

Report

SHALOM CLUB – ALL SAINTS SCHOOL
ST. LOUIS, MO – U.S.A.

CLUB DESCRIPTION

Membership consists of students of Grades 5-8 with 2 student co-coordinators

Meetings held twice a month, at lunch periods

Meetings include coming to know the charism (spirit) of Blessed Theresa and shared reflection on issues and realities in need of peace and justice in our world that touch the lives of students, as well as choosing actions to work on together that would promote peace, justice and unity in our world

ACTIVITIES

1. At each meeting the students committed themselves to a special personal action to be a peacemaker during the coming two weeks. We shared about some of the actions at the following meeting.
2. At each meeting we passed around a book Peace in 100 Languages – One Word Multilingual Dictionary, Jalmar Press. Students chose one language of peace and kept a list in their Shalom folders of words for peace in different languages. This provided a conscious awareness before them of peoples and places of the world.
3. At each meeting we passed around the USBORNE Flags Sticker Book to fill in any “flag-sightings” since the last meeting, broadening our consciousness of the world.
4. We chose the song “Shalom Is My Prayer” as the closing prayer for each meeting.
5. We viewed and talked together about the story “Caroline’s Dream” that appeared on the website “ssnd.org”
6. We sent representatives to the St. Louis “Shalom Clubs Orientation” with S. Ann Scholz, SSND, SSND representative to the United Nations.
7. We began preliminary steps to prepare for and obtain a Peace Pole at our parish.
8. We sent Christmas greetings of peace to other Shalom Clubs in the world.
9. We played “NetAid World Class Game”, taking the roles of children in India and their educational journey to reach their dreams; the game, the discussion and the analysis of its meaning for us took several meetings.
10. We discussed creating greater unity in our own school community as part of Blessed Theresa’s vision for unity. This led to a school-wide project – *the Peace Chain* – that called every homeroom in school to place links on a chain each time an act of peace was done by a student. The chains were collected and joined for the final All School Mass, then brought up at the Gathering Procession from all around the church.
11. At the invitation of S. Judy Best we read and discussed the book Henry Climbs a Mountain, a journey to stand up for what one is called to do even

- in the face of prison sentence. This led later into the sharing of the journey of S. Cynthia Brinkman, SSND, who was sentenced to six months in prison for protesting the School of the Americas. We used the song "Maybe Its Time for Peace" (Amanda Suchara) and also wrote notes of support to S. Cynthia Brinkman, SSND.
12. We began sharing about a "culture of peace", deciding to continue moving with this in the next school year.
 13. We had an end-of-the year "hotdog roast celebration" at the convent and played "new games", which are community-building and non-competitive.

IDEAS FOR COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION AMONG CLUBS

The set of addresses/websites we received was very good. I hope to use these more to communicate with individual clubs, if even to share the "good news" of what's happening

Perhaps we could have a general e-mail or website where events/happenings/issues of Shalom Clubs could be posted. This would provide a way to share ideas across cultures.

Working with a single theme throughout the network sounds like a good way to go, with the openness to move in other directions if there is a particular area of local urgent need. "Promoting a Culture of Peace and Sustainability" sounds very good and leaves room for developing it according to age, cultural and immediate needs. Our students are always ready for artwork, poetry, etc.!

Our library purchased a series of books (which I intend to use) and is a great resource for elementary school age clubs: Global Citizenship by Susan Watson, published by Smart Apple Media (2004). The series has 8 books:

1. Being Active Citizens
2. Protecting Global Environments
3. Improving the Quality of Life
4. Living Sustainably
5. Valuing World Heritage
6. Respecting Cultural Differences
7. Understanding Human Rights
8. Making Global Connections

We could celebrate special Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, SSND days in a common way among all Shalom clubs: perhaps praying a common prayer, pausing at a special time of the day, doing a special peacemaking gesture, etc.

We began the club at All Saints with lots of student enthusiasm and great leadership support. We just let the Spirit move us through this first year, trying to identify with the charism of Theresa, and are anxious to connect more with other clubs in the coming year.

The listing of Shalom Clubs from Feb. 2004 did not have our club description or website indicated. The description is at the beginning of the present information. The parish website is: www.catholic-forum.com/allsaints

Report submitted by S. Carol Jean Dust, SSND.