

## *Holy Spirit Parish at Geist* *Adopt-A-Family*

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Thank you for participating in Adopt A Family! We realize this type commitment can leave you with a lot of questions. Here's what most parishioners ask....if you need more specific information, please contact us. We'd be very happy help out in any way.

What do you expect me to provide?  
Is there a set amount of money I should budget for?  
How does Holy Spirit "get" these families?  
Can I call the family?  
Is there a deadline?  
What if I can't deliver?  
Do I wrap the gifts, and give gift receipts?  
Can I give food?  
What if their requests are too expensive?  
What if their clothing sizes are hard to find?  
I delivered my gifts and I'm not sure the family was needy. How do you know?  
How will the family react? Will I see their children? Can I take my children?  
How can I best involve my children?  
Can I keep in touch with the family after Christmas?  
How should I feel when I'm done?  
Where can I get more information?

### What do you expect me to provide?

We ask that our sponsor families provide a minimum of one practical item and one "fun" item per person in the household. This loosely translates to one item of clothing or an outfit and a toy. (Toys for younger children, older kids usually request video games, MP3 players, and other electronics—just like all teenagers)

### Is there a set amount of money I should budget for?

Depending on the age of a child, an outfit and a toy can usually be purchased for less than \$50 per person. We recommend shopping the discount stores (Target, Walmart and Meijer) to get the most for your money. Budgeting for a family depends on the size of the family and the age of the children. You will likely be given a list of their requests (wish list); this is intended to give you suggestions. You are not expected to purchase everything on the list.

### How does Holy Spirit "get" these families?

Families in great financial need register with organizations (social service providers, local schools and churches) that can help. We then contact the various agencies and select families where we feel we can make an impact.

## Can I call the family?

Absolutely! If you have any questions about their “wish list,” or about sizes, food preferences, etc., feel free to call. Tell them you are the sponsor family helping them out for Christmas. Then ask your questions. They have already been contacted by a Holy Spirit volunteer, so they will be expecting a call regarding delivery. All other calls are okay, too.

## Is there a deadline?

Any time before December 20th is fine; whatever is best for your schedule. We do ask that you call the family as soon as you can and decide on a delivery date. As the holiday nears, often the families get anxious if they have not been contacted and feel they have been forgotten.

## What if I can't deliver?

We have volunteers who will deliver for you. If you need to arrange a delivery, we will need to know as soon as possible. In that case, you will need to drop your gifts off at the Parish Life Center by December 17. (Sooner is okay.)

## Do I wrap the gifts, and give gift receipts?

Wrapping is up to you. If you can't wrap, please send along wrapping paper and tape. And, you might want to label the things so they get to the intended recipient. Gift receipts are great, making exchanges much simpler.

## Can I give food?

Definitely! Our callers ask each family if they need food and you will be given that information from the onset. Many of them do receive assistance with pantry staples, so perishable items are always needed. As with all families with children, food is always greatly appreciated.

## What if their requests are too expensive?

Like our own kids, their requests are sometimes beyond what we were planning to spend. Use your best judgment and substitute with a fairly comparable gift. If you need suggestions, contact us. Otherwise, gift cards are always welcomed.

## What if their clothing sizes are hard to find?

Contact us, we can help.

## I delivered my gifts and I'm not sure the family was really needy. How do you know?

Working with many social service providers, we take great care to make certain there is legitimate need and that the families are receiving help from just one source. When you enter their homes, the need may be very apparent. Others, you might wonder how they qualified for

help. A job loss, illness, high medical bills or other circumstances might devastate their finances, yet their home life might look fairly "normal." We truly believe God plays a hand in choosing the family you are paired with. We know this because many of our parishioners tell us!

## How will the family react? Will I see their children? Can I take my children?

More often than not, the families are grateful but reserved. It is an extremely humbling experience to receive gifts from a stranger, and it can feel very awkward for all parties involved. You might get a big exuberant hug, or some tears of joy....but usually the experience is one of quiet thanks.

## Most of the time, you will meet a parent/caretaker and not any children.

You may bring your own children, but we ask that you please respect the recipient family. Selfless giving is an invaluable lesson you are teaching your children, but remember no one wants to be "on display."

## How can I best involve my children?

Have them help you shop, wrap and sort the gifts. Possibly they can contribute their own funds for a gift or make a sacrifice to enable another child to receive a gift. Their own experience may not be immediately rewarding, but they will grow up to serve others and follow your example!

## Can I keep in touch with the family after Christmas?

Absolutely! Many of our parishioners do.

## How should I feel when I'm done?

Like you've answered Christ's call and given hope to someone in need!

## Do you need more information?

Sponsor or Recipient Family questions: Mike\_AnitaDee@comcast.net (Dee Ricciardi)  
Shopping questions: Colleen.cunningham@dfas.mil (Colleen Cunningham)  
Delivery questions: hoosierhurls@aol.com (Kim Hurley)

*"Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."  
Galatians 6:2*