

# The Ascension Weekly

October 29, 2017

## **SOME Shoeboxes and So Much More: Our Share & Care Ministry at Ascension**

Once again this fall, the Shoeboxes for SOME (So Others Might Eat) Campaign, an initiative of the Share & Care Ministry at Ascension, is underway. Parishioners are being invited to help collect and donate items that will be compiled and wrapped and then shipped out to the SOME headquarters in Washington, D.C., where they will be distributed to those in need. It is an endeavor that has taken place at Ascension for over ten years now, and it is one that is very dear to the heart of Mary Rapczynski, a member of Share & Care who has been with the group since it was first established at Ascension. She says, "I really am partial to helping out SOME because the need is so great – 7000 homeless people in D.C., many of whom are children – and because I think that's what the Catholic Church calls us to do. Our Holy Father Pope Francis wants us to help people in need and be like Christ to them. This is my way of actively participating in caring for people."

The Share & Care Ministry at Ascension, whose current president is Roberta Borges, was founded in the year 2000 by parishioner Nan Parsons, and it has borne much fruit throughout its nearly twenty years of existence. The list of projects and initiatives it has been involved with at Ascension is long and prolific: it includes, but is not limited to, Share Food CO-OP, funeral repasts, Christmas bazaars, prayer cards for those on the sick list, parish picnics, the Christmas Giving Tree, Lenten Soup & Salad Suppers, Paint Nite fundraisers, craft shows and used book sales, welcome packets and home visits for new parishioners, Oktoberfest, and the Bull & Oyster Roast.

Anne Powell, a parishioner who has been with the ministry since its inception, treasures her long association with the group. Her favorite activity with which Share & Care has collaborated is the Warm Nights program, which she was instrumental in getting Ascension involved with. Warm Nights is sponsored by



**Packing and wrapping SOME shoeboxes**

Community Crisis Services, Inc., and is a rotating emergency shelter, which serves, on average, 10,000 meals and 7,000 beds each winter to homeless individuals and families in Prince George's County. Last year, Ascension opened Bates Hall to about thirty people during its assigned week. The year before that, as Anne recalls, there was a huge snowstorm that hit the area while Ascension was hosting the program. "I was there to help make our guests comfortable and distribute the meals, and we ended up being snowed in together from Friday through Tuesday!" Looking back, she is grateful for the opportunities she has had to help out the homeless families and individuals in our area.

Maureen Barber is another longtime and very active member of Share & Care. On her involvement with the ministry, she reflects, "Pablo Picasso said, 'The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.' I think the thing I love most is sharing my creative skills by designing flyers and posters to announce all our events." Maureen has indeed blessed our parish with her exceptional talent in this capacity many times over; currently hanging in the church, for example, is a thermostat illustration of the current contribution totals toward the parish patio project capital campaign.

It is this dynamic that so often characterizes Share & Care: members discovering the service projects that they are passionate about, and then helping spearhead or support those projects to make them a reality in our parish. Share & Care is always looking for new members, since that can only enrich the ministry and make it more fruitful.