Writing up an invitation list to a wedding is one of the few times when people consciously think about who is in their “circle” of close relationships and who is not. Who gets on the list, who doesn’t, and why? Usually, immediate family members and close friends are automatically in the “circle.” Distant relatives, some co-workers, and acquaintances might not make the cut. We all have a “circle.”

Our “circles” can be measured not only by how many people we know and how well we know them, but also by the resources of those people. For example, if you need a ride to the airport, you call someone in your circle with a car. Or, if you are trying to find a job for one of your children, you call someone in your circle in a position to hire. Your circle is full of resources.

What I have learned over the years at Bishop Sullivan Center is that a poor person may have plenty of people in the circle, but those people are limited in resources. They don’t have cars to give a ride, they don’t have job contacts or leads, and they don’t have extra money to give in an emergency. Having a circle with limited resources can make life harder.

This phenomenon of a limited-resource circle becomes clear to me with Project ElderCool. When entering the home of an elderly person who needs an air-conditioner, the first thing I notice is that the home is really hot. I remember one woman meeting me at the door, wiping sweat off her face with a towel. On their walls or mantles, many of these people have pictures of family – loved ones in their “circle.” The air-conditioners we provide, in many cases, are literally life-savers and cost around $150. But even when the need for relief is urgent and the cost of providing it isn’t too much, no one in their circle can help. I really believe it is not a case of not wanting to help, but of not being able to help.

There’s a story in the Bible (Mark 3:34) where a group of poor people are “seated in a circle” around Jesus, and he tells the “teachers of the law” that those poor people are his “mother and brothers and sisters.” I think it was Jesus’ way of challenging us to include the poor in our circle.

We are grateful for your willingness to share your resources with people who do not have them. By doing so, you have included them in your circle.
KC Royal’s player Christian Colon and his wife Kayla are encouraging kids to “go to bat for others,” that is, to help those in need. Christian’s uniform number “24” is a constant reminder to Go2Bat4Others.

Christian is well aware that kids typically see professional athletes as role models. He wants to try to live up to that challenge.

Christian and Kayla have volunteered at our agency and have seen firsthand that there are people in need in our city. So now, they are asking kids (ages 14 and under) to put on mini food drives. It’s as easy as reaching out to family members, friends and neighbors for food donations. Then, the kids could have a parent, grandparent or other adult bring them and the food they have collected to Bishop Sullivan Center.

At Bishop Sullivan Center they will be given a tour, view a message Christian and Kayla videotaped just for them, and by way of video, they will “meet” some of the people whom their food donation will help.

To thank the kids for their food drive, each will receive a “Go2Bat4Others” t-shirt and a ticket to a Royals game that includes entering the stadium early to watch batting practice from behind the dugout. Christian Colon will personally greet the kids at the stadium (limited offer).

For more details how you can have your kids Go2Bat4Others, go to our website at www.bishopsullivan.org.