

## Youth Ministry 2020-2021

In a year that has us all living life in a “new normal” one thing that didn’t change was the impact that our Junior High and Senior High Youth Groups had on the community this year. Please find a list of all of the events and service projects our children participated in 2020/2021.

### September-

Friendship cards for patients at Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital. As we were starting to venture back into the classrooms we had 60 students take the time to create beautiful cards of well wishes and friendship to the children that are patients at Joe D to brighten their days and send them prayers of healing.

We had 78 students use their time and talents to create cards of well wishes and speedy recovery for Father Bartos during his stay in the convalescence home.

October-

### The Mobile School Pantry Project.

Over 110 Junior High and 28 High School students participated in the food drive for The Mobile School Pantry. MSP brings nutritious food to those in the most vulnerable low income areas. These families count on the public school system to provide breakfast and lunch for these children living at or below the poverty line. Our students provided the following donations:

- 249 boxes of Macaroni and Cheese
- 153 boxes of Breakfast Cereal
- 102 boxes of Breakfast/granola bars
- 160 cans of Tuna
- 57 cans of Soup
- 26 cans/bags of Beans
- 43 cans of Vegetables
- 3 cases of Ramen Noodles
- 23 cans of Spaghetti Sauce

November-

We have participated in the Miss Arc Broward Pageant for the last four years as a "Cheer Squad" for certain contestants in this pageant that celebrates the lives and achievements of young girls with mental and physical disabilities. Our Youth Groups have won OUTSTANDING CHEER SQUAD 3 of 4 of those years. This year the pageant was virtual and our cheer squad duties became virtual as well. We were tasked with creating a "scrapbook" page for our contestants to create a keepsake book for them of good wishes and all of their favorite things on one page. 35 students signed up to take this very special project on. We have such kind and talented students and they did amazing pages to really make these girls feel magical and special.

November-

We always like to honor those that have served or are currently serving in the Military. Together with the help of the parents of Sophie Oberhelman (Mike and Bianca) they created a video about how to write letters to veterans of WWII and Vietnam that are housed in a special home in Missouri. Mr. Oberhelman is a veteran as is his father who helps us to get the letters to the recipients in Missouri. This year the letters were scanned and sent via email to keep the residents safe from COVID. Over 68 letters were created, scanned and sent.

December-

Original Prayer Project.

In December we were introduced to 4 year old Riley Faith. She has stage 4 adrenocortical carcinoma. She had surgery in September of 2020 to remove a tumor the size of two grapefruits. She also had two smaller tumors removed from her lungs. The lung tumors were cancerous. Her next scan showed many new tumors growing in her lungs. Riley's Grandmother asked for prayers for her granddaughter. We had 115 students write beautiful original prayers for Riley Faith accompanied by amazing artwork. We bound it in a large 3 ring binder and sent it off to North Carolina to Riley and her grandmother 10 days before Christmas.

December-

Dog Videos for David.

David is 14 and is battling a life-threatening condition and he knows that he is different from other kids. Because of his illness he is isolated and the pandemic has made things much tougher. David has Alexander's Disease, which affects his brain. At times, walking, eating and talking are greatly impacted. There is no cure. David's Christmas wish is a very special one. He loves DOGS. His mom is asking for videos of our dogs for David, it brings him joy. 57 students took the time to create videos of themselves with their dogs to send to David. His mother was overwhelmed and so grateful to our students for helping to bring Christmas Joy to David.

Pajama and Sock Project for ChildNet- Senior High Youth Group.

Our National Junior Honor Society spearheaded a Christmas Service Event to collect Pajamas and Socks for children and teens in foster care. Our High School students reached out to their friends and we received over 100 pairs of pajamas and hundreds of pairs of socks from students at St. Thomas Aquinas, Cardinal Gibbons and Pinecrest. We also received over \$800.00 in cash donations that went directly to ChildNet to purchase Christmas gifts for teens in group home situations. Between the NJHS/St. Anthony School donations and the High School Youth Group we were able to send to Childnet:

364 pairs of Pajamas

1952 pairs of socks

\$800.00 cash donation.

We collected enough socks for every child in foster care in Broward County to have a new pair.

## December- The Angel Tree Project

This is our fourth year of the St. Anthony Angel Tree. We truly have the most generous and giving parishioners and school families. We had 90 lambs on the tree this year and 30 angels. The ornaments were put on the tree on Saturday, November 28th and all of the ornaments were taken by Sunday, December 6th. In a year where so many people were in need, the spirit of giving was alive and well at St. Anthony. The recipients were the children at God's Little Lambs Daycare and Preschool. 90% of the students at God's Little Lambs are on scholarships made possible by financial donations of individuals and corporations. Many of these students are living in shelters, are homeless or living with families that are at or below the poverty line. We also helped the students in the ESE Program at Ft. Lauderdale High School that have mental and physical disabilities and challenges and are learning life skills, most will never live on their own. These students have medical and therapy expenses that affect the income levels of most of these families, many are in foster care situations.

## January-

### Respect Life Month.

In honor of Respect Life month and in honor of the amazing women of the HHNT Ministry here at St. Anthony, we made fleece blankets for our local chapter of Respect Life. The students were sent 2 videos to show them how to complete that project (We were lucky to have members come in in the past to show them) and in all we had 83 blankets made and donated. 16 of these blankets went to Covenant House on Ft. Lauderdale Beach.

February-

### Homemade Dog Toys

The pandemic had so many families adopting dogs as they had the time to be home and train them, but the shelters and pet rescues were working at full capacity. Our February project was to make homemade dog toys to be donated to Abandoned Pet Rescue. 75 dog toys were made and donated. The rescue was very grateful for the donations and for the students taking time to recognize the need.

March-

### Restock the HOPE South Florida Mobile Shower Program

We stocked the mobile shower unit in March of 2020 and after over 6,400 showers, to those in need in the community. The demand for their services was up because of COVID but they were unable to do any fundraising due to the pandemic. We had 100 junior high students bring in donations and we had students from our preschool and kindergarten classes donate as well. We had towel donations from our High School Youth Group and from the collection box in the church as well. Our NJHS assembled 600 personal care kits containing shampoo, conditioner, body wash/soap body lotion. 150 dental care kits. 55 shaving kits. 133 towels were donated as well. When we dropped the items off, Pastor Pery Canan said there wasn't a bar of soap in the building, they were completely empty. A huge thanks to all that drop toiletries to the Ministry Center year round, it makes such a difference.

April-

Birthday Bags for children and teens in foster care and homeless shelters.

Over 1900 children and teens in foster care here in Broward County many without any idea of why or how they got there. A huge shortage of foster families and for those that do foster, money is tight. This project puts everything that you would need to throw a birthday party in a birthday gift bag. Cake, frosting, cake pan, birthday banner, balloons candles, a handmade birthday card and a \$5.00 to \$10.00 gift card to make these children in foster care or homeless shelters feel loved and cared about.

We had our Junior High Youth Group participate, but also families from PreK, 1st, 2nd and 4th grade joined in this project as well as 12 members of our High School Youth Group. In all 140 Birthday Bags were made and donated to Childnet. In the first hours of receiving these bags, the social workers had taken 42 bags out to their clients in the foster homes and they were overwhelmed with the generosity of our students and families.

May

Our last service event of the year was Paracord "Survival" Bracelets made by our students for the men and women serving in the military. These bracelets are made of 7 ½ feet of parachute cord that can withstand the weight of 550 pounds. These bracelets are used in the field for creating shelter, securing water jugs or fuel, if cut open the individual threads can be used as emergency sutures for medical emergencies.

Our students made 138 paracord bracelets that will be sent to Operation Gratitude to be put into the soldier care kits that they are constantly distributing. We chose this event to honor all of the men and women that have served and lost their lives protecting our country, in their memory.