

CATHOLIC PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

HEALTHY COURIER

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 1

FALL 2025

Helping others can be good for you

Volunteering can improve your mental and physical health by reducing stress and anxiety. Depending on the activity, it could be a good way to stay physically active and give you the opportunity to try something new, according to KidsHealth.org, a medical website.

St. Cecilia's fifth-grade *Healthy Courier* reporters interviewed Ms. Glenna Harkins, director of enrollment and family engagement for Catholic Partnership Schools, on the importance of volunteering. This interview has been lightly edited.

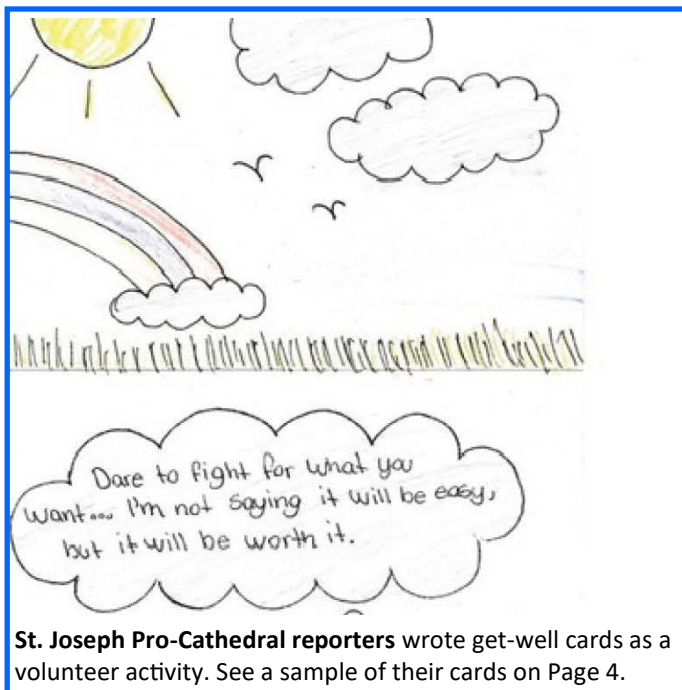
Q: What volunteer activities do you now participate in?

Ms. Harkins: Currently I volunteer by helping people learn to speak English. I also help with food distribution in the community. I also volunteered internationally when my church went to Guatemala.

(Please see Volunteering on Page 3)



Illustration by Brandon Flores, 8th grade, St. Joseph Pro-Cathedral



St. Joseph Pro-Cathedral reporters wrote get-well cards as a volunteer activity. See a sample of their cards on Page 4.

Teachers team up for group activities

Holy Name's physical education teacher Mr. Richards and basketball coach Mr. Taras Mack presented their views on the importance of participating in group activities.

Both men play a key role at Holy Name teaching and coaching students in sports and other group physical activities.

Mr. Mack, who likes to be called Mr. T., said, "Fourteen years ago a group of girls came to me and said, 'if you don't coach basketball for us, we will not have a team.' Now I enjoy watching the girls develop as a team and advance on to the high school level."

(Please see Exercising on Page 2)

Exercising together has benefits

(Continued from Page 1)

"After graduating from Penn State, I got certified to teach gym and health," said Mr. Richards. "I love to see the enjoyment on the students' faces when they are participating in group activities during gym and recess."

In interviews with Holy Name's seventh-grade *Healthy Courier* reporters, both Mr. Richards and Mr. T. said they would highly recommend that kids get involved in some sort of group activity, whether it's basketball or another sport. Mr. T. also said he would encourage other adults to coach sports.

Research has shown that doing activities with other kids can not only be fun, but they can also be good for your health, according to sciencedaily.com.

Experts from the Mayo Clinic, a research center and hospital, stress that when you're looking forward to seeing people at an event, you're more likely to go. This helps with motivation and following through with your commitments.

"When I was a kid, I participated in many activities, but swimming and football were my favorites," said Mr. Richards.

"I played football and competitively ran track when I was a kid," said Mr. T, who is a firefighter,

According to KidsHealth.org, not everyone likes organized sports or team sports. If that describes you, you might consider individual sports.

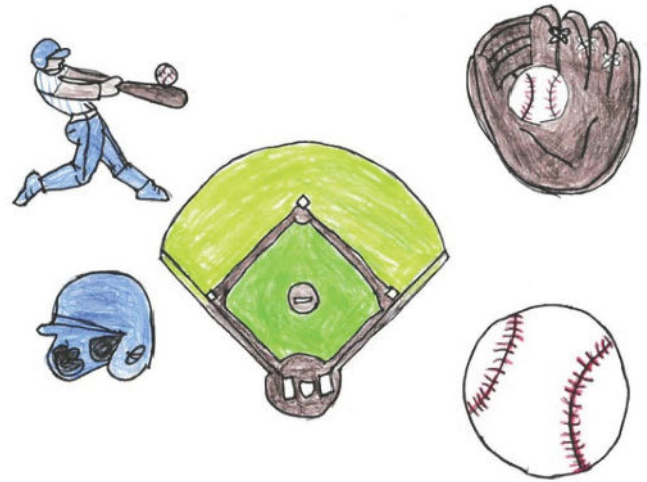


Illustration by Cassandra Ariel Ureña, Holy Name reporter

Examples of individual sports include swimming, skiing, track, gymnastics, and ice skating.

"Being the only child growing up, I enjoyed being on a team and working towards a common goal. I learned how to get along with other kids my age," said Mr. T.

"Whether you are on a team or enjoy doing an individual sport, I strongly suggest you just get out there and get moving," said Mr. Richards.

—By Holy Name reporters

Holy Name reporters on group activities

What we like to do ...

A group activity that I enjoy participating in is theater. It is so much fun to rehearse and perform in a play. I would recommend this activity to other students because you make friends from everywhere. But you also may be disappointed if you don't get the part that you want. —Cassandra Ariel Ureña

One group activity that I participate in and enjoy is playing on the basketball team. I would recommend basketball because you will become more confident in your abilities and learn to work together as a team. Most importantly, basketball will keep you healthy. —Xzavier Valdez

The group activity I participate in is soccer. I would recommend this group activity because it makes you feel energized and happy. Soccer also helps you with social interactions with people. —Christopher Aquina

St. Cecilia reporters on volunteering

What we've learned ...

Volunteering helps you when you are feeling down and it makes people in the community happy. Volunteering can also help you find something that you really enjoy doing and make a difference while teaching you to be responsible. —Amelia Osorio

I want people to know that volunteering can help with depression and sadness. Volunteering is also good for our school and community. Philanthropy is the giving of your time and treasure to help others. —Noah Infante

Giving your time, talent, and treasure can help you with your health. And I have also learned that volunteering helps you to become more responsible and can help you become more mature. —Christian Bonifacio Dorado

Volunteering teaches many lessons

(Continued from Page 1)

Q: What activity is most meaningful to you?

Ms. Harkins: When Sister Clarissa invited me to go to Guatemala, I had very meaningful experiences. The trip to Guatemala gave me the opportunity to practice speaking Spanish. It was good to work with kids from different countries.

Q: What did you enjoy about this activity?

Ms. Harkins: I enjoyed traveling and being part of a Christian team. I got the opportunity to meet different people and work on the common goal of helping others.

Q: Would you recommend this activity to someone else? Why or why not?

Ms. Harkins: Yes, definitely! Volunteering in general makes you feel good about yourself.

Q: What volunteer activity did you like to do when you were a kid?

Ms. Harkins: My first volunteering experience was helping at my local library.

Q: What did you learn from it?

Ms. Harkins: I learned an important lesson about what it means to be responsible. Volunteering at an early age also helped me realize that I like being part of a team.

Q: Is there any advice you would like to share with kids about volunteering?

Ms. Harkins: You choose a volunteer activity you are interested in. Find something that you can do as a group with your family and friends. Lastly, talk to school staff and churches to find out where the need is in your school and community.

Volunteering—a way to do God’s work

For St. Joseph’s guidance counselor Tasha Humphrey, volunteering plays an important role in her life.

She currently volunteers by serving in local kitchens and various activities through her sorority. According to Ms. Humphrey, volunteering doesn’t end once you finish school but should be a continual part of life.

When you volunteer, you help others—and you help yourself, according to the website Kids-Health.org. You feel good about taking action to make the world a better place.

Volunteering plays a key role at St. Joseph’s. “There are activities such as The Cathedral Kitchen, where we serve food to the less fortunate on Thanksgiving. Students also volunteer by keeping the school clean through activities such as painting and planting,” said Ms. Humphrey.

The volunteer activities are usually organized by St. Joseph’s eighth-grade teachers. “Volunteering is an important lesson for our students at St. Joseph. It teaches students the important lesson of being humble, helping the surrounding community, and to be aware of those who are less fortunate,” said Ms. Humphrey.

Ms. Humphrey said students can get involved in volunteering by talking to their teacher, school counselor, and administrator, checking in with churches

and local community centers, seeking volunteer opportunities on social media, and by being proactive.

“God commands us to be good servers, and I look forward to seeing the great work you all will do as volunteers,” said Ms. Humphrey.

—By St. Joseph Pro-Cathedral reporters

St. Joseph Pro-Cathedral

Volunteering is good because...

It can help you when you are feeling stressed, and volunteering can help you make new friends. People appreciate you when you volunteer for a good cause.

—Jace Schwartz

I think that volunteering is an effective way to teach people to be thankful for the things they have. When someone volunteers to help the homeless, they can learn that there are people around the world that aren’t having a good life. It can also help kids learn to care more about others.

—Eliana Sanchez

It gives you a chance to make a difference. It also gives you a chance to try something different and get out of a rut. Volunteering can help you cope with your feelings and practice being responsible.

—Brandon Flores

Reporters put lesson into action

St. Joseph Pro-Cathedral eighth-grade reporters decided to put their research about volunteering into action. Giving your time to help others can make your school and community a better place, according to Dr. Eric Kim, a professor of psychology at the University of British Columbia, in an article on the American Heart Association website, www.heart.org. Volunteering can offer people a sense of purpose, which is linked to healthier lifestyles and improved mental health.

School guidance counselor Ms. Humphrey told reporters that God commands us to be good servers and that she looks forward to seeing what type of volunteering projects the students will do.

St. Joseph reporters did not waste any time putting their research into action. They wrote and illustrate inspirational get-well cards for kids who are staying at the Ronald McDonald House receive medical treatment.

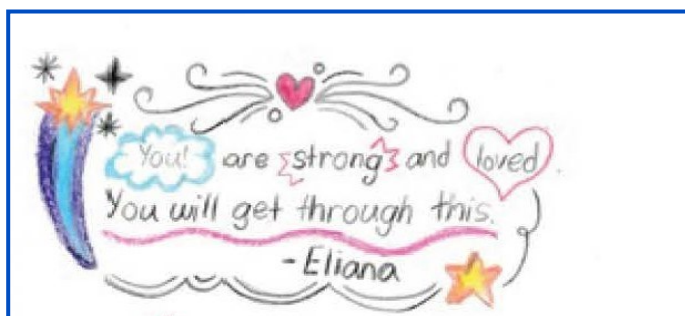


Illustration by Eliana Sanchez

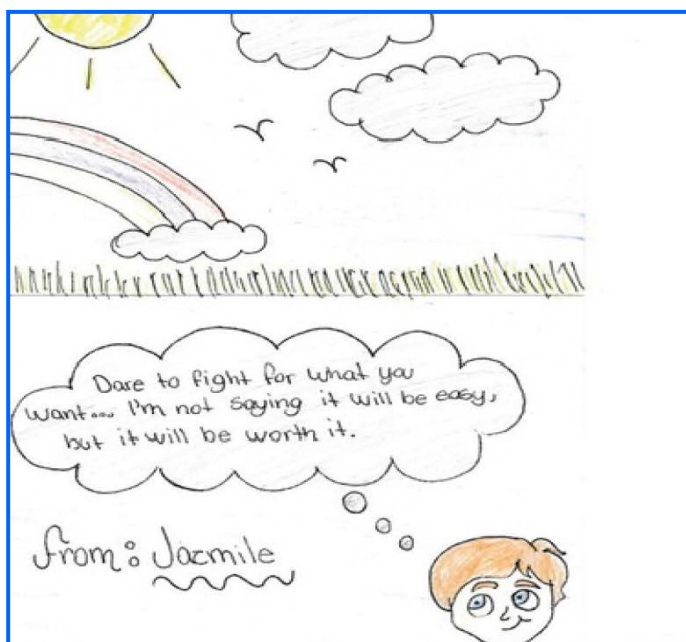


Illustration by Jazmile Peralta

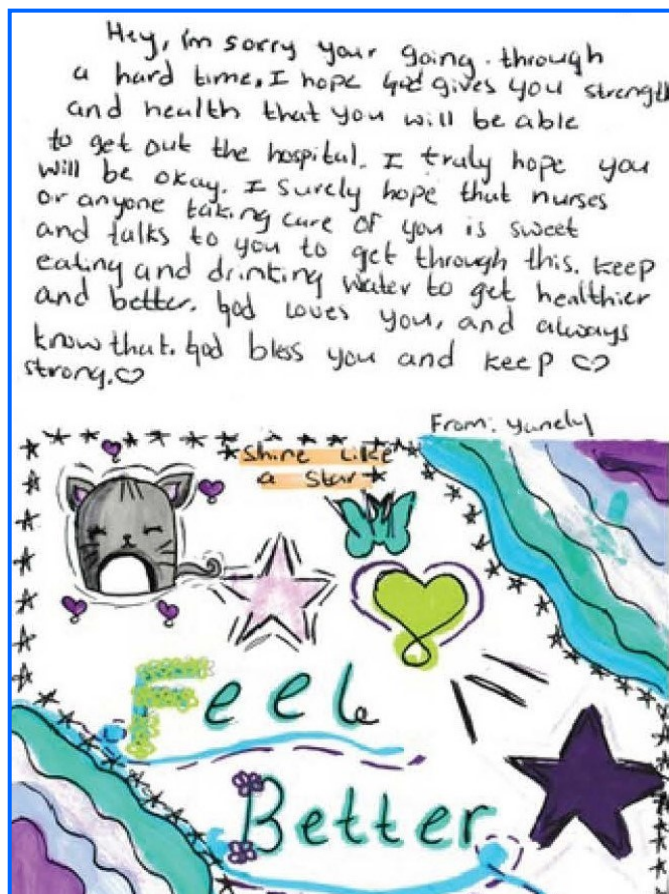


Illustration by Yanelly Gomez-Maldonado

Catholic Partnership Schools Healthy Courier

The *Healthy Courier* is a publication of the Catholic Partnership Schools in Camden, NJ. This issue has been created by reporters at St. Cecilia, Holy Name, and St. Joseph Pro-Cathedral.

Fifth-grade reporters from St. Cecilia include Kylan Dandridge, Yoarlin de la Cruz, Christian Bonifacio Dorado, Liam Gonzalez, Noah Infante, Giovanni Irene Jr., Antenello Jones, Masen Liranzo, Zaina Moulter, Amelia Osorio, and Gladys Ramos. Their faculty advisor is Mrs. Woerner. Sr. Alicia Perna is school principal.

Seventh-grade reporters from Holy Name include Christopher Aquino, Raidhiyrs Espinal, Nelania Hidalgo, Nelson Hidalgo, Jayson Lara, Yareli Nunez Centeno, Samayeliz Rivera, Christopher Rodriguez, Gael Samano, Victoria Sanchez, Jamiel Savage, Adrian Sosa, Zoey Stroman-Santiago, Cassandra Ureña, and Xzavier Valdez-Sharp. Mrs. Buchofer is their faculty advisor. Mrs. Kent is the school principal.

Eighth-grade reporters from St. Joseph Pro-Cathedral include Yeury Coronado, Brandon Flores, Abigail Garcia, Andrea Garcia, Yanelly Gomez-Maldonado, Kylar Harris, William Hernandez, Perla Jimenez, Alexandra Meza, Allison Morales, Jazmile Peralta, Miguel Pina, Matthew Ramos, Gianni Reyes-White, Diego Reyes-Xiqui, Eliana Sanchez, Jace Schwartz, and Mark Sevilla. Their faculty advisor is Mrs. Guernon-Wittman. Mrs. Orosz is the school principal.

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