

Summer "Home Work"

Covid19 has made life very challenging for our young people. Not only has school been closed but our young people have been living in a "social bubble" away from extended family and friends. In the past, our warehouse is usually filled each day during the summer months with students completing their mandatory "Community Service Hours." This has not been possible this summer with volunteer opportunities being so scarce because of Covid19. We have had to make the tough decision to limit warehouse work to only four volunteers each day. In order to help students, we initiated a CFFC Volunteer from Home program this summer. We encouraged students and their parents to write up a summer volunteer proposal and submit it to us via email. Students were encouraged to be creative in their proposals. They had to follow all regional Covid19 health protocols in their planning. Dr. Simone wanted students to remember "that little things done with great love can make a big difference in the world." We have a God that loves small things. In this letter we want to share a few of the student Volunteer from Home initiatives with you.

In early July we received an email from Trisha Natesan. Trisha is a high school student at Archbishop Philip Pocock school in Mississauga. Trisha wanted to volunteer at the warehouse but decided that she would take up the Volunteer from Home challenge. With her mother's permission, she emailed her family and friends. She also put letters in her neighbor's mailboxes. She explained that she was having a "social distancing" soap collection for CFFC. The poor children that we support at CFFC live in countries that have also been terribly impacted by Covid19. Soap is essential in the fight against disease. Trisha set up a colourful display on her driveway and provided a container for people to place their soap donations. There was no physical interaction or risk of Covid spread. At the end of the drive, the soap packages were cleaned with a disinfectant wipe. Over 120 bars of soap were donated and collected for the poor. Trisha was also able to earn 8 community service hours! Covid19 cannot stop the work of the Holy Spirit. It cannot stop us from loving others.



The Beautiful Life of a Teenager.

When Mikayla Portelli came to Canadian Food for Children in early February, 2020, with her Grade 12 Religion Class from Cardinal Leger School in Brampton, she was deeply touched by the story of a young girl named Fides in Africa. Mikayla saw a photo of Fides ,dressed in rags, on the classroom wall at the CFFC warehouse. Mikalya was told that Fides's parents were not well and that the Catholic nuns in her village, that we support, provide Fides with a good meal each day to keep her alive. Dr. Simone was at the warehouse that day and he told Mikayla that on a recent trip to Africa, he had a chance to visit Fides's village in Africa. He had hoped to meet with her to see how she was doing? The nuns found Fides and brought her to see Dr. Simone. Fides was now a healthy teenager. Since it was near her birthday, Dr. Simone brought the Nuns and Fides to a nearby market. He told the Nuns to tell Fides that she could go on a small shopping spree. Fides could pick out a couple of items for a birthday present. After a few minutes Fides returned with her birthday items. She held in her hands a small bottle of scented hand cream and a bottle of nail polish. Dr. Simone told Mikalya and her classmates that "Fides wanted the very same things that a young teenage girl in Canada would want. Fides wanted to look pretty and nice."

Mikayla was deeply touched by this story. She wanted to get involved. During the Covid19 lockdown Mikayla was a front line worker. She had a part time job working at a Shoppers Drug Mart in Brampton. She was often assigned to work in the cosmetic section at the store. Mikayla spoke to the store owner each time he would visit. After many conversations she convinced him to donate. She even bought several things with her own money. On July 18, 2020, Mikayla arrived at the CFFC warehouse with \$13,000 worth of nail polish, shampoos, hand creams and soap. These are items that we don't usually see at the warehouse. Mikayla said she wants all young girls to look and feel good everywhere in the world. "Everyone deserves to feel special because we all are created special by God." Covid19 didn't stop Mikayla from volunteering to help the poor." Mikayla is off to study nursing next year at college. Jesus has many plans for this dynamic young woman.

Brian Finamore, Chaplain

