

Archbishop Lori provides invocation for Helping Up Mission improvements

Archbishop William E. Lori gave the invocation during the ribbon-cutting ceremony for kitchen and dining room renovations at the Helping Up Mission in downtown Baltimore Dec. 19.

Addressing a crowd of close to 200, Archbishop Lori invoked blessings upon the mission and expressed gratitude to God for the service Helping Up Mission provides for men struggling with addiction and homelessness.

“This place where your sons are nourished; this place, this ministry, where your sons encounter your abundant life and love,” Archbishop Lori prayed.

He continued, “We give you thanks Lord for this ministry of the Helping Up Mission, which helps so many in our community to rediscover their God-given dignity, and to find new, virtuous and productive pathways in life.”

The dedication included Maryland Gov. Lawrence J. Hogan Jr., First Lady Yumi Hogan and Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh. Both the governor and mayor offered remarks prior to the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Auxiliary Bishops Mark E. Brennan and Denis J. Madden, as well as former State Sen. Frank Kelly, were also present during the event.

“This is a great achievement for everyone involved, for the folks here, for Baltimore City and the State of Maryland,” Hogan said. “The Gospel of Matthew tells us, ‘freely you have received, freely give.’ For 132 years, Helping Up Mission has taken that Scripture to heart, serving as a shining light and a community of hope for individuals who are facing poverty, homelessness and addiction here in Baltimore City and throughout the region.”

Pugh said, “It is a collective effort that gets these kinds of projects moving forward. Homelessness is a problem; drug addiction is a problem in our city, in our state, in

our country.”

Following their remarks, Hogan cut the ribbon and attendees had an opportunity to enjoy lunch in the newly-renovated dining room. The meal was prepared by residents of the Helping Up Mission in their new kitchen.

According to Mike Rallo, director of spiritual life for the Helping Up Mission, a faith-based institution with an approach that seeks to help the whole person, it houses more than 400 men.

“It’s a residential program; It’s a comprehensive, hard-core, one-year spiritual recovery program,” Rallo explained.

“After sobriety, we need to deal with their hearts and their souls. That’s why we believe the Gospel of Christ is at the core of that. We don’t force people to believe that, but we are faithful to proclaim Christ and are faithful to our orthodoxy in that sense,” Rallo said.

The program was emceed by Jim Longenecker, senior philanthropist officer for Helping Up Mission.

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