

Midnight Run Reflections...

What a night we had. I have been many Midnight Runs to NYC since I became Youth Minister at St. Thomas More and this has been the BEST experience I have had. It was thanks to the teamwork of over 100 people who battled the weather to help sort clothing, set up the hall, pack the lunches, and load the vans. It is thanks to the 33 kids and 16 adults who together made the Run to NYC. I am proud of your dedication and commitment ... 49 in total in 2 vans and 6 vehicles.

Beginning with the Sat., 4:00 Mass, Father Bob blessed all those going on the Run and all those parishioners at Mass who helped in any way. We gathered at 8:30 PM, Father Bob came to say goodbye. We were sent us off with another blessing for a good night and a safe return. The adult cooperation was exceptional both from the veterans and those new comers who joined us this year. There was such a feeling of camaraderie between all those parishioners who made the Run. You all did a GREAT job overseeing the kids especially at Penn Station. A "high five" to Monica Billeter and her daughter, Grace, who made the HUGE pot of chicken soup! It was outstanding! These were some of the comments from the street people about the soup. It was "bangin'," "the soup rocks," the soup was the "bomb!" People wanted seconds!

I could not be prouder of the maturity level of the kids on the Run! They all pitched in and did what was needed. I watched you interact with our homeless friends and saw the joy on your faces when you made one of the homeless men and women smile. Speaking with Al and Malcom from the Midnight Run Board of Directors at our stop at Penn Station, they said: "The homeless men and women love your run. You have GREAT stuff and bring meat loaf sandwiches. No one else does that." We are known as the "meatloaf sandwich run from CT!" Thank you to those of you who made meat loaves more than 40 of them!

We gave away every morsel of food and came home with only a few bags of clothing. This year we brought double what we brought last year and still we could have used more food and warm clothing. We brought 100 cups of coffee...GONE....over 100 cups of cocoa....GONE..... a huge pot of chicken soup...GONE....200 food bags filled with snacks and goodies which included 400+ meat loaf sandwichesGONE. All the van snacks not eaten by the kids....GONE. More hungry people than ever before!

Adult chaperone Jan Paptic learned: "Many of the homeless were actually good Christians. They were quoting the Bible chapter and verse and seemed to be deeply rooted in their faith. I think everyone should change place with them for a week. It might bring you closer to God. There is no greater good than giving!" Jan summed it up well: "Giving time and help gives you peace and purpose. You feel you are doing Jesus' work." Many blessings to all who went on the Midnight Run, you make my job a pleasure! Thanks to all who prayed for us and who were there in spirit. A special thanks to those parishioners who generously contributed their time, talent, and donations of food and clothing to the Midnight Run effort. My sincerest thanks, Janis Pataky