers begin one on one conversations with the men we’ve met, I feel hopeful. Perhaps this is one step closer to getting Karl out of the cycle of homelessness, prison for trespassing, and then homelessness again.

But as we continue our walk around the garage and down to the lower level. I feel overwhelmed, there sure are a lot of people staying here tonight. One man tells us he knows of over 140 homeless people in Rochester by name. He’d really like it if we could find one of the women staying there, “she’s too good for this” he tells us as we promise to look for her and help her if we find her.

In the end, I feel immense gratitude that God put these people in our path tonight. And thankful for the 14 amazing people from our parish who came out to make sandwiches and walk the streets of Rochester after dark.

**If you are interested in joining our team
or want to know more,
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