

New club sparks up kindness in students

ROXIE PRUNTY
Staff Writer

Senior Mary Tran has recently started the Acts of Kindness Club promoting others to be kind to one another. The club's goal is to help students feel confident in spreading good in their community.

Ambassador of love Katie Thompson has taken on the responsibility of sponsoring this club.

"I was so honored and delighted for Mary to ask me to be the sponsor of her club," Thompson said. "I think it is a really big compliment that they asked me to be a part of their club."

Although they have only had two meetings, Tran pushes the group members to make a difference in somebody's day in the small things they do.

As the club started close to Thanksgiving season, the Acts of Kindness Club had a focus on trying to be thankful for the little things in life.

"It is easy to be kind and make others' days easier for them," Tran said. "Especially with Thanksgiving being around, I think it's important to not take the things we have for granted and to show thanks to God for everything that we do."

At the meetings, attendees had the opportunity to make cards for Teacher Appreciation Week. Students were asked to write their teachers a note expressing their gratitude for what they do.

"We wrote notes for people that we loved, and then we were able to give them away," senior Katelyn Tran said. "It is in little ways that we get to spread happiness at Pius."

This was their first act of kindness to the community of Pius X. In the future, they are hoping to be able to organize even more events.

"Since we just started, we are more localized, but we are applying for a grant soon to help us start more projects to benefit the Pius community," Thompson said. "Hopefully in the future we can expand."

This club is held bi-weekly on Fridays in Sr. Catarina's room (1323). Acts of Kindness Club offers snacks and drinks to all who come and a warm welcome.

"The environment is very welcoming and warm," Katelyn Tran said. "Everybody there is kind or wants to be a kind person and that is what's important."



Members of the acts of kindness club create thank you cards. "I really liked doing that with all my friends," senior Katelyn Tran said. "It gave me an opportunity to be grateful for things I might overlook." Students enjoyed spending time with each other while doing something good for the community. Photo by M. Tran



Senior Thien-An Pham delivers a completed thank you card. "I am impressed with the kids that come in and how joyful they are," staff sponsor Katie Thompson said. "They seem to really love their teachers." Photo by M. Tran

Seniors step up to help kids with needs at Villa Marie

GRETCHEN BRODERSEN
Staff Writer

A handful of Pius X seniors volunteer at Villa Marie School every week. They help shape the young minds of children with disabilities who need additional support.

Villa Marie is a Catholic school that teaches kids ages 6 to 18 with special needs. It provides a living space and opportunities for the students to grow spiritually and develop as individuals despite their differences.

"Not only is it important for kids with special needs to learn, but it's also important because they learn about the faith," senior Jacky Diaz de Leon Sanchez said. "It's a better environment for them and they are treated well."

Senior Makenzie Backman saw an ad for a Villa Marie summer camp last year and decided to start volunteering.

"I feel like it's made me grow better as a person," Backman said. "Before, I didn't really have much experience with volunteering or

getting to know people with special needs. Ever since volunteering I feel a lot better about myself and it's easier for me to have conversations with people."

Since becoming close with many of the kids and faculty of Villa Marie, Backman wants to pursue special education in college.

"Going back there makes me feel really connected to the kids, and I have created so many bonds with them and the sisters too," Backman said.

Theology IV teacher Sr. Maria Meza explained that before Villa Marie was formed, the superintendent of Catholic schools, Monsignor James Dawson, noticed there was no special ed program for kids with disabilities in the Catholic school system.

"His idea was to provide a place, a school, that would address the educational, emotional, spiritual, and social needs of these children that have special needs," Meza said. "It seemed like if they did go to public schools, they just kind of fell through the cracks, and they

definitely didn't get any kind of spiritual formation."

Villa Marie provides housing, all necessary meals, education, recreational facilities and much more. Beyond that, they care for each student and allow them to learn in a safe, loving environment.

"For many of them, it's the first time they've ever had real friends," Meza said. "They find a sense of belonging, community and affirmation, which causes them to grow in their confidence."

Even on tough days the seniors know the kids will cheer them up and will always give them something to smile about.

"I like being there because they are always so happy and energetic, despite their disabilities," Diaz de Leon Sanchez said.

"It has helped me see all the ways that God comes into play in other people. It proves that no matter how hard my day is, I should always be thankful because some people have it worse and they can still find something to be grateful for."



Graphic by T. Ninh



Senior Makenzie Backman volunteers at Villa Marie. "Going back there makes me feel really connected to the kids," Backman said. She volunteers every Tuesday after school. Photo by M. Backman

Social studies classes come together for food drive

MELLISA NGUYEN
Staff Writer

As the government shutdown leaves families without support, U.S. history and government teacher Emma Miller and her classes decided to step up.

Miller started a food drive with her classes, driven by the desire to create good Catholics and help families in need.

"A really cool part of my job is helping create good Catholic citizens and with the shutdown and everything, food pantries have been low," Miller said.

Students in Miller's classes collected 1748 items for the food drive showing their compassion for families in need.

"I think her doing this is really cool and helps us be involved and want to donate stuff," junior Abby Tlamka said.

Miller was surprised by her students' generosity after seeing how much they contributed to the food drive.

"I kind of underestimated the generosity of my students," Miller said. "I didn't have a specific goal,

but my expectations have been blown out of the water."

Seeing the difference her students were making, Miller was proud to see the students giving back to the community.

"I love seeing my students and their big hearts giving back to their own community," Miller said.

These efforts by the students have shown how valuable it is to recognize the needs of others.

"I think it's important to show that you're not selfish with your belongings," Tlamka said. "And to recognize that other people have needs that we need to fill."

Those who contributed hope that their donation will truly impact someone and help a family in need.

"I hope it's able to give someone a meal so they can spend time with the people they love," Tlamka said.

This food drive also reminds people that kindness still exists, even in tough times. "I hope it gives some hope that there are good people out there, and people are always there for them," junior Elise Tassemeyer said.

All donations will be going to the Catholic Social Services food pantry.



U.S. history and government teacher Emma Miller shows the food collected for a local food pantry after the government shutdown. "It is really good to see my students thinking about the community even outside of school," Miller said. Photo by M. Nguyen

Campus ministry serves community with care packages

THANH NINH
Staff Writer

In the season of giving, Campus Ministry decided to step up and make a change.

Pius X students are creating care packages for shelters to help those in need, and Campus Ministry is leading this project.

Campus Ministry sent out an email to students and faculty asking for different items for the care packages and has been collecting items from students and faculty.

Things such as toothbrushes, hats, gloves, socks, soap, ChapStick and so much more are being donated for the service project.

"After the December Restore, the items will be laid out on the tables for students to create one or two care packages," campus minister Scott Sullivan said.

Many students are getting involved in the project and want to step up and help.

"I enjoy helping people, I am so

grateful to have so much in my life, so I wanted to help those in need," junior Klaira Sander said.

Giving to the less fortunate has brought the Pius X community together.

"I think this project is bringing a community of gratitude," senior Erica Horne said. "I think it is a really good way to have a lot of people help."

Pius X students now have the ability to step out of their comfort zone and do something that they are not used to.

"It gives students the ability to serve," Sullivan said. "On the flip side it also allows many of these organizations to see all these faith-filled students who are able to give so much."

This service project is new to Pius X and Sullivan intends on continuing this project for future years.

Sullivan hopes to have it twice a year. He likes how students get to spend time with Jesus at Restore and afterwards have the opportunity to

serve the community by making care packages.

"Creating these care packages helps us all come together for one thing," Sander said.



Junior Leah Korus places care packages on a cart to deliver to Catholic Social Services. "I heard the testimony and it inspired me to help other people," Korus said. The care packages included different food and toiletries items. Photo by T. Ninh

Thank you sticky note project displays appreciation to staff

AN VU
Staff Writer

During lunch on Nov. 6, Pius X Student Council members gave students the chance to express their gratitude to faculty and staff with a handwritten message on a sticky note.

Many students took the chance, and with their sticky notes, Student Council displayed them on the wall for everyone to see.

"We decided that we would like to thank our teachers, because during November, we're just full of gratitude," Student Council director Sara Gubbels said. "So, the students organize during lunch, and then they just asked everybody to write the notes of things that are great about their teachers."

Sophomore Bailey Willnerd was one of the Student Council members who helped with the project.

"It was kind of fun just seeing who everybody would write to," Willnerd said. "It was nice because

almost everybody I went to did sticky notes."

Some notes were addressed to specific teachers, while others were written for teachers in general. But each sticky note expressed gratitude to teachers, and many students were eager to contribute.

Of the many students, freshman Joselyn Diaz de Leon stopped and wrote on a sticky note.

"There's this one teacher and I'm really grateful for him," Diaz de Leon said. "He's made me realize that not only do teachers do their job, but they're your friends too. They become teachers not to just teach or criticize you, but to help you a lot in your future."

Diaz de Leon knew immediately who she wanted to thank.

"It came easily, right when they said, 'write to a teacher or thank them', my first thought was Mr. Hain," Diaz de Leon said.

Willnerd noticed all the positivity students wrote to their teachers.

"They all had good things to

write about teachers, and they were all happy to do it," Willnerd said."

Gubbels had the intent to make teachers recognize their goodness with these notes.

"I hope that they see their unique goodness and how they're impacting our students in many different ways," Gubbels said.

Gubbels noticed the success of the project through teacher reactions.

"The first 15 minutes it was up, there were teachers that were looking at it and they were smiling and just knowing they are making a difference," Gubbels said. "I think a lot of people have enjoyed reading them because we do have a great amount to celebrate here."

As a result of this project, student to teacher appreciation proves to be important.

"Especially as Student Council, that is one of our focuses, because to teach is sometimes a little bit thankless of a job, but they need to know that there is a lot of good and the teachers need to know that they are very appreciated," Gubbels said.



Freshman Joselyn Diaz de Leon looks through the sticky notes. "It just makes them feel better in themselves and their job," Diaz de Leon said. The sticky notes were handed out on Nov. 6 for students to write. Photo by A. Vu

Lincoln Pius X

Topic: Impact of giving

Students: Roxie Prunty, Gretchen Brodersen, Mellisa Nguyen, Thanh Ninh, An Vu, Alice Hilgers