



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

# Media Tip Sheet

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## BOX OF JOY

*Facts — Bios — News Hooks*

### NAME **Box of Joy**

**SYNOPSIS** Cross Catholic Outreach's Box of Joy is a booming Christmas ministry inviting people all over the U.S. to pack hope and happiness for thousands of children in dire poverty around the world. Parishes, schools, churches, groups and families may pack gift boxes with presents like small toys, bar soap, pencils, a toothbrush, toothpaste, hard candy, crayons, coloring books or T-shirts. Once participants donate \$9 to cover the shipment and help support the charitable work where the child lives, they deliver the Box of Joy to their local Drop-Off Center in November.

### IMPACT 2014

Participating Dioceses 2  
Country Guatemala  
Children Blessed 2,693

### 2015

Participating Dioceses 12  
Countries Haiti, Guatemala  
Children Blessed 11,575

### 2016

Nationwide Program  
Countries Haiti, Guatemala, Dominican Republic  
Children Blessed 31,712

### 2017

Countries Haiti, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua  
Children Blessed 46,360



## 2018

Countries Haiti, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, El Salvador  
Children Blessed 58,030

## 2019

Countries Haiti, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, El Salvador  
Children Blessed 75,797

## 2020

Countries Haiti, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, El Salvador,  
Grenada, Honduras  
Children Blessed 61,422

## 2021

Countries Haiti, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, El Salvador,  
Grenada, Honduras  
Children Blessed 106,276 (a 73% increase over 2020)

## 2022 SCHEDULE

February: Sign-ups open for 2022 Box of Joy

Sept/Oct: Box of Joy season kick-off

By October 28: Each participating group selects a Project Leader and signs up.

October: Project leaders receive materials, set goals and start shopping to fill boxes with their groups.

Nov. 5-13: Box of Joy Week Boxes are collected at Drop-Off Centers

and trucked to the Box of Joy National Screening Center in Miami.

December: Gifts are screened and prepared for shipment to children.

## NEWS HOOKS

### **A Great Way for Families to Focus on the Treasures of Heaven During the Busy Holiday Season**

The Christmas season can be immensely busy and participating in Box of Joy helps families to “store up treasures in heaven” (Mt. 6:20) by serving others instead of focusing on themselves and material gifts during the Christmas season.

### **The Generosity of Americans Increased During the Pandemic**

Americans were already the most generous people in the world, but during the pandemic, generosity actually increased. According to Axios, 72% of Americans helped strangers and 60% donated money, which is an astounding number. It seems that the desire to help others transcends any and all boundaries, which Box of Joy aims to cultivate in families and individuals who choose to help impoverished children. The number of children served by Box of Joy increased by 73% from 2020 to 2021.



## **Box of Joy Helps to Get Families “Back to Normal”**

Box of Joy is a wonderful way to ‘return to normal’ after a difficult past couple years for many families, especially those who had participated in previous years but felt uncomfortable to do so during the pandemic.

### **BIOS**

#### **Jim Cavnar President, Cross Catholic Outreach**

In 2001, Jim Cavnar and a small group of colleagues launched Cross Catholic Outreach to support parishes and ministries that directly serve the world’s poor in their own communities. Under Jim’s leadership, Cross Catholic Outreach grew from a fledgling enterprise to a Vatican-endorsed charity in dozens of countries. They fight poverty more effectively by channeling hundreds of millions of dollars in grants and relief supplies through this grassroots network.

Previously, Jim served eight years as executive director of a Christian relief and development ministry called Food for the Poor, helping build it into the fastest-growing major charity in the U.S.

After graduating from Notre Dame with a degree in Theology, Jim worked in campus ministry at the Catholic parish at the University of Michigan and then helped found and lead an ecumenical lay community in Ann Arbor of 3,000 members promoting evangelization and spiritual renewal nationally and internationally. Out of it grew Servant Ministries, an international mission organization and publishing company he helped develop and lead for 20 years.

#### **Michele Sagarino Vice President for Development, Cross Catholic Outreach**

After graduating from the University of Maryland, Michele answered the call on her life to begin service for various charitable organizations, including Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Gateway Community Outreach and Food for The Poor. In 2004, she began working with Cross Catholic Outreach, and today, as Vice President for Development, Michele leads a team of 135 people. Together, this team mobilizes U.S. Catholics to fund food, shelter, water, Catholic education and spiritual development for children and families in developing countries. Her philosophy is to pursue long-term relationships with benefactors, serving as the link between their hearts and what God is calling them to do for the poor.

#### **Sandi Pino Sr. Director of the Parish & Community Services Department, Cross Catholic Outreach**

During her tenure at Cross Catholic, Sandi has represented the organization at conferences, parishes, schools and community events. She has presented the mission of Cross Catholic for various television and radio opportunities. Sandi especially enjoys accompanying Catholic parish and school groups on mission trips to countries such as Belize, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Haiti. Her past experience spans over thirty years, gaining expertise in business, fundraising and development, staffing, personnel management, sales and budgeting.



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To learn more, visit [boxofjoy.org](http://boxofjoy.org).

For interviews, contact Kevin Wandra at 404-788-1276 or [kwandra@carmelcommunications.com](mailto:kwandra@carmelcommunications.com).

**Learn more about Cross Catholic Outreach at [CrossCatholic.org](http://CrossCatholic.org).**

Based in Florida, Cross Catholic Outreach is an official Catholic nonprofit 501(c)(3) relief and development organization that, since its founding in 2001, has given more than \$1 billion in aid to help “the poorest of the poor” in more than three dozen developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and other parts of the world. For more information about Cross Catholic Outreach, visit [CrossCatholic.org](http://CrossCatholic.org) or call 800-914-2420.



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