

Good cheer: 13 ways the Archdiocese of Baltimore is spreading warmth in Christmas 2013

By Elizabeth Lowe

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Catholic schools, parishes and organizations with Catholic ties give back this, and every Christmas. Groups provide food, clothing and toys to those in need in the Archdiocese of Baltimore and beyond. A few examples of their outreach follow.

Apostleship of the Sea

The Archdiocese of Baltimore's Stella Maris Apostleship of the Sea in Dundalk is collecting clean, used clothing for men, women, children, toddlers and infants to be sent to the Philippines. To donate money, clothing or toiletries, call 443-845-7227 or email aosbalt@gmail.com.

Archbishop Spalding High School

Archbishop Spalding High School adopted 55 families through St. Bernadette Parish's Adopt-a-Family program. The school collected food, clothing, gifts and gift cards for disadvantaged families, which the parish, also in Severn, distributed in West Baltimore.

The Catholic High School of Baltimore

The Catholic High School of Baltimore's alumnae Christmas project secured donations for gifts for 80 senior citizens at St. Joachim House and DePaul House, part of Catholic Charities' Jenkins Senior Living Community in Baltimore. Eighty students at Sandy Plains Elementary School in Dundalk received school supplies.

Catholic High also participated in Adopt-a-Family with St. Gregory the Great Parish in Baltimore. Students, parents, faculty and staff collected toys, food and clothes, among other items, for 24 families. Student government and National Honor Society wrapped gifts and loaded school buses.

Christ Child Society of Baltimore

The Christ Child Society of Baltimore, which works to serve the needs of parents and children in the Baltimore community, donated 71 hand-knitted scarves and hats to Mother Seton Academy in Baltimore Dec. 12. The items had been donated to the Christ Child Society. In addition, 100 books were donated to Mother Seton Academy students to help them build their personal libraries.

Holy Rosary Parish

Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, adjacent to Holy Rosary in Fells Point, donated more than 1,000 non-perishable food items in November to the parish's food pantry. About 100 families visit the pantry each month, according to parish officials.

In addition, Holy Rosary is collecting toiletries and new and gently used cold-weather clothing, including sweatpants and socks, for Baltimore's homeless. The parish is also collecting children's clothing for an orphanage in Poland. Donations are accepted through Dec. 31. Call 410-732-3960 or drop off items at Holy Rosary, 408 S. Chester St.

The Seton Keough High School

The Seton Keough High School in Baltimore collected 375 cold-weather apparel items, including hats, gloves and scarfs, 189 toys and 30 blankets through a clothing and toy drive. The items were divided between My Brother's Keeper in Irvington and HOPE For All, Inc., a nonprofit that aids people in Baltimore City, Anne Arundel County and the Appalachian region.

The toys were donated to Southwest Emergency Services in Arbutus.

Promotion Center for Little Italy

The Promotion Center for Little Italy, a nonprofit that serves as the voice for the neighborhood, donated 600 hats, scarves and gloves to St. Leo the Great at the Little Italy parish's dinner for the homeless Dec. 16. It mirrored a similar outreach last month at the parish's Thanksgiving dinner for the homeless.

School of the Incarnation

For the eighth year, School of the Incarnation in Gambrills partnered with Giving Back, Linda's Legacy to fill backpacks with warm clothing for a Christmas Eve distribution to Baltimore's homeless.

The Anne Arundel County school's 800 students planned to stuff that many backpacks with sweatshirts, thermal pants, thermal socks, gloves and personally-made Christmas cards Dec. 19. Students raised money to buy the backpacks and supplies, then stayed after school, to unload, fold and organize the clothing and supplies, and help load them onto trucks.

St. John's Catholic Prep

St. John's Catholic Prep donated more than 200 toys for Operation Once in a Lifetime, a nonprofit that works to make the dreams of U.S. soldiers come true.

Members of the Frederick Force Hockey Club, Inc. collected the toys from the Buckeystown school Dec. 12. The toys were taken to Naval Station Norfolk in Norfolk, Va.

St. Maria Goretti High School

Student athletes in St. Maria Goretti High School's Varsity Club raised more than \$700 during a Christmas sweater out-of-uniform day Dec. 12. The funds were used to purchase gifts for three area families in need.

In addition, the Hagerstown school's Rotary Interact Club participated in a Christmas gift hand out to children at the Winter Street School in Hagerstown Dec. 19.

St. Mark School

Students in kindergarten through third grade at St. Mark School in Catonsville sent 109 shoe boxes filled with goodies to children in need across the globe through Operation Christmas Child.

St. Mark students selected the items, gender and age of the child for whom they made the gift box. Items included school supplies, toiletries, toys, stuffed animals, hair accessories, socks and a personal note to the recipient.

St. Timothy Parish

Through St. Timothy's St. Vincent de Paul giving tree program, \$500 and enough clothing for 25 adult males was donated to The Religious Coalition for Emergency Human Needs' Alan P. Linton Jr. Cold Weather Shelter in Frederick.

The Walkersville parish also donated canned goods and money to the town's food bank. Contributions were made at the parish's annual Christmas classical music concert Dec. 17.

St. Veronica's Head Start Center

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's Baltimore office donated and delivered coats to 41 children Dec. 13 at Westport Academy in Baltimore, a satellite location for St. Veronica's Head Start Center in Cherry Hill.

To view a slideshow from the day, navigate the arrows below.

Also see:

Monsignor Miller, longtime St. Bernardine pastor, was 'everything to us' say parishioners

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