

Feeding God's Children Event How-to

Read about tips for planning and running Feeding God's Children events from real event organizers!

Isabelle Measner of Wisconsin

Sew Much Love for Haiti

Plan

- **Choose a cause.** I partnered with a local doctor who goes to Haiti on medical trips to make drawstring bags for the kids there.
- **Choose a date.** I checked local schedules such as activities and sports.
- **Choose a location.** I used our church hall because it had lots of tables and was big enough for everyone to space out.
- **Gather materials.** I collected fabric, string, sewing machines and more by borrowing items and asking for donations.
- **Invite people.** I reached out to parishioners, middle and high school students, the youth group, our local COF courts, and the community. I emailed a flyer and put it in the church bulletin and on Facebook.
- **Plan for food as it brings people together and makes it more fun.**



Event

- **Set up.** I spent time setting up before, so when people came it was ready to go. For my project, it worked best to have stations.
- **Have a check-in table by the door.** As people walked in, I greeted them, had them sign in and put on name tags, and gave them their cool Feeding God's Children shirts.
- **Share basic information.** I talked about the cause and gave directions on how the project would go. I then led a prayer.
- **Get to work!** I knew it would take some time to make all the bags, so I planned the event for three hours.
- **Pray over your work.** I gathered all the bags we made, and we prayed over them!
- **Take a group picture to commemorate the project!**
- **Do a final clean-up.**

Afterwards

- **Say thank you.** I handwrote notes to thank each person who attended and give an update on the number of bags made. I also wrote a thank you note for the church bulletin.



Click [here](#) or scan the QR Code to read about this event featured in *Catholic Forester* magazine.



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Sharon Roling of Iowa | *Pack the Principal's Office*

Plan

- As you register your event on Catholic Order of Foresters' website, order your FGC T-shirts! It is amazing how the shirts create unity for the project and great photo opportunities.
- Talk with student leaders to brainstorm theme ideas. Determine a goal for the number of items to collect.
- Discuss how to build enthusiasm for the project.
- Students agreed the first week would be a contest to see who could bring in the most items. Each morning, the total item count is shared.



- For the second week, students chose to have themed days (Macaroni Monday, Taco Tuesday, etc.). Small awards were presented to classes who donated the most.
- Promote the event! COF's website has posters. Also, student leaders made posters to hang in the school, and information was posted on Facebook and in the school newsletter.
- Ask student leaders to tape walkways in the principal's office to mark areas where the items should be placed.

Event

- Each morning, students collect the food items stacked outside the classrooms with wagons. The items are brought to the principal's office where the older student leaders unpack and arrange the items.
- Classes walk into the principal's office to create even more excitement. Post photos on social media to spread the good news (and promote COF).
- After the two-week drive, middle school students unpack the principal's office by putting the items into bags, boxes, wagons, and car trunks.
- After the all-school Mass, students bless the food and pray for the people who will receive the items. The students then deliver the items by walking to the food pantry.

Afterwards

- Celebrate! Post the photos and results on social media and complete the event wrap-up form on COF's website.



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Randy Nix of Ohio | *Baby Shower for Birthright*

The idea for the baby shower was facilitated by my wife, Judy Nix, because she has held and attended several baby showers. In addition to our Catholic beliefs, we are forever supporters of life! My wife was instrumental in running the baby shower, as she made sure decorations and food were much like a traditional baby shower.

Plan

- A long-time COF member and supporter of Birthright, Mary Dubber, brought the idea to support this organization to our local court (St. Joseph 1630). Birthright has an office down the road from our court's home parish, Transfiguration Parish (Lakewood, Ohio). There are four Catholic parishes, a Catholic cluster school, and a Catholic High School in Lakewood.
- Planning started about two months ahead of the event. Next, we identified people to lead the event and had a Fraternal Outreach Workshop with them as well as the Fraternal Outreach Team. I prepared an agenda of high points for this workshop; however, the results of the meeting led us in a slightly different direction.
- Three of the local parishes participated in collecting items on two separate weekends prior to the event. The court supplemented what we collected so that 100 of the Feeding God's Children yellow tote bags could be filled for Birthright.

Event

- At the baby shower, we sorted and organized all of the donations. Then, we filled the bags. Each bag had diapers, wipes, a pacifier or small toy, lotion, powder, and shampoo. Clothing was included, too, based on size and girl or boy.
- As an additional activity, we had a table to create "no sew" blankets for eight Birthright moms. All blankets were pre-cut and squared for assembly by attendees.
- We also had a table with arts and crafts, paper crayons, markers, stickers and Catholic religious cards or medals. Many people get these items in the mail, so they were a perfect item to add to the "Welcome, new baby and mom" cards we included with each bag.
- This event was in October, so we also had a table with actual Christmas cards and Catholic prayer cards and medals so our attendees could thank our servicemen who were overseas. I delivered these to the Red Cross office in Cleveland for distribution.
- We also served pizza (from a local pizzeria), salad, and beverages to our attendees. This was all topped off with a sheet cake from a local bakery.
- Having four Catholic parishes, the local court, and Birthright all in Lakewood helped make this happen.
- We did this event in 2018 and 2019.



Randy Nix (right) with his wife Judy and fellow COF Agent Richard Kuhar



Volunteers make welcome cards for the new mothers and their babies.

Feeding God's Children Event How-to

Beth McFarlane of Wisconsin | *Wrapping Our Veterans with Love*

Plan

- **Reach out to people in your community.** We reached out to the director of religious education at our parish, Lori Mathwich, who had recently retired after 20 years of service in the Army. Because of my involvement with the public school system, I knew the assistant principal at the middle school, Dr. Rod Watson, was an active member of the Wisconsin National Guard. We invited him and the principal for the parish school, Aleta Young, to our planning meeting.
- **Be openminded when brainstorming.** Originally our idea was to send care packages overseas as a local unit was about to be deployed. With input from Dr. Watson, we realized there might not be a great need for items since the soldiers would just be deploying. (We needed to shift gears, but we held onto the idea of care packages and revisited it as a Feeding God's Children event in May 2019.) Dr. Watson recommended we do something for the residents at the Wisconsin Veteran's Home in King, Wisconsin. We were all so excited that the ideas just began to flow!
- **Choose the date you want to do the project (or complete the project by) and work backward to determine when tasks need to be accomplished.** We knew the students had a couple of days in early December that would work, and we picked a Wednesday so the religious education students could also participate. Once the date was set, we worked backward to determine bulletin announcements, when to ask for donations of supplies, and deadlines for collecting supplies.
- **Don't be afraid to ask for the items you need.** We put announcements in the parish bulletin, and the school and religious education programs made announcements to the students. We were truly blessed with the response we received! Because of that, the biggest expense to our local court was the supplies for the ornaments we made.
- **Always remember you are not alone.** The COF Outreach Team provides support to help you make your event a positive experience. They assisted in making flyers for our event which we then stuffed into the parish bulletin! Reach out to your fellow court members. Take turns being the lead person for an event so full responsibility doesn't fall on the same person all the time.



Lori Mathwich (left) and Beth McFarlane at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King

Event

- **Consider hosting an event that is more than one day or finding a way to extend the lesson of Feeding God's Children.** We turned this event into a great service experience for the fifth through eighth grade Catholic school students by having them help deliver the items they made for the veterans including blankets and Christmas gift bags.
- **Look for the joy** – a successful event isn't about the amount of stress or lack of stress, nor is it about the amount of money spent to fund the event. It's about coming together for a purpose outside ourselves. As you brainstorm, plan, problem solve, and execute your mission, remember the smiles, the laughter, the connections made – that is where you find the joy!



Students delivered the Christmas bags they made to veterans in Wisconsin.

To read about this event in *Catholic Forester* magazine, click [here](#).