

# Sunday Chronicle

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## Church prepares Thanksgiving meal for hundreds

By Dana Edwards  
Special to the Chronicle

The aroma of 1,680 pounds of turkey slow-roasted in a black metal barbecue cooker surrounded the 200 volunteers filling containers with the traditional fixings of a Thanksgiving meal.

Deacon Tom McBrearty of Good Shepherd Catholic Church blessed the food before children and teenagers helped box food packages alongside their parents and grandparents.

After 30 years of preparing Thanksgiving meals for local charities, the parishioners of Good Shepherd have got the process of cooking meals and packing boxes down to three hours.

Planning starts four months in advance, turkey preparation starts the weekend before and boxed items are set up the night before Thanksgiving. Servers start at 8 a.m. Thanksgiving morning and by 11 a.m., the food is ready for more Good Shepherd parishioners to deliver to families in Tallahassee and Quincy.

"My favorite part of the whole event is seeing everyone come together to pull it off in such a short period of time," said Lawrence Stanford, a Good Shepherd parishioner who has volunteered with the Meals-on-Wheels program for the past 11 years. "The parish really looks forward to it."



SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Parishioners dig in to prepare Thanksgiving Day dinner boxes at Good Shepherd Catholic Church. The boxed dinners were delivered to families in Tallahassee and Quincy.

The parish tradition of serving Meals-on-Wheels to clients of Elder Care Services and 10 other charities on Thanksgiving Day has grown to more than 1,600 meals. Charity recipients include organizations such as Refuge

House, Good News Outreach and Haven of Rest.

"It's nice to give the folks at Elder Care Services a break," said Glen Nyman, the coordinator for the Good Shepherd parish Meals-on-Wheels. "They serve and

deliver meals every day."

Fifteen years ago, the parish added family dinners to the hot and cold individual meals served. This year, 900 individual meals and roughly 145 family meals were prepared. Between 800 and 850

parish volunteers donated, cooked, prepared and delivered food.

Nyman, the coordinator for the past eight years, said the Thanksgiving committee received an increase in people wanting to help this

year. The parish accepted bread donations from Second Harvest Food Bank, box donations from Home Depot and food donations from Costco, Sam's Club and Publix.

Mike Bettinger, a Good Shepherd parishioner, cooked the turkeys in a smoker he welded himself. Families were given the whole cooked turkeys with mashed potatoes and canned goods. Individual meals consisted of turkey slices, stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, apples, oranges, pie, bread and cranberry sauce.

"It's great to see how appreciative the elderly are for a Thanksgiving meal," said five-year volunteer Katherine Plevak, a Florida State University law student and 2011 advertising graduate from the University of Florida. "It's nice to do something they can't always do for themselves anymore and see your volunteer efforts working right at home."

The Men of Good Shepherd organization, or "MOGS," helped organize the Thanksgiving Meals-on-Wheels with Nyman. The group usually hosts six to eight social opportunities throughout the year for church members while also providing service opportunities.

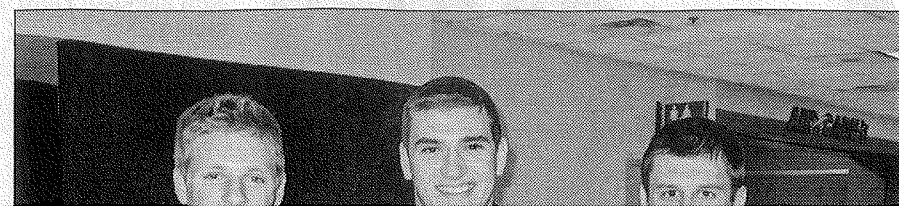
"This is one of the biggest community involvement activities here, and it wouldn't be Thanksgiving without it," Nyman said.

### Local pastors organize prayer service for FAMU and community

By Rev. R.B. Holmes, Jr.  
Special to the Chronicle

Local pastors held a press

### Midshipmen arrive home



### COMMUNITY BRIEFS

#### Take a walk through Bethlehem

The Bethlehem Experience is a free family event where you can experience the joy of the people of Bethlehem as they

and pictures with Santa on Saturday, Dec. 10 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. All free. The church is located at 1689 Old St. Augustine Road. Call 877-1738 for more information.