**Hive Mind - Service Projects**

November 11, 2020

* Notes to homebound - to say hello, keeping them engaged
* Could be for a Valentine
* Store runs for shut-in parishioners
* Send bundles to nursing homes
* Phone calls/video chats to nursing home members.
* Have them think of their own family members who may be shut in
* Raking leaves or shoveling snow
  + Adopt a parishioner for the season
* Read alouds to younger kids
  + Set up a nice background on Zoom
  + Record themselves reading a Christmas book on Zoom
  + Post videos to parish websites
* Picking up garbage around the neighborhood and schools
  + In spring or before snow hits
* Donation Drops
  + Do a 30-day challenge with a different item each day
* Service of the House
  + Clean a different part of the house - can do that on a Zoom
* Family program based on the Corporal & Spiritual Works of Mercy (see notes from Karissa)
  + CCC references, Scripture verses, and suggested practical ideas to live each Work of Mercy
  + Families make a “Family Service Plan”
* Holy Habits Challenge - https://www.archmil.org/familyperspectives/HolyHabits.htm
* Make pet blankets for the local humane society
* Sensory packs for First Responders (see notes below)
* Driving people to store/doctor appt.
* Random Acts of Kindness
* Walking dogs for the humane society
* Or walking dogs in the cold weather
* Highway clean-up
* River clean ups
  + Ozaukee Washington Land Trust (in Ozaukee and Washington Counties) and Milwaukee Riverkeepers in Milwaukee County that are always looking for help. They both have websites and look for volunteers on Ozaukee Volunteer Center website and usually the Milwaukee Volunteer Center websites.
  + Most Counties will have an office similar that you can contact.
  + In April there is also the Great American Clean up (usually in April)
* The Word of Mercy or the Prayer of Mercy
* Volunteermatch.org/covid19
  + Lots of opportunities
* Putting up Christmas decorations or taking them down for folks
* Sanitizing after meetings/Masses at parish
* Ushers for Mass or other liturgical roles
* Tutoring younger kids
* Helping with RE classes
* Make workout videos for younger kids or opportunities to engage kids
* Zachariah's Acres in Oconomowoc. If you haven't been there, you have to check them out. They are a favorite place with my Matthew 25 group every single year. My Confirmation families are going there in November to help them with their Christmas tree sale. [Here is the sign up genius to register.](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b054ba8af2ca31-christmas6) [Here is their website.](https://www.zachariahsacres.org/) They are wonderful people to work with and they do wonderful things for families who have children with special needs. The great part about it is that they are outdoors so it is COVID friendly. I am still asking that our families sign the COVID release form and wear masks while they are there for extra safety. It is optional so any families who are not comfortable, do not have to go. (From Corinna Ramsey - thanks, Corinna!)
* **Sensory Backpacks** notes from Corinna Ramsey - thanks, Corinna!
  + As you know, we had to revise our service project once and then cancel it. When we did that, we told you that we had a virtual service project in mind and here it is. This service project is something that our 2nd year Confirmation student, \*\*, has been working on so we are now going to help her along.

\*\*has already received permission from 1 fire department to provide these backpacks and a few other fire departments have expressed interest. She is creating Sensory Backpacks so that when an emergency department responds to a call involving an special needs individual (particularly those recognized as being on the autism spectrum) they will have a Sensory Backpack for that individual to help with the situation. This is helpful to both the first responders in communicating with the individual as well as calming the individual who is in this difficult situation.

**Why?**

Any call for emergency medical service is a stressful one. When a caregiver calls 911 requesting help with an autistic individual, the stress levels are higher than normal. First responders know it is important to remember that their presence may be overwhelming to an autistic individual and that individual may not respond in a typical manner. Many people afflicted with Autism use sensory items daily to keep calm.

Sensory items are needed to prevent meltdowns. What is a meltdown? A meltdown is a product of sensory overload and is rooted in the nervous system. Even someone who is typically verbal will have challenges once this begins. As the brain escalates, the ability to be rational and articulate diminishes rapidly.

What can you do?

We are asking you to help provide, purchase and/or make the things that will be included in the backpacks. Attached to this email is a copy of \*\*'s project. In it you will find the list of items that she/we will be providing the backpacks. You will also find the reasons some items are needed, instructions for making the theraputty and how to make sensory bottles. Also attached to this email is a copy of the "Here we go to the ER" book and instructions on how to make a weighted lap pad.

Please go to this sign up genius so you can sign up to provide as many of these items as you can. Take a look at [this google doc for information, instructions and ideas](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-9n9JkGuhOT9YAAU1eKkUBFYdGTOdDiQJTmzZZd-RXg/edit?usp=sharing) while you are deciding what you would like to provide. There is no maximum that you can sign up for. We would ask that everyone participate in this service since this is your Confirmation project so everyone needs to sign up for at least one item. Feel free to sign up for more.

After you have purchased, created or found the items that you have agreed to donate for this project, please contact \*\* at \*\* to arrange when and how the items will be picked up from you in a non-contact way. We are asking that everyone signs up for something as soon as possible and has their items(s) ready for pick up by May 22nd at the latest.