

Parish Social Ministry Highlights: August 2013

Opening Prayer + Faith Sharing (Successful parish social ministries are prayer driven, not agenda driven)

A Children's Prayer

We pray for children who put chocolate fingers everywhere, who like to be tickled, who stomp in puddles and ruin their new pants, who sneak Popsicles before supper, who erase holes in math workbooks, who can never find their shoes.

And we pray for those who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire, who can't bound down the street in new sneakers, who never go to the circus, who live in an X-rated world.

We pray for children who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions, who sleep with the cat and bury goldfish, who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money, who squeeze toothpaste all over the sink, who slurp their soup.

And we pray for those who never get dessert, who have no safe blanket to drag behind them, who watch their parents watch them die, who can't find any bread to steal, who don't have any rooms to clean up, whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser, whose monsters are real.

We pray for children who spend all their allowance before Tuesday, who throw tantrums in the grocery store and pick at their food, who like ghost stories, who shove dirty clothes under the bed, who get visits from the tooth fairy, who don't like to be kissed in front of the car pool, who squirm in church and scream in the phone, whose tears we sometimes laugh at and whose smiles can make us cry.

We pray for children who want to be carried and for those we never give up on and for those who never get a second chance. For those we smother...and for those who will grab the hand of anybody kind enough to offer it.

We pray for children. Amen.

Starting and Sustaining your Parish Social Ministry: Tools

- **Tobin DVDs:** At the Annual Tobin Lecture on May 15, Jack Jezreel gave an impassioned speech on St. Francis, Pope Francis and the American Catholic Church. His central message was that St. Francis and Pope Francis evangelized by being out in the world, but today's parishes tend to gather parishioners in but have forgotten to then send them back out into the world. The Catholic Church is a missionary church; its core nature is to be of this world and out in the world. His speech is a perfect tool for parish social ministry leaders to share with their committees to become reenergized, inspired and provoke new ideas. His speech would also be ideal to share with your ministry – your fellow parishioners – to spark conversation. Also, online!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTwKYOdNf1g>