

ALMSGIVING: The third Lenten practice is almsgiving. Almsgiving is the act of giving to the poor. Through almsgiving we share God's love with others and we recognize that the gifts we have are not really our own. If the thing you are fasting from leaves a little extra money in your pocket, then give that money to a worthy charity which helps the poor. You can also donate goods. If you really want to push yourself, give your time in direct service to another. Volunteer at a soup kitchen or visit a shut in. Acts of service such as these can also be considered almsgiving, especially if you do them with the intention of sharing your gifts. And who knows, you might receive a gift yourself. You might encounter Jesus in the faces of those you are serving.

So, what could you and your family do with ALMSGIVING this Lent?

1. St. Benedict Parish is lending its support to four projects this Lent. Your family could contribute money or several of these projects would greatly benefit from people becoming a little bit creative.



.OPERATION RICE BOWL. *This program initiated by the US Catholic Conference of Bishops provides funding for hunger, clean water and agricultural development projects around the world. Many are familiar with the paper rice bowls which are often used to collect the monies in. This year we are not distributing these paper bowls; instead we ask that you check off that section of the LENTEN ALMSGIVING form. Twenty-five per cent of all we collect locally stays in our community; annually we reinvest those funds in the BLESSING ROOM and CCIA FOOD PANTRY.*

The goal each year is to raise as much money as we can to support the projects that happen all over the world. Go to <https://www.crs.org/> to learn more about some of the specific projects Catholic Relief Services is currently involved. Consider how to have fun while you raise money for them (and save the earth), perhaps by redeeming bottles and cans with five cent deposits



.FAMILY PROMISE. *Over the last several years, FAMILY PROMISE of Ontario County has changed the lives of dozens of local homeless families. Working as part of a county-wide network of churches and organizations, St. Benedict's has housed families at St. Bridget's Hall, helped to support the Day Center in Canandaigua and been part of the system which has provided counseling services, job training and securing stable housing for families who have fallen on hard times. This amazing approach keeps families together in times of crisis and promotes the values of family and community support.*

It may not seem possible to you, but right here in our community there are families who have no place to live. They are families who have lost their job, or had their hours at work cut back, or have had a financial crisis AND didn't have the money to pay the bill or stay afloat until things get better. They lose their home or apartment. They don't have family to stay with. With the help of FAMILY PROMISE, families are able to stay together. Be proud that St. Benedict's Parish is part of this effort. Even though we are able to provide them a temporary warm, safe place to stay, they still need toys to play with and clothes to keep them warm. Consider looking through your toys and see which ones you could share with another child.



.HELPING LOCAL VETS. *A local young man working for his Eagle Scout badge has organized a program to gather needed supplies and resources for local vets who struggle with basic human needs. Below, we have listed the material goods he is looking to collect; there is also a need for monetary gifts. Your gift will stay in the local community to support local vets.*

According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, 11% of the homeless population are veterans and 1.4 million other veterans are at risk of homelessness due to poverty, lack of support, or dismal living conditions.

Locally, Josh Woodworth, a Boy Scout working for his Eagle Project, will be collecting items which will be given to the Canandaigua VA to help veterans in need.

During the month of February we will have collection boxes in the rear corridor of the PAC and in the foyer of St. Bridget’s Hall to collect items. If you have any questions, please contact Deacon Claude.

The following items would be greatly appreciated. All items must be NEW and UNOPENED.

Toiletries

- Body wash
- Disposable razors (male & female)
- Lotion (hand and body)
- Shower curtains/hooks
- Washcloths
- Denture grip & cleaner
- Hairbrushes/combs
- Nail clippers
- Toilet paper
- Women’s panty liners
- Deodorant (male & female)
- Hand soap
- Shampoo
- Towels

Sleep/Bed Needs

- Air Mattresses with electric pump (queen size or larger preferred)
- Bed pillows
- Bedsheets
- Alarm clocks
- Pillowcases

Cleaning Supplies

- Brooms
- Laundry & dish soap
- Vacuum cleaners
- Various cleaning supplies
- Mops/buckets
- Garbage cans/bags
- Paper towels

Other Object Needs

- Backpacks & tote bags
- Postage stamps
- Puzzle Books, Craft Kits/Paint by Numbers, Model Kits, Adult Coloring Books
- Paper Products: Plates, Cups, Napkins, Utensils
- Pots & pans, utensils

Food/Drinks

- Baking mixes & nonperishable foods
- Individually wrapped snack items (sell-by/expiration dates easily read)
- Coffee (also accepted: sugar, creamer, travel mugs)



.CARE NET. Located at 120 North Main Street in Canandaigua, CARE NET is a Christ-centered ministry empowering women to make informed, life-affirming choices in a non-judgmental environment. **ALL CARE NET SERVICES ARE FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL TO BOTH WOMEN AND MEN.** CARENET provides free pregnancy tests, pregnancy options/peer counseling, referrals, post-abortion healing and parenting classes. CARE NET PREGNANCY CENTER of Canandaigua is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Here's an opportunity to collect bags of new diapers to give to CARE NET, or baby clothes or baby furniture or new car seats, or cans of formula. Often when people have babies, they don't have money to purchase ALL that a baby needs. CARE NET keeps an inventory of all these things to be able to share with families who can't afford it themselves. So YOU can help a newborn be safe and healthy.

2. You could make a **LENTEN CHAIN OF KIND DEEDS** and take off one link each day.
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All these are suggestions of how you and your family can make a time to draw closer to one another, our neighbors and persons half a world away from us. These are not the limit; they are a starting point.

