



## Just Keep Right

**When Jimmy first showed up at S.A.Y. Yes!<sup>®</sup> he was an energetic little boy.** He showed real interest in the fun and games, but not so much the homework help or Bible lessons offered by the after-school mentoring program. The second-grader came from a broken home, well—technically, from two homes: one with mom and another with dad.

As the director of the S.A.Y. Yes! Center, Marta attended “Back to School

At first, Jimmy rarely engaged with the Bible teachings

Night” at Jimmy’s school. That’s where she met his mother, Mrs. Lopez. Jimmy’s mom had heard about the program from a neighbor whose children were already involved in S.A.Y. Yes!. Mrs. Lopez liked what she’d heard, so she signed Jimmy up that very night.

At first, Jimmy rarely engaged with the Bible teachings, but he still kept coming to the program. When they started studying the book of Acts, something changed—Jimmy began to

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S.A.Y. Yes! Centers offer kids like Jimmy a safe place to go after school, where they receive homework help, mentoring, and hear the Good News.

## Just Keep Right *Continued from front*

pay attention! Each week he was sitting still, listening with interest, and asking good questions.

One day, Jimmy asked Marta if he just “stayed right, would he get to heaven?” Marta tried to explain that we cannot earn our way to heaven by doing right things—but Jimmy interrupted asking, “No, I mean, if I am driving down the road and turn right and right and then just keep going to the right, will I get there?” He wanted directions! Not getting the answers he was looking for, he returned to his homework instead.

But, Jimmy kept digging for more information throughout the school year, seeking truth, and tucking away the things he heard in the lessons. Toward the end of the school year Marta was talking with the kids one afternoon. She was explaining,

again, that we become God’s children when we put our faith in Jesus. Jimmy called out, “I want to do that!” Marta took him aside to make sure Jimmy understood what it meant to trust Jesus.

She said she truly witnessed God at work, as the lights just seemed to come on for Jimmy. He understood that he needed and wanted Jesus’ payment for sin, so with Marta’s help, Jimmy prayed to express his new faith in Jesus! When his dad and step-mom came to pick him up, he looked to Marta and asked excitedly, “Can I go tell them what happened to me today?”

We are excited, too, about Jimmy asking Jesus to be his Lord and Savior! We look forward to more kids learning about the love of God through our partners’ S.A.Y. Yes! Centers in the school year ahead.



# Misjudged

**Often, in the first few days of their Summer in the City® experience, college students make meaningful memories.** Summer in the City is a Cru® summer project that helps college students focus on learning about and reaching out to inner cities around the country. One student from Minnesota, Cala, spent her summer break with Cru in the inner city of Milwaukee. She quickly had an unforgettable experience!

That unforgettable moment happened on the project's first outreach weekend, to be exact. Grouped in teams, the students and staff headed out to a beach. They hoped to meet people and initiate conversations that would lead to sharing the gospel. Cala teamed up with Hannah, a Cru staff person, and they set out to go wherever God would lead them.

Once at the beach, things were off to a slow start. Though they'd met a few people, they hadn't yet initiated any good conversations. But, by faith, the women decided not to give up! Hannah noticed a woman sitting on the sand alone down by the water and suggested they approach her. Cala felt uncertain...she noticed that the woman had lots of tattoos and generally found her a bit intimidating.



Students like Cala, pictured left, not only minister together but grow relationships with one another.

God wants everyone to come to know Him and the hope He has to offer

She remarked to Hannah, “There is no way she will want to hear the gospel!”

Still, they felt the Holy Spirit prompting them to talk with this woman. They walked over to introduce themselves to the woman we'll call “Jo”, and a pleasant conversation began naturally—much to Cala's surprise. As the conversation continued, she realized she'd misjudged Jo by her appearance.

No one was more surprised than Cala when their conversation eventually resulted in Jo putting her faith in Christ. Cala felt humbled by the realization that she'd judged the woman based on her appearance and realized in a fresh way that God wants everyone to come to know Him and the hope He has to offer!

Cala's experience impacted her entire summer on the project. She learned that God works in magnificent ways, and He could use her to share the Good News! Year after year of our Summer in the City mission projects, we see God do miraculous things...He not only draws people to Himself but also builds the faith of the project students in ways that change their lives forever!



# PowerPacked Message of Love



**Patrice lived in the neighborhood of New Life Church, a partner of Cru®.**

As a 17-year-old girl, she felt unattractive and very insecure. Mostly, Patrice kept to herself. But on the day people from New Life came by her house to invite her to the church's Youth and Family Day, she decided to go.

At the Sunday event, the warm and welcoming staff put together a program for the whole day. The program included songs performed by the church youth, poetry readings, and a skit. When the program was over, they planned to give away PowerPacks™—backpacks filled with school supplies to the youth whose families can't afford them.

When the songs and skits were done, the pastor gave a short sermon. At the end of his message, he offered prayer and an invitation to know Jesus as personal savior. After that, the young people gathered to get their new PowerPacks and enjoy a hot dog supper.

Patrice approached the pastor at the end of the service. After their interaction, she prayed to receive Christ as her Lord and savior! She even decided to become a member of the church. Her demeanor completely changed after that day! The change was so profound that her mother called the church to ask what happened. She said Patrice rarely said a word and had trouble making eye contact. Now, she was speaking out and glowing with confidence. She even began meeting with a mentor for discipleship.



The change was so profound that her mother called the church

By making PowerPacks a bridge to the gospel, New Life Church was able to bless families in need by meeting a material need for school supplies. But best of all, they got to offer the gospel to young people like Patrice. After hearing the gospel that day, she learned just how much Jesus cherished her, how He even died to pay for her sin and set her free.

In just a short time, there will be more opportunities to connect with families in need through PowerPacks. We know the needs are not only for material goods like school supplies, but also for the love of Jesus. We're so thankful for your continued support of our ministry, we truly couldn't do it without you!





John Sather  
Co-National Director

# A Personal Word

As summer draws to a close, we're preparing PowerPacks™. You'll read a lot about them in this issue and be able to see how they enable our partners to connect to people in need. I hope you've enjoyed reading how God is using your gifts and prayers to impact the lives of kids and their families.

But what is it that makes us care about folks in need? Maybe you wonder why we offer PowerPacks and many other Compassionate Products™. And how does each one act as a bridge to the Gospel?

The best answer for these questions is found in the heart of God. You often hear us refer to God's heart for the poor. Here are a few Bible verses that explain:

"There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore, I command you to be open handed toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land." (Deuteronomy 15:11)

"Who is like the Lord our God, the One who sits enthroned on high, who stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth? He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes, with the princes of their people." (Psalms 113:5-8)

"He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God." (Proverbs 14:31)

Our aim has always been to honor God through this ministry. We see people in material and spiritual need. God cares about those needs, so we do too. That's why we offer PowerPacks this month. That's why our partner churches use them to connect with kids and their families to tangibly demonstrate God's love and address every person's deepest need with the gospel.

We couldn't do this without your help!

With gratitude,

John Sather  
Co-National Director

## Compassionate Products:

**A bridge to the gospel.** Your partnership helped share the gospel message last year through:



**21,304**  
Boxes of Love®



**10,408**  
PowerPacks™



**3,379**  
Homeless Care Kits



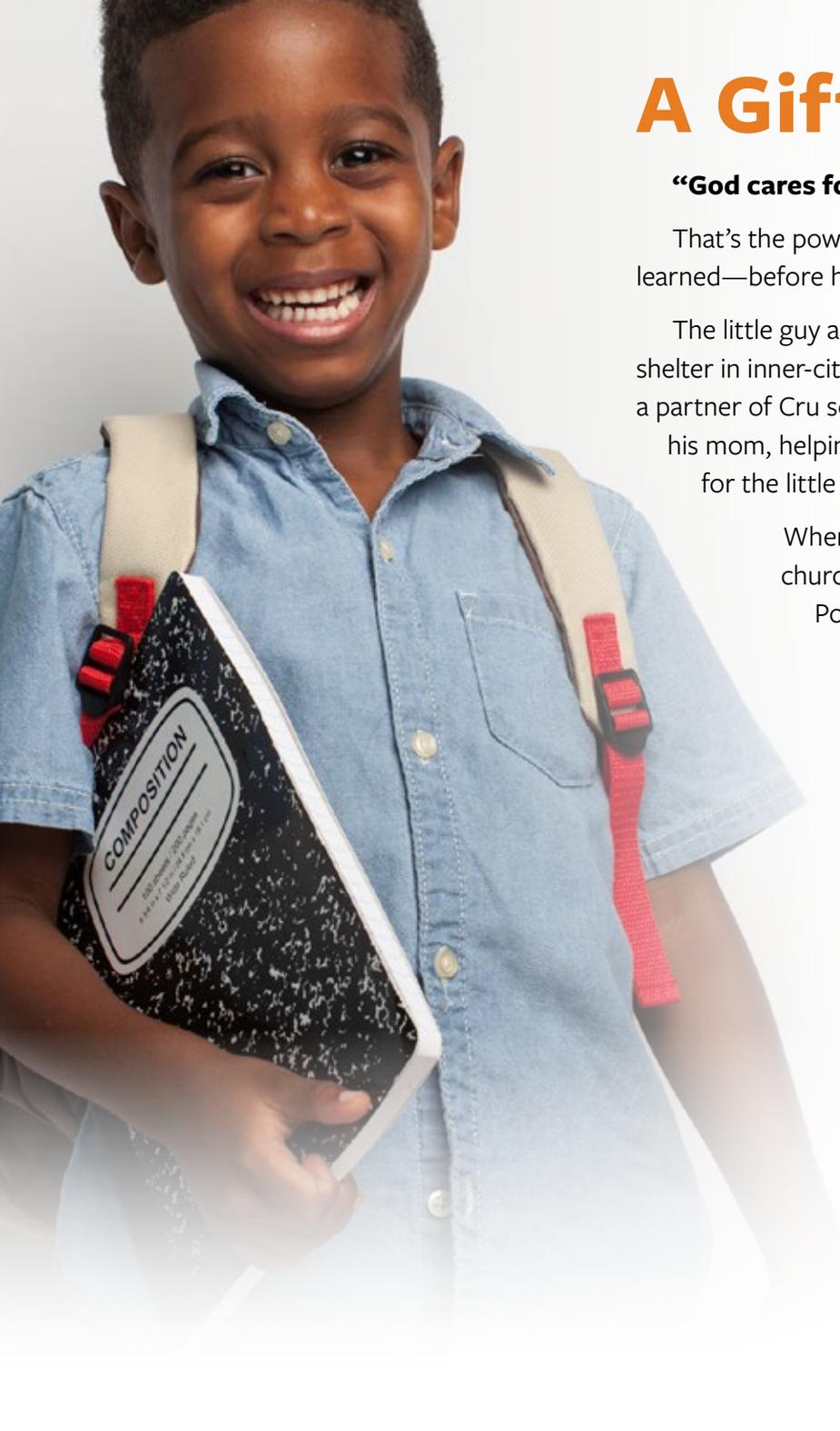
**23,304**  
Easter Bags



**1,014 pairs**  
of Heart and Sole® shoes



**Thanks to your generosity,**  
the gospel message  
was shared **59,409**  
times last year through  
**Compassionate Products.**



# A Gift From God

**“God cares for me.”**

That’s the powerful lesson 7-year-old Ziggy learned—before he went to school this year.

The little guy and his mom were down on their luck—living in a shelter in inner-city Chicago. Christian Fellowship Refuge Ministries, a partner of Cru serving in the inner city, reached out to Ziggy and his mom, helping to meet their needs and providing a few toys for the little boy to call his own.

When it was time for Ziggy to go to school, the church reached out again: Ziggy received a brand-new PowerPack™ backpack, filled with school supplies! He couldn’t believe his eyes!

That day, Ziggy heard the Gospel for the very first time. He learned the life-changing truth of Jesus and His love.

When Ziggy asked if God could take care of him and his mom, even in their situation, a church leader replied, “He can and He will ... what did He do for you today?”

Ziggy cheerfully replied “God gave me school supplies!”

It all started with someone like you, sharing the compassionate gift of a back-to-school backpack. Please give generously now, to support this proven-powerful evangelistic outreach, and provide more backpacks for children like Ziggy!



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Cru is a charter member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.

Occasionally the names of people featured in this report are changed to protect their privacy.

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