

Sammamish teens hit downtown Seattle to reward acts of kindness



Members of the Mary, Queen of Peace middle school youth group: (from left) Katherine Menezes, Matt Dulski, Caitlin Bowers, Sarah Cook, Johnny Hahn Anne Ginther, Robert Wicks and Vanessa Hernandez. The youth group felt Mr. Hahn totally deserved a 'Caught in Kindness' card because his talent could have him playing in theaters, and instead, he shares his gift of music with at Pike Place Market. Contributed photo

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None at this time.

By **MEGAN MANAGAN**

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For the past several months the troubled economy has dominated the country, worrying families and businesses about what is to come.

To encourage young people to think about the good stuff, members of the youth program at Mary, Queen of Peace Catholic Church in Sammamish spent Wednesday afternoon spotting people at Pike Place Market doing random acts of kindness.

Six members of the youth program at the church spent the afternoon spotting people at the market doing good things. Once an act was spotted the middle schoolers thanked the person and took a picture of the person doing their 'act of kindness' for a sildeshow which will be available on the church's Web site.

The idea was to not only thank people for simply being nice, but also to help instill into the youth members how much kindness matters.

Earlier in the spring Anne Ginther, one of the youth ministers at the church, took part in a program with church leaders where they discussed happiness, which got her thinking about what makes people happy.

"I thought it would be great to engage our youth in thinking about happiness and what really makes a person happy," she said.

Through that program she crafted one for teens, and Wednesday's event is a culmination of the previous steps, an idea which came to Ginther in the middle of the night, she said.

Ginther said Pike Place Market seemed like a great location for the event because so much is always going on, which provided ample opportunities to catch people doing something good.

"I realized that these people, who are too young to drive, don't often, if ever, venture beyond the plateau," said Ginther. "I thought it might be good to expand their horizons and see things outside the bubble of their family, but still within the comfort of their youth group."

At the end of the event the group will attend mass at St. James Cathedral, which will offer another first for many of the students.

"While this is our first time doing this event, a lot of people are buzzing about it at our church, so I imagine we'll do it again," Ginther said, before Wednesday's trip.

New program information at the church can be found at www.mqp.org/faithinformation/youth.asp, including a new blog which will start this summer.

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