

Media Advisory

For immediate release

December 21, 2007

Good Shepherd Annual Christmas Dinner will feed 3,000 plus

Enormous community effort gives guest more than just a meal

Hamilton, ON – December 22, 2007

- 110 turkeys
- 375 pounds of stuffing
- 2,700 lbs of potatoes
- 4,800 dinner rolls
- 105 pounds of cranberry sauce
- 3,000 pies
- 800 volunteers
- 30 choirs members
- 1,500 toys

These are just some of the ingredients of the Good Shepherd Annual Christmas Dinner and Wonderland. When combined on December 22 at the Hamilton Convention Centre, they will make a traditional Christmas dinner and festive celebration for more than 3,000 of this community's most vulnerable people.

Good Shepherd invites all media to attend the **46th Annual Good Shepherd Dinner and Wonderland**.

What: Good Shepherd Annual Christmas Dinner and Wonderland

When: Saturday, December 22, 2007. Doors open at 1:30. Dinner 3:00 to

5:00 p.m. **Media photos and interviews with staff, volunteers and guests will be available beginning at 3:00 in the Chedoke Room.**

Location: Hamilton Convention Centre, 1 Summers Lane

Contact: Alan Whittle at 905.528.6565 ext. 3322 during office hours or at 905.516.2924 other times.

For the volunteers and staff of Good Shepherd, the day begins at 6 a.m. Thousands of toys and other gifts are wrapped and packaged. Hundreds of tables are set with white table cloths and poinsettias. Cooks prepare the turkey, stuffing, gravy, mashed potatoes, peas and carrots.

more...

Other teams of volunteers are setting up the Santa's gift room and decorating the hall. At 1 p.m., guests will begin to arrive at 1 Summers Lane. As they come in they are greeted by Brother Richard, Executive Director of Good Shepherd, and Christmas carols courtesy of St. Joseph's Choir from Grimsby. Volunteers usher them into two huge rooms, which were decorated earlier in the day.

Teams of volunteers will serve guests a complete traditional Christmas meal, with turkey and all the fixings. By the end of the day, more than 3,000 will be served, half of whom are children.

After dinner, the guests will be guided through the Wonderland portion of the event, a delightful world of music, games, toys, face painting, clowns, elves, and of course, Santa and Mrs. Claus. The kids will have a ball, and the adults will love it too. Santa's helpers (more volunteers!) will make sure every guest takes home a special gift.

All told, 800 volunteers from the community make this event possible. Thousands of community members also support this event through donations of cash, food and toys, and dozens of organizations sponsor the event.

"They say you can judge a community by how well it treats its most vulnerable members," says Brother Richard, Executive Director of Good Shepherd. "Our Annual Dinner shows just how great this community is."

"This event gives many people in this community the opportunity to experience the joys of Christmas in the company of friends and family. Families and people who have very little look forward to this celebration to share in the warmth of companionship, which many lack during the holiday season."

"It's not just a meal for our guests," he adds. "The event really lifts their spirits and brings some joy into their lives. Our clients are very grateful. It shows that we care about them, and that we have faith in them. That can really make a difference in their lives."

Good Shepherd has been serving people in the Greater Hamilton area since 1961, when they were founded by the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd. Good Shepherd provides a wide range of community services for men, women, children, youth and families in need ranging from emergency shelter and hunger relief, to referral and counselling services, palliative care, housing for street youth, assistance for victims of domestic violence and housing for special-needs adults.

For more information, visit www.goodshepherdcentres.ca