

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.

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. 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.

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's 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 including holding lemonade stands to raise funds for our friends at St. Paul's School in Haiti and 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, to animal reports in the spring, animals are central to our First Grade social studies program. To complement these studies, students hold a recycling drive as their service learning project. Proceeds are donated to Episcopal Relief and Development's "Gifts for Life" animal program, which helps alleviate hunger around the world.



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



second grade

Second Grade social studies explores natural habitats including the ocean and rain forests. Second graders serve as leaders for the school's relationship with Heal the Bay, giving three opportunities for students to help clean up our local beach.

third grade

In coordination with their Africa unit in social studies, Third Grade students raise money through a read-a-thon to purchase mosquito nets to combat the spread of malaria. The class partners with GAIA (Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance), which works in the rural villages of southern Malawi, where there are virtually no health services available.



fourth grade

In order to develop an understanding of the problem of local hunger, Fourth Grade students support the work of the Westside Food Bank, a warehouse that distributes food to sixty-five social service organizations on the Westside of Los Angeles. Issues of global hunger are explored alongside studies in science about nutrition. The funds raised support our work in Haiti through Episcopal Relief and Development's sustainable gardening ventures.

fifth grade

In the Fifth Grade students develop a relationship with Second Grade children from Saint Anne School, a Roman Catholic School in Santa Monica where many of the families live below the poverty line. Mutual visits and a joint book writing project help foster the relationship between students. The Fifth Grade also helps support the Saint Anne Second Grade classroom through bake sales that raise funds to enhance their partners' classroom.



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. Science class solar oven projects offer 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.

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 explore the issues of homelessness and take a field trip to OPCC 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 OPCC'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 own 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.



We believe that the culture of giving and stewardship we've created at our school will have an important and lasting impact on the lives of our children.

Stu Work, St. Matthew's Head of School

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 also is 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