Thousands flock to minister’s call

by Thomas Perry

Pastor Paul Apostopoulos of Minneapolis (far right) has distributed food to all corners at the corner of Selby and Dale every Wednesday since New Year’s Day.

The food distribution begins at noon and lasts about an hour. More than 1,000 people, of all ages and from a widespread area, have been turning out for the weekly distribution.

Apostopoulos said he would eventually like to set up a national food collection network, and he would also like to start clothing giveaways. In the meantime, another project of his involves an attempt to provide more hot meals for the homeless in St. Paul.

“The more we give away the more we get back,” he said. “I love doing it. When something feels good you sometimes start to feel guilty about it but I like it. It’s not a job; it’s a joy.”

Much of the food is provided by Midwest area produce wholesalers, a vending company and various bakeries and grocery stores. The produce, dairy products and bakery goods they contribute are not outdated, but they do not have enough shelf life left to be marketable. For the most part, if they did not give the food to Apostopoulos it would have to be thrown out.

Apostopoulos is genuinely excited about the prospect of working with people in St. Paul. “This is what we’ve got to do — meet needs by doing creative things,” he said. “You can do a lot with a little.”