

Eagle Scout Project: Returning Home Backpack Program

"I was in prison and you came to visit me ... I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:36

Catholic Charities serves the formerly incarcerated. The goal is to welcome them back to the community, promote their success, and help them avoid re-incarceration. Life for an ex-offender can be very difficult. It is hard to gain employment and housing with a criminal record. There is often very little family or community support available to these men and women as they transition back into our community. One of the many ways that we offer support is to provide backpacks to those leaving jail. These backpacks demonstrate our love for our brothers and sisters. They contain toiletries and other needed survival items. We also include **hand-written welcome notes**, religious materials, and a gift card for the recipient. For information on this service project, contact volunteer@ccda.net.

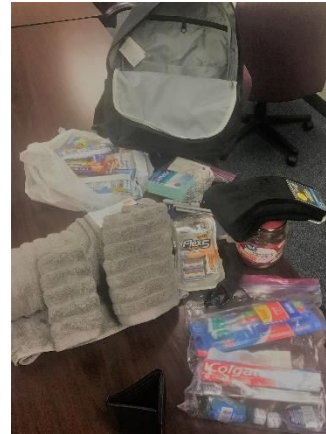
What To Put Into A Backpack ?

***starred items are primary needs**

- *Hand written encouragement card
- *One full-sized towel & one wash cloth
- *Deodorant, shampoo, lotion, soap
- *Toothbrush and toothpaste
- *Razors, non-aerosol shaving cream
- *3 pairs of socks
- *Gift card for a local store (Safeway or Walmart)
- *Hair brush and comb
- Travel-size mouthwash
- Notebook and pen
- Wallet
- Bus passes or SMART cards
- Small calendar
- Ball cap
- Tea or quality instant coffee

Backpacks should be made and tagged for men or women. Appropriate underwear, socks, and feminine hygiene products for women is appreciated.

Catholic Charities also partners with OAR Arlington, OAR NOVA, and local prison ministries to distribute these backpacks to those leaving jail and returning to the community.



How to Support this Eagle Scout Project

- Purchase a backpack
- Fill the backpacks with the items on the list
- Pray for the incarcerated, the volunteers and chaplains and correctional officers
- Completed backpacks should be dropped off at:

**The Basilica of St. Mary
310 S Royal St, Alexandria, VA 22314**

**Bring backpacks to Masses the weekend of
August 25 and leave at the back of Church
Scouts will collect them**