



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

# Press Release

## CONTACT:

Kevin Wandra, 404-788-1276

[kwandra@carmelcommunications.com](mailto:kwandra@carmelcommunications.com)

## More Than Half a Million Box of Joy Gifts Sent to Poverty-Stricken Children

2023 Season Hoping To Add Hundreds of Thousands More

**BOCA RATON, Fla. — Sept. 12, 2023** — Box of Joy, an interactive program of the international relief and development ministry Cross Catholic Outreach, is kicking off its 10th year with a massive effort to show the world's poorest children they are loved and remembered. Cross Catholic Outreach's goal is to bless 151,118 children with Box of Joy gifts in at least six poverty-stricken countries: Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, El Salvador, Honduras and Malawi.

"We want to bless boys and girls in these six developing countries with Box of Joy gifts provided through the generosity of U.S. families, parishes and communities, and we believe we can achieve our ambitious goal with the help of the Church," said Michele Sagarino, president of Cross Catholic Outreach. "These children deserve to be loved and blessed, and this is our opportunity to show them they are loved by Jesus and cherished by the Church."

In 2022, 118,990 boxes were sent to children in Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, El Salvador, Honduras and Malawi. That was the first year that an African country was included in the Box of Joy campaign. There were 1,254 participating groups, including the Knights of Columbus, Catholic Daughters of America, the National Council of Catholic Women, American Heritage Girls, Scouts and BOLD Youth groups. Additionally, 167 dioceses participated in the past Box of Joy season. The top 10 dioceses included Mobile, Washington, Harrisburg, Miami, Orlando, Baltimore, Atlanta, Palm Beach, Charleston and St. Louis.

"Last season, I was amazed by the generosity our Box of Joy participants showed, even in the midst of rising costs. We had a tremendous response to this outreach from families, schools, groups and parishes — and we are hoping and praying for even more support this year," said Sagarino. "To see the joy on a child's face when he or she receives a Box of Joy is a beautiful and inspiring experience. I wish everyone who supports this ministry could see the smiles of the children firsthand. These boys and girls are thrilled to be remembered, and they're grateful to the individuals and groups that take the time to pack and send a Box of Joy. I'm thankful to those that participate too. The success of Box of Joy is only possible because of you."



Since Box of Joy began in 2014, 512,855 gifts have been distributed, blessing underprivileged children around the world thanks to the generosity of U.S. Catholics. In 2022, TLC Toys, Sock Religious and Tiny Saints were gracious donors of bulk goods and toys.

Groups nationwide organize Box of Joy gifts by packing shoebox-sized boxes with small gifts such as toys and school supplies and adding helpful items like soap, toothpaste and toothbrushes, as well as a few treats like hard candy and coloring books. The ministry adds a rosary and *The Story of Jesus* to every box to evangelize our Catholic faith, and participants donate \$9 to cover international shipment. There also is a “Donate a Box of Joy Online” option for those who would like a Team Joy volunteer to pack a Box of Joy for them. The donation covers the cost of the gift and shipping; Cross Catholic Outreach’s Team Joy volunteers will shop for the gifts and pack and ship the Box of Joy gifts.

“We want to bless tens of thousands of additional children with a Box of Joy in 2023. As organizations and parishes look for more ways to incorporate Works of Mercy throughout the liturgical year and into the daily lives of their parish families, we hope they will consider Box of Joy as a fun and effective way to achieve that goal,” said Sagarino.

The 2023 Box of Joy campaign kicks off in September, and groups deliver gifts to a network of hundreds of local Drop-Off Centers during Box of Joy Week, Nov. 4-12. Any group that misses Box of Joy Week can ship its gifts to the National Screening Center in Miami.

To learn more about how to engage students, parishioners or group members in blessing needy children through Box of Joy, please visit [www.boxofjoy.org](http://www.boxofjoy.org).

For additional information or to schedule an interview with Michele Sagarino, please contact Kevin Wandra of Carmel Communications at [kwandra@carmelcommunications.com](mailto:kwandra@carmelcommunications.com) or 404-788-1276.

### **About Cross Catholic Outreach — 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 \$4 billion in aid to help the poorest of the poor in more than 90 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.

Box of Joy is a ministry of Cross Catholic Outreach.



2700 N. Military Trail • Suite 300 • PO Box 273908 • Boca Raton, Florida 33427-3908  
**800-914-2420**