

CATHOLIC REGISTER: Student action helps to feed the children

Written by Ruane Remy, The Catholic Register

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Students from Toronto-area schools volunteer each day at Canadian Food for Children. - *Photos by Bill Wittman*

When high school teachers want to show their students Christ's work in action, they bring them to Canadian Food for Children, said Dr. Andrew Simone.

Simone and his wife began the charity when Mother Teresa wrote a letter in 1981 encouraging the couple to start their own charity and to send food to her sisters in Tanzania and

Ethiopia.

More than 30 years later, one class from the Toronto Catholic District School Board arrives at Simone's warehouse every weekday during the school year.

"Other students come on their on P.A. Days and throughout the summer vacation," said Simone.

"The students learn that we are a pure charity with no paid help."

When the teenagers arrive, they are put to work unloading trucks with large bags of split peas and lentils. They load 12-metre containers with food and clothing for the poor and sweep to keep the warehouse clean. They also welcome people dropping off donations, help prepare quarterly newsletters and help send thank-you notes to donors.

"If we show students that we care for the poor, they will develop all other virtues along with chastity," said Simone. "We are very happy with the students that come to volunteer. We believe in our Catholic faith, as St. Francis and St. Clare said, 'The walls of poverty are very strong.'"

Canadian Food for Children, in addition to providing food, helps children go to school, "which helps their self-esteem," said Simone.

Simone's other charity organization, Silent Children's Mission, was registered in April 2011 to help protect vulnerable girls from prostitution.