

JustServe

"Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers." James 1:22

For over a decade, the youth of the Diocese of Raleigh have raised tens of thousands of dollars to serve the needs of the hungry of our area through the HAY (Hunger Action for Youth) Project. Each year, youth in parishes and deaneries have raised money and collected food through a variety of activities including change wars, dances, food drives and even Battles of the Bands. The funds raised have been pooled together and donated to various organizations that serve those in need of food and assistance in eastern North Carolina, including Food Bank of North Carolina and Catholic Social Ministries. These efforts have touched the lives of countless people, both those involved in doing HAY Project events and those who have received food and help through the money raised and food collected.

To the HAY Project and Beyond

While serving the needs of the hungry poor through HAY Project is meaningful and at the core of our Christian call to serve, we recognize that there are so many others, both young and old, who have many, many needs. There are homeless and under-sheltered youth and adults, elderly not receiving adequate care and attention, and many groups of people who are victims of prejudice, violence, abuse and neglect.

The Diocesan Youth Board of 2003-2004, inspired by the gospel call to be "doers of the word" and fully aware that the needs of the poor go beyond hunger, introduce a new strategy of justice and service for the youth of the diocese. The goal of this new project which is titled *JustServe*, is to not only serve the needs of the hungry, but to "just serve" the needs of all those less fortunate. Our hope is that *JustServe* will provide opportunities to encourage unity – among the whole parish community, between parishes within the deaneries, throughout the diocese, and, of course between the church and the needy of our world, just as Jesus envisioned. *JustServe* will record, recognize, and celebrate the concrete efforts of youth throughout the diocese on behalf of those in need.

Specifically, we are asking each parish to keep track of the ways they serve the needs of the poor and oppressed, submit them to the Youth Ministry Office once per year (on the form at the end of this packet). These statistics will be combined with all the other parishes and we will publish the results of the many impressive and caring ways youth *JustServe*. The form will ask you to submit all the service done by young people of the parish for the previous year (April 1 – March 31) in the following categories:

- **Food Collected:** whether you tally them by the can, box or pound, every item of food collected by youth which goes to feed the hungry will be counted in the *JustServe* count. All foods would be collected and distributed locally
- **Money Raised:** as with the HAY Project of the past, parishes and/or deaneries can sponsor events, or collect money a variety of ways and send it in to the

diocese, so that it may be pooled with funds from parishes throughout diocese to fight poverty, homelessness and hunger, discrimination, etc.

- **Service Hours Provided;** whether youth provide service on their own, as a part of a parish or deanery event, or through their confirmation program, all hours they dedicate to the service of others in need will be included to show how dedicated the young church truly is to “being doers of the word and not just hearers”. These hours could be accumulated at work camps and mission trips, food pantries, CSM programs, or soup kitchens and homeless shelters. They could come from the hours youth put into fixing houses, tutoring in an after school program, or teaching in a literacy program.
- **Justice Education Opportunities:** One of the most effective ways to serve the needs of the poor is to study more about social issues and how people are affected by them. Parishes will list under this section all those opportunities in which young people participated to educate themselves and others about justice and service. Examples of justice education opportunities may include: hunger awareness meals, retreats with justice based themes, attending sessions on Catholic Social Teaching, sponsoring speakers on justice issues, etc.
- **Miscellaneous:** As mentioned earlier, there are many ways youth can serve needs in this world. For this portion of the *JustServe* program, we will recognize the unique ways youth reach out that are not included in the categories above. These types of service need not be limited to, but may include: “adopting” a child through Christian Childrens’ Fund, seniors proms, helping the plight of the poor through legislative advocacy (letter writing campaigns, etc.), starting food shelters, pen pal programs with prisoners, orphans, the elderly, building homes, etc. The things that go in this category are not limited by the needs in the world, but by your creative response to that need.

Parishes could develop these service opportunities by themselves, plug into other programs, or join with other parishes in the deanery. Perhaps, deaneries could sponsor two such events, one in the fall and one in the spring that would, with the assistance of members of the Youth Board, bring the universal church together and make an even greater impact by their shared efforts.

Although we do not serve the needs of others so that we may be praised or recognized, we will find ways to celebrate this good news. Once the information that demonstrates the young church of the Diocese of Raleigh knows how to *JustServe*, this information will be published through the NC Catholic, the diocesan web site, and other media outlets. Each parish who submits their information will also receive a certificate of recognition for their efforts, presented at the annual Diocesan Youth Convention.

More details of this program will be presented at Back To Earth and other means.

The gospel calls us to serve the needs of the poor and to fight for justice for all. So, how do we as the young church respond? *We JustServe !*

JustServe
Parish Reporting Form

Thank you for serving the many needs of the poor in this world. In order to join your considerable efforts with other youth from across the Diocese of Raleigh, **please complete and submit this form to the Youth Ministry Office on or before April 1, 2005.**

Parish name:
Parish City:
Youth Ministry Contact Name:
Address:

The young people of our parish community have honored God by serving the needs of the poor in the following ways:

Food Collected (submit your report in whichever way the food was measured):

Number of cans and dry goods boxes collected _____
 Pounds of food _____
 How was the food collected?
 How was the food distributed?

Money Raised

How much money was raised?
 How was the money collected?
 How was the money distributed?

Justice Education Opportunities

Event	Description	Date(s) and length of Event	# of youth participating	# of non-youth participants	Organizers/Sponsors of the Event

Service Hours Provided (use additional pages if needed)

Total # of Events	Total # of participants	Total number of hours of service provided
Parish events	# of participants	Number of service hours provided
Deanery events	# of participants	Number of service hours provided
Other events	# of participants	Number of service hours provided

Miscellaneous:

Briefly describe the other ways you served the needs of the poor and worked for justice.
Use additional page(s) if needed

Event/Strategy	Description	Work Involved	Results/Effects of the efforts