

October 27, 2010

Dear Parents:

Many thanks to the families who donated the wonderful, decorated cakes for the SOR Cake Sale. We raised \$395 to go toward the landscaping around the church. There are several items and projects in an around the church for which the SOR has raised funds through the Cake Sale. I always think of the students as we use these items—microphones, hymnals, Rosary Garden, and much more. Thank you.

For November and December, we have two projects--one for local concerns and one for national concerns.

The first is a collection drive for boxed and canned food and clothing items. For the past many years, we have collected items for the Community Action Commission (CAC). Each year I would hear that everything was gone by spring. However, the past, most recent years, I would hear that everything was gone by the end of January and the next year that everything was gone by Christmas—so much was given out on the same day the CAC received them from us. The need has been there—for our own parish families, too. Unfortunately, the CAC had to close.

Some people have asked why we do not donate these items to our own St. Vincent dePaul Society. The St. Vincent dePaul Society feels that it is not necessary to duplicate services in the community. Instead, they use a voucher system, which gives financial aide in various ways to those in crisis situations.

The need is still there; so after discussion with our St. Vincent dePaul Society Director and with different agencies in the community, we will donate these items to the local Salvation Army.

We will be collecting boxed and canned food items, diapers, toothbrushes, deodorants, and other toiletries. Please no perishables or opened or partially-used items. At the same time, we will also be collecting coats, stocking hats, gloves or mittens, and socks. The coats do not need to be new, but should be clean and in no need of repair.

We ask that all the outerwear be in the sizes your child wears so we have a variety of sizes. As for the coats, adult sizes are also needed. If any parents have new or used coats to donate, they will be greatly appreciated.

Grades 3 and 6 are asked to donate new stocking hats.

Grades 1, 4, and 7 are asked to donate new gloves or mittens.

Grades 2, 5, and 8 are asked to donate new socks.

All Grades are asked to donate new or used coats, if possible,

We know projects like these become purchases the parents usually make for the child to donate. It's hoped that you will encourage your children to make the effort to act in service for someone else or around the house over the next few weeks to help provide the donated items.

Children should take these items to their classrooms rather than bringing them to the Religious Education Office. This gives each class the opportunity to pray over the donations, giving thanks, and asking a blessing on the donations and the people, who will receive them.

The second project is a Christmas Cookie Sale for Catholic Charities, USA. The mission of Catholic Charities is to provide services to people in need, to advocate for justice in social structures, and to call the entire Church and other people of good will to do the same for people of the United States. Catholic Charities USA uses many avenues to provide service. The money we raise from the cookie sale will be earmarked for disaster relief. Catholic Charities USA is also working as first responders, while continuing to carry on the long-term work and care they have always provided. We hope to continue the good work that Catholic Charities USA provides to people in disaster situations.

Would you be willing to bake three or four dozen cookies and to bring them to the gym on the evening of December 1? After class that evening, families are invited to come to the gym to help prepare plates of a variety of cookies for sale. If we have enough children and adults, this should move very quickly. Parents and children to help sell the cookies after the Masses of December 4 and 5 would also be appreciated. The cookies will sell for \$5 per dozen. This can also be an excellent way for families to obtain a variety of cookies for their get-togethers throughout December and the New Year.

These projects are not just a matter of helping "poor" people, although many of the people, who benefit from the projects, are in real financial straits. This is a matter of helping one another and sharing what we have with one another when in need, and there is a real need in our local communities and in our country.

If you have any questions about any of the SOR projects or you want to make an additional donation, please call the Religious Education Office at 238-3079.

December 8, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, will be our SOR Mass this year.

Fr. Mike does not want a Christmas gift this year. He would rather the money that would be spent on a gift be given to the School or to a project/need of the parish. We want to respect his wishes, but we can surely offer him a Spiritual Bouquet, too. Perhaps Father could be especially remembered one of the following ways:

- Pray for Father while making a visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel
- Pray a rosary
- Do a really kind deed for someone
- Make a sacrifice of some kind—name it
- Remember Father in bedtime prayers or in the Morning Offering

Pray an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be once a day for nine days or some other type of novena

Do a chore around the house, that you don't like to do, cheerfully and without being asked, and ask God to bless Fr. Mike while you are taking care of the job

Read a story about a saint—name the saint

Or come up with an idea of your own

Parents and children can write the prayers and deeds on slips of paper—no names, please, which will be tucked inside flowers the children will make. Please have the prayers and deeds turned in by December 8, the Immaculate Conception.

Looking ahead to the Christmas Masses—the Christmas Eve Children's Mass will be December 24 at 6:00 PM. The practice will be held on Wednesday, December 22, from 6:45 PM to approximately 8 PM. An invitation to participate in this Mass will be sent home the first class of December. We hope your children will be able to come.

Yours in Christ,

Cheryl L. Freewalt
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Parent Signature _____

