

## Holy Rosary Students Help Launch Archdiocese Program to Feed the Hungry

Holy Rosary's 7th grade class participated in a service day at the St. James Cathedral Soup Kitchen in Seattle this spring, and the event was such a success that St. James parish is now working to create a service program at the Cathedral for middle school students to assist at the soup kitchen on a regular basis. The students made cards for patrons of the soup kitchen, helped make dinner, served the meal, and cleaned up afterwards.

For student Gabi Callero, it was a life-changing event. She wrote of her experience, *"Working at the St. James Soup Kitchen is a wonderful opportunity that really made me feel I made a difference. This service makes me feel this way because when I was doing it, I knew that someone was going to receive food and then comfort by receiving the food. Without a job or income it is hard for people to live and eat, so knowing that people with struggles are receiving things that are hard to find with low to no income, it comforts me and helps me to feel I can make a difference; especially when food to someone who can't afford it is a huge difference to them. Plus we are serving people who are grateful for these things and when you hear a thank you, you feel warm and fuzzy inside. This is what I did and will continue doing to make a difference...One man when leaving told us his story. He said, 'I am so grateful to have a meal and such nice people with big smiles to serve me, especially when I have slept on the streets, sidewalks, and by the highway, most of them with cockroaches or bedbugs. It just means so much to me to be served.' When his story was finished it left me almost in tears. That rewarding feeling after serving at the Soup Kitchen is unexplainable, but I can tell you that this service was incredible."*

Joe Cotton, Youth Minister for St. James parish (and former Holy Rosary - Edmonds student), wrote, *"There has been a huge buzz on our campus today following your visit. The cathedral kitchen staff LOVED having the kids serve the meal and our guests absolutely delighted in their presence. Between the cards, the humble service, and the many examples of youth/guest interactions, I bore witness to a slice of the Kingdom of God manifesting in our cafeteria."*

Cotton says he has been working with the Catholic Schools Department and the St. James Social Outreach Department to create a new cathedral program to begin next year, offering an urban service retreat twice monthly for Catholic middle schools. The program would include a cathedral tour and service time in the soup kitchen. Since they helped launch it, Holy Rosary's 7th graders would help name the program, which is now tentatively called the Cathedral Service Immersion.



