

**My dear Little Flower,**

**This week I'd like to focus on Little Flower's support of youth, in our parish, in our community and beyond. I am invested in the future of the Catholic Church and the souls of our youth. I encourage you to join me in strengthening the future of our Church and community.**

**For the young people of Little Flower we have monthly Family Mass, monthly Liturgy of the Word for Children and Vacation Bible School. In addition to Catholic Formation for our youth we have non-denominational youth events for the Berkeley Heights teen community. For high school students there is the Heights Youth Group Kindness Team. For middle school students we have a regular Thursday after-school drop-in program and on select Saturday nights, a Wyldlife club (Pizza Olympics this weekend!).**

**On April 30th we have an inaugural youth club for friends with special needs (ages 14- 22). I'm excited to reach out to these families and let them know that Little Flower loves and supports them!**

**How does Little Flower support teens outside of our Berkeley Heights community?**

**In April we are partnering with Covenant House, a charity offering safety, shelter, mental health services and education to homeless and trafficked teens. If you have the means, donate a backpack or duffle bag to Covenant House to ease a teens burden during transition from homelessness to a stable environment. If you can't donate, you can pray a decade of the Rosary prior to Mass for all abused children.**

**On an Archdiocesan level, we support the Annual Appeal. The appeal supports scholarships for Catholic education, funds youth programs, campus ministry, Catholic schools, and Mercy House (teen Moms and kids). The money you donate to the Annual Appeal helps the greater Catholic community in the Archdiocese of Newark. I am blessed at Little Flower to have the backing of the parishioners, allowing me to implement these programs for our youth. Many churches in the Archdiocese cannot do what we are doing here and rely on funding from the Appeal. I hope you will donate. Answer the call to Discipleship!**

**Your Parish Priest,  
Fr JC Merino**