



PREPARES

Pregnancy & Parenting Support

December Newsletter 2020

Holy Spirit, inspire and ignite in us, your people a spirit of creativity and openness, so that through PREPARES we might serve families in our community safely, humbly and effectively all to build your Kingdom and to uphold the value and dignity of every life.

Amen

Volunteer Shout Out

We are still on the long and winding road, and many volunteers have gone the extra mile. In this Advent season, when we wait in hope for the Nativity, we would like to recognize a few volunteers, old and new, who have inspired us with their commitment.

Magdaly

Magdaly shared with us how vital she thinks PREPARES family companion training will be in her life. “A woman who is a stranger to me asked me for help. She had survived domestic violence and had a severely disabled child, among other, almost unreal, challenges. I did not know where to start or how to help. I had nothing to give – but could not turn away from the possibility that I could do something, as my prayer leader, who introduced me to her, persisted. I just sat with her. I helped make calls and reassured her she was overcoming. This is what you spoke about! The one special skill for family companions is compassion. I need this training!”

Arlene and Teresa

Arlene Bergam and Teresa McKiernan created our essential needs element, which we bring to every parish community. For years, Arlene and Teresa have dedicated countless hours and recruited donations to supply diapers and food staples to many families. They also shift into Santa Claus by baking hundreds of cookies and wrapping little presents for weeks. Their heart for the vulnerable is most inspiring.



Beatriz

Beatriz Escalera is an employee of Catholic Charities who also finds time to volunteer with PREPARES. She is always the first to help. Beatriz submitted applications on behalf of immigrants who would have otherwise not been able to apply for this program during our time of significant distress.

Barbara


Despite the shutdowns, new grandbaby care responsibilities, and the volunteer team dissipating before the torrent of the virus, **Barbara Pickett** keeps at it. She is companionship a new mother in a poor living situation, who has many obstacles to overcome. Barbara never gives up!

Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary Shout Out

PREPARES receives support from many groups who care about life and the marginalized – including the Knights of Columbus and the Adrian Dominican Sisters. Today, we give a shout out to the **Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary** (SNJM). Their commitment to those on the bottom rung is consistent with Mary, who speaks in the Magnificat, and impressive. For two years running, the SNJMs have supported hiring an area coordinator, a young mothers’ support group, and promoting PREPARES among Spanish-speakers. The province donated a large portion of the Sisters’ stimulus checks to provide rent relief to struggling families in our area.



Of course, **Sister Mary Ellen Robinson**, SNJM opened the Marie Rose House in Wapato to the support group and continues to offer companionship to young mothers in the area. She also works daily by video chat with a beginning reader from a PREPARES family. The PREPARES team is honored to be associated with the Sisters of the Holy Names!



Prayer

Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them through our hands, this day their daily bread, and by our understanding love, give peace and joy.

Pope Paul VI



Letter from staff

Dear volunteers and friends of PREPARES,

Advent is a time of preparation, to teach our hearts tranquility, and of course, to bake cookies! Here are a few Advent thoughts from staff:

“Advent for me is a precious time to walk with Mary of Nazareth during her last month of pregnancy--the most difficult one for a pregnant woman. She graciously teaches me how to manage difficult times of pain, uncertainty, and vulnerability with faith, hope, and joy.”



“Uniting the waiting that Advent represents with the waiting for health and wholeness we all yearn for, I look inside myself for patience. I am grateful for the inspiration of all our volunteers, who also wait patiently and continue to serve.”



“During this Advent season, I’m praying more and counting blessings. In this time of loss and darkness, staying in touch with you through Sacred Space and simple phone calls has been a blessing to me. YOU are my blessings.”

Stay safe, everyone! The Light of the World is with us in the darkness! And as always, reach out to us if we can help.

Blessings,

Your PREPARES team: Yolanda Castillo, Alma Ramos, Syndee Saucedo Cavazos, Ann Dibble, Sandra Barrós

A program of

