



October 12, 2017

Dear friends at St. John's:

I would like to share an experience that changed my life, and the blessing I received recently as part of a St. John's community service mission in support of Journey Home.

The apartment was bare, save for a table and chair in the kitchen, an air mattress on the living room floor, and some plastic bags and a backpack containing John's personal belongings. John had been living here for two weeks, yet today he was smiling, because on this day he was getting a bed, a dresser, a sofa, and a coffee table for the first place he could call home in more than a year.



Mark Proft

As John thanked those of us who were working with Journey Home and had delivered the furniture, I wished I had been able to show him how St. John's had been involved in helping him make this change in his life. But at that moment, all that mattered was that a life had been changed, and that was enough. Leading up to that moment, Journey Home had been constantly working to end homelessness in Connecticut, and St. John's had supported that effort in many ways. St. John's Community Service Committee had donated funding, dozens of parishioners had donated used furniture, others had collected and stored that furniture, and still others participated in the delivery to John's apartment. And of course, there were many others like John who benefited from the varied contributions of St. John's parishioners.

Similar stories can be told of changing lives through homebuilding with Habitat for Humanity, or working to settle a refugee family through co-sponsorship with Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS). But the story that often does not get told is the way these experiences change our lives. We don't volunteer our time or donate goods with the expectation that our life will change, but when you see the outsized impact our collective small efforts can have, you can't help but be moved.

As a faith family at St. John's, we bring many hands to any task we take on, and we have an enormous capacity to address the needs of so many. If you would like to join our work with Journey Home, IRIS, or Habitat for Humanity, or if you know of an organization or a cause that needs support — join us, support us, and together we can change many lives. I am grateful for these opportunities; they are why I make an annual gift to St. John's. Please join me in support of our parish and our ability to change lives, within St. John's and beyond.

Blessings,
Mark Proft