

EDUCATION MINISTRIES

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“Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people.” Ephesians 6:7

We are called by our baptism to serve the Lord and His people with our time, talent, and treasure. As Catholic preschool educators, we strive to teach our children this message by helping them to not only understand how special God made them, but how they can also assist others in feeling similarly. We also know that the more often young children are introduced to an idea through play and relatable experiences the more likely they are to carry this with them down the road. Keeping these things in mind, we try to instill the importance of doing good deeds and being kind to others throughout our day.

Although COVID has altered many of the service opportunities with which our preschoolers have engaged in the past, we are continuing to actively search for other ways to allow our students to serve others and spread kindness. One new activity that some of our children participated in this year was the parish turkey drive for Passage Home. Two of our 3-year old classes were “caught” pulling frozen turkeys in a sled to the donation area this past week (it took a bit of problem solving to figure out how they were going to move multiple large

and heavy frozen turkeys to where they needed to go!). Most of them will eat their own Thanksgiving turkey this year, and also can begin to recognize that some people might not be able to buy such a big thing to eat with their family. In addition, the 2-year old teachers shared the idea with their families about taking their child shopping to pick out one favorite food item to give to another child who might not be able to get that item. Even in this small way, children can start to learn how to participate in food donations such as the one that occurs in our parish for families at Our Lady of the Rosary in Louisburg.

As much as our little people love Cupcake and his squirrel buddies who roam our campus and eat the acorns, they also learned last week that pigs eat acorns too! What was even more exciting is that many classes and some of our families collected acorns to donate to some hungry rescued pigs at Saving Grace. This organization is primarily known for rescuing dogs, but they also are home to a few pigs who think that acorns are a special treat! How fun it was for our preschoolers to learn that not only do pigs like mud but they also have a fondness for acorns! They really enjoyed doing

their part to make sure that the pigs got to enjoy something that they find really delicious!

As we approach Advent, the preschoolers will continue partaking in efforts to help out when there is a need. Soon they will be busy decorating tags for the parish Advent giving tree gifts and making artwork to give to some homebound elderly parishioners. In a future bulletin article, I will share how the students participated in a project to bring some ‘preschool happy’ to recipients of homes being built through Habitat for Humanity.

It’s important to recognize that there are opportunities for all of us to participate in helping those in need. It is equally important that we impress upon our little ones that they can help someone else in a meaningful way; this lesson is critical to their future development at stewards of Christ. May God guide the adults in our students’ lives to be open to opportunities to make a difference for someone else!

To learn more about the wonderful opportunities that we provide, please visit our website at: preschoolatstfrancis.com or contact Shelley Freeman at: shelley.freeman@stfrancisraleigh.org