

# Commitment to Christian Service

## St. Jude School & Parish

**Goal:** to provide a resource for St. Jude teachers, students, parents and families that outlines and summarizes age/grade/family appropriate community service projects and initiatives that the students can participate in throughout their educational experience at St. Jude School & Parish, from 1<sup>st</sup> grade to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. This is aimed to provide opportunities to develop a lifelong *Commitment to Christian Service*.

Whenever possible, it is recommended to include Service Learning as part of the service initiative. Service Learning involves students in a community service project that supplements and meets curriculum objectives. For example, it is not always just collecting canned goods for a food drive. Students aim to learn something during the service learning project. If students were to make Easter or Christmas cards in Art class to mail to elderly parishioners/shut-ins/senior citizen buddies, they would be learning some specific art skills during the project. In addition, they would also learn about addressing envelopes, stamp requirements, the return address concept, etc. For family service oriented activities, it is recommended to involve family discussion before and after the participation to optimize the learning experience.

## In-School Service Projects

1) Craft projects sent to poorer Nursing Homes near St. Jude (on the West Side):

- Link to Art class/Religion class
- Maybe adopt a Nursing Home
- Younger grade levels (grades 1-2)
- Christmas & Easter cards
- Christmas wreaths
- Easter decorations
- Religious themed crafts
- Annual or periodic care packages (e.g. scotch tape, hard candy, greeting cards, stamps, batteries, tea bags, coffee, cocoa mix, tissues, hand lotion, toothpaste/other toiletries, etc)

2) Stuffed Animal donation: collect extra/unused/underused stuffed animals and donate to a charity in the name of St. Jude Catholic Grade School:

- Younger grade levels (grades 1-2)
- Each student brings in one of their stuffed animals (picked out with their parents to donate).
- Bethany House ([www.bethanyhouseservices.org](http://www.bethanyhouseservices.org)): Contact Amber Long 513-921-1131 x 123 or e-mail at [along@bhsinc.org](mailto:along@bhsinc.org)

3) Birthday Party in a Box:

- Younger grade levels (grades 1-2 and/or 3-4)
- Students donate empty shoebox from home.
- Decorate the outside of the shoebox (art class?).

- Fill it with donated small paper plates (10?), plastic silverware (10?), plastic cups (10?), napkins, balloons & a Kroger gift card bought with children's donations (\$1 each child?) so the recipient can buy a birthday cake.
- Wrap and donate to a Homeless Shelter for children who are too poor to have a Birthday Party while staying at a Homeless Shelter.
- Bethany House ([www.bethanyhouseservices.org](http://www.bethanyhouseservices.org)): Contact Amber Long 513-921-1131 x 123 or e-mail at [along@bhsinc.org](mailto:along@bhsinc.org)
- **OR** same concept for Friendship Boxes for children going to Homeless Shelters (extra Halloween candy, balloons, left over carnival/festival toys, unused toys or stuffed animals from home).
- Bethany House ([www.bethanyhouseservices.org](http://www.bethanyhouseservices.org)): Contact Amber Long 513-921-1131 x 123 or e-mail at [along@bhsinc.org](mailto:along@bhsinc.org)

4) Grade/Class Buddies: link up individual classes or grades (pending the amount of contacts the Pastor/Parish have) with interested elderly parishioners or shut-in senior citizens.

- Younger grade levels (grades 3-4)
- Hand crafted Christmas and Easter cards with religious themes (in Art/Religion classes?) mailed to their buddies (teach about addressing and stamping envelopes, return addresses, post office delivery, etc.).
- Pray for each other (reinforce teaching of prayer for others during religion class).
- Elderly parishioners or shut-in senior citizens can write letters to the class to be read during class (out loud by a student in front of class to promote public speaking).
- Put together food/holiday baskets for their buddy for Thanksgiving.

5) Halloween Candy donation: collect excess candy from Halloween and donate to:

- Homeless Shelter(s)
- Poverty Outreach Program(s)
- Grades 3-4

6) Pop Tab collection

- Already being performed.
- Grade 3
- Proceeds go to the Ronald McDonald House.

7) Make laminated book marks for the library

- Grades 3-4
- Stored in a box in the school library.
- Any students can take for general use for their library books.

8) Make Valentine Day and/or Thanksgiving Day cards for U.S. Military/soldiers overseas

- Grades 5-6
- Express thanksgiving for their service & sacrifice to our country.
- Yellow Ribbon Support Center ([www.yellowribbonsupportcenter.com](http://www.yellowribbonsupportcenter.com))

9) Adopt a classroom or grade from another school in the inner city (e.g. St. Joseph in OTR)

- Grades 5-6
- Write pen pal letters.
- Share learning experiences/share other resources.
- Other ideas determined by teachers and/or students.

10) Canned Food Drive

- Already performed during Super Bowl Week.
- School wide drive
- Grades 5-6 to coordinate or assist?

11) Caps for the Cure ([www.thecurestartsnow.org/participate](http://www.thecurestartsnow.org/participate))

- Possible annual school wide campaign to raise money and awareness of Brain Tumor/Brain Cancer Research and Treatment.
- Organized by older grade levels (grades 7-8).
- Students donate \$1 to wear a hat of their choice for the day.
- Teachers/staff donate \$5 to wear their hat of choice for the day.
- Friendly competition for Top Class and/or Top Grade (details determined by Principal).
- Funny/silly hat (Jester Hat? Dunce Cap?) for the teacher(s) of the class(es) with the top percentage of participation to wear the next day (ties require multiple teachers wearing hats: e.g. 3 classes with 100% participation require all 3 teachers to wear funny hats).
- 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students can make signs, awareness campaign, announcements, etc to publicize it and market it.

12) United States Holocaust Memorial Museum online R3 Service Project

- <http://r3program.ushmm.org/learnmore.html>
- Grades 7-8 (or correlated to whenever the students may study the Holocaust).
- R3: Remembrance/Reflection/Response
- Free online program that encourages young people to think about the lessons of the Holocaust for their own lives.
- Enrollees will be assigned the name of a child who perished in the Holocaust and explore the Holocaust, the Chain of Memory, Personal Stories of Victims and Survivors, Hate/Anti-Semitism & Genocide Today.
- Students will learn about the Holocaust & its relevance today.

13) Collection of gently used baby items to donate to Pregnancy Center West

- Annual school wide event that could crossover into the parish if directed & organized by the older students.
- Organized by older grade levels (grades 7-8).
- Collect gently used baby items that parents will no longer be using or no longer need (baby blankets, burp cloths, books, toys, diaper bags, mobiles, cribs, swings, etc). If this is established as an annual project, parents/parishioners can save these items until the collection week late in the school year then donate them to the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade program (instead of donating to St. Vincent de Paul or Goodwill throughout the year).

- Students can publicize the campaign in August/September/October & throughout the year including designing bulletin announcements, school signs, Hey Jude notices, etc (learn & practice marketing & advertising skills). A verbal appeal at masses (to publicize parish wide) by a few students can give public speaking and fund raising practice.
- Collection organized over 1-2 weeks late in the year (April? Early May?) and donation made to Pregnancy Center West ([www.pc-west.org](http://www.pc-west.org)) on behalf of St. Jude Catholic School & Church.

## Outside Service Projects

### 1) Lemonade Stand ([www.thecurestartsnow.org](http://www.thecurestartsnow.org))

- Younger kids (grades 1-2) can set up their own lemonade stand in their neighborhood under adult supervision to raise money for “The Cure Starts Now” (brain tumor/cancer research & awareness).
- Company will supply some brochures, signs, etc (in addition to printing off of the web site).
- Introduces fundraising concepts, starting and running a business, initiative/business sense, counting money.
- Adult supervision for optimal safety recommended.

### 2) Santa Maria Community Services ([www.santamaria-cincy.org](http://www.santamaria-cincy.org))

- Family oriented project
- Meals-on-Wheels Program and participation: provides home-bound, older adults with a nutritious meal 5 days/week and a frozen meal for the weekend.
- Contact Carol Espelage 557-2730 (x 402)

### 3) City Gospel Mission ([www.citygospelmission.org](http://www.citygospelmission.org))

- Established program at St. Jude.
- For grades 7-8 boys with their Fathers or other family members.
- Currently serve breakfast on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month.
- Arrive 5:20 am for breakfast served at 6:30 am (finished by 7:00-7:15 am)
- In summary, this City Gospel Mission (CGM) project focus is on developing 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students’ faith and relationship with their parents. Rather than wait for high school to get involved, we encourage our Junior High age boys to start to experience a more mature understanding of their faith outside of St. Jude. This provides an opportunity to get involved with your son and his maturing faith, his growing awareness of virtues and values and encourage how he could demonstrate his Christian faith outside of St. Jude. The CGM provides this opportunity by assisting those less fortunate in the community: by providing, cooking and serving a meal to a roomful of very needy people. It presents the opportunity to witness up close and first hand, a reality that is sometimes never seen before in our lifetime: homelessness, poverty in our own city, substance abuse/addiction and the consequences of personal decisions we all make in our lives. This experience works only if the parent follows each visit with meaningful conversation with their young adult about what they saw, what they did, felt, etc. This shared opportunity reinforces the importance of making good decisions in our lives.

- The CGM exists as a Christian-centered, safe and structured place to assist drug and alcohol addicted men that have little other choice to change their lives for the better by breaking their addiction. They have designed programs to break the cycle of substance dependency. To be enrolled in the program at the City Gospel Mission (CGM), a referral is required from the candidate's church followed by an interview & a successful completion of their screening process. Candidates must demonstrate a sincere desire for this assistance and a willingness to make the effort to complete the program and break their addiction.
- It is a good place to get our young students exposed to individuals who have made some wrong choices and decisions in their lives; help them to broaden their growing and developing social awareness; and present opportunities for them to learn about real life consequences, understanding of circumstances & different types of behavior leading to life altering situations.
- Some men enrolled in the program stay at the facility (15-20). All attend regularly scheduled, structured classroom programs and receive meals. The Mission fills the remaining space for meals in their dining room with "walk-ins". The Mission opens their chapel doors for 30 minutes before each breakfast and dinner. The dining room accommodates 120 (so the Mission feeds 120 people two times each and every day of the year). Before each meal, all attend a prayer service & engage in fellowship before receiving a decent breakfast and/or dinner.
- St. Jude's role: City Gospel Mission has a "Church Partnership Program" where volunteers from area churches and schools assist by providing, preparing and serving the breakfast and dinner 365 days a year. The church/school partner commits to serve on the same day each month. Volunteers are encouraged to interact and provide fellowship to the Mission guests during the meal. Much of this is simply being pleasant, positive and encouraging in the presence of the guests. Teams of 5 boys and 5 fathers (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders) are formed each year.
- Basically the boys prepare & serve the 120 guests breakfast. It is a cafeteria line process where the boys stand behind a steam table of prepared breakfast items, dish the items to a plate and pass the plate to the guest. Each team needs to arrive at CGM by 5:20 am to get the food started by 5:30 so all is ready at 6:30 am sharp (more specific details will be provided to each team member). The breakfast is usually finished by 7:00-7:15 am at the latest.
- We are able to get the food at a reasonable cost. The expense (~\$160 per meal) brings a very important lesson to our boys as well. One annual 2<sup>nd</sup> church collection occurs at St. Jude to raise money to purchase the food.
- City Gospel Mission's address is **1419 Elm Street** (one block North of Music Hall/North of 12th street). Because of the large number of volunteers and CGM guests involved at this early hour, the limited parking & personal circumstances of the CGM guests, it is imperative that all arrive together as a group, provide the service, then leave together as a group. While safety is not a major issue here, adult volunteers need to be aware of the CGM guests/surroundings/what is going on & oversee the boys.
- Current Project Leader: Tom Tressler can be contacted at ttressler1@cinci.rr.com or 364-5528 for more information on the CGM program or to volunteer for a team.

4) Crayons to Computers ([www.crayons2computers.org](http://www.crayons2computers.org))

- Free store for teachers in lower income school districts.
- Various volunteer roles available including working in the store.
- Possible Mother-Daughter focused opportunity.
- Call 482-3290 for more information (in addition to the web site).

5) Project Linus ([www.projectlinus.org](http://www.projectlinus.org))

- Non-Profit organization whose mission is to provide love and a sense of security/warmth /comfort to children who are seriously ill/traumatized/in need by providing new handmade blankets.
- Blankets are created/made by volunteers and donated to the local chapter.
- May be a good Mother-Daughter opportunity or a group project involving a small or large group of Mother-Daughter friends (Girl Scouts?).
- Cincinnati/Southeast Indiana Chapter (Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, Warren Counties): Contact Rosanna at (513) 910-8715 or e-mail at [rlolinus@fuse.net](mailto:rlolinus@fuse.net)

6) Tender Mercies Dinner ([www.tendermerciesinc.org](http://www.tendermerciesinc.org))

- Established program at St. Jude.
- For grades 5-6 boys & girls with one parent or other family member.
- Currently serve dinner on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month.
- Arrive at 4:30 pm for dinner served from approximately 4:45-5:30 pm.
- Tender Mercies is an organization that provides housing and related services to homeless persons with histories of emotional and/or mental disabilities.
- Maintains affordable permanent and transitional housing which promotes residents' comfort and makes a positive contribution to the neighborhood
- Provides support to residents allowing them to live independently as an integral part of their community
- Is financially secure and professionally managed & is a model of mutual respect and dignity in which individuals hold each other accountable for their actions and behaviors
- Related services include procuring benefits for residents, offering social and recreational opportunities & serving as an advocate for additional services needed or entitled to its residents.
- The Tender Mercies residences are located on West 12<sup>th</sup> street in OTR. We currently serve dinner at Haven Hall, located at 27 West 12<sup>th</sup> St. It has 39 residents. We also serve 16 residents of the transitional residence (a total of approximately 55 residents).
- Teams of 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade students (boys & girls) are formed each year to cover the monthly commitment on a rotating basis. Teams should consist of approximately 7-9 students with one parent also participating with each student (14-18 people) each month. Depending on the number of volunteers, teams will be established by the Tender Mercies Project Leader. Dinner is served to the residents of these 2 buildings. Meals are made at home by the students and parents and brought down to the buildings. Each student is responsible for only one dish (entrée or side dish). A common bin of staples is maintained for use each month (paper plates/bowls, cups, silverware, napkins, etc) and is passed along from team to team. A 2<sup>nd</sup> church

collection occurs on an as needed basis no more than annually to maintain these supplies.

- This service project provides an opportunity to get involved with your son or daughter and his/her maturing faith, his/her growing awareness of virtues and values and encourage how he/she could demonstrate his/her Christian faith outside of St. Jude. Tender Mercies provides this opportunity by assisting those less fortunate in the community: by providing, cooking and serving a meal to a roomful of very needy people. It presents the opportunity to witness homelessness/poverty in our own city & the presence of mental illness and its effect on real people in our community. This experience works optimally if the parent involves their son or daughter in the planning, shopping, preparing, cooking & serving of the meal & follows each visit with meaningful conversation with their young adolescent about what they saw, what they did & what they felt. It reinforces the importance of making good decisions and maintaining a healthy thankfulness for the family and community support most of us have in our own lives.
- Current Project Leader: Tom Tressler can be contacted at [ttressler1@cinci.rr.com](mailto:ttressler1@cinci.rr.com) or 364-5528 for more information on the Tender Mercies program or to volunteer for a team.

#### 7) Ronald McDonald House: Cooking For a Crowd House Meal Program

- [www.rmhcincinnati.org/volunteer-meals.aspx](http://www.rmhcincinnati.org/volunteer-meals.aspx)
- Multiple Family opportunity (up to 20 volunteers maximum).
- Plan, purchase & cook on site & serve breakfast, lunch or dinner for families staying at the Cincinnati Ronald McDonald House.
- 3-4 hour time commitment.
- Many other volunteer opportunities and needs (see web site).

#### 8) Kids Against Hunger ([www.kidsagainsthunger.org](http://www.kidsagainsthunger.org))

- Could be a Parish wide event (annual or periodic)
- The organization packages food for shipment to poverty stricken areas of the world. The meal ingredients have been engineered to provide a rich, easily digestible protein/carbohydrates/vitamins mix needed by undernourished children. The food is also acceptable to the diverse ethnic tastes and religious differences around the world.
- Kids are very welcome & encouraged to participate and actually do a lot of the work. The adults and children perform the food packaging work in a multiple assembly line format. Details and procedures are reviewed before the session begins.
- Each meal costs 25 cents to make (although no financial obligation is required for taking part in the **public** sessions since outside financing or fundraising will cover the cost).
- Local web site: [www.achildshopeintl.org/KidsAgainstHunger](http://www.achildshopeintl.org/KidsAgainstHunger)
- Individuals and groups can sign up for scheduled **public** sessions where financial donations are not required. Your time and effort is all that is needed.
- Great family or group activity
- Approximately 3 hour time commitment.

9) Bethany House Services ([www.bethanyhouseservices.org](http://www.bethanyhouseservices.org))

- Collect items that are needed year round to help homeless families or those living in poverty, (e.g. laundry detergent, clothes baskets, regular sized toiletries, cleaning supplies, diapers, towels, twin or queen size sheets, pillows, blankets, paper products, bus tokens, gift certificates for gas & groceries, socks for all ages, underwear for all ages, cereal, school snacks, diapers and baby formula).
- Collect various items to put into silent or live auctions for their special events to help raise funds to support the families that they serve.
- Decorate / Adopt rooms at Bethany Place.
- Days and times are open to host a weekend brunch at the emergency shelter by preparing food for 30 people. Brunch is served at 9:30 p.m. Arts and crafts or story-time can be done with the children in the shelter after the brunch. Meals can be cooked at the shelter or prepared and brought to the shelter on Fridays after 10:00 a.m.
- Hosting an ice cream or dessert social at the emergency shelter for 30 people Monday through Thursday at 6:30 p.m. (Bethany Homes: 80 people or Bethany Place: 5 people).
- Serve on various committees such as: Finance, Housing Advisory, Personnel, Safety, Golf Outing, Special Events, and Social Services. These committees insure that Bethany House operates in a responsible manner with guidance from a broad base of professional backgrounds.
- Plan a holiday party, back to school event, cook out for the emergency shelter guests or the families at Bethany Homes.
- Provide a dinner or brunch for five women at our Transitional Housing site.
- Contact: Amber Long 513-921-1131 x 123 or e-mail at [along@bhsinc.org](mailto:along@bhsinc.org)

St. Jude Education Commission  
Faith Formation Subcommittee  
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Contact Tom Tressler for any additional information that is needed:

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