



Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington

“WE CARE CARDS Youth Service Project



How do we put on a card-writing event?

1. Invite friends, family, your class, youth group, Scout troop, or other group to your event. Ask participants to bring a grocery store gift card to donate to the poor.
2. Explain the project.

Cards are a simple way of communicating directly with someone in need. Perhaps you do not have the time to volunteer at a food pantry or shelter, but writing to someone to let them know they are remembered can be equally powerful. Consider those times when you enjoy sending or receiving cards – Valentine’s Day, Easter, Mother’s or Father’s Day. Share that experience/love with another. You will be creating and writing cards to express your *support, love and encouragement* for those who are struggling. Artistic or crafty talent is not required.

Allow people to be as creative as they wish. Some suggested verses are listed below, but the most important point is to be sincere and upbeat in expressing your message. As Blessed Mother Teresa said, “Kind words can be short, and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.”
3. Obtain supplies.

You will need to provide cardstock paper and art supplies, such as colored pens, markers, crayons, seasonal stamp pads, stickers, ribbon, foam cutouts, scalloped scissors, hole punchers, foam cutouts etc. Large envelopes, such as 6X9 booklet size, are also helpful. Note: An 8½ X11” sheet of paper can be folded in half to fit a 6”X9” envelope – these large envelopes are available in bulk at an office supply store, e.g Staples.
4. Once dry, put your cards in envelopes.
5. Bring the cards to our administrative office (Suite 506, 200 North Glebe Road in Arlington, VA). Catholic Charities staff will deliver your cards to the men and families living in Catholic Charities shelter and transitional housing programs, dinner guests at the evening meal at Christ House, those who come to our pantries for food, the imprisoned and seniors.

Please be aware that if you wish to write cards to prisoners, they cannot have any sharp edges, glued pieces or glitter. Sign these cards using first names only. For these clients, plain religious-theme boxed cards may be easier to use.

Note: This activity is appropriate for all who are seeking an opportunity to do something for others in need. It is a recommended activity for families—children 8 years of age and older. It is also a project that would qualify for service hours for middle and high school students who participate.

What else should I bring?

Consider holding a gift card drive in combination with your event. Grocery gift cards are appreciated as well as gift cards from large retail stores, such as Walmart or Target. Gift cards empower the recipient to purchase what their family really needs. Food cards help to ensure that a family will enjoy a nice holiday meal.

How do we get started?

Organize supplies at each table. Provide instructions for completing the cards. Perhaps your group could begin by praying together for the poor. To make your event welcoming, consider having background music and light refreshments.

Thanks for supporting Catholic Charities and for sharing Jesus' message of hope. You are putting the Gospel into action!

Sample card verses:

“Always know that we love and care for you.”

“Never let life’s hardships disturb you. No one can avoid problems, not even saints.”

“Sometimes the situations you face will make you want to give up. However, what God brings you to...He will bring you through.”

“Every day is a brand new opportunity.”

Christmas messages:

“The message of Christmas is that we are never alone, not when the night is darkest, the wind coldest, the world seemingly indifferent. For this is still the time God chooses.”

“I will pray for your good health and a very positive New Year! You deserve the best of everything and I sincerely hope you receive many blessings.”

“Remember God loves you and we are praying you will find peace and joy in the Christmas season.”

“May the beauty and joy of Christmas bring hope to your heart and peace to your home.”