

Saint Francis of Assisi Food Pantry
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Saint Francis of Assisi Food Pantry Newsletter June, 2022

"We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers"

No Tricks - We're Six!

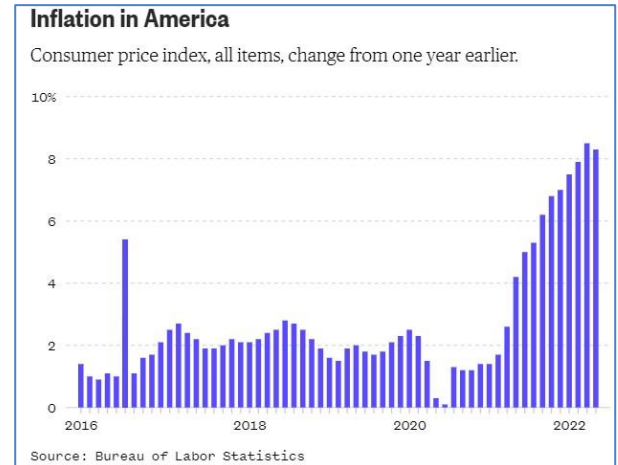
We were thrilled to celebrate the 6th anniversary of opening Saint Francis of Assisi Food Pantry on April 4, 2016! From our first day when we served 12 households to a record high 124 households served on May 5, 2022, we have welcomed all in need to the pantry. Over the past 6 years, we have provided free food to **9,846** households with a total of 23,315 household members. We have served these households **57,958** times in the past 6 years!



The pantry remained open during the COVID-19 epidemic, closing our doors for a week only when our President and Founder, Cindy Becher, was ill with COVID.

We couldn't have done this dedicated work without the faithful support of our loyal donors and volunteers who have worked tirelessly to make a difference in the lives of our clients.

Sadly, the need is greater now than ever as low-income families and seniors are struggling to cope with rising inflation, which reached an overall rate of 8.3% in April 2022 vs April 2021. A key component of inflation measurement is the cost of food, which increased 9.4% in the 12 months ending in April, the highest increase since April, 1981. Nationally, gas prices were up 48% in March 2022 vs. March 2021, and rent in Reno is up 21% for the same period. As a result, we are seeing more first-time visitors to the pantry and a steady flow of regular pantry clients who all mention they are struggling to cope with the increasing cost of living.



Your loyal support enables us to keep the pantry doors open and welcome all who need assistance in obtaining fresh healthy food. We are fully committed to our mission and sincerely appreciate your donations which help us help the least fortunate in our community. We and they thank you!



Pantry Honored at the Nevada Prayer Breakfast

We are proud to announce that Saint Francis of Assisi Food Pantry was honored at the Nevada Prayer Breakfast on May 18 and Cindy Becher received their Vision Award for her dedicated service to our community. According to Rita Sloan, who nominated the pantry, this award recognizes organizations in our community that “do ongoing remarkable work with people in poverty, particularly those groups who have continued to do their good work through the pandemic.”

The Nevada Prayer Breakfast is sponsored by the Nevada Interfaith Association and brings together over 250 representatives from various churches and religious groups in the Reno area. According to the Nevada Interfaith Association’s website, “The Nevada Prayer Breakfast is a community gathering at which we offer prayerful support for our State and our leaders. We also honor outstanding, visionary people and organizations in our community for their unique and caring work for the benefit of all.” Below is an excerpt from the letter Cindy Becher received from the Co-Chairs of the Nevada Prayer Breakfast:

Dear Cindy Becher and all the volunteer workers at the St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry,

It was lovely to learn of your humble acceptance of the 2022 Nevada Interfaith Vision Award. The St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry is an example of the sacrifice of time, energy and resources to benefit a community in need and was selected due to their visionary and courageous efforts during the pandemic of the last two years (2020-2021).

In keeping with our theme for the Nevada Prayer Breakfast, “Humility, Healing and Humanity,” this year’s Vision Award will be given to multiple recipients as the pandemic created an unprecedented opportunity for the need of Hometown Heroes like yourselves. The immense impact of many hands on a mission to help those who are hungry, homeless, sick, and suffering could change the world and the St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry is leading the way.

During these difficult and dangerous times, fear ruled the day, but due to brave, quiet, heroic visionaries like the St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry, lives were touched and suffering relieved, the hungry were fed and strengthened, the sick were ministered to and health was restored, the dying were comforted and not left to die alone when families could not be with them. We know the St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry does not do this work for recognition. However, this is a small way for your interfaith community to say, “You have made a difference.” Besides the Nevada Interfaith Vision Award, the St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry will also be receiving Senatorial Certificates of Recognition from Senators Rosen and Cortez Masto. The Reno Mayor, Hillary Schieve, has prepared a proclamation that May 18, 2022 will be declared “Nevada Interfaith Hometown Heroes Day.”

Congratulations for being selected as a Nevada Interfaith Hometown Hero. We thank you for your service to this community. We look forward to our fellowship with the St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry for many years to come.

Pamela Kellerstrass and Shelley Fisher

Nevada Prayer Breakfast Co-Chairs

Nevada Interfaith Association

Mobile: 775-846-3581

Webpage: www.nevadainterfaith.org

We are honored to be recognized by this notable organization that promotes kindness, charity, love, inclusion and respect among all religious groups and peoples of Nevada. For more information, go to their website:

<https://nevadainterfaith.org/>.



“For extraordinary Vision in the face of unprecedented times”





Upper L: Karrie & Wayne Backlund, pantry volunteers
Lower L: Jared Becher & Veronica Becher Morrison
Center: Cindy Becher and Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve
Right: Cindy & David Becher



Upper L: Certificate of Commendation from Catherine Cortez Masto, Nevada US Senator
Lower L: Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from Jackie Rosen, Nevada US Senator; The Vision Award 2022
Top R: Bishop Daniel Mueggenborg, Diocese of Reno; to his left is Rita Sloan, pantry supporter
Center R from L: Pantry volunteers Susan Murphy, Deacon Don Korson, Kerry McKinney, Roy Ballew, Don & Mary Ann Eberlein
Lower R: Supporters from St. Therese of the Little Flower Catholic Church

Missionary Update from Mallorca, Spain

Cindy Becher recently received a most interesting and informative email from Christy Dyer, one of our hardworking volunteers from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who just went on her mission to the island of Mallorca, Spain. She has given us permission to share her note with pantry supporters and it is below.

Dear Cindy,

I have thought of you and the St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry many times this past few weeks. We are on the island of Mallorca off the coast of Spain. We have found a huge project to help with here very much like the pantry. A priest in the Catholic church who is Ukrainian started to gather supplies to send to those relocated in Poland due to the war. His congregation is mostly Ukrainian people who moved to the island before the war.

The project got too big for his church to handle so they found this old fire station that was not being used and now donations are brought here, sorted, boxed in every and any size box where they stack high until a semi-truck comes to take them to Poland.

All labor is donated except they have to pay a price for the truck and driver. It takes about 6 days to get to Poland as first they ferry to the peninsula,

then drive across Europe to Poland. They don't like to call the people refugees, but re-located people.

We met a woman who just got here a couple weeks ago. Her home was mostly burned, her neighbor's home was totally obliterated. A group of 5 cars with mothers and children left Ukraine and drove for 6 days across Ukraine. They could only get petrol [gas] 10 to 20 liters at a time. They rested when they got across the border and made their way here. They don't speak Spanish or English so we communicate through Google translate! The woman's son and her husband are still in Poland as they are in the Army.

It is a very satisfying work to help with. The Elders and Sisters from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints of course are helping, as many received Visas recently like we did and we have about 18 on the island now.

I have enclosed some photos. Just thought you might like to know what we are doing.

With love and admiration for all that you do,
Christy



Christy with her fellow missionaries and local helpers. In the photo on right, Christy is at left holding the yellow flowered quilt.

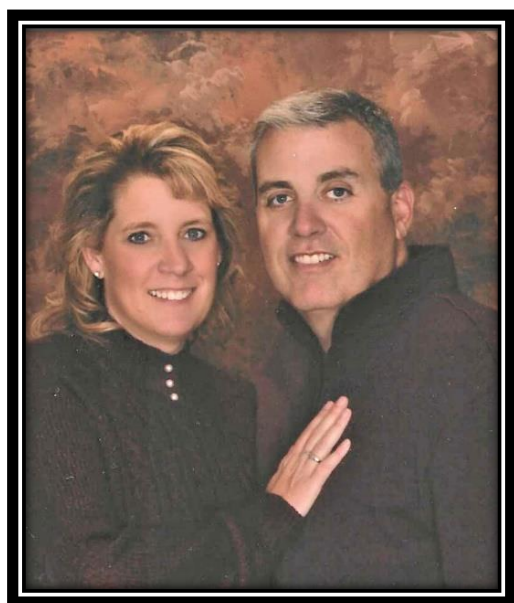
Generous Realtor Makes Donations to Pantry

In a tremendously generous gesture, local realtor Cindy Miller has notified us that she will be donating 10% of her commissions to the pantry. Cindy is affiliated with EXP Realty in Reno and is an Accredited Buyer's Representative. EXP Realty is one of the largest independent real estate brokerage firms in the country. You can learn more on Cindy's website: <https://www.agent4u775.com/>



We are grateful to Cindy and her husband Dan for their kind generosity and sincere commitment to helping the needy in our community.

Thank you, Cindy & Dan Miller!



We are always looking for volunteers to pick up donations, unload trucks, place items on our shelves and/or assist clients. Contact Cindy Becher at 772-2759 if you would like to help.

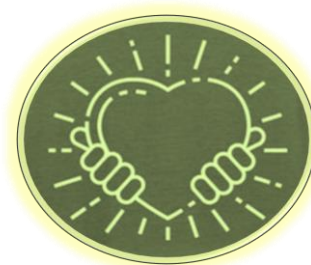


Serving Hope Dinner Returning in Fall, 2023

After 3 years of regretfully postponing our big annual fundraiser due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are planning to hold the next **Serving Hope Spaghetti Dinner** in the Fall of 2023. It was held last on October 26, 2019, at the Atlantis Casino Resort Spa in Reno and was then cancelled in 2020, 2021 and 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are eagerly looking forward to gathering once again with all of our loyal pantry supporters to share a hearty spaghetti dinner while updating all of you on pantry activities and new initiatives that we have implemented over the last 3 years. We draw tremendous inspiration from our many caring friends in the community and hope to once again visit with all of you in person next fall. We'll let you know when we've set a definite date and all the other important details.

Serving Hope Spaghetti Dinner



Until we see you next fall, know that we are eternally grateful for your ongoing financial support, which has kept the pantry doors open these past 2 ½ years and hopefully will continue to sustain us until our in-person gathering next fall. The need in our community is greater than ever and we know that together we are making a vital difference in the daily lives of those who are in need of healthy food. As it is said, "First we eat, then we do everything else."



Support the Pantry While You Shop!

If you are like many who shop online at Amazon, especially during this time of staying safe at home, we encourage you to log into Amazon Smile and choose St. Francis of Assisi Food Pantry as your designated charity. When you shop at Amazon Smile, which is identical to the regular Amazon website, the Amazon Smile Foundation will donate .5% of the dollar value of your eligible purchases to the pantry, at no cost to you.

Here's how to set it up:

1. Using your usual Amazon sign on information, log into <https://smile.amazon.com/>
2. Amazon will prompt you to choose a charity.
3. Search for **Saint Francis of Assisi Food Pantry Reno** and select it. It will remain your selected charity until you change or delete it.
4. Log in and shop at <https://smile.amazon.com/>

That's it! Very easy and you will be helping support the pantry with every purchase you make. On a quarterly basis, the Amazon Smile Foundation combines donations generated from all purchases designated for the pantry during the previous 3 months and automatically sends a donation to us. Just be sure to always log into <https://Smile.Amazon.com> to make the magic happen!



Toiletry Items Needed for Seniors

We provide our senior clients with toiletries. Can you help? Small size items are needed such as the items listed below and more. You can drop off donations during pantry hours:

- Golden Groceries for Seniors – Thursday 11 am - Noon
- Monday, Tuesday & Thursday every week 1 - 3 pm
 - 3rd Wednesday of each month - 5 - 7 pm

SOAP

Bar or Liquid Body Soap
Laundry Soap
Small Bottles of Dish Soap

OTHER

Deodorant
Hand & Body Lotion
Razors & Shaving Cream
Shampoo & Conditioner
Toothbrushes & Toothpaste

