



# *Parish Heartbeats: Stories of Faith In Action*

## **Kids Care, Too!**

While most high school freshmen look forward to the lazy, hazy days of summer vacation as a time to kick back, parishioner Kailee Nardi and her friends are kickin' it into high gear. If it's June, it's time for Camp Compassion!



**Kailee Nardi**

Camp Compassion runs for 5 days, 2 hours per day for a week in June in the Green Trails subdivision where Kailee lives. Last summer, under Kailee's direction, 26 helpers led 37 campers in a week of fun-filled adventures ... all for a good cause. The campers are girls between 5 and 10 years old who come to have fun! The camp runs in stations: outdoor games, crafts, dance (with a performance for parents at the end of the week), and beauty (with the empowering message that looking good on the outside just reflects your true beauty within!). Snacks are served and friendships blossom. The camp experience is a summer highlight for all involved.

What makes this camp truly special is the compassion behind it. Each child is charged an entry fee of \$30 – with \$25 going straight to DuPage PADS. Over the past three years, Camp Compassion has donated over \$1500 to that organization. And that's not all. Kailee also compiles "Wish Lists" from other area organizations such as DuPage County Animal Care and Control and Our Children's Homestead. These wish lists are distributed to the camp families who are encouraged to bring in items to donate. Boxes and boxes of items are received, sorted, and taken to the appropriate organizations at the end of the camp.

Kailee and her friends spend the winter and spring planning and work long hours the week of camp to make this a success. Back when she was in 5th and 6th grade, Kailee and her friend, Emily Peterson, were helpers at a similar camp run by a friend's sister. When that girl went away to college and discontinued the camp, Kailee and Emily stepped in. "I love organizing things and I was disappointed when the other camp ended" said Kailee. "My Dad really encouraged me and even helped me come up with the name 'Camp Compassion'. My friends have been great in helping run things and supporting the camp. To be able to do this for a cause is very special to me."

Kailee credits her parents with setting an example of Christian giving in her life. She also remembers being touched by a documentary on the abuse of dolphins and wanting to do something to help. "From a young age I have tried to give back. We even did a lemonade stand to help with relief for Hurricane Katrina. I think Camp Compassion shows how God can work through ordinary people to make a difference. We all make a small impact on the world in how we live our daily lives ... I just wanted to make a bigger one! Working together on this camp has helped my friends grow closer to God and each other. I can't wait to make it even better this year!"

If you would like to support Camp Compassion, they welcome your donations. Cash would be used to purchase materials. They could also use supply donations such as lemonade powder, napkins, sponges, bags of ice, plastic cups, kid scissors, and construction paper. Please contact Kailee Nardi at 630-717-7238 or kmn04@att.net. If you have a daughter between the ages of 5 and 10 who would like to participate in this year's camp, you may also contact Kailee to register.

Written by Cabrina Attal



**2012 Camp Compassion Participants**

**Parish Heartbeats is an occasional bulletin column that celebrates the ways St. Margaret Mary parishioners make a difference in the lives of others.**