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Participants Possible X The Task at Hand ± The Time Available

By Bob Kloos, Artistic Contractor

Beacon Street has always been most successful when as many audience members as possible are able to participate in the telling, the singing, and the doing of Gospel. When we manage to include everyone, no one has to use words to detail what is taking place. They already know. Participation is the key to hearing, integrating, and acting on the good news. The Ruffing playground project was a well-timed opportunity for parents to better understand their role in the education of their children. Parents employed the Montessori method by getting their hands on and arms around the project, and the satisfaction increased exponentially.

campaigns to the president or congressional representative in times when peace is in jeopardy can involve everyone. Short notes, colored pictures, and posters work just as well as carefully worded letters. One church congregation could completely fill a mailbag.

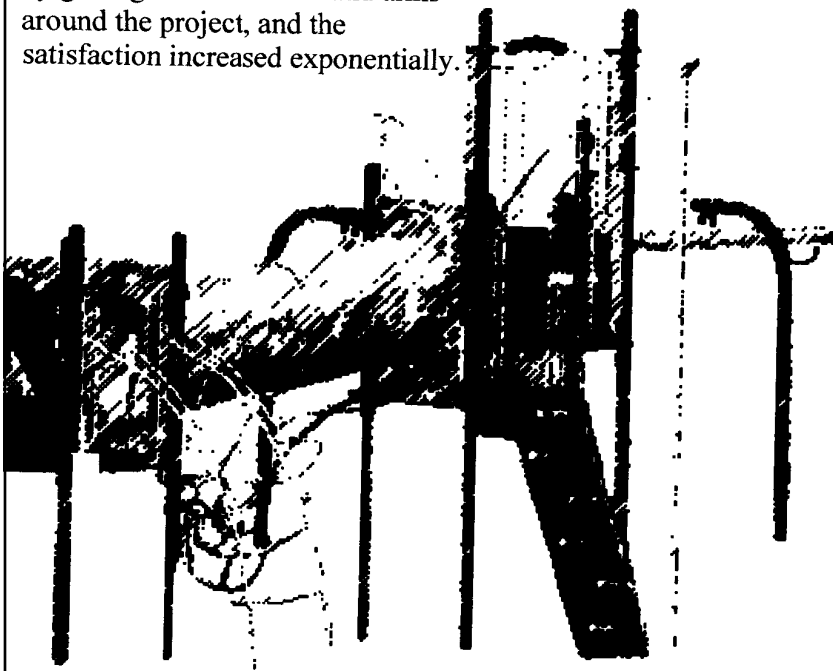
A few weeks ago, I was invited to a parish in the Canton area. Just prior to my presentation, two women spoke briefly to the junior and

may not have been familiar with, but the project was set up so an entire group could travel together and accomplish what no individual could. And the thought that many familiar faces would accompany you to an unfamiliar place may make the project more attractive. It can even turn a "bad" neighborhood into one you might return to someday. So, more participants can open more doors for more people.

I wonder if reunions somehow fall into this "Mission Success Formula." For the past year or so I have been putting a fair amount of time and energy into locating and reconnecting with people I have not seen since high school. I have concluded that this is one of my responses to events of 9/11. That tragic day has reminded me that the total number of participants does factor into the amount of satisfaction a project can provide, no matter how far back you have to reach.

Anyway, it was a long summer, but now there are dozens of wee folk at Ruffing Montessori School that call me by name! And I know dozens of parents now, too. They all credit me for the new playground. But I know better. The glow they feel about the project is the result of everyone's contribution, great or small, and it builds with each new day the kids come to play.

Money cannot buy the community that was built last August.



When you are planning projects, considering outreach, decorating for a church or school event, or trying to engage children in civic or political events, give the hands-on approach a chance. Letter-writing

senior high school students about an opportunity to participate in a service project in the heart of the city. One young lady asked, "Isn't that in a bad neighborhood?" Indeed, it was an area of the city she