

Street Patrol Guidelines

- ☑ Always be aware of your surroundings. Expect the unexpected.
- ☑ Do not travel on your own or stray away from the group.
- ☑ Always know the whereabouts of your Street Patrol route leader.
- ☑ Avoid situations that will put you in an uncomfortable or unsafe position. Your route leader is there for any questions or concerns.
- ☑ How can you tell if someone is in need of a meal?
A person begging is an obvious sign (although some will refuse offered food and accept only money). A lot of clothing or bags around a person is a good indication of homelessness. Very poor footwear is also a telling sign.
However, this is not an exact science. If you mistaken a person who is in no need of food, apologize, and walk on. It's no big deal. If you are in doubt, ask your leader for his or her opinion.
- ☑ Approach the homeless in groups NO LARGER than 5 or 6 participants.
*When traveling with the larger group, a group of five or six will volunteer to meet a street person on their own (while always keeping in sight of the larger group). If more food or drink is needed, they can then call for backup. This is in keeping with the very serious policy of giving street people their **SPACE**. *** Never wake-up a sleeping homeless person. You may leave food for them, if you wish.*
- ☑ Stop roughly one meter away from where they are standing or sitting.
Let them know what you are doing. If they agree to accept food or drink, and you feel comfortable, you may move closer, hand out what you have, and engage in conversation.
- ☑ What is a good opening line? Try this:

*"Hey buddy / friend / sir / dude..." or just
"Hi! We're giving out food tonight. Could you use some?"
It's as simple as that.*



If you have a choice of sandwiches, give street people the option of picking their own meal. This empowerment, little as it is, helps restore a sense of dignity that street people often lack. Use your judgment over whether or not the street person you are with would like to talk. Simple questions, like...

How are you doing?

What's your name?

Where did you stay last night?

... can break the ice and give you a sense of the person.



If you feel comfortable, and you believe the street person you are with is also in a comfortable zone, you may spend some time talking. Often, this companionship is valued as much, or perhaps even more, than the food and drink you are offering.



Never give out personal information, like your address or telephone number.



It is Street Patrol policy NOT to give money to those in need. If you are asked, tell street people you have food and drinks, and are not allowed to distribute money



Drink fluids along the way. It is a two hour walk, after all. Ask to take a break if you need one. Make absolutely sure your shoes (and feet) are up to the task of a two hour walk!



We will be walking through city streets and parks, looking for the homeless. Due to the transient lifestyle of street people, the numbers we meet vary from week to week. Sometimes we meet so many people in need that we run out of food. Other times, we have trouble finding the homeless and have food leftover. In the case of the latter, all extra food will be collected at the end of the patrol and taken to the Good Shepherd Centre, where the food will be gladly accepted.



And finally.... Street Patrol is a service for the homeless and YOU! Hopefully, the experience will change you forever. Do not hand out food with your eyes and heart closed. You may not be able to connect with everyone you meet. But if you can connect with only one homeless person, that will make the patrol worth all your effort. And it is almost guaranteed that at least one person's spirit will make an impact on you during the Patrol, if you are open to the experience. Then, when you are back in your own home, pray for that person, and reflect on the events of the night. But do all of this with a smile, and HAVE FUN!