



St. James Mission Circle Newsletter

P.O. Box 1376, Solana Beach, CA 92075

February 2015

www.missioncircle.com

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Our mission is to organize, lead, and engage the parishioners of Saint James and Saint Leo Catholic Community to improve the lives of people in need.



Help Fulfill Their Dreams Of Going To College:

**Change a Casa Eudes girl's life
by supporting our new Futures Program**

Maritsa dreams of being a doctor, Soledad wants to be a nutritionist, and Laura longs to be a nurse. But none of these girls from the Casa Eudes home have any family to offer support or guidance. Although they got good grades in high school, they have no hope of attending college.

Our new Futures Program will change all that. We want to pay their tuition and living expenses so they can go to college in Tijuana. To do this, we need compassionate people to step up and contribute to our new scholarship program. Please help these intelligent girls fulfill their dreams. See inside (page 4) for details on this new program. Or, contact Jeff Sturgis at pres@missioncircle.com or Maggy Hillenbrand at carlmaggy@aol.com.

**We can't change their difficult past
but we can change their future**



Gifts, Feasting, Singing, Dancing ... Santa Brings It!

With heaps of donated presents and scores of helpers, the Christmas party at Casa Eudes this year was the biggest and best we've ever hosted. Joy filled every room of the home, spilling out into the courtyard and brick patio.

Both Mexican and American traditions blended together to gladden the hearts of everyone present. The festivities began with a "posada". This is a solemn procession symbolizing the search by Mary and Joseph for shelter in Bethlehem. Teens played the holy couple and the angels. We followed them from door to door singing Mexican Christmas carols.

Next, the girls performed Mexican folk dances in the sunny courtyard. All of us who were watching were enchanted by the vibrant music, bright costumes, and swirling dance patterns.

After all that activity, the kids were ready for heaping platters of turkey and ham, creamy mashed potatoes, homemade gravy, yams, cranberry sauce, and Christmas salads. Lots of us came back for seconds but, of course, somehow we all found room for cookies and ice cream!

Finally, sleigh bells and hearty laughter announced the star of the show: Santa! He came with "elves" carrying big bags of presents for the all the girls, the sisters, the staff members and their children. In no time at all the room was filled with cries of delight amidst a flurry of ribbons, boxes, and tissue paper.

At the end of the afternoon, as those of us from Mission Circle piled into our "sleighs" to go back across the border, we took with us the nicest gift of all: the memory of a joyous day. A sincere thanks to all who helped.





We Came Bearing Gifts For Hundreds Of Migrant Families

It rained on Sunday, January 11th, but nothing could put a damper on our Epiphany Celebration! We traveled to The Galilee Center in Coachella to give migrant families warm blankets to keep away the cold as well as new shoes and socks for their children. The center added food including fresh produce and canned goods.

The event actually started the day before with scores of St. James parishioners and other volunteers sorting and packaging all the shoes and socks to transport to the center.

Mission Circle supplied more than 1,600 pairs of shoes and over 60 of our supporters made the six-hour round trip to help distribute them. The three wise men left their camels behind and traveled with us on the bus to mingle with the crowd and remind us of the meaning of the day: to bring gifts to ease the lives of these very poor families who make less than \$10,000 a year picking crops. This year has been extra hard for them because the drought has reduced the crops and cut down on the available work.

Some volunteers stocked the tables while others acted as escorts, helping each family find shoes that fit their kids and making sure they had blankets and food to take home.

Mission Circle would like to thank everyone who helped make this Epiphany Celebration so meaningful. We actually got a chance to meet the people we are trying to help. Despite the rain, it was a wonderful, heart-warming day.



Help Fund Life-Changing Scholarships For Casa Eudes Girls

When a girl is old enough to leave the Casa Eudes Girls Home (the home for "at risk" kids that we help support in Tijuana), she is completely on her own. She usually has no family to help her so going to college is an impossible dream. She has to accept a low-paying job with no chance to get ahead.

Our new Futures Program will change all that. We hope to offer qualified high school seniors from Casa Eudes life-changing scholarships to study the field of their choice at a Tijuana college.

To prepare the girls for this opportunity, there are new skills that will be taught at the Casa Eudes Girls Home itself. The juniors and seniors in high school will receive instruction and mentoring in subjects such as computer programs and English courses to help them prepare for college or vocational training.

Right now there are three Casa Eudes girls that started college in Tijuana this term with our help. We need sponsors and mentors for them so they can continue their studies. If you would like to help them fulfill their dreams of going to college, please contact Jeff Sturgis at pres@missioncircle.com or Maggy Hillenbrand at carlmaggy@aol.com. All these bright girls need is a chance. We can't change their difficult past, but we can change their future.

Cook A Meal For The Homeless With Your Family Or Group

Plan to cook and serve dinner for the street people at the Bread of Life Mission in Oceanside. Make this a family affair -- it's a wonderful way to teach your children compassion for the poor. Or, if you belong to a club or organization, make it a group project. We'll help you with planning the meal and using the Parish Kitchen. The cooking usually starts around 2:00 p.m. Serving dinner at the Mission goes from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. If you'd like to reserve a day for your group to cook a dinner, please contact Pete McDevitt at petemcdevitt@roadrunner.com.



Events Calendar

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
February		
During February	MC Quarterly Newsletter	US Mail
10 am to noon, all Fridays	Staffing CRC Pantry	CRC Resource Center
7:00 pm Tues 10th	MC Monthly Meeting	St. James Gathering Room
7:30 am Sat 7th	MC/SBYA*-Maint/Sewing	Casa Eudes, TJ
7:30 am Sat 21st	MC/SBYA*-Maint/Crafts	Casa Eudes, TJ
2:00 pm, Mon 24th	Bread of Life Dinner	Parish Hall & Oceanside
March		
10 am to noon, all Fridays	Staffing CRC Pantry	CRC Resource Center
7:00 pm Tues 10th	MC Monthly Meeting	St. James Gathering Room
2:00 pm Fri 12th	Bread of Life Dinner	Parish Hall & Oceanside
7:30 am Sat 14th	MC/SBYA*-Maint/Sewing	Casa Eudes, TJ
7:30 am Sat 28th	MC/SBYA*-Maint/Crafts	Casa Eudes, TJ
April		
10 am to noon, all Fridays	Staffing CRC Pantry	CRC Resource Center
7:30 am Sat 11th	MC/SBYA*-Maint/Sewing	Casa Eudes, TJ
7:30 am Sat 14th	MC Monthly Meeting	St. James Gathering Room
7:30 am Sat 25th	MC/SBYA*-Maint/Crafts	Casa Eudes, TJ

*St. Brigid's Young Adults

News Briefs:

The CRC Holiday Baskets Program Was A Huge Success!

It provided over 6,000 needy people with warm coats, blankets, toys, baby items, and food. The Community Resource Center's Holiday Basket Staff send their sincere thanks to all the Mission Circle volunteers who participated -- our members helped make the holidays a lot brighter for local families who needed help.

We're Staffing the CRC Food Pantry In Encinitas on Friday mornings to assist our neighbors who have had difficulties and are trying to get their lives back on track. If you'd like to participate, you can sign up online by going to our Mission Circle website: www.missioncircle.com.

Temporary Shelter was offered at the parish hall once again as part of the Interfaith program that hosts a group of homeless people, giving them meals and a place to sleep. This year a family with five children and another with three kids stayed with us.

Many Thanks



To all our generous donors who gave scores of Christmas presents for the Casa Eudes Girls, the sisters, the staff members and their children. Thanks also to the many helpers like chef Jeff Sturgis and Maggy Hillenbrand who organized the event.

To the parishioners who have signed up to help local people by staffing the CRC pantry on Fridays mornings.



To everyone who helped sort shoes for the Epiphany Celebration. And special thanks to all the volunteers headed by Katie Hodsdon who went to Coachella to distribute them.



To the sponsors and donors who were the first to contribute to our new Futures Program offering life-changing scholarships to Casa Eudes high school graduates.

St. James Mission Circle
P.O. Box 1376
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You're Invited To One Of Our Meetings:

This is an open invitation to all our supporters to come to one of our monthly meetings.

They're held on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Gathering Room of St. James Church (formally the church library). You're welcome to come and learn about our charity as we plan events and discuss the many ways we help the poor.

If you are interested, please contact Jeff Sturgis at pres@missioncircle.com.

Please Send Donations To:

Mission Circle, P.O. Box 1376, Solana Beach, CA 92075

Want to donate on line? It's very easy. Just go to our website and follow the simple directions.

**Visit Our Facebook page
at www.facebook.com/sjmissioncircle**

We post all of our upcoming events on this site. If you are already a member of Facebook, just register as a "fan" and refer the site to others. If you are not a member, visit the website to check on our activities.

**Go To Our Website at
www.missioncircle.com**

You can get more details on our activities and ways you can help at this website.

**For volunteer opportunities, contact
Jeff Sturgis, President - pres@missioncircle.com**

Mission Circle Contacts:

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