



FOR CHILDREN WHO WISH
FOR **JUST ONE GIFT**

Project Leader's Guide 2021

2021 Box of Joy Schedule

Project Leader Commitment. January 1 – October 30

The Project Leader registers your group and determines the number of children you want to reach with a Box of Joy.

Plan and Organize. September – October

To make the Box of Joy project a success, we suggest you meet with parish/school/group leaders to:

- Make sure they understand the project.
- Get their approval.
- Coordinate key dates/events.

Kickoff and Promotion. October

Plan a kickoff event to engage and motivate your community. See **Ideas to Engage Your Group** on pages 4 and 5 for lots of fun and exciting ways to *involve* your parishioners or students.

Hand Out Materials to Participants. October

- Gift Boxes — Participants can also use any cardboard shoebox (approx. 12"x 5").
- Donation Brochure/Envelope — REQUIRED for each participant.
- Ideas to Engage Your Group — IMPORTANT! **Please see pages 4 and 5**, make copies.
- Child's Activity Page — Included in your kit. Make copies.
- Appreciation items for participants:
 - Bookmark
 - "I Packed a Box of Joy" Sticker

Shop/Pack. October

Encourage your group to shop for age-appropriate gifts; see **Gift Ideas** on page 6. Participants can include their \$9 donation in their Box of Joy or go online to pay. This small donation pays for shipping their Box of Joy and supports the priests and nuns ministering to the children who receive a Box of Joy.



Box of Joy Week. **November 6 – 14**

This is the main event, when all the participants — young and old — bring their Boxes of Joy to your school, parish or group meeting place! Make this a fun and exciting time. Be creative!

Try to make this a spiritual experience, keeping in mind that the Lord will bless needy children and their families through Catholic ministries overseas that will use these gifts as an opportunity to share the Christmas story — the story of God's love!

- Pack up your Boxes of Joy: Please see page 7, **How to Pack a Shipping Carton**, for proper packing instructions. Use any large, clean, sturdy box if you run out of official cartons.
- Extra items: If you have any leftover gift items, just put them in a plastic bag and add them to a shipping carton. We will add them to Boxes of Joy that are not quite full.

Deliver Boxes to Drop-Off Center! **November 6 – 14**

Sunday, November 14, is the final day of the national collection (Box of Joy Week). Drop-Off Center locations will be posted at CrossCatholic.org/drop-off-centers, along with directions, dates, hours of operation and contact info.

If you don't see a Drop-Off Center near your area, consider serving your community in this way. Recruit volunteers who have vans or trucks to deliver your Boxes of Joy by November 14 and a Box of Joy Volunteer will take it from there.

NOTE: If you prefer to ship directly to the South Florida Screening Center, contact us for the address. Please **DO NOT** ship cartons to our office in Boca Raton, FL.

Screening Center (South Florida). **November 27 – December 19**

At the Screening Center, Boxes of Joy are checked to make sure all gifts are safe and appropriate for children. If you are located in South Florida or have a group of volunteers who would like to travel there to screen gifts, please contact teamjoy@crosscatholic.org to sign up.





Ideas to Engage Your Group



Get your group ready to participate in Box of Joy through these fun ideas. Please feel free to use your own creative thoughts or modify the ones below.

We pray that God draws your community closer together as you reach out to bless children for his glory.

THE JOY METER

- This idea gives you some room for creativity! Set a goal for how many children your group wants to help, then place a “Joy Meter” in a prominent place. Each time a box is brought in, fill your meter a little more. Your Joy Meter could be a thermometer drawn on a large piece of paper, it could be a map-of-the-world coloring sheet that gets filled in as benchmarks are met, or it could be a large plastic tube that you fill with different-colored sand each time a gift is dropped off — the possibilities are endless. Remember, the more creative you are, the more it will inspire your parishioners to “feel the joy!”

FAMILY CHRISTMAS PARTY

- Serve hot chocolate, Christmas cookies and candy canes and ask every family to bring the items to pack in their boxes. Play Christmas music and set up a Christmas card and box-wrapping station. Each box can include a Christmas card to make the children feel special. (Lids must be wrapped in a way so they can still open.)

BOX OF JOY OLYMPICS

- In catechism classes, turn your Box of Joy campaign into a friendly competition to see who can pack the most Boxes of Joy! This competition could be between boys and girls, between grades or between teams within your group. Give children weekly updates on who is winning — and give them a fun incentive to participate. For instance, the winning team receives a pizza party.

TEENS ON A MISSION

- Don’t forget to get your parish’s youth group involved in this project. Ask them to volunteer to promote Box of Joy in your parish and community. Don’t forget to listen to their suggestions — they have creative ideas and can help get your campaign circulated all over social media!

BOX OF JOY CHRISTMAS TREE

- Encourage your parishioners or students to bring enough boxes to build a “Christmas tree” at a gathering area in your parish. By the time Box of Joy Week comes, you will have gathered plenty of boxes and made a beautiful Christmas display!

BOX OF JOY BLESSING CEREMONY

- Before your gifts are taken to the Drop-Off Center, have a special time of blessing for the Boxes of Joy at Sunday Mass. Pray that the Lord will bless the gifts on their journey and that they will show the love of Christ to the children, their families and the entire community.

- The priest’s message can be about giving to the poor, fulfilling the Works of Mercy and other lessons on showing the love of Christ to the world.

- Pray for the priests, nuns and lay missionaries in the countries receiving the Boxes of Joy.

“JOY” RIDE

- When your group collects all your Boxes of Joy, caravan them to your Drop-Off Center. Make it fun for the children in your parish or school by decorating cars. Use window paint to say things like, “I Packed a Box of Joy for Christmas,” or “For Kids Who Wish for Just One Gift.”

POVERTY EDUCATION

- Once a week, before the Boxes of Joy are collected, explain to children’s catechism classes what it means to be a child living in poverty overseas. Many children might not be aware that other children don’t have food to eat, clothes to wear, a pencil for school, or toys to play with.

RUN FOR JOY

- Host a 5k run/walk in your community; make the entry fee a filled Box of Joy for a child in need.

CRAFTING PARTY

- For the Women’s Group in your parish, gather to make items for your boxes in order to save money on supplies and to give children creative, one-of-a-kind gifts. For instance, you could sew pillowcase dresses for girls age 2-4, sew beanbags or knit hats for children of any age. Search the internet for additional creative ideas.

- For your Children’s Group, gather children to make Christmas cards to be placed in each box. This will make the Boxes of Joy more personal and make the children feel more involved. See the printable **Kids Activity Page** on CrossCatholic.org/boxofjoy.

FAMILY TIME

- Encourage each family to make this a part of their family’s Christmas celebration. Have a family fun night by going to the store to buy items, and then come home to pack the Boxes of Joy and make a card for the children who’ll receive them.

PRAYER TEAM

Recruit a prayer team from your parish or social justice team to meet regularly the month before Box of Joy Week. Here are some ways they can cover this ministry in prayer:

- Pray for each boy and girl who will receive a box, that they will receive the box God meant for them to have.

- Pray for your parish, that God would open each member’s heart to give generously of their time and resources.

- Pray that each Box of Joy will show God’s love to each child who receives one, opening his or her heart to the lifesaving message of Jesus Christ.

- Pray for God to work in the hearts of people in the communities where these poor children live. May these gifts show Christ’s heart for the poor and build a bridge to the local Catholic parish.

SKIT PROMOTIONS

- Promote your Box of Joy campaign through skits in catechism classes and other children's or youth ministry events. For example, ask two adult members to dress up like Boxes of Joy talking about the journey they're about to make across the world. Or have children participate, representing children from the U.S. and children in the developing countries that would be receiving the boxes. Show the difference in the children's lives and build compassion for the poor in the hearts of your students.

HONOR OR MEMORIAL GIFTS

Have a program in your parish or school to pack a Box of Joy in honor or memory of someone.

- Create a card to be filled out in the person's honor or memory and place it in your Box of Joy.
- Instead of giving traditional Christmas gifts to family members, fill a box in their honor or memory.

A "Joyous Gift-a-Week" (8-week program)

- Beginning the first week in September, designate a category for each week and ask the participating community to donate items that match the appropriate category. We suggest seven categories: Toys, School Supplies, Apparel, (non-liquid) Hygiene Accessories, Useful Items and Candy/Gum.

Example: First week in September: "Toys"; second week in September: "School Supplies"; etc.

- Dedicate the eighth week (or any week of your choice) to a fundraising event that will collect the \$9 shipping cost of each gift box. As an alternative, you can ask each participating family to donate \$9 for every gift box they would like to pack.
- During the first week in November, have a fun, faith-filled packing party with the children and families in your community. Pack at least one item from each category into the gift boxes. Add a special note, card or picture, and pray for the children receiving the gifts!



GIFT IDEAS

KEY REMINDERS

1. Use the provided gift box or any shoebox (approximately 12" x 5").
2. Please fill the box to the top (with gifts from the list below) so each child can receive a box FULL of JOY!
3. Include a \$9 check (no cash please) in provided envelope. Place on TOP of gifts. Or go online to donate.
4. Secure the lid with a rubber band (no tape please).

PERSONAL NOTES & PHOTOS

We encourage you to write a personal note or handmade Christmas card and share a photo of yourself or family (advisable for parent or teacher to review notes written by children).

TOYS

Handheld toys
Small plush animals
Small balls (tennis, etc.)
Ball (deflated), with pump
Cars / Trucks
Doll
Mini puzzle
Finger puppets
Silly Putty
Beanbag / Hacky sack
Unopened fast-food toys
Binoculars
Lego® building blocks
Harmonica, kazoo or other small instrument
Jump rope
Paddle ball
Yo-yo
Slinky®
Mini board games
Balloons
Craft kit (beads, elastic, etc.)
Pom-poms

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Pencils, colored pencils
Solar calculator
Sharpener
Small board books
Erasers
Pencil case
Crayons
Pens, markers
Ruler
Glue stick (no liquid)
Safety scissors
Coloring book
Notepads
Stickers
Self-inking stamp
Flashcards
Dry paints (no liquid paint)

HARD CANDY & GUM

Please seal in a Ziploc®-style bag (no chocolates)

APPAREL

Socks
Shorts
Underwear
T-shirts
Flip-flops
Bandanas
Hats
Shoelaces
Plastic poncho

HYGIENE / HOME

Comb / Brush
Forks and Spoons
Cup / Bottle with lid
Bar soap
Toothpaste (in the box)
Toothbrush and floss
Bandages
Hand wipes (no gels)
Tissues
Lip balm
Manicure kit
Nail clippers / Emery board

ACCESSORIES

Watch
Purse or Wallet
Sunglasses
Necklace
Hair ribbons
Hair / Headbands
Barrettes
Bracelets
Earrings
Scarf
Cross or Rosary

USEFUL ITEMS

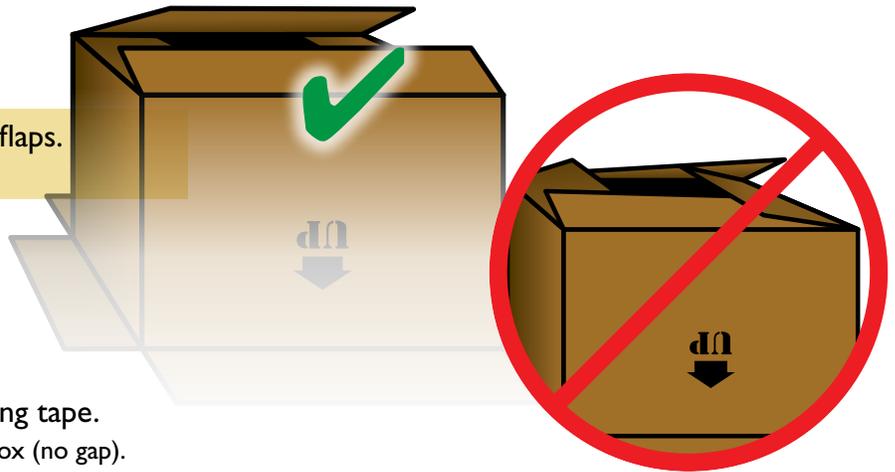
Sewing kit
Utensils
Compass
LED keychain
Duct tape
No-battery flashlight
Drawstring bag

DO NOT PACK

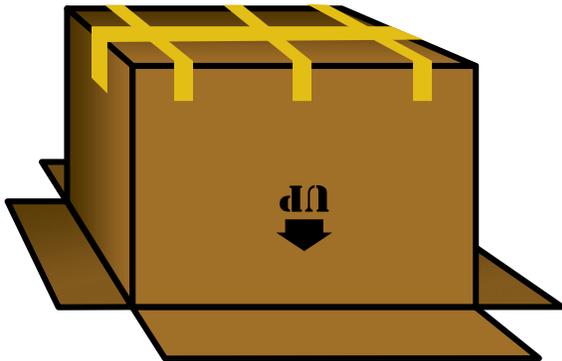
Food or Beverages • Medicines or Vitamins • Liquids (shampoo, nail polish, etc.) • Gels (antibacterial, etc.)
Chocolate • Military / Police Toys • Toy Weapons • Glass / Breakables • Knives / Tools

HOW to Pack a SHIPPING CARTON

- 1 **Fold** in short flaps first, then long flaps. Be sure carton is upside-down.

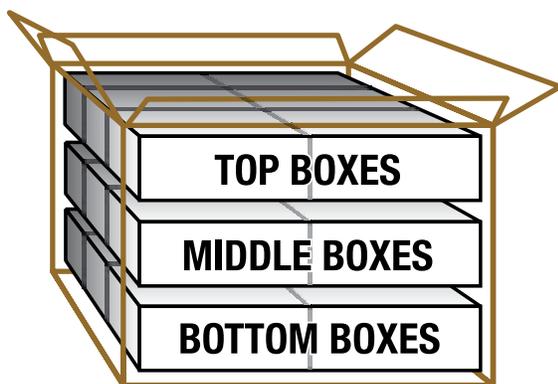


- 2 **Tape** like this with **CLEAR** packing tape. Tape **TWICE** along bottom seam of box (no gap). Also tape 3 additional strips across box as shown



NO DUCT TAPE MASKING TAPE

- 3 Official gift boxes will fit 18/carton. **Pack 6** per layer, face up.



Top View



NOTE: Regular shoeboxes, especially plastic ones, may fill the carton best if packed vertically.

- 4 **Fill out Project Leader info** on TOP of carton. Do not write anywhere else.
- 5 **Tape top flaps** same as you did the bottom.
- 6 Affix the **Shipping Label** in designated spot on front of carton before taking to **Drop-Off Center**.

About Cross Catholic Outreach

Our Mission

We mobilize the global Catholic Church to transform the poor and their communities materially and spiritually for the glory of Jesus Christ.

How We Serve

Rather than create new institutions to distribute aid, we support existing ministries and churches already serving the poor. In addition to being the most cost-effective way of helping the poor, empowering these ministries allows us to support the Church's spiritual mission and its important position of leadership in poor communities.

Good Stewardship

We consider every gift we receive as a precious resource from God. We direct every donation to its intended project, provide honest and accurate reports to our donors, and keep overhead costs to an industry low. We handle funds with utmost integrity and hold our ministry partners in the field to the same high standards by asking them to document costs and the impact of their outreach.

Cross Catholic Outreach also works in collaboration with the Holy Father's own relief and development organization, Dicastery of Integral Human Development. This unique relationship is especially effective when natural disasters strike or when there's a need to serve refugees of civil conflicts around the globe.

Box of Joy is a ministry of Cross Catholic Outreach.

Cross Catholic Outreach at a Glance

33

the number of countries
that received our aid

299

the number of projects
we supported

5.05%

the percentage of
expenses used for
overhead costs

\$316,077,236

total aid provided
to the poor

Audited financials for fiscal year 2020



**Cross Catholic
OUTREACH**

Delivering Food, Shelter and Hope to the Poorest of the Poor

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