

Our Lady of Mercy



Saints

Sharing and Caring

The Our Lady of Mercy Academy community has always recognized the importance of living our faith and sharing our good fortune with our local and global communities. Throughout the school year, each grade sponsors a school-wide service project that helps make our world a better place. We gladly accept God's directive that we are our brothers' keepers.

Grade 1: Our first graders write **letters to our nation's troops** serving overseas. Their letters brighten the day of young Americans serving far from home.

Grade 2: Our second grades collect boxes of colorful children's band-aids to donate to the **Tomorrow's Children Hospital**. Most hospital budgets only allow for the purchase of generic, skin-toned band-aids. When pediatric nurses can offer the patient a choice of their favorite characters, it can take the child's mind off the impending blood test. This charity was brought to the attention of OLMA by the late Claire Dowd, our beloved reading teacher.

Grade 3: The third grades collect "**Pennies for Patients**". This collection raises funds to help cure leukemia and other blood-related cancers. "Pennies for Patients" is a two-week campaign in which students are encouraged to donate spare change to **The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society**.

Grade 4: Our fourth graders sponsor the annual **Math-a-thon**. The proceeds from the Math-a-thon benefit **St. Jude's Children's Hospital**. St. Jude's is unlike any other pediatric treatment and research facility anywhere. Discoveries made there have completely changed how the world treats children with cancer and other catastrophic diseases. All patients accepted for treatment at St. Jude are treated without regard to the family's ability to pay.

Grade 5: The fifth grade classes join with the eighth grade and collect **Toys for Tots**. The mission of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program is to collect new, unwrapped toys during October, November and December each year, and distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to needy children in the community in which the campaign is conducted. The primary goal of **Toys for Tots** is to deliver, through a shiny new toy at Christmas, a message of hope to needy youngsters that will motivate them to grow into responsible, productive, patriotic citizens and community leaders.

Grade 6: The 6th Grade classes sponsor the **Pennies for Puppies** campaign. “**Pennies for Puppies**” is a fundraising program to benefit The Seeing Eye, Inc. based in Morristown, New Jersey. The mission of The Seeing Eye is to enhance the independence, dignity, and self-confidence of blind people through the use of Seeing Eye dogs. During the campaign, OLMA students bring in their extra pennies and place them in classroom canisters. This cause gives the children a chance to help others become more independent in everyday living.

Grade 7: The seventh grades collect pet food and pet supplies to donate to the **Bergen County Animal Shelter**. The county-operated shelter provides animal control to 51 communities in Bergen County. They also accept stray domestic animals from any of these towns, and they respond to calls for sick or injured wildlife. Many of their animals are available for adoption.

Grade 8: The eighth grade joins with the fifth grade and collects **Toys for Tots**. See Grade 5 for more details. They also help load the truck which delivers goods collected by Our Lady of Mercy Parish destined for its twinning parish in Vallieres, Haiti.

Other Campaigns: Through our Physical Education Program, OLMA students participate in the “**Hoop for Hearts**” and “**Jump for Hearts**” programs which benefit the American Heart Association.

OLMA students also sponsor a child through the **Christian Children’s Fund**. Her name is Tantiana Bou. She is 13 years old and lives in Jakarta, Indonesia. Each class is assigned a month (a \$21 donation and a letter are sent) and students are asked to earn the money by helping out with extra chores.

All grades participate in an annual food collection entitled “**Harvest for Hope.**” The drive is sponsored by the Newark Archdiocese which schedules the collection and distributes the food to needy people in the four counties that make up the Archdiocese.

And, last but not least, every classroom has a collection can for the **Missions of the Holy Childhood Association**. Students are encouraged to drop in their change from lunch or change from their allowances and share their good fortune with the less fortunate.

We hope you enjoyed learning about your children’s charitable efforts. Watch your backpack throughout the school year for flyers advising the start of these classroom campaigns. Please support our students in their efforts to make the world in which they live a better place.

