



Announcing Pilgrim Lutheran School's 11th Annual Toy Drive for Pablo Casals Elementary School!!!!

On Tuesday, December 15th Miss H's 1/2 grade class is scheduled to hop on a bus to deliver the toys collected at this year's Toy Drive. The planning for the afternoon is underway, the bus is reserved, the supplies have been ordered... now we need the toys!

Every year for the past 9 years the Pilgrim community has helped bring Christmas joy to children at Pablo Casals Elementary School in Humboldt Park. This year we are aiming high and hope to collect enough toys for not only the 63 first graders with whom our 1st and 2nd graders will spend the afternoon but also gifts for all the Pablo Casals preschoolers, kindergartners and 2nd graders-a total of at least 186! We **can** reach that goal but obviously we need as much help as we can get. Here is how you can help-

Please...

1. **Purchase toys, games or books appropriate for children aged 4-8.** Suggested price range is \$10- \$15. Please try to avoid extra-large sized gifts. They are exciting to receive but hard to transport and can cause hurt feelings to those who receive smaller-sized gifts. (Note- the majority of the children will be 6 or 7 so aim for the middle of the range.
2. **Wrap your gift(s) and mark it (them) "G"(girl), "B"(boy) or "E"(either).** It is very helpful if you put the toy's suggested age range on the tag.
3. Put your wrapped and tagged gift(s) in the collection boxes that will appear in the back of church after Thanksgiving break.
4. Read (or re-read) the letter on the back below for some thoughts about talking about the Toy Drive with your child(ren).
5. If you don't know much about the Toy Drive delivery, try to talk with someone who has gone along in the past. It is a story worth hearing.
6. See Mrs. Saiki if you have questions.

To allow us to sort and bag the toys we ask that you deliver them to Pilgrim no later than Friday, Dec. 13. Because of this year's ambitious goal we REALLY, REALLY need gifts to be here by the deadline.

Thank you in advance for helping make our Toy Drive a success once again.

ORIGINALLY SHARED IN 2008 BUT WORTH A REPEAT EVERY YEAR-

Over the past few years the annual Toy Drive has become one of the most meaningful Pilgrim Kid Care projects. This is not only because we have been able to deliver a large number of toys to the school each year but more importantly because we have learned a lot about empathy and giving. Two years ago, with the help of Dr. Terry Smith, Pilgrim grandparent and instructor at National-Louis University we made some changes to our afternoon at Pablo Casals. These changes helped all of us who were there **understand, see and feel that this event was not about our children, the “rich”, bringing to the “poor” but rather about building a sense of community and empathy. This is what Pilgrim Kids Care is really about.**

As we, the teachers, and you, the parents, discuss events like the Toy Drive with the children, the language that we use can have a major effect on their perception.

Please do NOT use the word “poor” in reference to the children at Pablo Casals.

We want our children to understand that although these are children who are less fortunate materially, they have a lot to give us. Instead, discuss

- how SHARING TOYS brings JOY to others.
- that when we help others smile, their JOY is then shared with US.
- that we take toys but we bring back the pictures and stories of JOY.

Lastly, in discussions with my class about the Toy Drive one thing that has always been tricky is the question that comes up every year - “Why won’t Santa bring them toys?” Well, that’s hard for me to answer since I haven’t been able to talk to Santa directly about it but my guess is that Santa knows that their families may not be able to buy all the things they need so he may deliver things they **need** rather than things they **want** like toys.

Thank you for your help in spreading the Joy of Christmas,

Beth Ruppe (with input from Dave Maring, Karen Huelskoetter and Terry Smith)

