



# Sleep Out Saturday

... for the homeless  
**Saturday, November 3, 2012**

Sleep Out Saturday is a major homeless awareness event. Funds raised assist the growing number of local homeless families via the transitional housing program at St. Thomas and county-wide.

## Does Transitional Housing make a difference?

It has made a life-changing difference for over a dozen St. Thomas-supported families, three of whom graduated to self-sufficiency in the past two years.

Transitional housing supports homeless families on their return to self sufficiency. St. Thomas provides rent and more importantly ... a team of two trained mentors who meet with the family providing guidance on financial, parenting, and life skills. The mentors serve as trusted advisors/coaches. St. Thomas partners with Bridge Communities. They offer additional services as needed: a car/car repairs, career advice/job-finding assistance, legal assistance, educational advice, and tutoring for the children. All of this helps break the cycle of poverty. There are more than 1,700 people county-wide living self-sufficiently after completing the Bridge Communities transitional housing program.

## *Did you know?*

- Since 2004, Sleep Out Saturday has raised more than \$404,000, which equals 16,610 nights of housing and shelter for homeless families in DuPage County.
- During the 2009-2010 school year 792 homeless students were educated in DuPage County schools, a 10% increase over the previous year.
- The average age of a homeless person in DuPage County is 9 years old.  
(Illinois Poverty Summit; DuPage County Homeless Continuum of Care, DuPage Federation on Human Services).

## *What can I do?*

1. **Sleep Out on Saturday, November 3** and sign-up donation sponsors.
2. **Assist** with Sleep Out supervision, activities, and coordination.
3. **Donate directly** or sponsor a Sleeper collection donation.

(Check to "Bridge Communities" – drop off at St. Thomas or put in collection).

(To donate on-line: Please visit [www.sleepoutsaturday.org](http://www.sleepoutsaturday.org), click "make a donation", for Participant's Name enter "St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church", and follow instructions.)



# Who can sleep out? EVERYONE

**Families** Bring out the tent for an educational faith in action activity. Sleep in your car, as many homeless families do.

**Junior High & Elementary Students** with a parent or older sibling and parental permission.

**High School Youth** (with parental permission). Gather friends to join you in a tent or big box village for the night. (Same gender per box or tent.)

**Adults** Recruit your small faith community?

## How do I Participate or Volunteer to Help?

1. Pick up a SLEEP OUT SATURDAY Family Packet from: a.) the table in the Gathering area the weekends of October 21 and 28 or b.) the reception desk during the week.
2. Complete the information & return the packet (except the pledge sheet/collections envelope) to the church office by Friday, November 2.
3. Bring your pledge sheet with the sponsor donations to turn in at check-in on November 3.
4. Event volunteers will be contacted by phone.

## Schedule of Activities

2 – 4:30 PM	Check-in, set up tents/boxes on the lawn, or park a car/van in the parking lot.
5:45– 8:45 PM	Ride school bus to the S.O.S rally in downtown Glen Ellyn. Join 1,500 other “sleepers” for music, refreshments, and thought provoking speakers. (In the parking lot adjacent to Bridge Communities at 505 Crescent Blvd.)
9 – Midnight	Return to St. Thomas for spirit-filled, fun, thought-provoking activities designed around the homeless experience.
12:00 – 6:00 AM	Sleep out. The grounds will be <u>well supervised all night</u> by parish staff and adult volunteers. (Free coffee for the supervisors.)
6:30 AM	A light continental Breakfast for all participants.
8:00 AM	Mass – Come as you are and witness for our community (Please leave your tents and boxes set up until 11:15 AM as a visual witness.)
11:15 AM	Pick up your tents and boxes ... and THANK YOU!

## Questions

<b>Where can I get a big box?</b> An appliance store such as Best Buy, Abt Electronics, etc.
<b>What should I wear/bring?</b> Warm clothes, in layers so you can adjust, depending on the weather. Blankets or sleeping bags. A spirit of adventure
<b>Can I bring my motor home or camping trailer?</b> In empathy for homeless families, we wish to limit sleeping accommodations to small tents, boxes, cars, or vans.
<b>Will food be served?</b> Not until a light breakfast Sunday morning. We want to represent what it’s like to be homeless. We recommend you eat something Saturday afternoon before you arrive.
<b>What if it rains etc.?</b> If dangerous weather arises (tornados, lightning) we will move indoors for safety. Other than that, this is an outdoor event. The Gathering Area door will be open all night to use the rest room or to warm up.
<b>It sounds kind of fun. Isn’t homelessness a serious issue?</b> Yes, and yes. Fun – with education and awareness on what we can do to help <u>reduce</u> homelessness. The activities will include spiritual & educational activities after the rally and a sense of community among our diverse group of St. Thomas sleepers.
<b>What if I have additional questions?</b> Call Larry Drummond, Transitional Housing Ministry Facilitator-Cell: 973-953-2382 or Mike Ryder, Outreach and Social Justice Director: 630-355-8980, x121.