

Central Catholic High School's Guardian Angels Working Outdoors

James Bendele, Ministry Lead at Central Catholic High School, San Antonio, TX, sends us this update about the Guardian Angels participating in volunteer activities at the 28th Annual Basura Bash and the Saddle Light Center.

On Feb. 18, 2023, a group of more than twenty *Guardian Angels* from Central Catholic High School got together at OP Schnabel Park on the northwest side of San Antonio to participate in the 28th annual [Basura Bash](#). The group met at 8:00 a.m. and took a hike throughout the park led by Mr. James Bendele, a certified master naturalist. While on the walk, the group learned quite a bit about the flora and fauna of the Texas Hill Country, as well as environmental concerns (such as plastic pollution). **After the hike, the group partnered with over 100 other volunteers around the city to help clean up trash within the Leon Creek Greenway.**

One week later, on Feb. 25, sixteen Guardian Angels met at the [Saddle Light Center](#) for another community service project. The Saddle Light Center is a facility that houses horses that are used for equestrian therapy. Equestrian therapy is a unique therapy type where horses help children with Down syndrome, muscular dystrophy, and cerebral palsy. A lot goes on at the Saddle Light Center, so volunteers are always needed. Once again, the group arrived a half hour early for Mr. Bendele to give a lesson on horse anatomy and physiology. After the lesson, the group cleaned the horse stables for the rest of the morning. *It was an honor being able to volunteer at such a remarkable place!*

One of the most incredible things about both projects is that we got our students to experience the outdoors in a way that might have been entirely new to them, and that is a big part of what the Marianist Encounters Project is all about!



