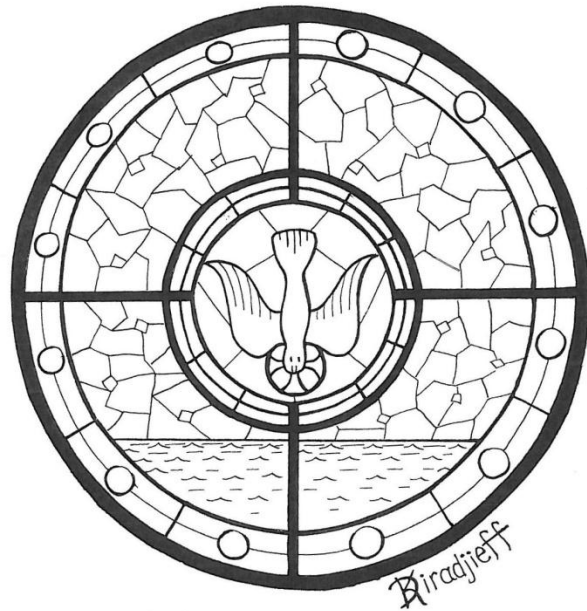


Socially Conscious Giving Guide



St. Matthew Catholic Church

*Connected in Christ!
Moved by the Spirit!*

2011

Dear Friends,

Throughout the year we often become overwhelmed with the consumerism associated with exchanging gifts among our families and friends in celebration of various events. At the same time we cannot help but be aware of the needs of so many men, women and children right here in our own community. For many of them, a hot meal and a place to stay for the night would be a gift beyond price.

Through the efforts of the St. Matthew Peace and Justice Ministry, we are providing a simple guide of ideas and opportunities to broaden our perspective. Hopefully, these might foster in each of us the spirit of giving to those find themselves wanting life's basic needs.

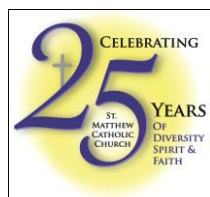
As we at St. Matthew celebrate our 25th anniversary, I invite you to take a moment and look over the good works that you will find in this guide. While you may still want to give a gift to your loved ones, I ask that you also consider giving gifts in their name that will foster a spirit of socially conscious giving all through the year.

May God continue to bless you always and in all ways.

God's Blessings,

Reverend Monsignor John J. McSweeney

Pastor of St. Matthew Catholic Church



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8015 Ballantyne Commons Parkway • Charlotte, NC 28277
704-543-7677 • www.stmatthewcatholic.org

A Child's Place

With no permanent residence, homeless children often stop going to school—**the one place that should provide structure in a life of transition**. Without the influence and stability of a classroom environment, these children lose more than a chance to learn. They also lose the crucial sense of belonging gained from interacting with friends and other students. But there is hope for these children—and help—through A Child's Place, founded in 1989, as a collaborative effort between the Charlotte, NC, community and Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS).

The goals of A Child's Place are to provide stable, appropriate education to homeless students; to provide support services to enhance their opportunities for academic success; and to provide services to families to ensure long term stability and self-sufficiency

With homelessness involving children swiftly increasing, there is a growing need for monetary donations, individually packaged food items, clothing, and other item donations as well as for **volunteers**. Monetary **donations** can be made on the website at <http://achildsplace.org> where you also can read about many ways to help throughout the year.

\$10	Will provide after-school snacks for two homeless children for a week.
\$25	Will buy a school uniform for a homeless child.
\$50	Will pay for a dental visit for a homeless child to get a tooth filled.

St. Matthew Contacts: Valerie Zerbe 704-910-0737
 Marcie DeMore 704-341-2057

Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee Through Centralina Area Agency on Aging

Volunteer committee appointees work toward improving quality care for the elderly and disabled while acting as community representatives to ensure residents understand the Residents' Bill of Rights and facility staff encourage their residents to assert those rights. Preparation and involvement include training, visiting facilities, talking with residents, conferences with administrators, quarterly committee meetings, complaint investigation and report writing.

Persons who possess a strong motivation to work with older adults, an ability to advocate, to listen, to observe, and to resolve problems and who meet the qualifications for appointment, are encouraged to contact Centralina Area Agency on Aging. For additional information go to <http://centralinaaging.org/Volunteers/Volunteer.htm#Community> and click on "Community Advisory Committee".

St. Matthew Contact: Pam Irish pirish@centralina.org 704-688-6504

The Angel Tree

The Angel Tree at St. Matthew benefits many organizations throughout our community during the Christmas season. The **donated gifts** go to children from Smithfield, Sterling, and Hawk Ridge elementary schools, and to families through Charlotte Emergency Housing. Gifts also are given to our RAIN team partners (p. 7) as well as to residents at Holy Angels in Belmont. Wal-Mart **gift cards** enable Senior Citizens to acquire medicine and other supplies. Other recipient organizations include the Mental Health Adolescent Division, Missionaries of the Poor in Monroe, and Thompson Children's Center.

St. Matthew Contact: Martha Bookout 704-542-6761

Burial Assistance Program

The Burial Assistance Program is a ministry of Catholic Social Services (CSS) Charlotte Regional Office which began in 1994 when Mecklenburg County discontinued funding assistance for indigent burials. The program assists families with limited resources in the burial of a family member who lived in Mecklenburg County.

CSS provides the social service support and eligibility verification for the program to serve families that have no insurance, are unable to negotiate financial arrangements with a funeral home, and have less than the cost of the burial charged through the program.

For additional information call 704-370-3232 or email csscro@charlottediocese.org. Make a **contribution** online at www.cssnc.org, then click on Donate Online; or mail a check to: Catholic Social Services, Charlotte Regional Office, Burial Assistance Program, 1123 South Church Street, Charlotte, NC 28203.

Christ Our Shepherd Child Development Campus

Christ Our Shepherd Child Development Campus (501c3 nonprofit) provides a safe and nurturing environment for the children of two parent and single parent households. All activities focus on sharing the love, compassion and word of Our Savior, Jesus Christ. A limited number of child care scholarships are available to single parent households. The Christian Library is open to the public for an annual fee. To **volunteer** or **donate**, visit the website at www.cosministries.org.

St. Matthew Contact: Julie A. Jahn

704-845-4673 x202

Donated Goods

The Donated Goods Ministry delivers donations to Charlotte area and western North Carolina area Thrift Stores who sell these items to support their ministry. **Donate** usable and sellable items (**except** baby cribs, soiled mattresses, oversized TVs, old computers and monitors) including gently used furniture, stand-alone appliances and clothing (clean, not torn; in all sizes for men, women and children). **Collections** are every 2nd Saturday each month from 8:00 AM—Noon in the St. Matthew Donated Goods Storage area located under the Daily Chapel. **Volunteers** help receive goods, pick up donations in the area, and pack and load trucks.

St. Matthew Contact: Chuck Elgin

704-243-3365

Family Assist Program

The St. Matthew Family Assist Program requests Wal-Mart and Target **gift cards** to share with parish families. Gift cards help cover a variety of needs including prescriptions, medical needs and/or clothing. They also allow those in the parish community who are ill, families with children, or who have special dietary needs, the opportunity to purchase household products and perishable health-conscious foods.

St. Matthew Contact: Sharon Davis

704-543-7677 x1018

swdavis@charlottediocese.org

Food Pantry

The Food Pantry maintained at St. Matthew provides food to needy families in the greater Charlotte area and food baskets to Catholic Social Services at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. Non-perishable items are collected the 1st Sunday of each month. **Volunteers** help on the Monday after the collection. **Gift Cards** from area grocery stores also are used to supplement the food baskets. The Food Pantry is located in the storage room beneath the Daily Mass Chapel.

St. Matthew Contact: Brenda Lehtinen 704-541-1551

Friendship Trays

Friendship Trays is a community program utilizing volunteers to deliver hot meals to shut-ins throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg. **Volunteers** are needed to pick up meals for delivery Monday-Friday between 11 and 11:30 a.m. – www.friendshiptrays.org.

\$22	Provides meals for one person for a week.
\$90	Provides meals for one person for a month
\$585	Provides meals for one person for six months.

St. Matthew Contact: Robbie Burris 704-847-8058

Patti Olejniczak 704-443-5150

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity helps build low-cost housing for a needy family and provides meals for workers each weekend during the construction phase. St. Matthew has completed 7 Habitat houses through Habitat for Humanity Matthews. To **donate** or **volunteer**, go to <http://habitatmatthews.org>. The ReStore sells both household items and building materials. 100% of profits from the ReStore support Habitat Matthews' mission. For donating items or ReStore hours and location, go to <http://habitatmatthews.org/restore.htm>.

St. Matthew Contact: Jeff Wilson 704-608-6829

Homeless Shelters

☀ A group of parishioners prepares and serves dinner on the 2nd Saturday evening of odd-numbered months and lunch on the 5th Saturday of any month at the **Men's Shelter of Charlotte North Tryon Campus** and serves dinner on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at the **Statesville Avenue Shelter**.

Volunteers and team coordinators are always needed to sort and distribute clothing twice weekly.

A quarterly (November, February, May, and August) **collection** at St. Matthew of men's underwear is delivered to the Men's Shelter of Charlotte for distribution to their residents and clients. For a list of items needed throughout the year visit <http://www.mensshelterofcharlotte.org/get-involved/wish-list>.

St. Matthew Contacts: Tom Ellis 704-907-8372
Mark Brodowicz 704-443-7609

☀ The **Center of Hope**, housed at the Salvation Army, is a 24/7 facility for women and children who are homeless. The St. Matthew Women's Guild organizes a **collection** of bed and bath linens and toiletries for the Center of Hope. An extended list of needed items is at <http://www.salvationarmycharlotte.org/>, click on "Make a Contribution", then "Donate Goods" and scroll to the bottom.

St. Matthew Contact: Sylvia Panicara 980-355-4883

St. Matthew Contact: Helen Fritsch 704-543-0446

Refugee Resettlement Ministry

The Refugee Resettlement Ministry **adopts refugee families** during their first six months in this county. Services include welcoming the family at the airport, donating home furnishings and money, furniture pick-up and delivery, food, and friendship.

St. Matthew Contact: Bill LaMay 704-995-0002

United Family Services' Shelter for Battered Women

United Family Services' Shelter for Battered Women serves female victims and their children of intimate partner violence. Each year the Shelter for Battered Women provides life-saving services to over 650 individuals. These services include shelter, food, crisis intervention and counseling – all with the goal of empowering women to break the cycle of intimate partner violence and building safer, healthier lives. **Volunteers** and/or **monetary contributions** are always welcome to support the United Family Services mission of providing hope and solutions to people in crisis. Visit www.unitedfamilyservices.org or call 704-367-2706 for additional information about the agency.

Ways to help:

- Cook a meal for our shelter residents and their children
- Donate **gift cards** to help residents secure life saving prescription medications
- Provide childcare for young children while moms attend a support group
- Assemble shelter 'welcome kits'
- Pray that our clients and their children can live a safe and violence-free life

St. Matthew Contact: Kelly Coyne 704-367-2706

Urban Ministry Center

In the beginning there was only a soup kitchen. By 1994, the needs of those who were poor and homeless in our city had grown substantially—a need met by the establishment of the Urban Ministry Center (UMC).

Where would you go if you were homeless, hungry, sick, dirty, mentally ill or addicted? What if you lost most of your possessions, your ID and had no transportation or family? UMC provides an array of helpful services, including:

- **SOUP KITCHEN** — Serving lunch daily totaling 106,000 meals a year.
- **SUPPORT SERVICES** — On-site social worker, showers, laundry, prescription and many more services that assist our neighbors to move towards greater self sufficiency.
- **COUNSELING**
- **HOMELESS HELPING HOMELESS** — The voice of the homeless whose mission is to educate and achieve security and success through advocacy, social and political action.
- **ROOM IN THE INN** — Providing over 14,000 beds for the homeless.

Handcrafting Justice is a Fair Trade project of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, working in cooperation with women struggling for economic justice and independence in the developing world. The Sisters work with and assist the women in their efforts to create employment for themselves in order to provide for their families and better their lives. Learn more about their crafts and alternative gifts at

<http://handcraftingjustice.cedris.org/index.php?lang=en&pt=c&p=aboutUs>

The Word Among Us Partners provides spiritual materials to Catholics in need. Through donations to the ministry, the daily Scripture reading and meditation magazine is sent to prisoners, service men and women, and women experiencing crisis pregnancy or who have had an abortion. Make a **donation** at <http://waupartners.org/about/>.

The Labouré Society has fostered priestly and Religious vocations through student loan resolution since 2003. For details visit www.LaboureSociety.org.

Together in Education, Harris Teeter's TIE is a fund raising program for schools (public or private—preschool through 12th grade) in our communities. When customers purchase select Harris Teeter Brand products using their VIC card, Harris Teeter contributes a percentage of those purchase dollars to the schools of their choice. You can support your own children's school as well as link to a predominantly low-income school (ex. Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic School – 2477 or Thomasboro Elementary – 4362). Sign up to link your VIC card at http://www.harristeeter.com/community/together_in_education/tie_details.aspx

Supportive Housing Innovative Partnership (SHIP) is a collaborative program to move women and children from homelessness to transitional housing. Details at <http://www.stmatthewcatholic.org/> then click on “Supportive Housing Innovative Partnership” under “Of Interest”.

Easy, affordable green things to make a difference:

- If every American chose one organic instead of a non-organic cotton T-shirt, we'd keep 250,000 tons of chemicals out of our air, water, and soil.
- Every time we buy an item of secondhand clothing, rather than new, we save the equivalent of a half gallon of gasoline.
- Not driving just one day a week can reduce your CO₂ emissions by about 8 pounds per week, or 400 pounds per year.
- If every U.S. household replaced one bottle of petroleum-based detergent with a plant-based one, 149,000 barrels of oil could be saved.
- If all Americans skipped meat for one day a week, it would reduce carbon emissions as much as taking 20 million midsize cars off the road for one year.

□ *Do One Green Thing: Saving the Earth Through Simple, Everyday Choices (2010)*
By Mindy Pennybacker

SEASONS OF THE LITURGICAL YEAR

ADVENT, a season of hope as well as penance, begins the liturgical year on the fourth Sunday before Christmas.

CHRISTMAS begins with Christmas Day, goes through Epiphany (the Twelve Days of Christmas), and concludes with the Baptism of the Lord.

LENT is sometimes described as the “Church on retreat”. A season of fasting, prayer and almsgiving, Lent is a time to reflect on how well we are living out our baptismal call.

THE TRIDUUM or PASCHAL TRIDUUM (three days) begins with the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday and concludes on Easter Evening.

EASTER is the season following Easter and concluding on Pentecost Sunday.

ORDINARY TIME is the only liturgical season that comes in two sections. The first begins with the Baptism of the Lord and goes until Ash Wednesday. The second follows Pentecost and concludes with the Feast of Christ the King.

St. Matthew Peace and Justice Ministry

The **Peace and Justice Ministry** meets on the first Wednesday of October, December, February, April, June, and August.

Mission Statement: The Peace and Justice Ministry of St. Matthew Catholic Church strives to shine a light on injustices as well as to educate and to engage our parishioners and our community on ways to achieve justice for every human person.

- As a part of this mission, we have provided this Socially Conscious Giving Guide since 2009.
- Local, state, national and international sign up lists for advocacy on social issues are available by contacting Terri Jarina (see below).
- Look for additional workshops and events in the parish bulletin and on the St. Matthew website at www.stmatthewcatholic.org.
- For a reading list on Catholic Social Teaching, go to http://www.osjspm.org/reading_list.aspx.

For more information on the Peace and Justice Ministry, contact coordinator Terri Jarina at tjarina@windstream.net or 704-243-4431.