

THANKSGIVING DINNER SHOPPING FOR MULTI SERVICE

On Sunday, November 12th, 2023 at 2:00 PM a Conga Line of grocery carts snaked its way through the aisles of Redner's Warehouse Market in Boyertown. The carts were pushed by Esther Hendricks, Ethan Dierolf, Greg & Anita Hoffman, Jim & Kathy Youse, Carol Barton, and coordinated by Dennis & Marta Weller. Along the way each cart was filled with the components for 2 complete Thanksgiving meals to be delivered to Boyertown Area Multi Service the following day.



This included: canned, boxed, & FRESH items like milk, eggs, carrots, potatoes, onions, celery, margarine, and boxes of stuffing mix, muffin mix, refrigerated Pillsbury pie crust, and cans of pumpkin, evaporated milk, AND a 13 lb. (avg) frozen turkey (not forgetting the cranberry sauce and the makings for a great green bean casserole & sweet potatoes WITH miniature marshmallows!). And, no, that was not the complete list of groceries. Each family would receive 3 full grocery bags and a Turkey valued at approximately \$69.

Less than a half hour after we started shopping, we reached the checkout lane that Redner's management opened just for our project. After a few false starts, an assembly line became apparent: carts were emptied – one family dinner at a time & a Turkey was added, Dennis paid with either the \$250 Thrivent VISA card or with the Redner's Gift Cards donated by our congregation (the total bill came to \$791.05), Ethan & Marta bagged the food with Ethan putting the Turkeys into one shopping cart by themselves and the bags went back into the seven shopping carts, and the carts were jockeyed by the shoppers into a new Conga Line that traveled outside to where Marta and Dennis had parked their cars.

With a little expert Jigsaw Puzzle solving skills, all 39 bags and 13 frozen Turkeys were STUFFED into Marta's Passat. That's 52 large items inside one car. When Marta delivered the Thanksgiving Dinner groceries to Multi Service the next morning, Cody (the Pantry Manager) said our numbering system was exactly how they packed food for their families. Our groceries were labeled so that each family received a set of bags numbered 1,1,1 or 3,3,3 plus a frozen Turkey.

Everyone who participates each year has felt that this is a fun, exhilarating, and soul rewarding project. Multi Service is always extra grateful for the quality and variety of food we include. There are families who have not the wherewithal to buy fresh ingredients or especially the fun items like marshmallows. This activity makes Thanksgiving a truly happy holiday for quite a few families. Thank you goes to our congregation at St. Joe's and to Thrivent for making it possible.

-Submitted by Marta Weller