

2025 Back to School Supply Drive: Talking Points for Parish Engagement Blending Catholic Social Teaching, St. Patrick's Social Justice Pillars, and Real-World Impact

What?: Have you heard?! Our annual Back to School Drive is happening now.

Who?: Back to school supplies are being collected for students of St. Matthew Catholic School and Roadrunner Elementary School. Gift cards are being collected to benefit Children of the Incarcerated through the Diocesan Prison Ministry.

When?: Donations are now being accepted at all weekend Masses through Sunday, July 27.

Where?: Donations can be dropped off in the Narthex before or after Mass or an Amazon Shopping List has been created so that your gift can be shipped directly to the Church.

Why?:

1. Pillar of Social Justice in Action

- Social Justice is one of our St. Patrick Community's pillars, and we have a commitment as God's people to love our neighbors and to promote equity.
- A school supply drive is a practical expression: no child should enter the new year falling behind.

2. Human Dignity and Learning Opportunity

- Every child is made in God's image and deserves dignity, including being equipped to learn from the first day of school and throughout the school year.
- Students with proper supplies are more likely to attend regularly, complete homework, and engage in class ([Believe in Me Foundation, 2023](#)).

3. Preferential Option for the Poor

- The Church urges us to prioritize those in need.
- Rising costs have made school supplies out of reach for all students:
 - 33% of teens report parents are worried about affording the needed supplies ([Junior Achievement USA, 2022](#)).
 - 37% of students fear they won't be able to have all of the needed supplies ([Junior Achievement USA, 2022](#)).
 - 90% of teachers buy supplies out of pocket and their expenses will be at least \$800 this upcoming school year ([National Education Association, 2022](#), [Education and Career News, 2025](#)).

4. Solidarity & Community Impact

- When we unite, we affirm: what we do for the least among us, we do for Christ.
- Teachers say that having the essential school supplies help to foster student focus, motivation, and engagement ([National School Supply and Equipment Association, 2025](#)).

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5. Common Good & Participation

- A well-supplied classroom fosters academic equity:
 - 81% of teachers say more funding and supplies help bridge learning gaps.
 - 76% say it boosts student engagement ([Adopt A Classroom, 2024](#)).
- Academic equity strengthens entire grade levels, schools, and neighborhoods.

6. Charity in Truth: More Than Just Giving

- True charity addresses root needs.
- 76% of educators say that the self-esteem of the students improves when they have the supplies they need, a profound effect on learning readiness ([Education and Career News, 2023](#)).

7. Faith in Action

- Catholic Social Teaching must be lived through meaningful deeds.
- This is a spiritual practice: practicing solidarity, caring for the poor, and fostering dignity through concrete action.

▲ Call to Action

- **Donate:** Backpacks, notebooks, art supplies, hygiene items.
- **Give:** Whether school supplies or gift cards, your gift sends a powerful message of care.
- **Volunteer & Pray:** Sort, distribute, or pray for students and teachers.

■ Scriptural Anchor

- *"What you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me"* (Matthew 25:40)
- Let us see Christ in every student who needs some crayons or paints to make this school year a success.

Thank you for helping every child start the school year with dignity, hope, and the tools to succeed.

For more information about the Back to School Drive, please see this week's bulletin insert. You may also contact Leah Hill at the Parish Office with any questions.