

Views from the Pews

St. Stephen Protomartyr Ukrainian Church

PASS IT ON EDITION | FEBRUARY 2022

“Let the man with two tunics share with him who has none” (Luke 3:11)



You may still associate PASS IT ON (PIO) with large sorting events in St. Stephen's Hall and crowded clothing giveaways in school gymnasiums. Although COVID has ended such activities, PIO is still dedicated to collecting and sharing winter clothing to families in need, and we have been blessed by many who have continued to support us and want to serve.

PIO has moved to a more facilitative model, creatively sourcing clothing and other items for organizations, such as Jacket Racket (JR), the Calgary Catholic School District's (CSSD) St John Reception Centre and Street Sisters who can safely distribute them to those most in need.

For example, on Sunday, January 23, 2022, winter coats from the Knights of Columbus' Coats for Kids program were blessed at St Stephens and at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary parishes. These coats were purchased by the parishes and parishioners-at-large, and were destined for CSSD's St John reception Centre and Jacket Racket (JR) for distribution to students-in-need and their families

Our own Bishop David Motiuk spearheaded the donation of the KofC coats – in the fall, he personally purchased 3 cases of coats (12 jackets to a case) through the Knights' Coats for Kids program, keeping 18 jackets for distribution to students in Edmonton and donating 18 to Jacket Racket in Calgary. He then challenged parishes to do something similar. Even Calgary parishes such as St Cecilia's, Mary Mother of the Holy Redeemer, and St Lukes all donated coats via the KofC Coats for Kids program.

PASS IT ON sources winter clothing from as many places as possible. In particular, we are so grateful to Alida DeBoer, Corporate Relations for PIO and her team. Ali maintains a close connection with 3 local Value Villages, who, at the end of the winter season, will donate their excess stock of winterwear which all goes to stock the St John Reception Centre.



Photo above: Front row left to right Jennifer Orr and Joann Williams (St John Reception Centre CSSD), Deborah Johnson, Ali deBoer, Theresa Lewchuk (Pass It On), back row Knights of Columbus left to right, David Franko, Wilf Petryk, SDCn Bill Lewchuk, Fr Stan Bjeli (visiting priest), Chris Macken, Ambrose Comchi, Dan Oryschak, Allan Oryschak, Bohdan Tyrawski.

During the fall, 2021, Jacket Racket handed out 2040 accessorized coats to students, and, from August 2021 to Jan 2022, the Reception Centre welcomed just over 1300 students with their families.

If you are unfamiliar with Jacket Racket, St John Reception Centre and Street Sisters:

- **Jacket Racket** supplies winter coats upon request to all schools in Calgary – the CBE, Calgary Catholic School District (CSSD), and private/charter schools. They currently operate out of warehouse space at the St Brother Andre Centre, given to them by the CSSD.
- Children born outside Canada must be registered for and placed into the Catholic School system through **St. John Reception Centre**. In addition to providing school necessities, the Centre maintains a “clothing boutique” to supply the student and their family with winter clothing and running shoes (as supply allows), as often, the family arrives with nothing.
- **Street Sisters** volunteers go onto the streets to create connections and build relationships with vulnerable women and girls while promoting health and safety. They distribute items specific to women's needs, and support them in getting any help they require.

Theresa Lewchuk, Co-Convener, Operations
Deborah Johnson, Co-Convener, Communications
Alida DeBoer, Corporate Relations



Bill Lewchuk with Lisa Yerex, the Program coordinator for Jacket Racket

The following is excerpted from a thank-you communication from the St. John Reception Centre:

To Our Friends with the Knights of Columbus, Pass It On, and the Parishioners at St. Stephen Church your generous gift not only touched our hearts, warmed our souls and impacted the landing of numerous new families to Canada but we also gained true advocates for all our students and their families.

Thank you seems all too slight; but we thank you dearly!



Your donation has filled our boutique and as you can see most of the winter coats that you generously donated have already found new homes.....such a blessing

Faith, Hope, Love
but the greatest of these is love

