

Loaves and Fishes is a coordinated effort to provide a free meal for anyone in need. This program began in Minneapolis in 1979 by a Catholic priest and a sister who believed that they could accomplish this mission from the basement of a local church. They soon realized that there were more hungry guests than they had food or room for so, within two years, the Loaves and Fishes program was conceived. This organization is a nonprofit, volunteer driven agency that is funded by churches, corporations/foundations, The United Way, individuals, government and business. Their board of directors is composed of bankers, lawyers, business professionals and other community representatives. The *vision* of Loaves and Fishes is to meet the basic human needs for food, dignity and respect for all people regardless of their socioeconomic, cultural or ethnic backgrounds. Their *mission* is to provide nutritious meals in an atmosphere of hospitality and to develop partnerships with like minded organizations.

Corpus Christi has been a Loaves and Fishes partner for 25 years. We serve the evening meal on the second Tuesday of each month at the Dorothy Day Center in St. Paul (there are eight serving sites in the Twin Cities area). Our Corpus Christi volunteers purchase the food and deliver it to the site where it is prepared and served.

**Timing and action for meal preparation:**

- Purchase food and deliver to serving site by 3:00 PM on the second Tuesday of each month
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- Food preparation: 3:00-4:30
  - Cook pasta for our hotdish
  - Slice meatballs
  - Open vegetables and heat
  - Open cans of fruit and place in serving containers
  - Butter bread
  - Unpack cookies and candy
  - Wrap silverware
  - Prepare beverages
- Food service: 4:30-5:15
  - Trays pass through various food stations along a steam table before they are handed to the guest. Each tray has hotdish, vegetables, fruit, cookies, candy and a beverage glass, fork and spoon. Once the guests are seated, they are served bread, and beverages by a Corpus Christi volunteer.
- Clean-up: 4:30-5:30
  - The guests bring their trays and silverware to a kitchen window where volunteers wash and arrange them for the next meal.

In two and a half hours, 20-25 Corpus Christi volunteers serve and clean up after approximately 250 guests. If you would like to join our Loaves and Fishes team but don't have two and a half hours, come and stay as long as you can! The Dorothy Day Center is located at 183 Old Sixth St., St. Paul. There is ample parking on the west side of the center or in the parking lot of Assumption Church on the east side of Dorothy Day.

## 2005 Loaves and Fishes Annual Service Summary for eight serving sites:

Number of meals served	316,863
Operating Budget	\$768,000
Average cost per meal	\$2.42
Average number of guests served per night	1,300
Number of volunteer terms	265
Number of volunteer hours (est.)	110,000
Value of donated food and service (est.)	\$1.3 mil

### Site Statistics Summary:

Site	Total Served in 2005	Total Served in 2004
River of Life	40,128	44,173
Dorothy Day	71,883	69,289
Faith Lutheran	26,281	26,755
Holy Rosary	42,930	45,200
Creekside	38,491	36,816
St. Stephens	67,260	69,694
St. Matthews	28,892	28,539
Assumption	998	N/A
<b>Totals</b>	<b>316,863</b>	<b>320,466</b>

### The state of hunger in Minnesota 2005:

During July and August of 2005 13,599 individuals from across the state of Minnesota completed surveys about their food needs for food shelves and onsite meal programs. The State of Hunger in Minnesota has provided the following snapshot of hunger from the survey respondents:

- More people are living in poverty or near the poverty level than five years ago. The hunger relief infrastructure has changed since 2000. What were considered emergency solutions are now becoming sustaining programs, a fundamental part of the survival strategy for an increasing number of people. Food shelf usage has increased by 45% since 2000.
- Even though food shelves are experiencing a rise in demand for services, food support (formerly known as food stamps) is significantly under utilized. While 80% of those surveyed are eligible, only 30% are accessing that resource. 54% of those not participating in the food support program believe that they are not eligible.

### Profile of Survey Respondents:

- 56% of the surveyed households have children
- 15% of the households have at least one senior adult (age 60+) living with them
- 18% of the respondents were single-parent households
- 27% were single person households

### Cutting the size of meals or skipping meals:

- In 58% of the households, one adult had to cut the size of meals due to lack of money

- In 25% of the households, one **child** had to cut the size of meals due to lack of money
- In 47% of the households, one adult skipped meals due to lack of money
- In 14% of the households, one **child** skipped meals due to lack of money

We are all impacted by the effects of hunger! We see this in children who are unable to learn or adults who become underperforming employees. We see hunger as a cause for increased health care costs which ultimately weakens our economic base. As Catholics, we are called to respond to the poverty in our midst.

**WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE BY VOLUNTEERING**