



The Helping Hand

Father Gene's Help Center Newsletter

Spring 2024

Volunteers Dana and Patsy Mills Dedicated to Helping Others

"Marquette University has a saying, 'be the difference,'" said volunteer Dana Mills. "That's how I think of our work at Fr. Gene's. We're just trying to make a difference."

Dana and his wife Patsy learned of Fr. Gene's from parishioners at their parish, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in New Berlin.

"Dana had recently retired from the University of Oregon, and we were looking for a volunteer opportunity," said Patsy, adding "Fr. Gene's is the perfect place for retirees."

Dana and Patsy like the flexibility of volunteering at FGHC. The couple frequently travel to the West Coast to visit their three daughters and seven grandchildren.

After volunteering for nearly 10 years, the couple has many stories about clients who have come to FGHC. Patsy recounts the time a man and woman who had been living in a tent came to shop. The woman told Patsy she had just found a job and needed black pants, a white shirt, and shoes for work.

"Sometimes we're just there to get people through a rough patch," said Patsy.

Dana tells the story of a large Hispanic family that came in many years ago. They had several bags of clothing but had no way of transporting them. Dana offered to deliver the bags to their house.

"When I arrived at the apartment and went inside, I noticed there was nothing in the apartment, not even a chair," said Dana. "This is why Fr. Gene's is here."

When asked why they continue to volunteer after so many years, they cite the friendships they've formed with clients, volunteers, and donors.

"Whether they come from the front door or the back door," said Patsy.

Dana is often the face that donors see at the back door when they bring clothing donations.

"I've become friends with a lot of the donors," said Dana.

The couple also draws satisfaction from making clients happy.

"For example, seeing a little girl excited by the dress she found," said Patsy.

In the end, fulfilling Fr. Gene's mission of providing dignity through free clothing is what keeps them coming back.

"We're doing good that has lasting value," said Dana.

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make a difference."*

- Dana Mills



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Preparing Your Clothing Donation

We are so grateful for the clothing donations we receive that we can then pass on to people in need in the community. Our volunteers know that sorting through the clothing donations can be a daunting task. To expedite the sorting process and allow us to distribute the clothing more quickly, we offer the following suggestions when preparing your clothing donations:

Donate anything you can wear. We accept clothing for men, women, and children. We accept items you can wear, such as tops, bottoms, dresses, underwear, socks, coats, and shoes.

Make sure it is clean. We ask that you donate new or gently used clean clothing. Please do not donate clothing that is dirty, stained, or torn. We do not have a washer/dryer to wash clothing so make sure it's been washed before donating it (including athletic shoes).

Label bags and boxes. We ask that you fold items and put them into a bag or box and attach a brief description of the contents on the outside. Please do not donate loose items or garments on hangers or in receptacles that you want back.



To find out which items we are most in need of, please review the critical needs list below. Alternatively, you can view our Amazon wishlist by going to www.fathergeneshelp.org/support-us and clicking on "View Wishlist." Thank you for supporting our mission.

Volunteer Opportunities

Looking for a rewarding volunteer opportunity where you can directly impact the community? FGHC needs volunteers to sort incoming clothing donations and assist client shoppers. We also offer group experiences for schools, churches, and other organizations. To learn more, go to fathergeneshelp.org/volunteer or scan the QR code.



Critical Needs



- New underwear
- New socks, esp. athletic and ankle socks
- Bras and sports bras
- Athletic and casual shoes
- Men's belts

How to Donate

Donations can be dropped off at: **Father Gene's Help Center** | 5919 W. National Ave., West Allis, WI 53214

Hours

Monday-Thursday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. | First Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Please call the center at (414) 258-4357 with any questions regarding donations.