Chapter Name San Jose, CA Benefits: First Communion Clothes to

Low-Income Families

(Self-Esteem)

Name of Program: Vests and Veils

**Timing, duration, frequency of program:** Prior to the pandemic we would provide new or gently-used first Communion dresses for girls, and dark slacks and white shirts for boys of low-income families at Our Lady Star of the Sea parish in Alviso, (a SF Bay area city). We may be on the lookout for bargain clothes throughout the year, but generally go to a few parishes in January and February asking for donations of clothes or money and collecting the same over the next couple of weekends after the Masses. We provide the clothing over a single weekend at Our Lady Star of the Sea, where families involved in the Sacramental program come in to outfit their children as needed. This is generally in April. Last year, due to the pandemic, we left the clothes for a month or so during the summer, while families came individually to select them prior to their individual family celebration of the Sacrament.

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**Fiscal Information:** We received several grants and individual donations of money during our clothing drives in 2018 and 2019. We have not had to spend any additional money on this program last year, and still have about $2100 in that fund. We occasionally have to dry clean some of the donated clothing and purchase clothes in sizes that will support the children in need beyond what we receive.

**Partnerships:** We partner with Sacred Heart of Saratoga, and Saint Joseph of Cupertino for donations. We partner with Our Lady Star of the Sea in Alviso to provide their in-need parishioners with clothing.

**Clients:** Clients are children from age 7 to about 16 in a generally impoverished Latino parish where families are required to participate in a 2-year Sacramental preparation program. Families move around a lot and so they have a difficult time making the time commitment. Therefore, children are frequently older when making their First Communion, also make their Confirmation at the same time, and multiple siblings are prepared all together.

**Volunteers:** About 4 or 5 of our members support this ministry.

**Program Description:** Members staff the weekend donation requests after Masses at 2 or 3 local parishes, prepare the inventory by categorizing, cleaning, pressing, and purchasing gaps in our inventory from a list of needs provided by the receiving parish. We then transport the clothes on racks, set up by size and assemble PVC pipe and fabric dressing rooms, aid families in selecting clothes to try on, then remove the dressing rooms and remaining clothes.

More Information: Chairperson is Sandy Sifferman

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