



## Advent Giving Trees - Sharing Our Blessings

Each year during the Season of Advent we have the opportunity to share our blessings in many ways with those in need. Currently in the gathering space is the McConnellsburg Children's Giving Tree. Your generosity brightens Christmas Day for 125 deserving children through the Christmas gifts purchased. Next week, the Advent Giving Trees to assist local charities, families in need, and the Holy Spirit (Jamaican Parish) will be placed in the gathering space. These trees provide an opportunity to meet critical needs in the coming year.

**McConnellsburg Giving Tree:** Each year Sister Margie, Sister Martha, and their team with the Fulton County Catholic Mission, identify children in the area who, due to the financial situation of their families, will probably receive very little or nothing at all for Christmas. Appropriate gift suggestions for each child are identified, which include toys and clothing items to brighten their Christmas Season. Volunteers will deliver the gifts on Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup> to Sister Martha for distribution to the children.

**Families in Need:** Working with local charity organizations and parishioners of GSCC, potential families in need of financial support are identified and critical needs are identified. Last year GSCC gave more than \$4,000 to support this effort and we were able to provide assistance to 11 families to ease their burden in critical needs areas and brighten their Christmas Season.

**Local Charities:** Through this Giving Tree, GSCC supports Interfaith Human Services (IHS) and The House of Care. IHS provides an array of services to families and individuals in need in our area. The House of Care provides affordable personal care for people with declining or compromised health who need food, shelter, and assistance. Last year, we were able to provide both of these local charities more than \$1,000 to support their outreach efforts. These funds will also provide support to the Out of the Cold Centre County program this year.

**Holy Spirit (Jamaican Parish):** Our Sister Parish, Holy Spirit under the direction of Father Marek, has developed life changing justice programs for the people of Maggoty. Father Marek and his mission team, focus on education through an after school tutoring program and adult literacy programs. Results are a dramatic increase in consistent school attendance and increased rates of progress in literacy and math. This academic program has enabled local Maggoty youth to progress onto University course work! Cooperative work opportunities at the Mission offer the dignity of work, as well as relationship and community building. Last year GSCC gave \$1,470 to help Holy Spirit Mission continue their incredible spiritual, educational, agricultural and work programs.

**Thank you for your generosity in supporting these special efforts and the needs of children and families during the Christmas Season!**