

Saint Michael Catholic Community Christmas Hamper Organizing Committee 2025 Report

On December 15th, members of Saint Michael Catholic Community came together for our annual Christmas Hamper Program. The Church building embodied our mission of outreach during this busy pre-Christmas week, as more than 400 volunteers from our community assembled hampers.

We are grateful to the dedicated and talented members of this Christmas Hamper Committee for their commitment and selfless use of talents. They are:

Joe Ladouceur	Lora Saccomani, SSVP	Kathy Koop
Allison Denesuk	Maureen Boyd, SSVP	Peace Ike
Vivian Truesdale	Deana Helton, SSVP	Carol Pantella
Julia Gonzalez	Pamela Hannan	Maria Pastega
Joanne Yeo	Gail Lee	Lois Fuss
Lana McFadden, SSVP	Darlene Saltesz	
Barb Mulcahy, SSVP representative	Jessie McLaughlin	
	Nick Sorbo	

Thanks are also due to the Saint Michael Conference, Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, for financial support. Community businesses, specifically Paul Driscoll and Nancy Tetreault via her business Jiangnan Wholesale both made generous donations of produce. Local supermarkets Calgary Coop, No Frills and Sobeys Strathcona also made in-kind donations of shopping bags.

PROGRAM SCOPE:

Our 2025 Hamper Program prepared 184 hampers and served 688 people including 131 families with children (Appendix 1). A detailed breakdown is provided in Table 1. Of note is the large number of families referred from parish schools. This year, the SSVP boundaries were extended to include Trinity Hills and Crestmont which, although there were few referrals from this area, did increase the potential population served and expand our delivery area.

Table 1: persons served - 2025 Christmas Hamper Program

<i>Category</i>	<i>SSVP and school- referred</i>	<i>St. Bernard</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Adults Served	282	67	349
Children served	244*	95	339
Total	526	162	688

*Children's gifts provided from SMCC for this number

Our total number of people served is the highest since we began keeping records. We also note the number of families with young children being served. As one indicator, forty-four boxes of diapers were provided.

One observation that has been brought to the attention of SSVP is the increase in families requesting special accommodation, such as halal food, allergies, adaptation to special diets and the like. We attempt to provide this courtesy, however the growth in both number of requests and detailed requirements is becoming harder to manage, as we purchase food in bulk and well in advance of receiving these referrals. It is recommended that families with complex requirements be served directly by SSVP home visitors.

VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION:

The amazing response to our call for volunteers shows the depth of community commitment for this program. In addition to the seventeen members of the Organizing Committee, 435 individual volunteer slots were filled. Service opportunities were made available for young confirmation candidates through the Angel Tree gift preparation. Our program was supported by groups of volunteers from Knights of Columbus, Coffee Ministry, and the staff of John Costello School.

The use of Sign-Up Genius has saved many hours of work and allowed us to keep better records of volunteers, thus increasing compliance with the Diocese Code of Conduct policies. We were fortunate to work with our new Volunteer Coordinator Gladys Doh, whose enthusiasm and quick responses are an asset.

PROGRAM VALUE, FUNDING AND COST:

The overall value of the program is \$83,276, including donated children’s gifts, other donations and purchases. The direct cost for food, inclusion gift cards and incidentals was slightly higher although offset by generous donations of all produce. Costs continue to be subject to inflationary pressures.

This year, following analysis of the contents and costs of a standard SSVP hamper, we increased slightly the inclusion Gift card amounts. Note that gift card amounts had not increased since prior to COVID.

**TABLE 2: OVERALL COSTS
2025 Hamper Program:**

2025 Hamper Program Costs	
Total expenditures	\$71,716
<i>Value of donated items:</i>	
Angel tree Gift Cards (est)	\$9,760
Produce (est)	\$1,800
TOTAL VALUE OF HAMPER PROGRAM	\$83,276

STRESSORS:

Increased demand and knowing of the real needs in the community inspires us to provide what we can. This year, despite an original target of 170 hampers, and having ordered sufficient food for 175 hampers, we were able to stretch our resources and, in the end, prepared 14 more hampers than originally anticipated. Thanks are owed to our Food Management team, Joe Ladouceur and Allison Densuk for making this happen.

Preparing this many hampers does stretch our capacity – the physical capacity of the facility as well as our volunteer capacity, most notably those on the Hamper Committee. We must project numbers well in advance, both to organize volunteers and order sufficient food. We must also balance concerns about

sufficient donations to cover our costs. While this year was a stretch, we go forth in faith that our needs will be supported by the community.

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS:

This year, we moved Hamper Assembly to the narthex, which was more efficient and contributed to a more relaxed atmosphere. We are grateful to parish staff, especially Loreen Morrison, for her careful attention to ensuring our many space needs are accommodated. And our gratitude goes to the caretakers, for their attention to ensuring our space needs are well provided.

Members are also liaising with our SSVP referral sources to optimize the quality of information provided when submitting referrals. This will streamline our process of managing referral details.

In 2026 we will explore options for printing our necessary paperwork. The increased numbers now place an unrealistic burden on individual committee members to produce professional quality printing in a short period of time. We will also revise our procedures around preparing recipient envelopes and streamline our delivery assignment process.

HAMPER CAMPAIGN 2026:

Thanks are extended to the entire parish community for their support and participation in making Hampers 2025 a success.

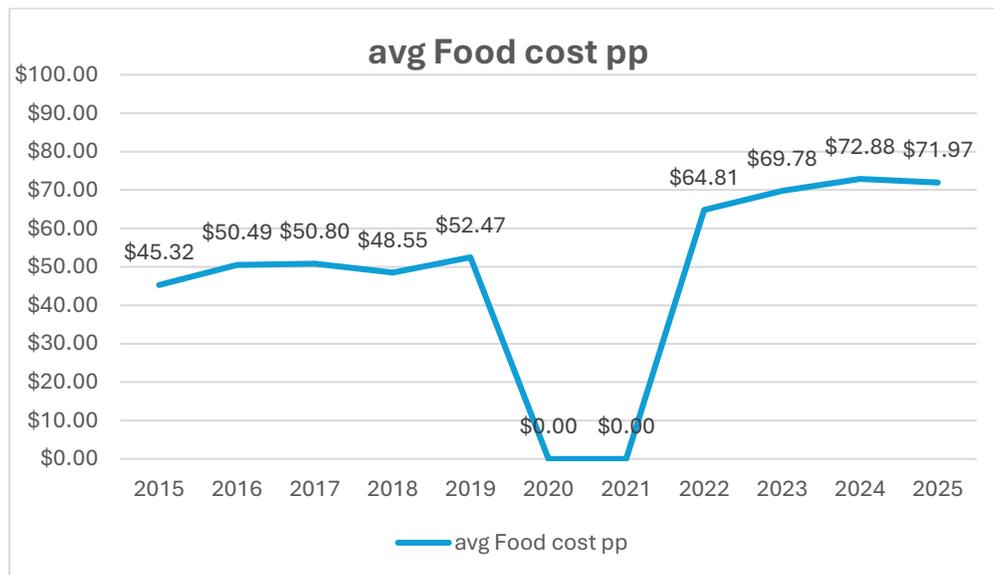
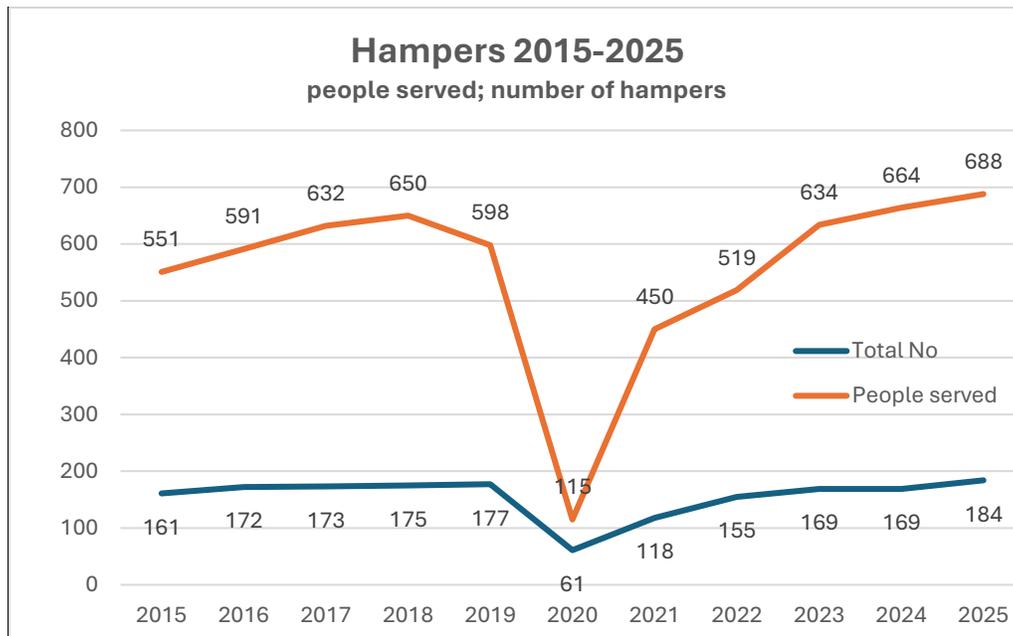
It is with gratitude that we note many of our current members have agreed to continue their participation in 2026.

We propose a date of January 14th, for 2026 Hamper Day.

Respectfully submitted:

Colleen Fitzpatrick
Chair, Christmas Hamper Program 2025

APPENDIX 1: Christmas Hamper Program 2025 - KEY METRICS



Note: data from 2020 and 2021 incomplete due to impacts of Covid 19