

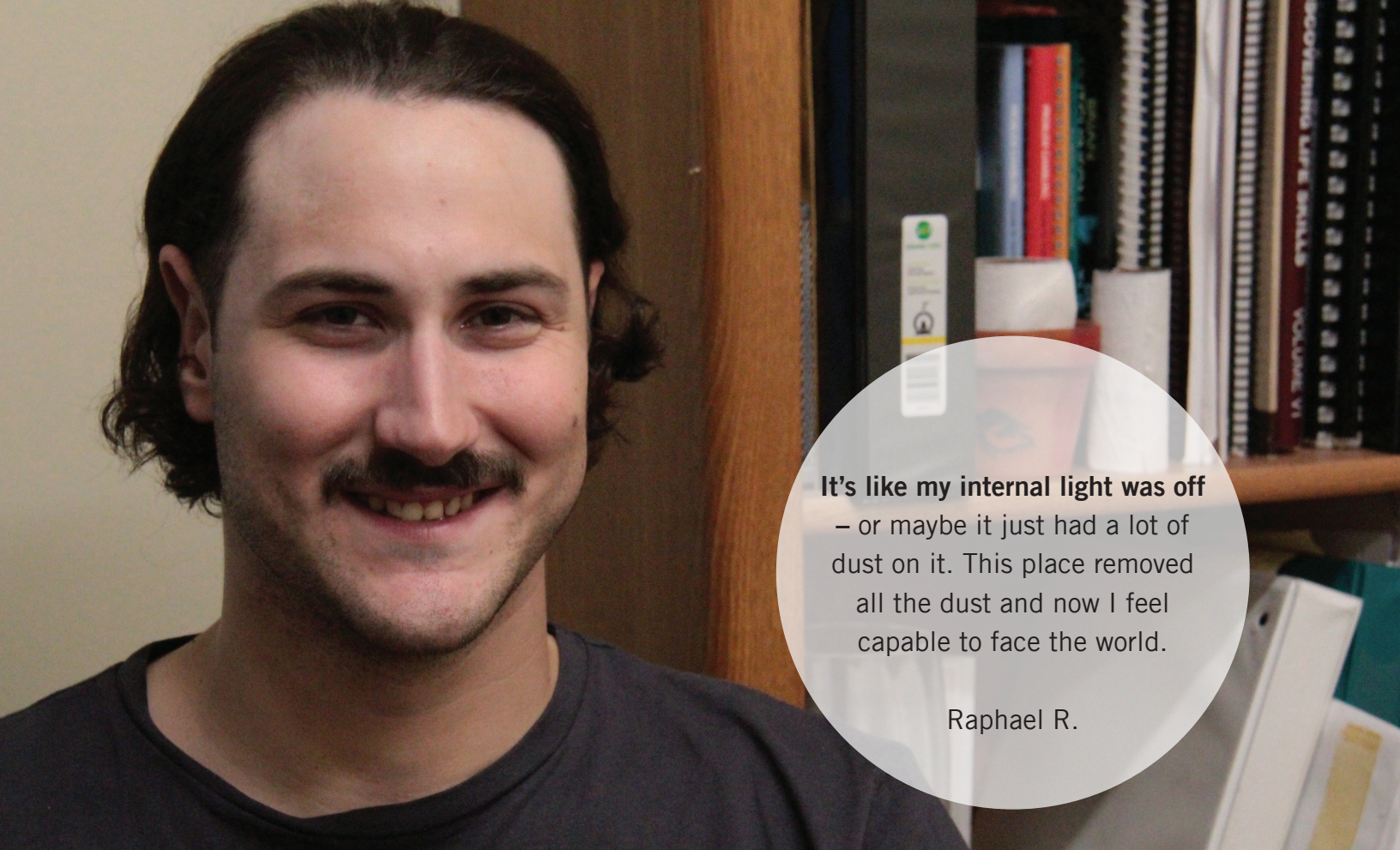


# GOODSHEPHERD JOURNAL

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It's like my internal light was off – or maybe it just had a lot of dust on it. This place removed all the dust and now I feel capable to face the world.

Raphael R.

In June 2021, I got third-degree burns when my apartment in Quebec City burned down. I was homeless after the fire. I started living with my aunt.

I am an alcoholic. My alcoholism got worse and worse as I tried to escape from the trauma of the fire. My aunt kicked me out.

I came to Toronto and became homeless. I ran out of money. I was on the streets, shaking from withdrawal, so I called a detox centre. The detox found Good Shepherd's DARE Program for me. I got in here and that's how I survived.

**Read on to find out how your support gave Raphael structure and purpose...**

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After my first 30 days here, I relapsed. I got my cheque, and I went out and drank.

I was trying to prove I wasn't "one of them." I said to myself, I will just have a couple drinks. And then I tried everything in me to stop and I just couldn't stop. I just watched myself drinking and I said to myself, "Man, you are messed up as hell."

That's when I surrendered. I just admitted complete defeat. I got back into DARE, and I stopped trying to get out of my addiction on my own. I started taking direction and suggestions. I did everything the counsellors said to do.

The DARE Program gave me structure and it gave me safe refuge. When you're on the streets and you don't know where you are going to sleep, there's a lot of fear.

Waking up in the morning, doing chores, it gave me purpose again. It taught me how to live again. As an alcoholic, there is no morning, no night, no breakfast time, no lunch, no dinner, no accountability, no chores. There's just waking up, drinking, passing out, waking up and drinking again.

DARE gave me the tools to go on with my life and face my addiction. The DARE counsellors are good listeners, they're capable of empathy, of putting themselves in our shoes.

I'm responsible, I'm accountable for my actions and what I'm saying. I accept life on life's terms. I stopped acting like I was victim of everything. That's the tools I learned in the DARE Program.

DARE was a lifeline for me because I was drowning. I had a good childhood; I don't know why I became an alcoholic. I just couldn't stop drinking.

I used to wake up in the morning wishing I was

dead or wishing to never wake up again, just go back to sleep.

Now, I wake up in the morning and I just can't get enough of it! I have people who care about me again. I reunited with my family – before, they were not speaking to me.

It's like my internal light was off – or maybe it just had a lot of dust on it. This place removed all the dust and now I feel capable to face the world.

Guys like me – without a place like this – I probably wouldn't be here today. I would be still drinking or even worse. Now, I feel like I have something to offer. I feel like a valuable member of society again.

A place like DARE – it doesn't work for everyone. But for me, it made all the difference!

### **How you have helped the DARE Program grow**

Good Shepherd launched the DARE Program (at first called the Transition Program) back in 1997 as a pilot project.

DARE began by providing 15 beds where homeless adult men could stay while preparing for treatment for addictions. By 2000, DARE added 10 more beds so that men exiting treatment had a supportive place to stay while finding housing.

Soon after, DARE added support groups for the growing number of program graduates living in the community. In 2011, DARE started giving priority access to 5 beds for homeless and at-risk Veterans.

In the first half of 2023, DARE welcomed 125 homeless men, 42 of whom have successfully entered treatment. Thank you for giving them a lifeline, for rekindling their light!



## Executive Director's message

**“At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.” - Albert Schweitzer**

“It was like my internal light was off,” says Raphael, the DARE graduate who shares his story in this newsletter.

That reminded me of the famous quote by Albert Schweitzer, the Nobel prize winner.

It reminded me of John, writing at the beginning of his gospel of “a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower.”

And it reminded me of YOU. If Good Shepherd is like a light that helped rekindle the light inside Raphael, YOU are the light that keeps Good Shepherd shining.

Your compassion and generosity are what makes it possible for Good Shepherd to be a light shining

in the darkness of poverty and homelessness.

The light at Good Shepherd, the light that rekindles the flame of hope for people on the streets — that light shines through YOU. Every thoughtful gift, whether of time or money or supplies, makes the light of love and hope at Good Shepherd burn brighter.

In this season of Thanksgiving, I give thanks for you and the caring community that keeps the warmth and light of hospitality burning brightly — and has kept it shining for 60 years! Thank you.

Akililu Wendaferew, MSW, RSW  
Executive Director

## New Housing Programs

Since 1997, Good Shepherd has operated the Resettlement program helping homeless individuals secure housing and provide aftercare support. To augment this work, two new programs have been added since October 2022.

The **Housing Follow-Up Support** program provides a service to those who are exiting homelessness, assisting them in settling into their new residence and connecting them with community resources in their area. This helps to ensure their housing is stabilized and that they can live independently. Some of these wrap around services that workers provide include making appropriate referrals to community resources. These can also include medical supports, employment supports, social assistance, obtaining identification and more. Workers also provide life skills, counselling and goal setting for clients.

The **Eviction Prevention** program supports tenants at risk of homelessness by providing immediate, short-term supports to sustain tenancies. These projects work directly with housing providers and any other service providers that may be engaged with the tenant, such as the Landlord and Tenant Board and income maintenance programs.

In light of the housing crisis in Toronto, these new support programs will ensure that people maintain their housing and do not end up in an already over burdened shelter system.





## years of uninterrupted compassionate service

Good Shepherd Ministries has a long history of serving homeless individuals in

Toronto. Founded by Br. Mathias Barrett, the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd opened the Centre in 1963 at the invitation of Archbishop Pocock. At the time, Good Shepherd provided meals and shelter for individuals who were struggling with poverty, unemployment, and homelessness.

Over the past 60 years of providing compassionate care for homeless, together, we have continued to provide not only the basic necessities of food, clothing and shelter – we have also focused on addressing the complex realities of mental health, addictions, health care and housing.

Good Shepherd has come a long way since 1963. Grown with your support to address the increasing homeless crisis and the effects of poverty on people in our community and done so quietly with little fanfare.

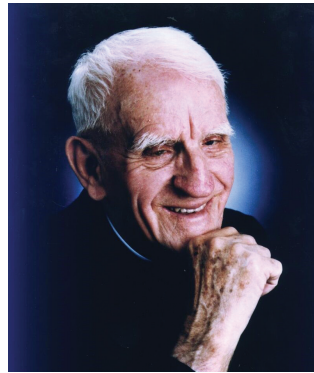
In 1986, the Brothers opened Barrett House, supportive housing for people with HIV and AIDS. This was followed by St. Joseph's Residence which opened in 1999 to offer supportive housing for frail formerly homeless seniors with a history of mental health and addictions.

The Brothers also underwent a change in 2015 when they fused with Hospitaller Order of St. John of God. Nothing really changed at the ministry – the Brothers, coworkers, and volunteers continued to roll up their sleeves and get the job done with faith, hospitality, respect and compassion.

While many things have changed, the neighbourhood, new programs, new faces; the one thing that remains constant is our collective passionate commitment to protecting the dignity of the most vulnerable members of our community. We remain grounded in our mission of enhancing the quality of life of the homeless while inspiring hope and promoting human dignity.

It is because of YOU - our volunteers, benefactors, coworkers, and supporters and those that came before, that for six decades many lives have been and will continue to be transformed!

### FOUNDERS

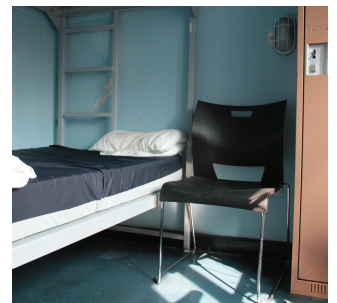
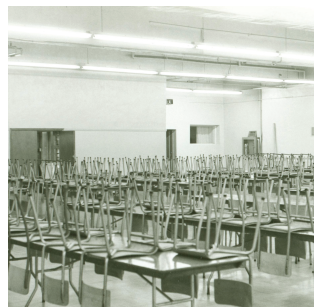


**Br. Mathias Barrett**



**St. John of God**

### THEN & NOW



## Volunteering 4 Good



Layla Haddad started her journey with Good Shepherd volunteering with her high school. This year she returned, during her summer break from studying at university.

Layla engaged in various activities at Good Shepherd such as bagging treats, preparing meals, and distributing meals-to-go. When in-person dining resumed in August, she helped to serve meals to guests.

The act of meal serving at Good Shepherd held a special sentiment for her. She shared, "It takes me back eight years, to when I served meals alongside my classmates." Beyond nostalgia, it was a rewarding experience for Layla as she interacted with guests and coworkers and contributed to the community. "I look forward to coming for my shift. This is not something I feel I have to do but something I want to do."

Layla discovered that what truly distinguished her experience at Good Shepherd from her other volunteer opportunities was the strong sense of connection she felt. "Here, I can directly see

the people I'm serving," Layla emphasized. She further noted, "You can easily find like-minded people who care about the community at Good Shepherd. It is also a place where people are brought closer to their faith."

Looking ahead, Layla is set to pursue a master's degree with a focus on public policy and global affairs. Her time as a volunteer influenced her to challenge assumptions and embrace different perspectives. Through learning about shelter programs and conversing with guests, she gained valuable insights. Layla is committed to rethinking the needs of clients and proposing more client-centered policies in her future studies.

Layla's contributions have not gone unnoticed by Good Shepherd, and the same goes for the many other volunteers. They don't just support Good Shepherd's operation during their shifts; they genuinely care about poverty and homelessness issues. Their compassion resonates deeply with us. A heartfelt thank you to our volunteers, who have never forgotten the less privileged individuals we serve together.

**Anytime is a good time to volunteer. Whether you are new to volunteering or a past volunteer considering returning, you are all welcome to reach out.**

### Volunteers Needed

Good Shepherd is looking for volunteers to fill shifts from 9-12pm and 2-4pm.

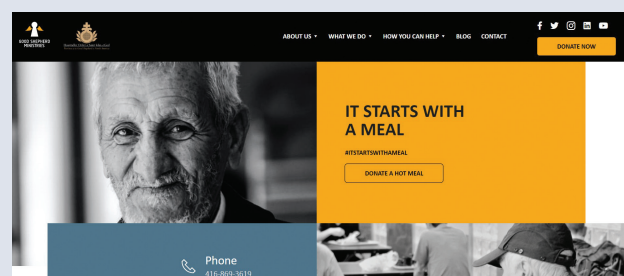
Available volunteer opportunities include meal serving and meal preparation. Group volunteers of up to 10 volunteers are also welcome!

Please contact 416-869-3619 x 262 or [volunteer@goodshepherd.ca](mailto:volunteer@goodshepherd.ca)

### New Website

We have a newly designed website,

**GOODSHEPHERD.CA** Please visit and let us know what you think, [info@goodshepherd.ca](mailto:info@goodshepherd.ca).



## Annual Angels

Take the complication out of giving. Help provide programs and services to homeless and vulnerable individuals.

Make giving easy by signing up to become a monthly donor. Signing up means not having to remember to donate. It means spreading your annual gift over a 12-month period and making it more manageable. And you will receive a consolidated receipt at the end of the year - no worries about trying to track down all the tax receipts you accumulate throughout the year.

There is also a benefit to Good Shepherd Ministries. A stable source of revenue helps to properly plan and ensure that homeless and at-risk individuals continue to receive the programs needed, such as shelter, meals and clothing.

You can sign up online at [GOODSHEPHERD.CA/DONATE](https://goodshepherd.ca/donate) and choose to make a monthly gift on the 15th or 30th of every month.

For more information or if you would like assistance, please contact 416.869.3619 x 277 or [cindy@goodshepherd.ca](mailto:cindy@goodshepherd.ca).

## The Thanksgiving Food Drive is On!

The Good Shepherd pantry is bare. You can help fill it up again with nutritious food to help provide meals for those needing our support.



You can drop off any of the food items to 412 Queen Street East. If you arrange a group food drive at your school, church or community centre, give us a call and we can arrange a pick up (416) 869-3619, ext. 262.

- ✓ canned tuna & meat
- ✓ canned tomatoes
- ✓ tomato sauce
- ✓ beans & chickpeas
- ✓ soups and stews
- ✓ canned vegetables
- ✓ breakfast cereals
- ✓ granola bars
- ✓ jam
- ✓ mayonnaise
- ✓ mustard
- ✓ Peanut butter
- ✓ Tea bags
- ✓ Ground coffee
- ✓ Rice

### Your Legacy of Compassion

When estate planning, please remember our homeless brothers and sisters and the work of Good Shepherd Ministries.

For more information contact 416.869.3619 x 223

### SAVE THE DATE

ANGELS AMONG US GALA  
May 4, 2024

Paramount Eventspace  
Woodbridge

Tickets \$400 or \$3000 table of 8  
Reserve now 416.869.3619 x 223

**DONATE  
ONLINE  
NOW!**



Founded in 1963, Good Shepherd Ministries is a registered charity and a mission of the



**Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God**  
*Province of the Good Shepherd in North America*

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