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THE DINNER BELL

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF



OUR MISSION:

TO ALLEVIATE FOOD INSECURITY THROUGHOUT ST. MARY'S COUNTY

OUR VISION:

A ST. MARY'S COUNTY FREE FROM HUNGER



WHAT'S INSIDE:

- *FSM – WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO*
- *SALUTING OUR PARTNERS*

Just like everyone in the county, Feed St. Mary's Food Bank has been impacted by the events surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak. While this has presented us with challenges, it has reinforced our commitment to help Feed St. Mary's!

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE “WHY” OF WHAT WE DO

One of the primary concepts of any organization is to understand who they are. In the modern world where diversification has become easy, it is vital that successful organizations stay focused on what they have been tasked to do, but maybe as importantly, the passion that drives them to do it. In essence, organizations can get lost in “what” they do when they lose sight of “why” they do it.

This realization has become even more important in today’s challenging times – especially for groups who seek to help people. It is easy to see all of the needs created by the tidal wave known as the Coronavirus Pandemic, and it is tempting to try to do so much that we become swallowed up by the flood of needs – and even the opportunities – we face today. Feed St. Mary’s came into existence during an interesting time. We



received a lot of support and were fortunate to put together the foundation of a fully functional warehouse. Then, just as we were opening for business, the world changed. In addition to the uncertainty of the times, the rules by which we served people were severely altered. In all honesty, we were never able to gain a solid foothold before much of our community was placed into the current state of suspension. For the past few weeks, the Feed St. Mary’s board and staff have been trying to do what the law and social conventions allow while preparing for the chance to get back to business as usual. In an effort to stay balanced and focused, it is important to keep our eye on the “why”. Our mission remains to alleviate food insecurity throughout St. Mary’s County and our vision is still a St. Mary’s County free from hunger. So how do we stay focused? Here are some general principles we keep in mind:



1. We understand our role in feeding those in need. We are not a food pantry or a soup kitchen that provides direct services to individuals, rather we are available to support agencies that provide those services. We do not seek to influence how the local pantries operate nor compete with them in fulfilling their ministry. We are an asset to them by being in partnership with them.

2. We operate our food bank under the “hub” and “spoke” model. One of the more unique aspects of Feed St. Mary’s is that we are the conduit through which local pantries interact with the Maryland Food Bank. Each local entity orders food based upon their own unique needs directly from the Maryland Food Bank. Rather than requiring the individual food pantries or soup kitchens to go elsewhere to pick up the food, the items are shipped directly to Feed St. Mary’s where they

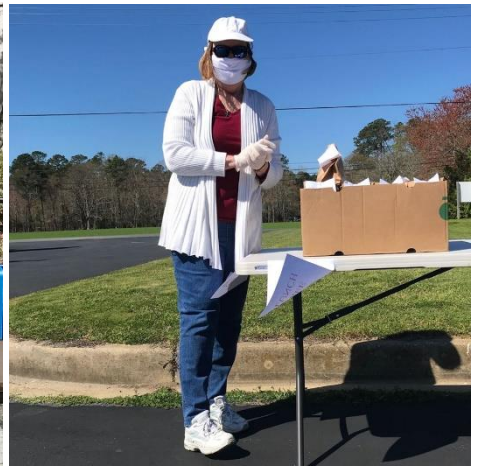
can be picked up locally at the convenience of the ordering agency. By providing this resource, we help reduce fiscal overhead and the strain on volunteers.

3. We are partners with other organizations serving those in need. Addressing food insecurity is not something that can be done by any one entity or even one philosophy, it is a community-based effort. Feed St. Mary’s welcomes the chance to work in harmony with other organizations to help change lives.

Yes, Feed St. Mary’s has been hampered by what has happened in Southern Maryland over the last several weeks, but we are still committed to making a difference! We continue to seek ways to support those people on the frontlines of serving others while looking forward to the chance to enhance the impact we can have when life returns to normal.

A TIP OF THE CAP TO THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

One of the most important (and challenging) decisions that agencies must make during times of community crisis is knowing how much they can do. For some, the decision is financial, while others must balance the health and welfare of their volunteers and staff. The circumstances surrounding what is happening today is unprecedented and so are the decisions agencies are forced to make. We salute our community partners who were able to stay open during the pandemic and support those who made different decisions. We look forward to a time when we can all come back together to Help Feed St. Mary's!



**Would you like to donate your time or treasure to support Feed St. Mary's?
It is as simple as a click of the mouse!**

**To become a volunteer visit: <https://feedstmarys.org/volunteer/>
To make a monetary donation visit: <https://feedstmarys.org/donate/>**

**Are you interested in finding a Food Pantry in St. Mary's County? Check out the
up-to-date listing on our website: <https://feedstmarys.org/services/>**

Feed St. Mary's
Greatly Appreciates
its Operational Sponsors



Generous Citizens
of Southern Maryland

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FEED ST. MARY'S**

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