

Welcome to Street Patrol!

Dear friends,

I watched on, slightly amused, slightly insulted, as a homeless person spitted out a sandwich I had just handed him. He then began to cuss and swear: "What the @#\$% is this @#\$% you're feeding me?" Well, it was an eggplant sandwich; an Italian delicacy. My new found friend was not impressed.

And so began my involvement with the homeless. Many summers of Street Patrol later, I have since learned a few things -- like sticking to more "traditional" sandwiches. I have also experienced countless rewarding moments with those who were in need of my company, concern, and offer of food.

Street Patrol, too, has grown in the many years it has been running. What started out as a small group of dedicated volunteers walking the streets and handing out food to the homeless, has now become an organized, multi-parish effort committed to giving aid to the street people of our city. Our strength is God's strength, our hearts a reflection of Jesus' love for us.

Below is a result of our years of experience on the Patrol. The information provided answers most of the commonly asked questions regarding this exciting and affecting outreach service. An outline of our schedule and guidelines have also been included.

The aim of this information is to reach Catholic groups/ associations/ movements/ clubs and parish communities, and to share with them the opportunity to join us on Street Patrol.

I personally continue to volunteer my time and effort because I know the real difference this program makes to the lives of the homeless and to the souls of our volunteers.

As chief organizer of this ministry, I am proud and honoured to welcome you to Saint Patrick's Catholic Street Patrol.

Yours in Christ,

Lucio Abbruzzese
Street Patrol Organizer
(416) 738-9197
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



- **What is it?**

Men, women, and youth (13 years of age and up) walking the streets of downtown Toronto, offering food and friendship to those in need.

- **When is it?**

Wednesday evenings, from the first week of July to the last week of August. We begin at **6:30pm**, and end at **9:30pm**.

- **6:30 p.m.** – gather on the steps of Saint Patrick’s Church
- **6:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.** – orientation talk: “How ‘to do’ Street Patrol” & Street Patrol Prayer
- **6:45 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.** – Proceed along designated routes
- **9:15 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.** – gather back on the steps to “share our experiences” and end in prayer

- **Where do meet?**

St. Patrick's Church (on the outside steps) – 131 McCaul Street

- **What's the best way to get to St. Patrick's Church?**

McCaul Street runs north/south, between University and Spadina Avenues. The church is located just north of Dundas Street West, on the east side of McCaul.

If you choose to drive, free parking is available at the church parking lot located directly across the street from the building.

If you choose to use TTC, the closest subway stop is "St. Patrick", on the University Line (University and Dundas).

- **What should I wear?**

A good pair of walking shoes is **VERY IMPORTANT**. Keep in mind that we will be walking for over two hours. Comfortable clothing is also a must. A knapsack to put your food in is a very good idea. It will leave your arms free, and it's easier to walk when your back is carrying most of the weight.

- **How do I sign up?**

There are **TWO** ways to get involved:

1. If you are **NOT** connected with a particular parish group, you can show up on any Wednesday evening **WITHOUT** confirming with us beforehand. We encourage everyone to lend a hand and experience the Patrol.

2. If you are a group leader, you'll want to contact Street Patrol's chief organizer ASAP:

Lucio Abbruzzese at (416) 738-9197 or e-mail at inmylife@rogers.com

If your parish group is interested in participating, you will be asked to "host" a Wednesday night Patrol. This means your parish's group members will be the main participants on that assigned Wednesday night. We like to have no more than 50 (and no less than 20) participants on any given Street Patrol.

If your group is small in numbers, you will be asked to “co-host” a Patrol with another equally numbered group.

Information gathering should start in May, and you should have a booked Wednesday by the middle of June. When booking, please know how many people in your group are willing to commit to your assigned Patrol. This is important for us to know.

If you have a specific Wednesday you would like to book, please notify us as soon as possible.

- **What can we do in advance to prepare for the Patrol?**

You may want to hold a meeting and present on the theme of homelessness.

What is it? Why is it? Who is it? How does Christ fit into the picture? How do we?

After the Patrol, we highly recommend a follow up "rap" session. Your participants will have many new insights on homelessness and will want to share their experiences. They may also have questions or need support after witnessing this serious issue head on. It's a great opportunity for growth!

- **Where does the food come from?**

From you! Sandwiches are prepared prior to meeting at St. Patrick's Church. If you belong to a group, you may want to prepare the sandwiches and drinks collectively.

(A Tuesday night get-together in your parish hall may be the best time and place.)



- **What type of food do I bring?**

The TWO main things we bring are:

1. SANDWICHES: These can be made of anything healthy, like cold cuts, cheese, tuna, egg salad, etc. We have only one exception, and that is peanut butter. The reason is peanut butter is inexpensive, and the homeless get a whole lot of it. We try hard to avoid using it. Using whole wheat bread or bagels is a good idea. Please wrap all sandwiches hygienically.

2. DRINKS: These are very important!! Often, homeless people are very dehydrated, especially on hot summer days. Any type of drink is okay. Juice is preferred. Even water will do. Drink boxes or cans of pop are convenient. But what may work best, and is the least expensive, is to bring 1, 2 or 4 litre jugs (along with paper cups). It may take longer to pour the drinks and serve them, but this time can be used to exchange in small talk with the homeless.

You may want to bring other foods, as well. Soft fruit is welcomed, such as bananas and oranges. (Hard fruit, like apples, are difficult to eat when you have poor teeth.) Vegetables, nuts, raisins, and seeds are a good idea, too. And if you wish, a small sweet treat, like cookies, can add to the enjoyment of the meal.

- **How much food do I bring?**

This is a personal decision. A loaf of bread makes about ten sandwiches. Ten sandwiches per person is the average offering. You may want to approach your parish to donate food or money (to purchase food) for your Patrol. By asking your community to contribute, you make Street Patrol a true parish contribution.

- **What if there's food left over from the Patrol?**

No food is ever wasted. All extra food will be collected at the end of the night and taken to a shelter.

- **What are the group leaders' responsibilities?**

They make sure participants are committed to the project. They acquire permission forms (if needed) . If the group decides to prepare sandwiches collectively, leaders organize food collection and sandwich production. Leaders are responsible for transportation to and from St. Patrick's Church.

Leaders are also responsible for group conduct during Street Patrol.

When a parish hosts a Street Patrol, it is very much YOUR PROJECT!

YOU will be the factor that makes it a success. We will do our best to make sure you can do yours 😊

- **What are the age limits?**

We enthusiastically welcome all adults and youth.

However, some restrictions do apply to those under thirteen years of age. If a youth under thirteen wishes to participate, we request that an adult, preferably a parent, be with that youth at all times during the Patrol.

- **What if it's raining?**

We sometimes get sprinkled upon, and from time to time a storm passes through, but Street Patrol has NEVER been cancelled. However, if you have any doubts about whether or not the Patrol will proceed, please phone Lucio at (416) 738-9197.

- **More questions?**

Call Lucio Abbruzzese (chief organizer) at **(416) 738-9197** or e-mail at inmylife@rogers.com