



# ASLAN Youth Ministries

*changing the world, one child at a time...*



\* P.O. Box 270 \* Red Bank \* NJ \* 07701 \* (732) 741-7824 \* [www.aslanyouth.org](http://www.aslanyouth.org) \*

“Life's most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’ ”

*Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

For many of our families, the Christmas season is an especially trying time as they are faced with the prospect of a Christmas tree with no gifts under it or a kitchen table without enough food on it to feed their families. As Christmas draws ever near, concern and panic swallows many of our parents as the gap widens between their kids' expectations of a magical Christmas and the parents' fear that the magic may have died. In spite of this dawning realization, many of these parents still manage to hold out hope that somehow their kids' dreams might come true.

Celeste, one of our key Bible class volunteers has been struggling financially for the past year. She has four adorable kids, three of her own and one niece, living under her care. Her

own children have grown up in Aslan since they were little kids, and her niece has been part of our programs for the past several years. Celeste is hardworking, determined, and desperate to make sure her kids aren't devoured by the hard ways of the street.

This past winter was a particularly difficult time for Celeste and her family. Her niece's older brother, who spent the past few summers living with Celeste and her husband, was brutally murdered. Celeste and her family were devastated. On

top of that, she and her husband were struggling to make ends meet and keep enough food in the pantry to feed four growing teenagers.

Then there's Miss Angie. Miss Angie has been a dedicated Aslan volunteer for a very long time. She's had several grandkids go through our programs and currently has another one starting out in our youngest class.

Miss Angie has struggled with unemployment for years. She manages to find odd jobs here and there, but this past year even those jobs were hard to come by.

In a conversation I recently had with her, she broke down in tears as she explained how terrified she was that she wasn't going to have enough money to give her kids and grandkids at Christmas.



# TEAM ASLAN

## NEW JERSEY MARATHON

### RUNNERS AND VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR TEAM ASLAN!

JOIN TEAM ASLAN AND  
RUN IN THE FULL  
MARATHON, HALF  
MARATHON, OR THE HALF  
MARATHON RELAY IN  
SUPPORT OF ASLAN.

THIS YEAR'S NEW JERSEY  
MARATHON TAKES PLACE  
ON SUNDAY, MAY 1<sup>ST</sup>.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ON HOW YOU CAN  
SUPPORT TEAM ASLAN,  
GO TO

[WWW.ASLANYOUTH.ORG](http://WWW.ASLANYOUTH.ORG)

OR CALL

(732) 741-7824

In an effort help Celeste, Miss Angie, and so many of our Aslan families during the holiday season, we connect them with churches, businesses, and individuals committed to making a difference in the lives of others. These are people who take Martin Luther King, Jr. seriously when he said "Life's most persistent and urgent question is 'What are you doing for others?'"

One key volunteer got a group of his business associates to adopt an Aslan family. They raised enough money to buy presents for a family of 10 and had enough left over to give Aslan four \$400 grocery store gift certificates!

I knew immediately whom I wanted to give one of the grocery store gift cards to. I'd grown close to Celeste and her family this past year, and I knew how difficult things had been for them. A gift card in this amount would be a huge blessing to her. It would knock her socks off!

After I explained how important she and her family are to me and to the entire Aslan community, I gave Celeste the food card. As tears streamed down her face she told me how much she needed this. While trying to choke back her emotions, she explained how difficult the past year had been. She didn't know how she and her family were going to make it. "But now," she said, "Now, I know that God hasn't forgotten about us." She gave me a big hug and thanked me for all that Aslan does for her family.

Miss Angie recently reported to me how amazing her Christmas was. The person who adopted her family showed up to her apartment on Christmas Eve with a truck overflowing with presents. She was blown away! Not only did her kids get everything on their list, but they also got enough food to last several weeks! She was moved to tears as she explained what a blessed Christmas her family had.

Celeste, Miss Angie, and the other 80 families and 170 children who all received presents and food this past Christmas were blessed beyond measure. None of this would have been possible if people like you did not take Dr. King's question seriously. My hope and prayer for this next year is that you would continue to be challenged and encouraged by these stories. That you would see the direct link between your support of Aslan and the positive impact in the lives of Celeste, Miss Angie, and the entire Aslan family!



*Doug*