

November 3, 2008

Dear Parents,

It is hard to believe that the first quarter of the school year is over. As we settle into the routine of our days it is important for us to remember our blessings. This note is to communicate to you the work of the Community Service Corps. The Prep's chapter of the CSC is part of a larger metropolitan organization. Each week our boys tutor children from North Philadelphia, teach youngsters from this neighborhood to swim and help them express themselves in art.

I want to tell you some stories about teenage boys. They are frequently demonized in the press. Let me witness to you what I see on a daily basis. Students who want to make a difference in the world frequently ambush me. They are anxious to know how to do that. They want to serve. They are cognizant of the gifts they have received. As their first teachers, you can take the credit for their kind and generous hearts. I am always humbled by their sincerity. To see a gangly teenager kneel on the floor to help a young child with a problem is a moving experience.

In the upcoming weeks the CSC will embark on three very important programs. From November 12 to 24, the CSC asks each student to bring in food items that will be included in a food basket to be delivered to needy, area families. Each homeroom will be assigned one specific item to contribute to the food baskets. Students are asked to bring in five of the item. The list of homeroom items is included with this letter. We hope that this will insure that each basket contains the important staples for a holiday meal. Last year the Prep delivered food to 218 families. This year we hope to increase the total to 250. This Thanksgiving tradition at the Prep brings joy to those who deliver the food as well as to those who receive it. If you are willing to donate a frozen turkey, please bring it to the Parent /Teacher conferences on Wednesday, November 19. After that date we will know how many turkeys we have to order. CSC volunteers will be in the foyer to collect your donation.

Operation Santa Claus is a program that delivers toys to needy families. The Prep participates in this program. Last year, toys were delivered to 12,000 children. Teams of teens from the Delaware Valley volunteer to dress up and deliver toys to children who may not receive gifts at Christmas. To support this program we ask each family to donate \$25. This money will be used to purchase toys for Operation Santa Claus and to support all of the CSC programs. Money will be collected in homerooms from December 1 until December 12.

Finally, I ask you to remember our campaign to help build homes for families in Nicaragua. Presently there are plans to name one of the communities after the Prep. We are halfway along in our mission to raise \$50,000 for this endeavor. Our project works in conjunction with the work of Food for the Poor Inc. To see a complete description of the project and a DVD put together by two of our recent graduates who attended the dedication of the first village, please visit [www.sjprep.org/csc](http://www.sjprep.org/csc) Donations can be made out to St. Joseph's Prep and sent to my attention or on-line at the CSC website.

St. Ignatius teaches us that love is seen in action not words. As the most important role model for our students, I thank you in advance for all your support of CSC.

Sincerely,

Barbara Brown  
Moderator, Community Service Corps