

## Another Christmas Miracle

Our St. Vincent DePaul Mission Statement reiterates our purpose--“Together in Christ’s love, we serve those in need”. This holiday season we were joined by many donors and volunteers who firmly believe in our mission--I’d like to share the work of three special groups now.

The Middle School students in Visitation, St. Edward’s and St. Francis parishes teamed up to put together “Blessing Bags” for the homeless and families experiencing need. The Evergreen Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints also provided bags, along with the Washington County 4H teens and their families--over 400 bags contributed!!!!

These bags were stuffed full of hygiene items, water bottles, wash cloths, socks, gloves--so many wonderful needed things. In addition, the Evergreen Ward sent out a call asking their families to provide Christmas gifts for the homeless. These beautifully wrapped and filled “Magical Christmas Boxes”--more than 150--were the first gifts our homeless people have received in many years.

We distributed the blessing bags to families and homeless folks who came through our Center during December, and had a great time visiting with people who came to our Christmas Dinner on the 18<sup>th</sup> as part of our “Blue Bus” lunch program. Many of the bags and extras (like warm gloves and hats) were included in the food



Middle School Students preparing Blessing Bags



Santa helped pass out Blessing Bags along with several representatives from the LDS Church, Evergreen Stake.

boxes we distributed as part of our holiday effort. We kept some back, of course, because Winter is just starting.

This project has deeper meaning than helping those in need--it helps all of us to remember how blessed we are. If your hands are cold, you put on gloves. If your head is chilly, you find a hat. If you need to wash your hands, you probably have a bathroom--maybe you take a shower to warm up. But what if you don't have any of these things we take for granted...you depend on the good will of others. Well, thank God for our volunteers and these young people that helped provide some relief. For some, working on projects such as this is a real eye-opener. If you have never experienced want, seeing it first-hand encourages us to continue to volunteer, to work with elected officials to find answers, and best of all, deepen our own spirituality.

This is a community effort, and our community is exceptionally generous. Working together our faith shows the way--we aren't expecting miracles, but I think we just had one.

Thank you again, Evergreen Ward LDS church, Visitation, St. Edward's, and St. Francis Middle School and Washington County 4H. We are blessed by your presence in our lives.