

**“Remember the prisoners as if chained with them”** (Hebrews 13:3)

In late September, the Homeless Ministry received a call from Why Not Prosper asking if we could offer support for two different service projects. For anyone unfamiliar with Why Not Prosper, their mission is to help women from prison systems discover their strength by providing them with the support and resources to empower them to become responsible, economically self-sufficient, and contributing community members.

The first project was to provide care packages filled with essential items for 300 women incarcerated at PICC (Philadelphia Industrial Correctional Center). These items, which included white washcloths, bras and underwear, toiletries, and other essentials, were targeted for mid-October delivery and distribution at PICC. Our parishioners and Philoptochos quickly stepped up to fulfill the requested items. A thank you video from the Director of Why Not Prosper and a thank you note from one of the incarcerated women were included in our November 6<sup>th</sup> church bulletin in case you missed either.

The second was to help provide a Thanksgiving meal for the 300 women. The requested items included turkeys, cans of cranberry sauce, jars of gravy, soda, Thanksgiving-themed napkins, cups, plates, tablecloths, serving trays, and utensils. During this same time, FOCUS North America reached out to the Homeless Ministry, looking for opportunities to invite other churches in our area to join Annunciation in serving those in need. The call came at the perfect time! Once again, our parishioners, Matthew 25 Ministry, and St. Luke’s Church, came together to fulfill the requested items! Soon after, Why Not Prosper reached out once again, asking for volunteers to join in serving the meal to the women at PICC the day before Thanksgiving.

On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, a group of ten volunteers, including a few from Annunciation church, were humbled and blessed to serve Thanksgiving dinner to 272 women at PICC.

As humans, we communicate love and care through food; we bring soup to friends who are sick, drop off a comforting meal to grieving loved ones, and bake celebratory treats for birthdays and other milestones. On the other hand, the food in prison facilities sends a message that incarcerated people are not worthy of care and well-being. The effects of receiving that message, meal after meal, day after day, for years or even decades, can profoundly undermine someone’s sense of humanity and self-worth.

Not everyone can spend Thanksgiving sharing a delicious meal in the company of the people they love the most in the world! We hope and pray you did and want to say once again “thank you” for thinking of others!



In Christ’s Service,

THE HOMELESS MINISTRY