

What is Matthew 25?

Matthew 25 is an action item * It is a standard bulletin item that is changed monthly*

It is a collection of “things” requested by service providers*

It reflects the needs in the community *

Donated items are distributed to Fairfax County residents *

Based on the Bible account of the Last Judgment in Matthew 25:31-46, we are called to *love the poor; those who are hungry; thirsty; naked, ill; those who are strangers or in prison*. This is the very heart of Christianity. By loving the poor, we love God, and it is by our actions that Jesus tells us in this parable, that we will be judged.

The Matthew 25 collection is a concrete way we can assist in bringing about a small change in the lives of our neighbors in need. Most of the people who receive the items you donate are the “working poor” of Fairfax County. Since the cost of housing is so high, many people have to spend more than 50% of their income on rent and have little left for other necessities. With the lack of affordable housing, rent is a priority in the budget of these families. Especially in the current economic downturn, the need for basic food and cleaning supplies is great.

The Matthew 25 Collection was initiated at *ST. MARK* 15 years ago in response to requests from local agencies seeking assistance for their clients. The agencies, via the faith communities and other organizations assist with items that people cannot afford to purchase, yet need.

Since the *ST. MARK* faith community is typically generous to the needs of others, we publish this list monthly in the bulletin so you can keep it in mind as you go about your regular shopping routine. We often find the list cut out from the bulletin included in the bags of donated items. If you go to a club store and buy 24 cans of something, you can bring several with you on the way to Mass for the Matthew 25 collection! When things are on sale, pick up an extra one to bring in. It is an easy thing to do.

There are two requests we have. 1) **No Glass items Please. Glass will often break and create a mess.** 2) **Only donate items that are completely sealed, unopened and not expired.** This helps us greatly in the distribution process.

There are two baskets located in the Narthex. One is marked for the Matthew 25 donations. The other is for the Support Our Troops Ministry. Thank you for responding with compassion for those in need in our greater community.