

**God is always here for us. Thank you Lord Jesus Christ for showing us in action how to love the poor!**

**May 3, 2014, Saturday, Bagging of Food for Jim's Project: Homeless Help #5.** 21 Volunteers came to help. With our beloved volunteers the bagging was done quickly. **THANK YOU ALL!** They were Nita Blankington, Fred Quisenberry, Sarah Bajo drove the church pick up truck, Robert & Amy Russell, Josue Galvan and his mom, the Rimando family: Fina, Richeter Mark, Richmond, Richard, & Richelle, Edna & Kevin de Galvan, Peggy Olson ( donated many deodorants), Melesio Villegas, Erika DelaMora, Jeri Punsoy, Kimberly de Guzman, Fred Smith, James Rose, & Althea Jones.

The food in the bag were food that are easy to open: Vienna Sausage, Campbell noodle soup, Ramen, cooked pinto beans, Hot Cocoa Mix, chocolate drink, fruit cocktail, fruit variety pack, peaches, orange juice, spoons & cups. Toiletries were: toothpaste, toothbrush, bars of soap, deodorant & socks.

**May 9 & 10, Friday at 4:00pm & Saturday at 6:45 am to 12:00 noon, please see below pictures I took during the distribution of food for Jim's Project: Homeless Help #5 for 4 different locations.** From the Retreat garage to Precious Blood Catholic Church, Chula Vista ( dinner is serve every Friday), to Methodist Church, Imperial Beach ( our homeless friends take a bath & eat breakfast every Saturday) to Lauderbach Park, Chula Vista, and to Eucalyptus Park, Chula Vista/National City.

**Thank you so much beloved volunteers:** (Deacon David's & the church truck were used)

**May 9, Friday, 13 volunteers** were Joe Bajo (drove the church truck to Precious Blood Catholic Church), Sara Bajo Warren, the Rimando family: Rene, Richter Mark, Richelle, Richard & Richmond; Erica Mora, Paula Ana & Maria Ancheta.

**May 10, Saturday, 22 volunteers:** The Russell: Robert, Rosa, Ashley & Amy; Dora Islas, Deacon David (used his truck for the 3 distribution locations) & Rowena Lewis, Joe Bajo & Sarah Bajo Warren, the Rimando family: Fina, Richard, Richelle, Richmond & Richter Mark; JoAnn & Jan Gomez, Althea Jones & Candy Raya.

Please see below **Amy Russell's article about Jim's Project #5. She is an 8th grade student, Saint Charles Catholic School.**

## **Caritas: Help the Homeless**

“God feeds the soul that feeds his neighbor in need. May 10, 2014; I decided to bring my family along to serve at the St. Charles Catholic Church Caritas, “**Help the Homeless**” program, by handing out packaged food to the homeless. As we arrived at our first location The United Methodist Church, I handed a package of food to a

man who had an open injury on his finger. I was puzzled on the fact that he maintained a smile on his face, but I entered realization when looking into his eyes that happiness is a truly a choice. God lays down obstacles on our path, but we still can choose to smile and see the good in every situation.

We had an hour intermission before getting to our next location and my eagerness to arrive was endless. We all met up at the Lauderbach Park, where we made living just a bit easier for people. A mini-van rolls up to the parking lot and my sister strolls by when heading to the restroom; she couldn't help but notice that the car was crammed with multiple children. All packed like crayons in a box, they slept away as their mother went out to find them something to eat that day. After seeing this take place, I reflected on the life style of not knowing whether or not you will have a meal to feed your children our yourself tonight. A few minutes later a pregnant young woman steps up to receive a package of food. She tells me and my teacher, Ms. Islas, that she is due in September. I couldn't stop thinking about how that baby would be raised; how would she be able to afford a child when she could barley make it through herself? Next up, a man walks up with a huge smile on his face and before I handed him a bag he says, "God bless you sweetheart! God bless!" His joy lit my heart with motivation that even in times of I can make it through. Lastly, a woman began to cry. Droplets of joy ran through the wrinkles beside her eye, while thanking me for handing her a bag of food. After realizing how good God is, I responded in a unique but different way. Before I always said, "Your welcome" but this time I said, "Oh don't thank me, all I did was put food in a bag and wake up early to be here, thank the Lord! He is the one running this whole thing."

We then went over to Eucalyptus Park to distribute to our last group. Eastlake Church had hot meals made for everyone there. They did their worship by singing to Christian rock, which I have never seen done before. It was unique and empowering to those whom needed to be reminded to stay strong. Honestly after seeing all these people in need and relying on God it reminded me of the short story of God carrying the man on the beach. This was because these people have so many struggles in their lives but they stay strong thanks to God who carries them through the pain:

*One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord.*

*Across the sky flashed scenes from his life.*

*For each scene he noticed two sets of*

*footprints in the sand: one belonging  
to him, and the other to the Lord.*

*When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand.*

*He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints.*

*He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life.*

*This really bothered him and he questioned the Lord about it: "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way".*

*But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me."*

*The Lord replied: "My son, my precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."*

*Mary Stevenson*

A tired yet faithful man rolled up his 2 or 3 carts of belongings. He looked accustomed to poverty and loneliness but remained with his head high! Observing this man is when it hit me and I related everything to the verse above. This amazed me and inspired me. See, today everyone complains over simple thing of non-importance. They forget that God is the reason they are here and their suffrage revolves around materialistic matters. However, after seeing all these people who truly live in poverty, it inspired me to carry my cross like Jesus once did. Life has its highs and lows but Jesus did not give up on us, so why must we give up on him? Also, God doesn't give us tasks that he knows we can not handle. Yes, sometimes they may turn into battles but somewhere out there, maybe right in your community; someone wishes they had your problems.

Just when we thought our hard work was done, my family and I drove down a couple blocks where we encountered a homeless family of three who crossed right in front of us. Two struggling parents were raising their daughter by having her eat a third of a string cheese. They had split a stick of string cheese three ways to have enough for each of them to eat. We could not just keep driving so I told my dad to turn around. As they set up with their sign in search of donations, we walked up behind them with the two bags of food; we still had in the trunk and the two blankets we were planning on taking back to the garage. I startled them by saying, “you look like you guys could need some of these things.” The little girl leaped off the jacket that she was sharing with her parents to sit on. She rushes up to my mother and hugs the blanket we handed her as though it was a teddy bear. After seeing this, I really thought she deserved a toy. I remembered we had a box of toys we were giving out but, I had placed it in Sarah’s car. I thought of what to do, and then I came across the thought that I had taken a toy from the box to eventually annoy my teacher in class. I knew Ms. Islas found the little song it played nothing but irritating. I ran into the car grabbed it and knew it was God whom had me take the toy from the box. I pressed Pooh Bear on the front of it to get the little girl’s attention with the music. As the little girl turns her big blue eyes, lit up as her golden curls bounced when running toward me. She hugs me tight, and whispers gently, “thank you!” then each of her parents took a bag of food as I handed it to him and he turns and says, “May God bless and give you more!” My heart was full of joy and I would not change anything about that moment. I could have been doing many other things on a Saturday morning but I wouldn’t have wanted to be anywhere else but there. People often forget that the homeless are people too. Society gets lost in useless drama that they rarely pay attention that their own community needs help.

At Caritas we are not friends, we are a family. After all we all share the same father, whom watches over us daily. We all share the same joy of making people smile, and we all share the same desire to make a difference. Caritas has changed who I am today. I’ve attended almost all the caritas of Jim’s projects and every visit seems to bring more and more unity. I plan to continue coming to every project even after I graduate from St. Charles Catholic School, due to the family-like feeling when working together, and the life changing feeling of making a difference!”

**-Amy Paula Russell**

8<sup>th</sup> grade student at  
St. Charles Catholic School

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Thank you Amy for a wonderful article!!!

Sincerely yours,

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