

# Kids send help to Africa

By **RACHEL MONTGOMERY**  
Press & Guide Newspapers

DEARBORN — The real Bob Barker wasn't able to make it, but that didn't stop Divine Child High School students from inviting people to "come on down" to the school in support of a worthy cause last Thursday.

Students and other guests got as close to TV glory as they ever would by playing in the high school's version of classic game show "The Price is Right."

Divine Child's version, dubbed "The Prize is Right," was an event sponsored by the leadership class to raise money for people thousands of miles away.

The purpose of Ensure for Africa, a program created by Rev. Frank Julian, is to raise money and collect cans of Ensure, a liquid nutritional drink, to send to people infected with HIV and AIDS in Africa, a continent ravaged by the disease.

Julian, a Melvindale-based pastor, began the program after a 2001 visit to Africa that humbled him.

Julian said he would never forget driving past a

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*Rev. Frank Julian  
pastor*

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graveyard full of fresh graves and how he felt after learning that the deaths were from people dying of AIDS-related illnesses.

"I had heard about the AIDS epidemic, but this was so bad," Julian said. "So I said, 'what can we do to help?'"

The answer was one he wasn't expecting — Julian was asked to send Ensure.

He said he was told that the nutritional supplement helped strengthen the withering immune systems of people infected with the incurable disease to fight off other illnesses.

Since returning from that trip, Julian has helped collect thousands of cans of Ensure to send to Africa. He estimates that he has sent over 14 tons of the drink to Africa in the last three years.

Local communities have contributed significantly to

his efforts, and he called on Divine Child students to do the same during his visit to the school in February.

The school's student council started an Ensure collection campaign, shortly after hearing Julian's speech, and the leadership class began its own project of raising money for the program.

Divine Child's leadership class, taught by teacher Mayra Jares, adopts a charity each year for part of its service project.

Student Suzanne Brooks said as soon as students heard about Julian's program, they knew it was the right cause for them to support this year.

"He's a friend to Divine Child, and it clicked for us," Brooks said.

"He wants to do really big things, and he motivates people when you talk to him."

The next step was organizing a fund-raising event for Ensure for Africa.

Past classes had success in raising money for charities by hosting game show nights, so in that spirit, "The Prize is Right" was born.

Jares said she had no idea the game show, which has been on TV for over 30 years, had such a big following with her students.

"The kids really love this game," Jares said. "I had no idea."

The biggest challenge was arranging prizes big enough to get people to turn out for the night, Jares said.

Local businesses donated big-ticket items like color TVs, DVD players and gift certificates.

When the big night finally came, the audience filed in and was treated to the entire game show experience complete with theme music and the infamous dollar wheel.

The real winner that night, however, was the Ensure for Africa program — even if it didn't make it to the showcase showdown.

For more information



Photo by Rachel Montgomery

Divine Child High School students Jeff Rabe and Jennifer Nasal show off the dollar wheel before the school's "Price is Right" event for charity last week.