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***Best Practices of  
Diocesan Outreach Ministries***  
*or,*  
***Some Really Good Ideas to Make Your Program  
Run More Smoothly!***  
*Fall 2010*

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Dear Outreach Ministry Leaders,

Episcopal Charities of Southeast Florida is so pleased to offer you this handbook of 'best practices' that our diocesan outreach ministries have adopted. The ideas you will find here are creative, practical, easy to implement and a great way to avoid 'reinventing the wheel'! You will find the ideas and suggestions grouped by type of outreach: Feeding, Community Gardening, and After School programs.

We thank all those who have offered such wonderful ideas and suggestions, and we invite you to let us know if your program has discovered a practice that can help other outreach leaders. Send your ideas to Bonnie Weaver, our Program, Grants and Resource Director at [bonnie@ecsefl.org](mailto:bonnie@ecsefl.org).

All of us at Episcopal Charities are so inspired by the work you are doing. Your dedication and commitment to service in your local congregations and communities is an example of the living Christ in action.

May God richly bless your ministries!

Faithfully,



The Rev. Donna Dambrot  
President & Executive Director  
Episcopal Charities of Southeast Florida



Bonnie Weaver, Program, Grants and Resource Director  
Elizabeth Smiley, Business Operations Director  
Carol Bruno, Development Director

## Best Feeding Ministry Practices

"Food donations are brought to the Church on the first Sunday of every month and are blessed as a part of the offering at the 10:00 service. One of the techniques used for getting these donations is to have volunteers at the back of the Church on the last Sunday of each month handing out food bags with the Logo "Reach for Outreach" on them along with a shopping list. This seems to be a very effective method of reminding people of the donations that are needed. This is in addition to a separate smaller notice contained in our weekly e-mail blast sent on Thursday to all parishioners.

*From St. Philip's, Coral Gables collecting for Christ Church's Food Pantry, Coconut Grove.*

Purchasing prepared frozen meals from GA Foods, <http://www.sunmeadow.com> has been very cost effective and efficient, especially for large unexpected needs. They deliver to us on a weekly basis. The Daily Bread Food Bank <http://www.dailybread.org> has also been extremely helpful to us.

*From Loaves and Fish Food Pantry, sponsored by St. Peter's, Key West.*

We know there are seniors in our neighborhoods who are not eating properly and who often choose between paying for medicine or food. Sometimes, they eat dog food. We also know that they rarely leave their apartments or homes. Several months ago, on Monday's we started serving a hot meal at 3:00 pm to people over 60 years old. (Quite different than the usual Jubilee soup line client). We didn't have many people show up - maybe 3 or 4 until we initiated the following:

1. We provide Bingo at 2:00 pm with an entertaining Bingo caller who tells stories between calling the numbers.
2. We give interesting prizes.
3. We add a delicious dessert ala mode to the rather sparse meal provided by Meals on Wheels.
4. We give each senior a bag of groceries to take home when they leave.
5. We have one senior play the harmonica.

Each Monday, we now feed about 15-20 seniors.

*From The Jubilee Center, Hollywood*

Always cook for 100 and usually have food left over. Freeze main dish and once a month have pot luck that includes leftovers from 3 prior weeks. Don't save over 30 days.

Guests are individually served so if one person gets a main dish he/she doesn't like he/she can change with someone else if that works for another person.

*From St. Andrew's/Calvary Methodist Churches, Lake Worth.*

We have volunteers play the piano during the Wednesday evening meals for our ministry in "Feeding the Hungry" This gives a relaxed time for them to enjoy their dinner. We have 4 piano players that make this happen. We started several years ago with a "Sponsored Meal Program". This allows one to contribute \$250.00 towards a meal. We supply a tent card on each table to let our guest know who provided their meal tonight. We put a logo, picture on short wording on the card to indicate who and for whom the dinner is sponsored by and for whom. i.e., in memory of a loved one, birthday, anniversary, or any special occasion. This has been very popular with St Mary's members and outside groups, businesses etc. Since Mary's Kitchen is not financially supported by the Church Budget this provides many meals to those in need. Starting a few months ago Mary's Kitchen contributes back to St Mary's \$100.00 per week to help offset the electric, water, gas and clean up service in Pittenger Hall.

A newly instituted extra is when the Call to Discipleship group wanted to help the outreach. They (Bob Snyder and Jack Godfrey and others) began a Gift Basket of canned and packaged foods basket each week during the meal. They collect non perishable foods, in a beautiful wrapped basket. Our greeters give each guest a ticket when they arrive for the dinner. The drawing is by one of our guest and the winning number ticket is announced. This adds a bit of excitement for a very pleasant evening meal...

We also give out bread and pastry obtained from our local grocery stores along with a freshly made peanut butter and jelly sandwich to take home. Occasionally we have some fresh vegetables fruit and other items to take with them.

We do have "Betty's Boutique" that has clothing, books, soaps and shampoos etc that is given out each Wednesday.

*From Mary's Kitchen, St. Mary's, Stuart*

## Best After School Program Practices

- You need a daily structured program combined with some free time that has several different activities the kids can choose from.
- Have a structured curriculum set in place for the kids who are not doing homework.
- Have assigned seating
- Have a designated space for children to keep their belongings
- Cell phones are not allowed to be used; have designated "student phone" that is monitored by staff.
- Give out health snacks. Check with the Board of Health to find out the type of snack you can distribute (i.e. Can they be refrigerated foods?)
- Give out healthy snacks: too much sugar and the kids do bounce off the walls!
- When you are not familiar with someone who is picking up a child make sure you check their I.D and find out if they are a designated "pick up" person;
- Have a designated space for children to sign in & out as well as parents.
- Parents and children sign a Behavior Contract

*From My Backyard, St. Margaret's, Miami, Lakes*

**Parents and Students:** It is important each and every year to sit down with the families to go over the goals, expectations and daily rules of the program. We, in fact, have the parents and students sign an agreement that they understand the expectations.

**Volunteers:** We solicit our volunteers through announcements in the weekly church bulletin and ministry fair at the beginning of each school year - also word of mouth from friend to friend of the program has been very fruitful.

**Fundraising:** We have two separate fundraising events. In the fall we do a mail solicitation to our mailing list (500+) and indicate something specific that we are trying to fund i.e. art teacher, social worker, camp funds, etc. Our second fundraising event is in the spring- usually a cocktail party and raffle. This has become a tradition and something our donors look forward to.

*From Paul's Place, St. Paul's, Delray Beach*