



Christmas Celebration 2020—Sharing God’s Gifts during a Pandemic

After months of worry and planning and under the careful coordination of Theresa Zimnawoda, SVDP hosted Christmas Celebration 2020 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on December 5, 12, and 19. The event was open to the community with invitations distributed at food pop-ups, on Facebook, notice in the Brown County Democrat and with direct mailings to 300 households. An on-line scheduling system was used to recruit volunteers. Each Saturday required two shifts of at least seven volunteers. Volunteers from Church of the Lakes in Nineveh, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Agnes, St. David’s, the Brown County School Corporation, Rotary Club of Brown County, the Northern Brown County Food Alliance and Jackson Township Trustee’s Office signed up for roles such as Parking Lot Greeter, Welcome Host, Personal Shopper and Santa’s Helper. CDC guidelines were followed and only three individuals representing three different households were invited in the building at any time. All wore masks, used hand sanitizer upon entrance and practiced social distancing. Those waiting their turn were patient and stayed in their cars. A total of 136 households (some were multi-family households) participated and made selections for 507 children and grandchildren. More than 80 different individuals or organizations contributed including those who committed to praying each day for the volunteers and families. Church of the Lakes, St. Agnes Church and community groups organized campaigns to which individuals contributed one or more gift items...a true sharing of God’s Gifts during a Pandemic!

Hats, gloves, and breath-taking knitted items were donated by Natalie Lavengood, Marsha Hughes-Gay, Rita Simon and Janet Miller. A mountain of new pillows were contributed by a yet unidentified angel. Touch of Silver, Gold and Old (Al & Carol Drake) donated more than 200 stocking stuffers. Jonathan Bolte secured 800 age-appropriate books from Half-Price Books in Bloomington. Denise Hammack, manager of a local store, provided generous donations of 300+ gifts and 100 sets of batteries. Doris Bachman, Corydon, donated more than 200 pieces of new jewelry. Church of the Lakes members worked at the event and also brought items collected by their faith community: teen gift items such as adult coloring books, markers, shoes, water bottles, wallets & DVD’s. A Giving Tree at St. Agnes, coordinated by Jackie Brich and Cheryl Bedwell, resulted in the parish donating 61 items and \$100 towards 2021’s event. Midwest Foods donated candy and snacks. The Caring Center in Lebanon (Brenda Vaughn and Janet Miller) donate items throughout the year. Alan Schwenk came to work the event & brought firewood. Mike Day, Wanda Lawson, Sheila Roccia, Shirley Kelp, Mimi Riffle, Nancy Kates, Margie Brandon, Marsha Lafferty and Brenda Zody brought gifts, toys, Christmas decorations and other treasures. Kroger Corporation donated \$500 in gift cards and Kroger in Columbus donated thousands of pounds of meat and other food! Sam’s Club in Columbus provided a generous donations of turkeys.

Christmas Celebration Recap of the 507 Served

Ages	Boys	Girls	Ages	Boys	Girls	Ages	Boys	Girls
<1	7	14	7	12	10	14	12	11
1	15	18	8	9	16	15	8	11
2	14	17	9	13	20	16	10	8
3	16	19	10	18	17	17	11	15
4	13	16	11	10	9	18	3	3
5	19	14	12	12	20	Total	240	267
6	14	17	13	24	12	Grand Total	507	

Theresa and John Zimnawoda and family members Mary, Jeff, Kylene, Jake, Sarah, Jared, Mila, Emmett, Nate and Valerie, started early in 2020 watching for seasonal sales, sorted through donations throughout the year, monitored the supply of items, and set-up and worked the event. Sandy Scheidler, Cheryl Dixon and Cindy Peck along with other “sorting volunteers” identified gently used items during the year and set them aside. Kevin Preuss & Lisa Duret monitored the schedule & kept a watchful eye on the flow during the event. John & Angie Aumage, Jonathan Bolte and Shirley Boardman provided organizational support. The Food Pantry was open 6 days in December between 10:00 a.m. and noon and distributed 12,000 pounds of food to 151 households. Also in December SVDP in collaboration with community partners, hosted two pop-up distributions and distributed 26,000 pounds of food to 415 households. We are overwhelmed with gratitude and know that this report doesn’t capture all that happened nor all whom contributed!