

Next Week: Souper Bowl kick-off for Super Bowl

Confused? Don't be! **Souper Bowl**—note that it's spelled S-O-U-P-E-R—is a faith-based grassroots fundraising effort that's been around since 1990, last year raising more than \$7 million nationally that went directly to churches' own hunger-related efforts that operate on a local level.

As it would happen, I have some personal experience with Souper Bowl. While I was DRE for the younger grades at St. Ann's in Stoughton, the First Communion class each year—as their service project—made it their continuing tradition to collect on Super Bowl weekend each year and donate the proceeds to the parish's St. Vincent de Paul chapter to help feed families in crisis. What I've always liked about the Souper Bowl of Caring is that it's a wonderful blend of national and local; it helps churches with a nationally organized media campaign, complete with statistics and graphics—so that busy parish volunteers don't have to “reinvent the wheel”—but then encourages groups use donations locally.

This year, as HMC teens collect for the annual Souper Bowl fundraiser, they are automatically collecting for the well-publicized Madison-area effort called **Feed My Sheep**. Perhaps you've seen the articles on Feed My Sheep in the *Catholic Herald* the last two years—or seen it explained on Channel 3. Now in its third year, Feed My Sheep is sponsored by the West Side Catholic Youth Network (of which HMC is a part), in partnership with an organization called 6:8 which does most of the logistics. All funds that are raised go toward buying the four simple ingredients for meals that will be packaged by hundreds of volunteers on Saturday, April 5th at the Catholic Multicultural Center. On that day, volunteers also break for lunch and fellowship together and end the day with a special Mass at the CMC, presided over by Msgr. Ken Fiedler.

Basically, Madison-area Catholic parishes volunteer for Feed My Sheep in two ways: (1) They raise the funds necessary to buy the meals' raw ingredients. At HMC we're using Souper Bowl as our kick-off and then also collecting in teens' classrooms during Lent. Each meal costs 25 cents, and one volunteer-packaged bag contains six meals. The meals consist of four ingredients: rice, soy, dried vegetables, and a vitamin/mineral flavoring that reverses the effects of starvation. (2) Volunteers from our parishes—youth, but also parents and younger siblings; anybody from the parish, really—sign up to help pack the ingredients, according to a special recipe, into bags that are collected and delivered to local Catholic charities and a school in Nicaragua. Last year, volunteers from area Catholic parishes packed an astonishing 61,000 meals.

Please contact me, Mary Lynn Hendrickson, for further details—especially if your teen or family would like to help pack meals with other parishes on April 5th. For the short-run, though, we would simply appreciate your generosity on Super Bowl Sunday!