



Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington

# **“FEED A FAMILY” Youth Service Project**

## **What is this event all about?**

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington encourages youth of the Diocese to help us in feeding the needy by holding a volunteer “feed a family” event. The number of families who are in need of food assistance has grown exponentially. By celebrating community and packaging dinners for the needy, youth will be living the Gospel.

## **What are the meals?**

The meals will include a recipe and all the ingredients needed to cook a hearty tuna casserole that will amply serve a family of four. The ingredients are nonperishable and can be stored for over one year.

## **Why Tuna Casserole?**

Tuna is high in omega-3 fatty acids which help fight heart disease and other inflammatory diseases. Eating two servings of fish weekly, as recommended by the American Heart Association, can be difficult for many people. A can of tuna contains just under two servings of fish (one serving of fish = 75g). Tuna is low in calories and fat, with half a can of tuna (packed in water) containing only 60 calories, 0.5g of fat, and 15g of protein!

## **Where will the food for the dinners come from?**

You will need to collect a lot of tuna and cream soup cans and elbow macaroni. Some ideas:

- Ask each volunteer to bring 25 undented, cans of tuna (either water or oil) to the event.
- Hold a parish tuna and creamed soup food drive.
- Look for sales and coupons and purchase in bulk.
- Seek donations from local grocery stores.

## **To whom will the dinners be provided?**

The dinners will be provided to the poor in the Diocese of Arlington through the three pantries Catholic Charities operates in Alexandria, Leesburg and Front Royal. Most of our clients are seniors on fixed incomes, the disabled, the unemployed, single parent families, and those who simply cannot make ends meet. Last year, Catholic Charities served more than 8,000 people at our pantries. We will also provide the dinners to the rural pantries of Virginia. Last year, through our mobile Christ House on Wheels Program, we delivered 55,000 pounds to these pantries. These

pantries often run low on food. They depend on our support in order to feed the many people in the rural counties who don't know where their next meal will come from.

Together we can do great things and put the Gospel into action.

### **What will we be doing?**

Assembling nutritious family dinners in packages that Catholic Charities will provide to families in need. We recommend beginning your event with a prayer or Gospel reading to remind participants why as Catholics we are called to feed the hungry.

Depending on your schedule, this service project can be combined with another service or celebratory activity.

### **Where do we bring the casserole packages?**

We ask that you deliver any completed packages to Catholic Charities food pantries: either

- Christ House, 131 South West Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 (703) 549-8644, or if you are in Western Fairfax or Loudon counties
- Western Regional Office, 12 Cardinal Park, #12 Leesburg, VA 20175 (703) 443-2489 or
- Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry, 208 John Rice Road, Front Royal, VA 22630 (540) 622-2479.

### **Where is the event going to be located?**

Determine whether you will gather at your parish, school, or in someone's home to assemble these dinners.

### **When?**

Identify the date and time of your event.

### **How long will this event last?**

Depending on the amount of your supplies, one to two hours.

Remember to allow some preparation time before your volunteers arrive to setup work space and clear an area where bags can be assembled and packed. You will also need to copy (2 sided) and cut the recipe cards. You may customize these cards to show the name of your youth group or have volunteers sign them to personalize their service.

### **What will we need for packing the meals**

- Two sizes of Ziploc bags: sandwich size for pasta and gallon size for the complete dinners
- Measuring cups
- Copies of the recipe cards (2 sided) to insert in each bag.

- Boxes of elbow macaroni pasta
- Cans of cream of mushroom soup
- Canned tuna

### **How do we assemble each meal?**

Group and stack your cans. Line up tables with each component or have some of each item arranged on each table. The idea is to either have an assembly line to add the meal components, or have each volunteer assemble a full dinner at one work station.

Some volunteers will need to measure the pasta, 2½ cups, into a sandwich bag and seal those bags to be included in the dinner package.

Starting with the large Ziploc bag, add a recipe card and each ingredient from the recipe. Seal the bag, removing as much air as possible, and pack up your results!

### **How many dinners will be assembled?**

Set a goal for how many dinners you would like to assemble. Remember, each dinner can feed a family of four, so if your goal is to assemble 200 dinners, your efforts will feed 800 hungry people!

**Matthew 14:17: "And they said to Him, 'We have here only five loaves and two fish.'"**

*Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington is a non-profit social service agency that serves twenty-one counties and seven independent cities in Virginia. Catholic Charities carries out Christ's command to love our neighbors and helps those in need regardless of their race or creed.*



Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington's

## Roman Tuna Casserole

### Ingredients:

- 2 ½ cups pasta
- 1 can of cream of mushroom (or other cream) soup
- 2 – 5 oz. cans tuna, drained
- ½ cup of milk
- 6 cups of water to cook pasta

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bring 6 cups of water in a saucepan to boil, add pasta and cook 10 minutes, or until tender. Drain pasta in colander. In a separate bowl, mix together soup and milk. Stir in pasta. Transfer to a casserole dish. Bake 30 minutes or until sauce starts to bubble.



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## Grace before Meals

*Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen!*

*This dinner was packed for you by \_\_\_\_\_ . We hope that it nourishes you and your family!*



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# Bringing Food to Christ House

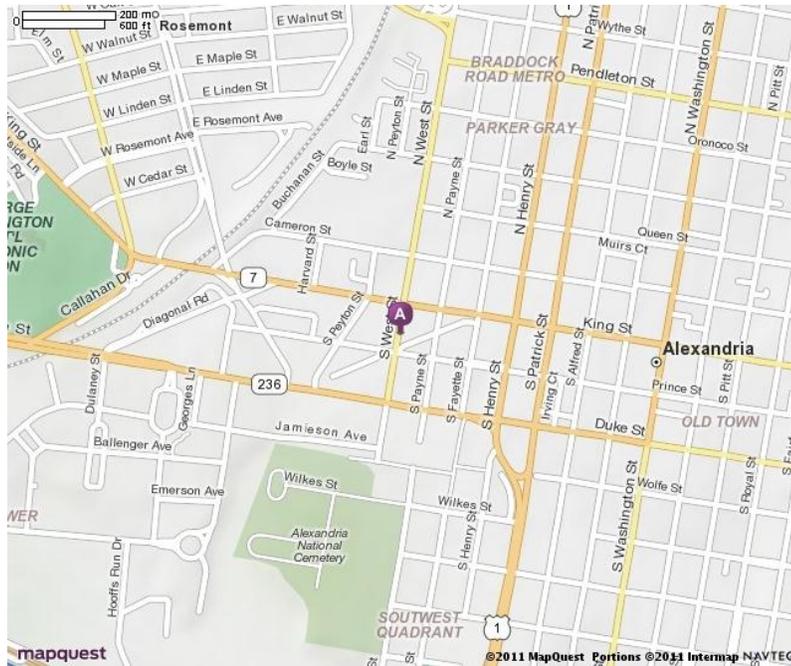
131 South West St.  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
(703) 549-8644

*Please bring your food donations to Christ House Food Pantry.*

Directions: Take King St. (the main street in Old Town) to South West Street. There is a Loading Zone directly in front of Christ House. Christ House is a large, yellow brick building standing on the corner of South West Street and Prince Street. You can't miss us! If you get lost, call us at (703) 549-8644.



\*Remember to call to let us know when you are dropping off your food donations!



## HOURS:

- Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM; Saturday, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

**Thank you very much for helping Christ House help hungry families throughout the Arlington Diocese!**