

PRESS RELEASE

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PR Contact: Ashley Beleny
Armanasco Public Relations, Inc.
Tel: 831.372.2259
Email: abeleny@armanasco.com

SANTA CATALINA SCHOOL'S 'FOOD FAST' PROMOTES POVERTY AWARENESS
Local students sacrifice to show their love for humankind this Valentine's Day

MONTEREY, Calif. – February 13-14, 2009 — Beginning this Friday, February 13, 2009, approximately 25 students from Santa Catalina School will join together in a focused effort to address the growing reality of world hunger in this time of global economic crisis.

The youth have pledged to go without food for 24 hours to raise money for Catholic Relief Services, the official overseas relief and development agency of the United States Catholic Community. CRS provides assistance on the basis of need, not creed, race, or ethnicity. Ninety-four percent of all donations go directly to overseas programs, making it one of the most efficient humanitarian agencies in the world. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, six million children under the age of five die every year as a result of hunger.

Santa Catalina's Food Fast event is in its eleventh year, led by longtime organizer and teacher Debra Baker. With a focus on global poverty and justice, Food Fast gives participants an experience of solidarity with others around the world living in hunger and poverty. The event also provides an experience of community as students work together to serve those in our own local neighborhood who experience hunger on a regular basis. While they are fasting themselves this Valentine's Day, these dedicated young people will help to prepare a meal for the homeless at Dorothy's Kitchen in Salinas, and provide the volunteer help that is needed to pack food bags for distribution at the Monterey County Food Bank.

In addition, during the fast, students will participate in activities that focus on cultural appreciation and mindfulness of food and water needs and waste. Many will even build shelters out of cardboard, and brave the cold of the night to see what it feels like to sleep on the streets in the United States or to be a refugee, like so many people around the world.

In the ten years that Santa Catalina School has held the Food Fast they have raised more than \$55,000 to help end world hunger. They have joined with over 600,000 young people across the United States who have participated in similar events each year.

For more information or to sponsor our local Food Fast, please contact Debra Baker, Santa Catalina School Religious Studies Department at 655-9364.

(Our students will be working at Dorothy's Kitchen at 30 Soledad St., Salinas, and at the Food Bank at 815 West Market St. #5 Salinas between 10:00 am and 12:00 noon on Valentine's Day, February 14. They will be breaking their fast with a communal meal at Santa Catalina School at

1500 Mark Thomas Dr. at 1:00 p.m., and are available to be interviewed at any of these times/places)

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About Santa Catalina School

Santa Catalina School is dedicated to the education of young people between the ages of 4-18, giving careful consideration to the individual abilities and potential of each child. The school's mission is to balance intellectual growth with spiritual awareness, creativity with order, and individuality with compassion. Santa Catalina School is enriched by the diversity of socioeconomic, religious, geographic, and cultural backgrounds represented by students and faculty. The Upper School includes boarding students from 14 states and 9 countries. Local students come from not only the Central Coast, but also from cities as far away as Gilroy, King City, Santa Cruz, San Jose and Santa Clara. For more information visit www.santacatalina.org or call 831.655.9300.