Resurrection first-graders ‘make a difference in their world’

BY MEGAN ERBACHER
The Message assistant editor

Brayden Head loves to spend his free time fishing and hunting, and he wants other kids to enjoy his favorite outdoor hobbies. Head, a first-grader at Resurrection School, didn’t have to think long about what nonprofit or person of their choice he wanted to support for “Make a Difference — First Grade Style.” He chose C.A.S.T. for Kids.

Resurrection first-grade teachers Jennifer Meyer and Jennifer Schmitz gave their 23 students $5 each and challenged them to “make a difference in their world” by raising money, items or donating time to help a charity, nonprofit or person of their choice.

In the project’s 10th year, students raised more than $19,851.87, which is a record-breaking year, according to Meyer.

“I feel that God is teaching me to share my love for fishing,” Head said. “Also, that it is nice to help others. I feel I have made a difference by putting a smile on other kids’ faces.”

Resurrection first-graders presented their projects and what they learned to an audience of parents and grandparents on Feb. 5 in Resurrection Church. Schmitz said every year she is amazed by the different projects students come up with that made a difference in their community and their world. Kids made posters to promote their project, and some parents helped their child create a video and post it to social media to ask for donations.

used his $5, plus some of his profits from the two candy machines he manages at two local businesses, to donate $105 to C.A.S.T. for Kids. The nonprofit, Catch A Special Thrill, takes disabled youngsters ages 6-18 years-old on fishing trips. Head has donated to them in the past.

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Bill aims to help homeless by removing residency requirement

BY VICTORIA ARTHUR
Statehouse Correspondent for Indiana’s Catholic Newspapers

During his nine years as a township trustee, Jack Sandlin was on the front lines of serving the most vulnerable in his community, including the homeless.

The more-than 1,000 township trustee offices across Indiana are often considered a last-resort source of help for those in the community who are in need of the most basic necessities, such as food and shelter. But like other trustees, Sandlin often found his hands tied from providing desperately needed help to those without a place to call home. That’s because, by the very nature of their situation, they were lacking one basic requirement: proof of residency in the township.

Now, as a state senator, he wants to change that. His proposed legislation, Senate Bill 67 — which unanimously passed the Indiana Senate — would allow a township trustee to assist homeless people who cannot establish their township of residency.

“If I go back to the origin of the township trustee, providing emergency assistance to those in the community,” said Sen. Sandlin (R-Indianapolis), who served as trustee of Perry Township on the city’s south side for nearly a decade.

“We all know homelessness is on the rise,” Sandlin said. “I have a great appreciation for the many non-profits that address this issue, including churches,” Sandlin said. “My encouragement to them is to keep doing what they’re doing.”

Among the resources Sandlin knows well is the Holy Family Shelter, which opened in 1984 as the first emergency shelter specifically for homeless families in Indianapolis. The near-westside facility; a program of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, can house up to 22 homeless families a night, according to its director, Bill Bickel. In addition to providing the basics of food and temporary housing, the shelter offers residents comprehensive social services to assist them with life skills and job training, ultimately with the goal of securing employment