

Students make news to help Mother Teresa Home

by PATRICK J. BUECHI

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Staff Reporter



Nativity of Our Lord School Orchard Park sixth graders Amelia Lazzara, Ella Ignatius and Leah Banes present Mother Teresa House coordinator Olivia Giza with gifts they bought with money they raised through a newspaper they created as fifth graders. Lazzara, who spearheaded the project, said she and her fellow students wanted to donate toys to need children of the holiday. The Mother Teresa house, which is located at 208 Stanislaus Street, on Buffalo's East Side, provides shelter, community service, and education referral services for mothers in need. The gifts will be give to needy children during a Christmas at the Mother Teresa House. (Dan Cappellazzo/Staff Photographer)

Girls at Nativity School, in Orchard Park are making headlines for a good cause, literally. These eighth-graders wrote, designed and printed their own newspaper to raise money for the children at Mother Teresa Home in Buffalo.

Amelia Lazzara came up with the idea of making a newspaper to sell to her schoolmates as a way to raise money to buy Christmas presents for the babies and toddlers at the Mother Teresa Home in Buffalo, which provides a safe and stable environment for women who have experienced pressure regarding their pregnancies. Currently, three mothers live at the home with two children and two newborn twins.

"We are thrilled at the Mother Teresa Home that we have inspired those of all ages," said Cheryl Calire, director of the diocesan Office of Pro-Life Activities. "It warmed my heart to see service and giving back instilled in our youth - the future of our church."

Inspiration for Amelia's newspaper came from television. "I watch this show called 'Gilmore

Girls.' The girl in that, she goes to college and she always wanted to be a reporter and I want to be a photographer and a reporter, so a photojournalist."

She created a Google classroom, a free web service that allows multiple people to create and share paperless documents. Her friends Ella Ignatius and Leah Banes quickly joined the staff. In the debut issue of News, Fun and More, Ella wrote about cats, while Leah wrote about a trip to the Marko Islands. Amelia researched and wrote about the socioeconomic difference between having a summer birthday as opposed to a winter birthday.

"Sometimes you don't like getting all of your presents at once because you barely get presents in the summertime," she said. "I interviewed one of my friends who has a sort of winter birthday."

Fellow students Erica Crossman and Amelia Cook also work on the paper. Erica did a report on what dog is right for you, listing the characteristics of different breeds of dogs. Amelia Cook started a fiction serial to encourage people to pick up the paper each month.

The paper sold for 25 cents an issue, with teachers, classmates and family picking up most of the copies.

"Sometimes if it was your family, they'd give you \$5 or \$10, which was nice," said Amelia.

"That's how we got all the money for Mother Teresa Home."

The girls learned about the home through Amelia's mother, Suzanne, who works at the Catholic Center with Calire.

The girls bought clothes for the kids, including pajamas for the twins, and a reindeer outfit for one of the boys, along with books and toys.

"They can always use something extra. Something special to top their day," said Ella.

For anyone else looking to start their own newspaper, Amelia has some advice.

"Make sure it's not something you want to read about, but something everybody would want to read about," she said.

The Mother Teresa Home, which is located at 208 Stanislaus Street, on Buffalo's East Side, provides shelter, community service, and education referral services for mothers in need. The gifts will be given to needy children during a Christmas at the Mother Teresa House.