

SERVICE PROJECTS IDEAS & RESOURCES

The Diocese of Phoenix "Gift From on High" Confirmation & First Communion Policy requires that sacramental preparation includes a service component:

"Service is encouraged to be part of the preparation experience as it is a visible sign of lifelong faith. Candidates should serve in ways meaningful to them that enable them to use their talents and abilities. Parents are to guide and nurture their candidate into a vision of lifelong service following the example of Christ."

Below are some ideas assembled by the St. Theresa Sacramental Preparation Core Team. If you need help or recommendations please feel free to contact us at gkeating@sttheresaphx.org.

Some important principles about service projects:

1) Age Appropriate 2) Follows Safe Environment 3) Deepens child's understanding of Christian Service

Things to think about while planning, preparing and doing your Confirmation Project

- **DISPLAY:** You will want to take photos of you giving service or photos of those benefitting from your service project. Also, if you receive letters, notes or cards from the organization or person you will want to save those for your display. It is also a good idea to write up your project in your own words to be displayed along with a sample of your project (if you have one).
- **DIMENSIONS:** To display your confirmation project, you will be sharing a table with 5 other children. Please **DO NOT USE** the large science boards. They are too big. Instead, look at yardstick and plan a display board or visual to be **NO LARGER THAN 20x20**. Children have also used laptops and made a power point presentation while other children brought in a special guest who received the efforts from the child. **BE CREATIVE**

Let's Get Started:

1. Child fills out Project Information form to be handed in with Confirmation/First Eucharist Registration paperwork (available in the registration packet). Please be sure the project is your

child's choice so they have a vested interest and an understanding of the service they will complete.

2. Begin documenting service. Children have the year to complete their Confirmation Project, which will be on display during their Confirmation Fair/First Eucharist Retreat in the spring.
3. Make a list of those to invite to your Confirmation Fair. It's always best to personally invite your sponsor to this retreat so you can celebrate your accomplishments, together, with your family.

Home & Parish-based Projects:

- **Letter Writing:** With the help of their parents or sponsor, students can write letters, notes or make cards for the parish or homebound, expectant mothers at Maggie's Place, new moms at Aid to Women Center, Life Choices or First Way. Also, letters to the troops overseas and those stationed at American bases- please visit www.Letterstosoldiers.org.
- **Parish Charity Drives:** St. Vincent de Paul, Christmas Angels, Circle the City, Spiritual Baby Adoption. Children can raise awareness and provide essential goods by collecting, food, blankets, socks, water and baby items to be collected throughout the year for these groups.
- **Parish-Based service:** There are many opportunities to help your church such as: Bake cookies and help host the St. Nicholas Parish Party in December; serve as a greeter before Mass or reader during Children's Liturgy of the Word in the gym (see Mrs. Keating for help)

Community-based Projects:

- Organize a "bake and take cookie day." Invite friends, family, groups, to bake cookies and wrap in packages. (Maybe 2 or 3 cookies each) and donate them to a local charity.
- Organize a neighborhood clean-up day.
- Collect empty soda cans and turn them in for money to donate to a worthy cause.
- Have a party and ask everyone to bring a new unwrapped toy or game to be donated to Maggie's Place or other organization.
- Help families from around the world who are relocated to Arizona through Welcome to America. For information, call 602-820-3224, pwelcome3@wtap.org
- Coordinate a book drive and collect used books in good condition to donate to children at a school in a low income area. Contact UMOM New Day Center Family Shelter to donate books or for volunteering opportunities. www.umom.org.
- Arrange to visit a nursing home. You could decorate their doors with a holiday theme, arrange a sing-along or do a talent show for residents. For more ideas contact Bobbie Stich in Pastoral Care at 602-840-0850 x 113.
- Sign up for the PF Chang "Kids Rock" Marathon and run the last mile of the race in January.
- Make a blanket for a soldier at Soldier's Angels Blankets of Hope- soldiersangels.org Families who choose this are committing to making at least one blanket AND mailing it to the distribution center. Estimated cost: \$35.

- Shoebox Ministries www.shoeboxministry.org. Families who choose this commit to making at least one family kit and delivering it to the distribution center in Scottsdale. Estimated cost: \$40 per kit; \$0 if donations are donated. 480-905-1610.
- Contact Sharing Downs Syndrome Arizona to see if you can help with one of their events sharingds.org.
- Help with Special Olympics www.specialolympicsarizona.org/involved/index.html
- Contact teachers at your school to set up a buddy system for kids with special needs on your campus.
- Help at Phoenix Birthing Project, 602-258-6990.
- Plant a tree or help plant flowers at different parks. Contact City of Phoenix for projects. 602-534-8198.
- Contact St. Joseph the Worker and ask about helping with one of their volunteer opportunities to help homeless, low income and disadvantaged people gain independence through full-time work. 602-257-4390.
- Host a hunger banquet and give the proceeds to the poor.
- Collect and sort clothes for the homeless and poor at Vista Del Camino, 480-312-0052.
- Visit a different house of worship and learn about that faith. Talk to people about their church and keep a record of what you learned.
- Help a family from another country to settle here in the USA. Contact the Refugee Assistance Program of the Catholic Diocese of Phoenix. 602-997-6105.

Sharing your GIFTS...

You have many special talents. Sharing your skills, talents, and self with others is your commission. Acts of KINDNESS and GOODNESS happen each day. CHARITABLE words, UNDERSTANDING and patience displayed towards others, simple gestures of FRIENDSHIP and JOY all are part of your daily routine and many of you do not even recognize it. All these are "GIFTS" from the Holy Spirit. Thank you for sharing your gifts with those in our community and those outside our community who are in need. May God continue to bless and protect you.

“Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me.” - Jesus

For more information, please contact Gina Keating at gkeating@sttheresaphx.org, 602-840-0850, ext. 111.