

SPECIAL ISSUE CELEBRATING **COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY**KIDS FALL EDITION VOLUME 39!





A Message from the Heart

by Louis A. Craco III

Throughout the world we see smiles in all parts of the globe, no matter what skin color, heritage, culture and language they have, even us in *The Imagine Society*. I experience these smiles and I smile as well. In my lifetime I see people homeless and some with disabilities. They might be wondering that God is failing them. But they are surrounded by people who can help.

Years ago when I was in middle school I was new to *God's Love We Deliver*. On a field trip we learned about their kitchen company in Harlem. They cook for people to improve their daily health. These cookers help people who are struggling through serious illness or cannot shop or cook for themselves, especially during traditional holidays. Elderly and sick people need the taste of *God's Love We Deliver*. Now I am in 10th grade



and I can show my self-advocacy to the world. In my internship at GLWD I volunteer by decorating images and inspiring words for these twenty bags for the upcoming holidays.

Every time I go to Connecticut where my grandparents are from, my Grandfather (Poppy) and I drive to the freshest ice cream store in America, *Carvel*. You might be thinking what does this have to do with compassion? After we were done having our ice cream in the car, Poppy gave me cash, and I used it to get my Grandmother's ice cream. Poppy sends me in with money to experience my independence. The cash register clerk told me I needed another dollar bill. The second I was going to go out to Poppy for more money, another customer gave up a dollar bill for me! I was not expecting that. Now my Grandmother can get involved in eating ice cream. So, from this example of compassion, you will understand how compassion can make other people feel, and just what I was feeling, heartwarming, and that's probably what he felt when I opened the door for him. What is your favorite ice cream flavor? Poppy and I like having the same thing: cherry vanilla.



Louis volunteering with **God's Love We Deliver!**

This year during Halloween I gave out candy to the trick-o-treaters. And when my caregiver and I went to Borough Hall for speech, I was compassionate to my speech therapist and other friends who work there too. Every Sunday I go to an all gluten-free restaurant called **Wild**. Then they took my favorite purchasable recipe, the chicken nachos, off their menu! But there is another restaurant called the **Beer Garage** that has the same kitchen as Wild. They have it on their menu and they sent in the chicken nachos because they were compassionate to me. When I went with my Dad to Manhasset, we were out having lunch with my other Grandmother, Mimi. The restaurant is called the **Landmark Diner.** I have a female friend there who sometimes compassionately brings me a gluten-free

So, you've heard me talk about food and **God's Love We Deliver**. There is one person in my family who is my caregiver, Ria. The way she uses compassion is what I want to eat every Friday for dinner to watch in front of the TV. She cooks penne with meat sauce, meatball pizza, burgers and fries, and even tacos. I tell her, in every bite she puts in special ingredients, compassion and love, and when I eat her masterpiece it makes it mouthwatering!

If you see me wearing a "compassion" bracelet, here is my explanation of why I got it. Every Friday at my school assembly, the teachers share our characteristic traits we showed this week. They will give out bracelets with the name of the trait that are awarded to students. I got mine for helping to welcome a new classmate to our group.

Both *The Imagine Society* and *God's Love We Deliver* are where I volunteer. I feel I can do anything at this point, keeping God proud at all times. No matter where I go, I can share my smiles with the world. I show them my compassion and they will do the same with me. To those who want to do the same that I do: "Be Inspired" and "NEVER GIVE UP!!!"



Louis's **compassion** bracelet!

Louis Aloysius Craco III Cooke School Age 15

pastry afterwards.

Dear Louis, Thank you so much for not only sharing your story, but for all the incredible and compassionate volunteering you do for your community!

MY EXPERIENCE AT WORLD YOUTH DAY LISBON by Margot Lymbery

This past summer, I attended *World Youth*Day, a massive Catholic pilgrimage which took place in Lisbon, Portugal, this year. Most pilgrims are members of a church or school group, but my cousin and I joined a group of those whose parish or school wasn't sending one. The ten day long trip consisted of one week in the city and three days exploring the Portuguese countryside with our group, and besides being a fantastic approach to visiting an unfamiliar country, the trip left me with a fresh sense of community and faith in the Catholic Church.

The picturesque city of Lisbon was completely engulfed in the massive

pilgrimage. There were 1.5 million pilgrims - triple the population of Lisbon itself - and everyone on the streets wore their **WYD** lanyards with pride. The shops and restaurants gave us free meals and water, and we moved from event to event as a wave of flags and backpacks, only ceasing our songs and chants to introduce ourselves to the person next to us and exchanging stories about our homes.

The main attraction, after five days of outdoor masses, eucharistic adorations, and plenty of sightseeing, was the vigil with **Pope Francis**. After the eight mile walk to the vigil site, we slept under the stars, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of strangers, though I don't know if I can consider anyone who shares this memory a stranger anymore. In the morning, **Pope Francis** said a beautiful mass, which some of us listened to via translator through an app, while the rest of us tried to soak in the Spanish and Portuguese readings and hymns – understanding the meaning, but not the words themselves.



A fraction of the crowd at one of the masses



Pope Francis

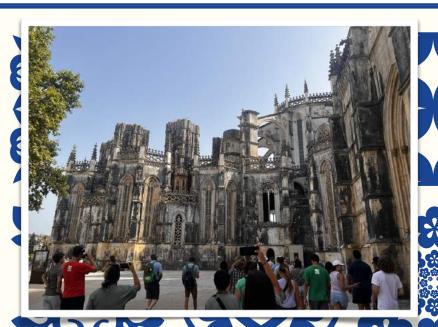
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The last few days, we toured some towns in the Portuguese countryside, including Fatima, where Our Lady appeared. Fatima was my favorite part of the trip; the central sanctuary emitted a warmth and peace unlike anything I had ever felt, and I could truly feel God's presence in the spirit of my fellow pilgrims.

It was so meaningful to be surrounded by others with the same interests and passions as me, and to be able to share my ideas without providing a disclaimer about my beliefs. Overall, my experience there taught me how empowering it is to be surrounded by like-minded people from varying backgrounds. The next **World Youth Day** will be in Seoul in 2027, and I highly recommend that everyone consider making the journey - it is the experience of a lifetime.



The Sanctuary at Fatima



The Monastery of Batalha, in the Portuguese countryside



Margot (white pants) and her new friends at the Sanctuary of Fatima

Dear Margot, Thank you so much for sharing your incredible experience (and amazing photos) from World Youth Day!

We are so proud of you!





Margot Lymbery (18) is a Senior at Brearley

The Little Things by Katie Gaffigan

When you're the moon and you're gazing at the earth,

You can't see the little things.

You can't see the cities or the towns or the villages

When you can't see the little things, you can't see the families inside

You can't see the parents or the brothers or the sisters

When you can't see the little things you can't see their features

You can't see his brassy uneven teeth

Or her nails that are bitten to the skin or the mole on her left cheek

When you can't see the little things you can't see how he looks at her

You can't see his eyes explore her overwhelmed with appreciation and love

When you can't see the little things you can't see how quietly she admires him

You can't see her eyes brighten when he smiles or when she sees him after work.

When you're the moon and you're gazing at earth,

You can't see the little things.



Katie Gaffigan (14) is in the 9th grade and a member of The Imagine Society Newsletter! She wrote this poem in grade 8.

The Imagine Society Gratitude Quilt 2023 ... youth voices joining together in powerful appreciation

am grateful for being alive. - Sebastian

I am grateful for clean water because it will prevent me from getting a disease. I am so fortunate to have clean water unlike other kids. -Tayel Nasrani (11)

I am grateful that I can be here today and all the love we can bring other people. - Morgan (6)

I'm grateful for Jesus, my family, friends and all the good people who helped me overcome challenges. I'm grateful for police, soldiers, firefighters, and teachers. - David (9) BOLD

I am grateful for my brothers and family, and for another chance to prove to my mom that I am more than a criminal. - E.V. (20) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful for the opportunities of personal and intellectual growth that receiving higher education offers. - Jacob Toboroff

I'm seriously grateful for my cat. No joke. He calms me down. -Aiden (13)

I'm
extremely grateful for my
support system, education,
and the wonderful
opportunities I've received
- Jesus Tiburcio-Zane
(18)

I am grateful for my family, friends and food and I am also grateful to have a roof over my head. - Zuzu Hall (8) I am grateful for my teammates. -Timothy Fitzpatrick (15) I'm so grateful for my parents and the amazing opportunities they've been able to provide. Without their hard work, I would not be who I am today, and I would not have so many of the beautiful memories I cherish. - Margot Lymbery (18)

KA-MINAMINATER FIRE

I'm thankful for my friends and family who are always there for me. -Audrey Cho (15)

I am grateful for my friends because every time I go to school they give me a big hug and I can always count on them to keep my secrets. - I am grateful for not being out on the streets right now in this cold weather, and also, for having a caring mother and father. - C.Z. (24) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful for the adventures in the books I read. - J.B. (22) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful for Growth. - Katie Gaffigan (14)

I am grateful for music and expression! Also food, my home, and Gilmore Girls and my paint. grateful for my school. - Nico Santos-Shin (16)I am grateful for having a second chance on becoming a better person, mentally and physically. Gaining strong and mature knowledge from library. Meeting excellent staff and amazing librarians. - J.V. (20) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful to help people in New York today. - Hannah Fenton (15) l am grateful for my piano. - Vienna Wu (16) I am grateful for the opportunity to graduate college and high school. -T.S. (24) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful for being given books that help my language studies and creative stories to boost my creativity.
K.E. (22) Green Hill Resident

I am thankful for my family. - Casey Fenton (6) I am thankful for my family and the life I get to live. -Maya Kilburn (20)

I am grateful for books. - Hava K. (11)

I am grateful for the opportunity to learn.

- Krishna BOLD

I am thankful for Joe Biden. Go Joe! -Louis A. Craco III (15)

I am grateful for my family. - Joseph Mantilla (14) I am grateful for my health and also for my school. -Olympia Hall (10) I am grateful for everything Ms. Julie and Ms. Tanya have done for me. - J.S. (24) Green Hill Resident

l am thankful for my friends. - Maggie Craco (16)

I am very grateful for my

I am grateful for my baby brother Ennis. - Millie Donovan (4) I am very grateful for my family. They are kind, caring and loving. In addition to spending time with my parents and brother, I especially enjoy talking on the phone and visiting with my aunts, uncles and cousins because I learn a lot from them!!! - Julian (16) BOLD

I am thankful for being able to play basketball. - Michael Gaffigan (12)

I am grateful for my parents. - Leonardo
Belanich (16)

I am grateful for all
the incredible
opportunities that my
parents have given me
through their sacrifices and
hard work. - Sabrina
Turner (20)

I am thankful for mom and dad my family and the Earth. - Reese Moras (5) I am grateful for my bed. -Genevieve Fitzpatrick (14) I'm thankful that I have loving parents that support me and care for me. I don't know where I would be without them. - Kalil Nasrani (14)

WREATHER TO THE HOLD THE HELD THE HELD THE HELD TO THE HELD THE HE

I am grateful for my family because I can always count on them no matter what and they'll always be my biggest cheerleader. -Payton Reardon (11)

I am grateful for my friends. - Kristine Mantilla (19) I am grateful for my family and good memories with friends. - C.S. (18) Green Hill Resident I am grateful for my friends and family that have continued to support me through every success and failure. -Sarah Cheng (17) BOLD

I'm thankful that I picked you as my family - Layla

Vyas (6)

I am grateful for my amazing family and friends. Annarose Grizzle (14) I'm so grateful for the people that I've let into my life; my friends have brought me so much joy and helped me to be the best possible version of myself. -Marre Gaffigan (19)

I am grateful for having a second chance at life. - K.H. (17) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful for my family. - Dashiell Hall (12) I am grateful for having such a short sentence and a second chance to go to a group home and learn a new trade. - C.C. (17) Green Hill Resident

l am grateful for my mom, family, and my girl. -Z.H. (17) Green Hill Resident I am thankful for growing up in Brooklyn, and for my home. - Tristan Craco (19)

I am grateful for my daughter and the blessings she has bestowed upon my life, my mother who always supports me and my selfmade family. - T.C. (20) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this incredible community. -S.A. BOLD I am grateful for food. - Hudson Donovan (9)

I am grateful for my school. - Paul Connelly (13) I'm grateful my siblings, grandparents, and extended family. DC (23) grateful for my grandfather! -Jayden Lopez (16)l am grateful for my family and my life. I am also grateful for the

am grateful for my family. -Jaelyn Rosa (14)

grateful for my family and for another day and chance at life. - M.L (17) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful for having who's always there for me and a home I'm comfortable in. My two life without them. -Admir (17)

I am grateful for my cat Pebbles. -Beiya Tang (15)

I am grateful for my parents, siblings, friends, and community along with all the opportunities I'm given! - Shelby Fenton (17)

grateful for the love I'm able to give and receive back. Natalie Bossio **BOLD**

library and everything they do for us - they make time fly! - C.B. (19) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful for being alive every day and to be able to read lots of books. - S.H. (20) Green Hill Resident

grateful for my Caine (16)

I am grateful for having family that cares for me on the outs and takes care of me. - X.V. (18) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful for God and everything he's done for me. I am also grateful to my family and Angela, my lawyer, for all of their support. - J.Y. (17) Green Hill Resident

grateful for everybody who did me wrong and for those who did me right because it made me who I am today. - G.M. (20) Green Hill

I am thankful for family and elephants. -Darroch Fenton (10)

grateful that high school is only 4 years. Jack Gaffigan

lam grateful for delicious food. Matthew Wu (16)

I am grateful for my friends. - Eli Gonzalez (17)

I'm grateful for God, my family, friends, BOLD and everybody else God gave me as a gift in my life.- Soraya (12) **BOLD**

I am grateful for my release date, my kids and most of all my whole family. - C.H. (18) Green Hill Resident

I am grateful for my am grateful for sister, my education my mom and dad, at Villanova, and the I am grateful for my I am grateful grandparents, and amazing friends I've teachers. - Evie for my friends. brother and sister. - C.H made that are always Brimberg (17) Lucas Mann (22) Green Hill there for me. -(17)Sabrina Turner (20) l am grateful for am grateful for a chance to live a better life, for my brothers because I am grateful for my family, everyone who has they always take care of thankful for for my positive peers, and supported me along this my home. - Patrick for waking up every day. experience, and for the and my cat. He is the opportunities I have here - R.T. (17) Green Hill Gaffigan best cat ever! at Green Hill. - K.W. (17) Resident Arian (7) Green Hill Resident I'm grateful for Bold, Gabrielle, Steven, Sarah, l am grateful my teachers, lawyers, I am grateful for I am grateful for my priests, pastors, pilots, for the roof above family, my friends, and my friends. - Kevin police, firefighters, the my head. my school! janitors, doctors, animals O'Neill (15) Krishna BOLD Reese (9) and good movies and Dhar Mann. - Soraya (12) BOLD Wall of the Property of the Land of the Control of grateful for life, I am grateful for family, food, and the I am grateful for my grateful for my my friends, who chance to be parents. - Norma never fail to make released. - G.L. (17) Rebollar (17) Cauchi (17) me laugh. - S.A. Green Hill **BOLD** I am grateful for my lam I am grateful am grateful for everyday school, my friends, grateful for of my life that I have to Poppy, my dog, my for my family. food. - Sybil live. - K.H. (17) Green Liza S. (14) Hill Resident Donovan being well fed -Stephanie K. (17)



An Open Letter to President Biden by Jack Gaffigan

Dear President Biden,

Our generation is concerned about the environmental crisis and I believe that a look into the past can help us secure our future and the future of generations to come. I am writing this letter to you, the leader of our country, because I want to emphasize that history has shown how the leaders of societies handle important environmental issues can be the deciding factor between a thriving nation and a dying one. In a world with ever increasing populations, rising temperatures and new strains of viruses, how we treat our environment as a community can help or hinder us. Societies throughout history have taught us which directions we should take when dealing with these problems. By looking at the successes and failures of the Algonquian, Egyptian and Roman societies, we can conclude that being prepared for the worst and not wasting time, resources, or land can save our society which is in great jeopardy. Through the study of these past societies, we can deduce that pulling our attention towards what's most environmentally effective rather than what's agriculturally or monetarily exploitive, will lead to greater longevity of our society.

One of the primary examples of efficient utilization of resources is the culture of respect for the land held by the Algonquian Tribe of New England, who lived on and managed the land with an understanding of how their actions would affect it. They took great care to minimize their community's impact on their lands. The Algonquins adapted their diets to what was available. The land they lived on was not solely for their exclusive use. They did not believe in private ownership of land any more than one would consider private ownership of air or sunshine. Communities could fish, gather plants and berries or grow crops during specific seasons, and the harvest would be distributed collectively to support their communities. The leaders made sure land was used specifically for what the community needed. For example, if people lived on land where farming or fishing could be done, they would be expected to share and trade with people that did not live on the same land. Harvests would not go to waste. When the Dutch settlers arrived, the Algonquin tribes would sell or trade items for settlers' rights to use the land, but in their mind that would not end their own rights to occupy the land. This policy was in sharp contrast to the attitudes of the European settlers that viewed land as a private commodity to be used solely for their own use.

The Algonquins did not hoard or waste food, instead they shared it with everyone who needed it. The success of this respect for the land and the community allowed the Algonquins to survive and thrive for 8,000 years. For centuries, the tribe was incredibly aware of human impact on the environment, and built this into their beliefs, culture and governing policies. In the text, *Land Use in Early America* it states, "Village agricultural lands were divided up and owned by individual families, with each family's ownership rights in the farm lands continuing only so long as the family made actual use of the lands" (Cronon, 721).

This observation specifies how integral using allocated land to its full potential is to an efficient society, because it shows that these groups had to be actively and successfully using their land in order to thrive as a community. The Algonquin leadership knew that humans' compassionate relationship to and respect for the land was essential for the survival of their communities. However, not every ancient culture adopted this stewardship approach to the environment.

On the other side of the societal coin, Ancient Egyptians did not fully understand or utilize the land they lived on, making them unprepared for abrupt changes like an environmentally induced famine. The Ancient

...continued from page 12

Egyptians did not fully understand or utilize the land they lived on, making them unprepared for abrupt changes like an environmentally induced famine. The Ancient Egyptians were accustomed to plentiful harvests due to the proximity to the Nile river, and it's predictable rise and fall with the seasons kept the kings rich and the people well fed for hundred of years. They never worried much about supplies of livestock or grain. In the old kingdom, the Anicent Egyptians grew a variety of foods, but because wheat was so plentiful, their main diet relied on this vulnerable food source. Vulnerable because it relied on the normal rising and falling of the Nile. When climate change caused the Nile to flood or dry up, there was a domino effect of mass starvation and famine as a result of many of the kings being unprepared because they had become comfortable and rich. The rulers failed to understand how at risk their supplies were to environmental devastation. Masses of people went hungry and that affected their desire and ability to work. Their communities collapsed. The text, *Ancient Egypt Climate Disasters*, describes the Egyptians ignorance of the effects of their land use; "They refused to change their politics and it left them vulnerable once larger forces in nature and in the world came along and pushed them over the edge" (Wan, 2).

Similarly, our country and its governmental policies have been arrogant in how we treat the land which will eventually lead to irreversible consequences. For example, there is an obvious crisis with surplus food waste at the same time when millions of Americans go hungry. One third of the food grown in America goes to waste simply for cosmetic reasons. Instead of pushing for the creation of more and more food and wasting it, it would benefit our country to take a lesson from the Algonquins and use the food we have. We have an abundance. The wealthiest people live in big houses on a lot of land and acres of golf courses that use massive amounts of water to keep the grass green for the entertainment of a tiny fragment of the population. Water and land that could be used to grow food and feed hungry people in their own local communities, many living nearby in crowded apartments. This would be unthinkable in Algonquin society. It is imperative for our modern society to have a better understanding of how our actions and compassion for our land and other people in our society affects our environment. Climate change is causing natural disasters, but conservation policies are not implemented because of corporate greed. If the lesson of Ancient Egypt fails to inform our perspective on the present and the future, we can look to other ancient societies to learn from their mistakes.

The downfall of Ancient Rome can teach us about a fate that we as American society may soon share. In The Ancient Rome Climate Change, Kyle Harper suggests that Rome's fall was caused by the Little Ice Age and the simultaneous occurrence of the Bubonic Plague, coupled with the decadent and careless attitude of Roman society at the time of those events. Overspending on expansion and the military, together with a divided and corrupt government, distracted Roman leaders from focusing on the future of their empire. Harper explains, "The Romans, too, thought they had the upper hand over the fickle and furious power of the natural environment. History warns us: they were wrong" (Harper, 3). In Ancient Rome, the rapid cooling of temperature caused drastic changes in agriculture. Extravagant governmental practices increased food prices and caused major social unrest. This happened at the same time as the Bubonic Plague epidemic. While it may seem that we don't have it nearly as bad as the Ancient Romans, Mr. President, taking a closer look at ourselves we can find incredible similarities. We are suffering from extremely parallel problems with the aftereffects of the coronavirus pandemic and widespread increasing change in temperature and weather patterns, while the majority of the public remains indifferent, instead consumed with culture wars and bitter societal division. It has become abundantly clear that we can't immediately stop the increase in temperature, but we can and should work together with compassion in our society to prepare for its effects by protecting our food, health and land which the Romans failed to do.

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In conclusion Mr. Biden, I implore you as our current leader to look to both the positive lessons of the Algonquins and the tragic downfall of the Ancient Egyptians and Romans to create and implement the changes necessary for our country and the world at large to survive the impending disaster. It will help us more if we work together with compassion to respect the environment, prioritize coexisting with nature by looking at what we have right now and thinking about what we need to do instead of constantly focusing on expansion and consumerism. The past holds the key to the future.

I hope you will consider these lessons from history while making decisions as the leader of our nation.

Sincerely, Jack Gaffigan

Food in America

by Jack Gaffigan



Statement from the Artist: "This piece was inspired by the film, Abundance, The Farmland Project, about how a small group of college students connected the double crises of waste from farm surplus, to the millions of food insecure people relying on food banks, and the vision that two problems can solve each other.

Thank you to Owen Dubeck and the Robin Hood Teen Council for the private screening."

Grateful for Youth-Led Service!

This fall has been buzzing with extraordinary youth-led service! We are so grateful for our community of incredible youth leaders and volunteers. From our special <u>Bombas</u> Sock Donation Project benefiting youth shelters and vulnerable kids throughout NYC, High School freshman Ella Toboroff's candy drives to benefit our favorite family shelter, a special Halloween candy donation from our friends at <u>Economy Candy</u>, an incredible Imagine Babies Shower with our biggest youth collaboration yet handling baking, sign making, organization and more, <u>The Warriors Youth Group</u> getting a jump on their yearly Advent Drive, and <u>The Ascension</u> Food Pantry serving NYC's food insecure community and run by youth leaders all over NYC. Thank you as always to the amazing partnership of <u>Woolco Foods</u> for your critical food donations month after month to the pantry clients.

At <u>The Imagine Society</u>, our mission is to nurture youth service and volunteerism, while serving some of our most vulnerable communities and neighbors. We are 100% volunteer driven, and committed to help foster the future compassionate leaders of tomorrow. Check out this link to <u>DONATE</u> to help support our work and programming!



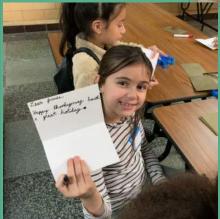












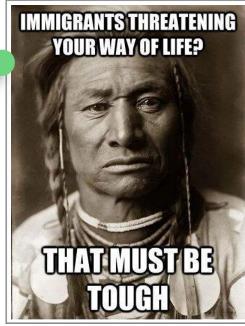






FUN PAGES

Edited by Youth Leaders Michael (12) & Patrick (11) Gaffigan



We don't always have to agree on everything to be kind to one another.

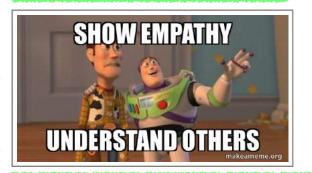
Mike & Pat's Fave Memes

Lol!



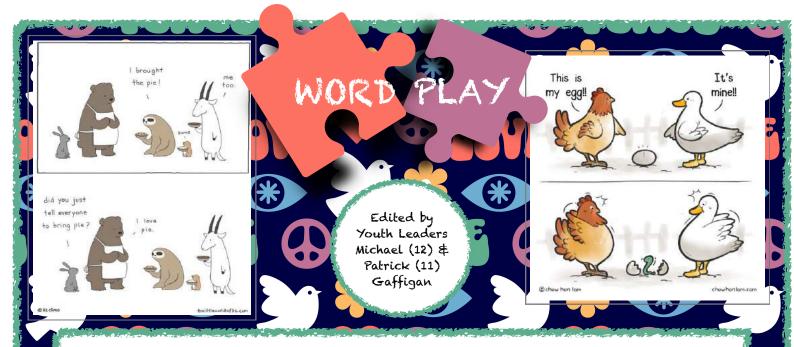
Q: What do you call a sad community of melons?

A: A melancholy melon colony!



Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation towards the local swimming pool. I gave him a glass of water. I love supporting the community!





Compassionate Community Word Search

C A R I N G C G G V R N I U C E F J S Y C O M K F T K N A O M E T U U H M C K S H U T I O P L O P Q A M O C H O W E N P A L G P S R O L O A U K R T E T O E O Y I N L M R G K A E R H W T R M T A E M I H I C R A Y S H T P A L C U N T N T A T S H E I A B I T N G F D I C I O I R V T L T I A L U N N T V C P N E H E Y V L O L E G I E I T E G Y X P E Z V N S O O Y E W S U N I T E D I E S E N Q T O S G H R M B V N S T E H Z Y G R O U P I U B G S N E C I

Thoughtfulness Togetherness Cooperative Interaction Commonality Charitable **Fellowship** Communal Kindness Collective Empathy Interacting Supportive Group Sympathy Sharing Society Loving Caring United



N E C

Search

Compassionate Community Word

A V