The Story of the Sharing Tree

Who Am I?

The Sharing Tree is a "Hearts and Hands" Ministry that invites everyone to join. All ages are welcome to participate. ***Our mission is to extend Christ's love through helping hands that collect, create, and provide personal care kits to impoverished families.*** Our ministry volunteers transform everyday items into treasured necessities for an impoverished family that will be distributed by Catholic Charities.

It is an opportunity to experience Christ's example in a personal way. By sharing home & personal care items with poor families who want to be clean and make their home safe, Christ's love is being extended from your hand to theirs. Simple items such as paper towels, toilet paper, soap, shampoo, and cleaning products become treasured items used sparingly by families in need. They want to clean and maintain a safe home for their families but they need a helping hand.

When did I begin?

On June 23, 2019, St. Mark Catholic Church and Catholic Charities of Wilmington followed Christ's example and spearheaded the Sharing Tree project to help those less fortunate in New Hanover, Brunswick, and Pender counties meet basic living needs with the sharing of household, personal care, and every day cleaning/support items.

In July 2019, Bishop Luis Zarama blessed the donations from St. Mark Catholic Church's Parishioners and the Sharing Tree Project. The Sharing Tree began as a Parish project and has grown into a vibrant Outreach Ministry.

Where do I come from?

The Sharing Tree is a Place where hearts and hands join to help families in need.

Why am I here?

The Sharing Tree is a sturdy branch of kindness. It helps families in crisis build/rebuild their foundation.

What do I do?

Every month the 3D Sharing Tree is placed in the Gathering Hall with items that will be collected on the 4th weekend of each month after & before all Masses. The Sharing Tree Corner in the Parish Bulletin gives weekly updates and the month's list of needed items. The list of items to be collected is generated by Catholic Charities Wilmington after years of working with the homeless, families in crisis, and disaster victims.

Advertising, donations, collection of donations, and transportation of collected items is done by St. Mark's Sharing Tree Ministry Members. All collected donations are placed directly into the Catholic Charities Truck by Sharing Tree Ministry members. **Starting with the September 28th & 29th collection**, Sharing Tree Care Kits will be created the same weekend items are collected. The essentials the Sharing Tree Care kits will have are: Household cleaning products, Paper Towels, Toilet paper, shampoo, soap, laundry/dish detergent, and personal hygiene products. Kits can be supplemented with items such as water, flashlights, etc. as needed. Kitting ensures fair gifting of Parishioner donations to needy families and quickens the distribution process to the poor. Funds collected are used to supplement items to make kits complete. A special spiritual gift is also added to our kits. Each Sharing Tree Care Kit will have a handmade rosary and prayer card packet assembled by St. Mark School Children. Completed Kits will be driven back to Catholic Charities by Sharing Tree members who are also Catholic Charities Volunteers after assembly on Sunday. On Monday, the truck is unloaded and kits will be recorded and prepared for distribution to families/individuals in need by Catholic Charities staff and volunteers.

How can I grow?

Through Volunteer Opportunities, the Sharing Tree will continue to prosper. The following are opportunities to become active in the Sharing Tree Ministry:
* Donation collections on 4th Saturday or Sunday
* Pick-up and Return Catholic Charities Truck (additional requirements)
* Sort and repackage donations
* Unload truck at St. Mark Gymnasium for Kitting and reload Truck with kits at completion
* Unload truck with Kits at Catholic Charities
* Assist with inventorying collections

If you would like additional information or would like to join the Ministry please contact: Sabina Newman at 910-343-0122 or email at Sabina@thesharingtree.net