

# St. Matthew's spotlights



## Service Learning

*As a faith-based school, we at St. Matthew's have a biblical and sacramental understanding of ourselves as deeply blessed by a loving God who calls us to respond by being God's hands in the world.*

*The Rev. Kristin Barberia, School Chaplain*

A vital part of each child's education at St. Matthew's Parish School is participation in our grade-level and school-wide Service Learning programs. The school's motto, "**Serve, Lead, Flourish,**" makes it clear that service to others is a high priority at St. Matthew's. Through this work, students reflect on their responsibility to grow as leaders by serving others and develop the life-long habit of doing something for someone else.

Being of service to others allows students to see themselves as capable leaders, to act upon the empathy we strive to nurture in them, and to understand that we flourish when everyone is able to share in God's abundance.

The School serves a wide variety of organizations throughout the Westside of Los Angeles and beyond, making efforts to complement classroom studies and Parish Outreach efforts. Every student participates in a class community-based service commitment as well as school-wide service activities led by our student action leadership team (SALT). In addition, Parents' Council fundraising supports the School's Service Learning focus through matching grants for SALT's partner organizations and for several of our primary outreach partners, including Saint Anne School and the Westside Food Bank.

*While I was doing my project, a lot of the clients said to me, "Thank you. You don't understand how thankful I am for you." It really touched my heart, and I don't think that a lot of other things can the way that volunteering does.*

*St. Matthew's 8th Grade Student*

## early childhood

Preschool partners with the children of The Early Learning Center of St. Joseph Center - a bilingual, "dual-immersion", high-quality childcare program for toddlers and Pre-K children - with mutual visits to celebrate the seasons.



## kindergarten

Kindergarten cares for others by holding lemonade stand fundraisers to benefit our friends at St. Paul's School in Haiti, and by visiting the elderly for a Valentine's Day "Sweethearts Concert" at the WISE and Healthy Aging Adult Day Service Center in Santa Monica.

## first grade

From "Bubs" the class bear to the annual Teddy Bear Picnic, followed by animal reports and the community helpers play, these first grade traditions are the foundation for their service learning project. Students hold a recycling drive and proceeds are donated to Episcopal Relief & Development's microloan program, currently assisting parents at St. Paul's School in Haiti become community helpers and farmers!



*It is important to us that our kids understand that they are citizens of this world and are called by God to be of service to others. Our Service Learning program helps service to become second nature to our children.*

*St. Matthew's Parent*

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## sixth grade



QUEST is a project based learning program in the Sixth Grade that explores water issues from the past and the present, while exploring solutions for the future. As part of this exploration, students participate in Heal the Bay activities alongside their Second Grade buddies as well as raise awareness about water issues within our student body. The Science class solar oven project offers an opportunity for a "cook off" where the proceeds benefit *We Care Solar*.

The Sixth Grade also supports the work of our St. Matthew's Parish Thrift Shop by serving as part of the Summer Brigade, which helps staff the store during the summer months.

## seventh grade



The focus of Seventh Grade is supporting the needs of the hungry and homeless in our community. As part of their fall retreat, they take a field trip to The People Concern and the Westside Food Bank. During the year, seventh graders lead the joint Parish-School Food Ingathering for the Westside Food Bank and serve meals at The People Concern's shelters and transitional housing projects. Students participate in the full chain of food assistance: donating, sorting, distributing, and serving.

## eighth grade

The Eighth Grade Service Learning summer project is the students' opportunity to make a self-initiated difference in the world and to begin living out the school motto of "Serve, Lead, Flourish" in their own communities. Students complete nine hours of community service at an organization of their choosing. The project challenges the students to get involved in a community that is different from their own, and to recognize their own gifts and how much they have to offer.



## Episcopal Schools Partnership in Haiti

In 1984, the National Association of Episcopal Schools recognized the importance of the over 250 Episcopal schools in Haiti that provide quality education to children of all faiths, and remain an anchor of stability and progress in the communities they serve. As a result, the Partnership Program was born where U.S. and Haitian Schools were linked in long-term cultural and prayerful relationships, as well as providing financial support to ensure the viability of these schools. We currently are partnered with the National Cathedral School in Washington, D.C., in support of St. Paul's School in Caracol which is located in the Centre region of Haiti. St. Paul's School is on a sunny hillside about a 2 hour hike into the mountains north of the town of Cange.

Paul Farmer's Zanmi Lasante Partner's in Health Hospital is also located in Cange.

To learn more about our Partnership: <http://haitipartnership.stmatthewsschool.com/>



### Community Outreach Partners

Boys & Girls Club  
Episcopal Relief and Development  
Episcopal Schools Partnership Program/Haiti  
Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance (GAIA)  
Heal the Bay  
The Neighborhood Youth Association (NYA)  
The People Concern (OPCC)

Saint Anne School in Santa Monica  
St. Joseph Center  
St. Matthew's Thrift Shop  
We Care Solar  
Wells of Life  
Westside Food Bank  
WISE & Healthy Aging Center

*We are deeply grateful for the long-standing and powerful support we receive from this (St. Matthew's) community.*

*Bruce Rankin, Executive Director of Westside Food Bank*