

Artists & Art Enthusiasts Wanted!

Alexian Brothers AIDS Ministry and friends celebrate life and art in a colorful community event.

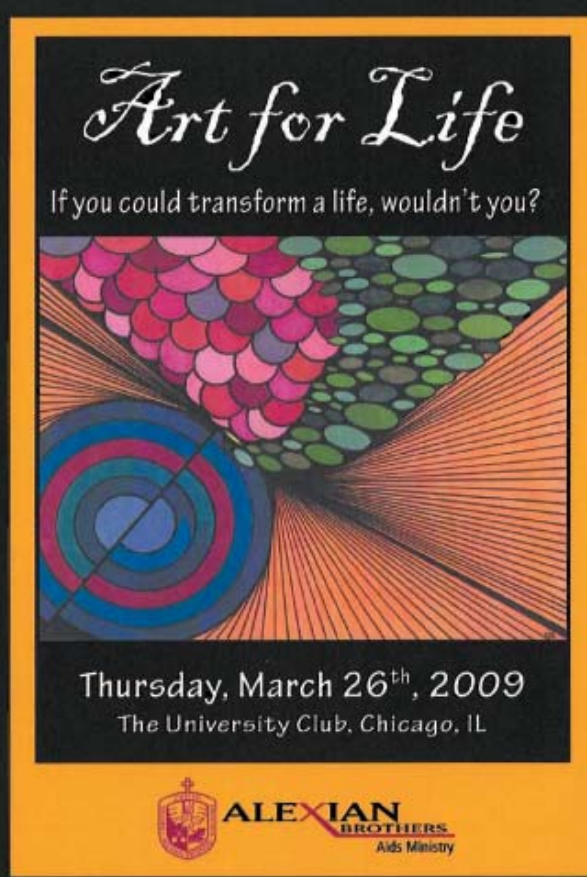
# Art for Life

Thursday, March 26, 2009

The University Club  
76 E. Monroe Street  
Michigan Room, 2nd Floor  
6:00pm till 9:00pm  
Tickets \$ 100.00

Interested artists should contact the Development Department regarding possible donations of art at 773.327.9921 ext. 132 or [kkowal@abam.org](mailto:kkowal@abam.org)

More information at [http://www.bonaventurehouse.org/art\\_for\\_life](http://www.bonaventurehouse.org/art_for_life)



Would you like to receive this newsletter in electronic form?  
E-mail us at [info@abam.org](mailto:info@abam.org)



Alexian Brothers Bonaventure House  
825 W. Wellington Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60657  
773.327.9921  
773.327.9113 (fax)

Alexian Brothers The Harbor  
826 North Avenue  
Waukegan, IL 60085  
847.782.8015  
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<http://www.abam.org>

# Voices from Home

Winter 2008-9

Published for Friends of Alexian Brothers Bonaventure House & The Harbor

## World Wide AIDS Ministry?

This year Alexian Brothers AIDS Ministry has worked to increase our presence on the internet. Our first initiative was to revamp our current website. When you visit us at <http://www.abam.org>, you will see a much cleaner look to our website with updated information. We hope you will find it easier to use and stay connected with our community.

Most of us are surfing the internet on a regular basis. Now you can support and stay in touch with Alexian Brothers AIDS Ministry through a variety of different sites.

### Do you eBay?



The next time you're buying or selling on eBay, please give eBay Giving Works (also known as Mission Fish) a try. Use it to list items on eBay and donate 10% to 100% of your listing's final sale price to us. Your listing will benefit from several unique program features that have been proven to attract more buyers and raise awareness of our cause such as the eBay Giving Works ribbon and enhanced searchability. Plus your listings will automatically qualify for the eBay Giving Works Fee Credit Benefit and you'll

receive a tax-receipt for your donation.

When you list an item on eBay, be sure to customize it. Look for the eBay Giving Works field and search for and select "Alexian Brothers Bonaventure House." You can also support us by shopping for items that are being sold in aid of us on eBay! Be sure to visit our MissionFish page on a regular basis to see all the great listings benefiting us.

### Shop 'til you Drop!

Many of us do a lot of our shopping online because often with our busy schedules it is just easier and faster. Wouldn't it be great if your online shopping could benefit a great organization like Alexian Brothers AIDS Ministry? Now you can through iGive.com.



iGive.com is easy and safe. Simply register online and choose "Alexian Brothers Bonaventure House" in the "Select Your Cause" area. Then shop in the iGive Mall. The iGive Mall features over 700 trusted online retailers. You'll NEVER pay more when you reach these stores through iGive.com. Up to 26% of EACH purchase through iGive benefits Alexian Brothers AIDS Ministry. Even window shopping can raise money for our organization.

## From the CEO

The news has been pretty tough lately with all the talk of war, recession, bursting bubbles and elaborate ponzi schemes. All these things have an impact on us and our families – so much so that it becomes easy to focus on the negative and lose sight of the blessings that are part of our lives. Though we cannot and should not ignore the negativity that is at work in the world, we should not lose sight of the goodness and grace that is also powerfully at work. In difficult times, we need to take stock of the goodness and count our blessings, both as individuals and as communities.

For 20 years, Alexian Brothers AIDS Ministry has been a blessing to our communities in Chicago and Waukegan. We provide our residents with more than four walls, three meals a day, and two years of housing. We provide a foundation for change. For our residents, living at Bonaventure House or The Harbor is truly a blessing. Christopher (highlighted in this issue of the newsletter) says, "no matter who you are and what your circumstances are, you are treated like someone who is truly loved by God. It feels like a home."

*continued on page 2*

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### What's Inside:

Resident Story..... page 2

Event Calendar..... page 3

## Making a Profound Change

Christopher, like so many of our current and former residents, has faced daunting challenges, including serious health problems, addiction and homelessness. It would be understandable if they allowed their challenges and worries to eclipse any blessings they may have. But they do not succumb to this temptation. Instead, our residents take stock of what is good and positive and hopeful in their lives. They count their blessings. But even more, they share their blessings.

Even during the difficult times we are facing, there is no better time to realize how fortunate we are then during the holidays. As I reflect on the coming year, I hope that you will continue to share your blessings with us as we celebrate our 20th anniversary so that our life-changing mission can flourish and thrive. Thank you and all the best in the coming year.

*Bart Winters*

Web from page 1

**Be Connected! Be Social!**  
 facebook  
 myspace.com  
 a place for friends

Social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace are very popular (and not just with 20-somethings). If you aren't on one of these sites, you would be surprised at how many people you know are. We have created pages and profiles both on Facebook and MySpace. If you use either (or both) of these sites, please search of "Alexian Brothers Bonaventure House" and become a fan or a friend. We will use these sites (in addition to our website) to post information about upcoming events and the latest news about our organization.

We invite you to join us on the World Wide Web. You can support us through your regular activities on the internet. More information and links to all of these sites are available on our website under "Ways to Give" or simple call the Development Office with any questions. See you on web!

"I will be leaving this house very different than when I came," says Christopher, "I love this house because no matter who you are and what your circumstances are, you are treated like someone who is truly loved by God. It feels like a home."

Christopher says life for him has been a process of constant running. Growing up he was surrounded by alcohol and drug abuse and attended a different school every year. He grew up with dyslexia, which made life difficult. He felt that he wasn't able to learn and that something was wrong with him. He says he grew up with the mentality of being a victim.

He also struggled with homelessness for most of his adult life. Christopher has frequently switched professions. He been HIV positive since 1985 and at this time he was coming to terms with his sexuality. Christopher feels "anyone who has lived through AIDS in

loved by God. He also started praying to the Rosary.

Then Christopher came to Bonaventure House. He says, "It is profound to have people that I can talk to and connect with



and be myself." His case manager David Dempsey has been a significant influence on his life. "David Dempsey is someone I can really talk to and I feel like I am the most important person in the room." He goes on to say that, "Bonaventure

House is about ministry, everyone who works here ministers in some way."

In the last fourteen months, Christopher has

reconnected with his family. More importantly, he has reconnected with himself. Some of the most powerful things he has learned are that he can trust his own instincts and inner voice; that he does make a difference; and that he matters.

Christopher has become stronger, more confident and prepared for the future. "I have a better sense of what I want to do. I see myself being successful, professional and being in recovery and the two coinciding."

*"It is profound to have people that I can talk to and connect with and be myself."*

the early years, all of us have this sense of post-traumatic stress."

He had used alcohol for most of his life and at 38 turned to drugs. He says he used drugs because he didn't have to feel the pain or deal with the anger and rage in his life. In the end, Christopher realized that drugs "made my life small and eventually I stopped caring about life. I had given up."

At a rehabilitation facility he discovered African-American spirituality. He felt this penetrated the deep darkness in him. He learned that no matter what he was still



**AIDS Fact:** 2 out of 3 people living with HIV/AIDS in Illinois reside in Chicago.

## Leaders in the Community

We would like to acknowledge the following awards and distinctions received by Alexian Brothers AIDS Ministry staff and former residents:

Marty Hansen, Director of Programs and Services, was named Executive Committee of AIDS Foundation of Chicago's Service Providers Council at their 2008 Annual Meeting in November. He will use his expertise on the housing committee.

David Dempsey, Director of Clinical Services, received a 2008 Red Ribbon Award for "The Compassionate Heart" from the Illinois Department of Public Health for his outstanding work in the HIV continuum of care that has significantly improved the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Kim C., former Bonaventure House resident, was honored with the Long Term Survivor award from The Chicago Area HIV/AIDS Caucus EASE. The award honors those individuals who have a history of Long Term Survival and living with HIV and by recognizing their struggles and courage in surmounting the odds against them. She was nominated by Chicago Women's AIDS Project.

We would also like to congratulate Marjorie Orr, Director of Development, for receiving the Masters in Business Administration from North Park University and Lela Smith, Senior Case Manager, for receiving the Bachelor's of Art through the Board of Governors Program in psychology from Northeastern University.

## Mark Your Calendars for our 2009 Special Events

**Art for Life** (Thursday, March 26th, 2009 at The University Club in Chicago)

**Founder's Day** (Saturday, June 6th, 2009 at Bonaventure House)

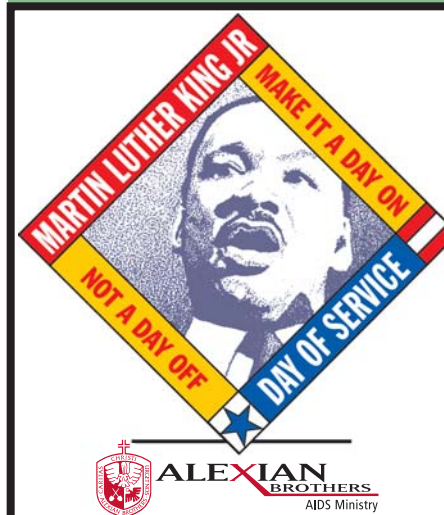
**Sober & Proud: Recovery Event & Party** (Saturday, June 27th, 2009)

**Chicago Gay & Lesbian Pride Parade** (Sunday, June 28th, 2009)

**Garden Party** (Saturday, August 22nd, 2009 at The Harbor)

**AIDS Run/Walk** (tentatively Saturday, October 3rd, 2009 at Grant Park)

Please see our website for complete details. RSVP appreciated for all events.



If you are interested in participating in this service opportunity please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 773.327.9921 ext. 126 or volunteers@abam.org. Very limited space is available.

What will you be doing on January 19th, 2009? Many of us will have the day off because it is Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Did you know there is a movement to make Martin Luther King Jr. Day a day on and not a day off? Across the country many Americans make MLK Day a Day of Service to their communities.

This year Alexian Brothers AIDS Ministry will proudly take part in this day of service. We have partnered with Service for Peace, another non-profit organization, and have created a service project called "A Celebration of Clean Living."

Bonaventure House will host a group of volunteers to perform various cleaning and maintenance tasks around the facility. The volunteers will receive an overview of the services provided to our residents and we will

have a few of the residents and former residents speak about their experiences living with HIV/AIDS, being homeless, and being in recovery from drug and/or alcohol addiction. At the end of the day, we will bring all of the volunteers together again to reflect upon what they have experienced during the day and how the day coincides with the message of service articulated by Dr. King.

*"Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve."  
— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

View our Current Wish List at <http://www.bonaventurehouse.org/files/Wish%20List%202008.12.pdf>