

GREAT GIFT OR PROJECT IDEAS

Financial Projects are always helpful, but sometimes a more relational gift or project can have an even longer lasting effect – on both your community and those you're reaching out to! When you're looking for service ideas, be sure to also consider such gifts and projects as:

- Have students make a banner sharing a message of unity (such as “Brothers and Sisters in Christ” or a phrase from our Eucharistic Prayers), to send to one of our connections abroad to be hung in their schools or parishes
- Make peace, unity or justice messages (ex. written prayers or letters, or drawings) to be sent to children in areas of the world who are suffering and need to know we hope these things for them
- Connect with the Parish Mission Group(s) to see what projects they're working on, and help them with certain item collections or gift-making
- Connect with the DCCW, Christian Mothers group, Knights of Columbus, Social Concerns Committee, or other groups in your parish or community to help them or enlist their help in your projects or events
- Have students make World Mission Rosaries (the 5 different colored decades) to be shared around the diocese and world, or for your own prayer use. Host a World Mission Rosary prayer service in your community – prayer is a great gift to give in mission! (and don't forget that every first Friday of October is Holy Childhood Day, in which our diocese celebrates by praying the World Mission Rosary as schools, parishes and groups)
- “Adopt a Missioner” by committing to pray regularly for one of our diocesan missionaries and their ministry throughout the year; exchange letters or emails as well to really build a relationship with these great people living and serving in our global church!
- Have students make nice blankets or quilts for our mission connections; be sure to pray over them before you send them to make them a prayer blanket others can wrap themselves in!
- Organize a Fair Trade sale or fundraiser to raise awareness and help those in need (the fundraiser could benefit your school or group, or could raise support monies to send to a mission ministry elsewhere in need so that your fundraiser creates a double-donation!)
- Create a kit to share about your school, community and Minnesota (ex. A shoebox with pictures of your school, information about your parish or town, favorite foods and activities of the students here, etc.)
- Make a video introducing yourselves and sharing messages with those in our global connections
- Gather information about those receiving Sacraments (ex. Pictures of First Communion or Confirmation class; dates of the celebration; letters explaining what you're doing to prepare; names of candidates; etc.) to give others an idea of what we do, and to share a commonality with young people in other countries also receiving these same great Sacraments that unite us as a universal Church
- “Tax” yourselves on the number of pairs of shoes, number of jackets, toys, sinks/water fountains, or other common item in your home or classroom to see how lucky we are; then donate that money to those who don't have easy access to these and other important items

- Collect or make items specifically for a country where someone from our diocese will be traveling to (*to find out when and where folks from our area are traveling, contact the Mission Office*)
- Host an “international day” or “culture fair” in your school, parish or community to include fun and educational displays, foods, music, etc from around our world
- Plan a multi-cultural, mission or social justice oriented liturgy (the Mission Office has Liturgy planning aids for these types of Masses or prayer services)
- Raffle off simple things such as a pitcher of water, pound of meat, carton of milk, book, or other common items to us, and donate the money to places where these things are not easily accessible
- Host a “Hunger Banquet” (or “M&M Banquet”) or Rice Meal to raise awareness of hunger and food distribution injustices in our world; “charge” people an entrance fee and donate those monies to Operation Rice Bowl, the School Lunch Program in Nicaragua, or other hunger-relief ministries (*ask the Mission Office which of our missionaries are working in such areas where your donations can be sent to do good work*)
- Sponsor a “Walk a Mile in their Shoes” event, and pledge to walk a certain distance in honor of those displaced or refugees who have to flee their homes; collect pledges to go towards Refugee Emergency funds (*there are various ones; see the Mission Office for info*)
- Host a Vocations Fair or panel, and include speaker on the mission vocation
- Volunteer to help with delegation events, welcome packages or farewell gifts for guests in our diocese from other countries or from our Diocesan Partnerships in Homa Bay, Kenya or Maracay, Venezuela
- Write a class mission statement that includes how you hope to better your world outside your classroom
- Host a “toy contest” where entry toys must be made entirely out of recycled or reused materials; ask a local group (such as the KC’s or Lions) to donate prize money for the winner and/or a matching grant to be given to a charity or mission location of the winner’s choosing.
- Measure your class (in weight or inches) and total it up to determine your donation to a favorite mission organization
- Research and share with your young people what the cost of a Happy Meal could do in other countries (such as how much food it could buy, how much school supplies, medicine, etc), and then ask the class to consider donating that amount instead of getting a Happy Meal the next time they go out to eat with their family
- Print phrases such as “*Sent to heal an aching world (John 20:21)*” on clear address labels, and stick them to bandaids that you can hand-out or sell after Masses or at a health fair in your community
- Write the names of different mission connections you’re aware of on the sides of a dice; then roll that dice each week to determine who/where your school Mass will be said for, or who/where you will pray for at the start of this week’s faith formation class, etc.

- Plan an experience for your group on World Day of Peace (January 1st)
- Organize a World Mission Sunday (second to last Sunday in October) or Holy Childhood Day (first Friday in October) garage sale to help raise funds for global mission
- Ask students to bring-in newspaper clippings and current events of where Jesus is suffering in the world; make a bulletin-board of these to share with your community, or keep it in your youth room or classroom and cross off the articles when you've prayed for them
- Offer a "dress-up" or "dress-down" day for Mission, where students can pay a quarter to dress different than the usual dress code in order to raise funds for a special mission passion
- Invite a mission speaker during Catholic Schools Week to talk about what schools are like in another country.
- Ask community groups (such as Christian Mothers or KC's) to sponsor a "Missioner of the Year" contest in your parish or school, where your class discusses who in the community has been a true example of mission and justice, and awards them with this title, the prize being funds (donated by the sponsoring group) to donate to their charity or mission ministry of choice.
- Have a rice fundraiser after Masses, sharing with families who purchase your rice that many children around the world receive only ¼ cup of rice a day (put this much rice in ziplock baggies to illustrate). Or have a "rice-lottery," where people pay \$1 for a chance, and some win a full bag of rice and others only the ¼ cup depending on what they draw; use this to talk about the inequalities of food distribution and hunger in our world today.
- Ask students to get pledges for how many age-appropriate books they can read in a certain time frame; donate these funds to Heiffer International's "Read to Feed" program, or to "Books for Africa" to raise funds to send textbooks to Sudan.
- **Or others – be creative!!** *Check with the Mission Office about special gift needs or ideas that may come up throughout the year; or share your creative ideas with us!!!*