



Kindness, Compassion and Forgiveness

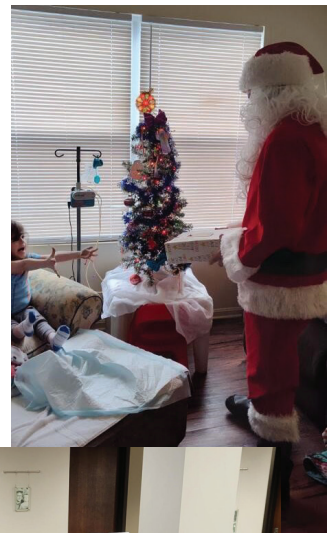
By: Jill Walch, Volunteer Coordinator

It is heartwarming to reflect on the recent holidays and the impact we have had in helping those in need. This year, Catholic Charities collaborated with St. Pius X and Blessed Sacrament to provide 165 Thanksgiving meals to families in Northern Kentucky and Bracken and Owen counties who would have otherwise gone without a traditional Thanksgiving meal. Additionally, over 50 families received Christmas presents, allowing their children to experience the joy of waking up to gifts under the tree on Christmas morning.

While our goal at Catholic Charities is to educate and empower families to become self-sufficient and less reliant on emergency programs, we recognize that unexpected circumstances can sometimes leave families in need of extra help. It is reassuring to know that our donors and volunteers are always ready to assist in this mission.

Our Catholic teachings remind us of the importance of providing loving and just service to everyone we encounter, embodying kindness, compassion, and forgiveness. Jesus serves as an example of kindness and compassion, even in the face of our own shortcomings. His sacrifice on the cross sealed the forgiveness of our sins.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each of our volunteers and supporters for their dedication in serving those who needed help this year. It is through giving that we also receive, and it is this generosity that allows Catholic Charities to continue serving our community year after year.



A Letter from the Executive Director



Serving and Transforming Lives—Planning for Catholic Charities Future

As we embark on the New Year, our efforts revolve around shaping Catholic Charities' forthcoming three-year strategic plan, and I am filled with anticipation for the potential opportunities that lie ahead. While envisioning growth in certain ministries, stability in others, and fostering deeper partnerships, my central focus this year is on evaluating the effectiveness of our initiatives in transforming lives and implementing necessary changes to enhance our efforts—a theme alluded to in my Autumn 2023 article. This article will provide insights into my current thoughts regarding Jesus' transformative call to impact lives, particularly as applied to Catholic Charities' crucial ministries in the coming year.

Drawing inspiration from St. Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, the Christian mandate to serve and transform lives is emphasized. This call mirrors Jesus' example, urging generosity with Christ and bearing witness to His Gospel through service. Participating in the mission of spreading God's word entails giving our lives in service to others, fostering transformation in the world.

Certainly, as Catholic Charities fulfills its mission through the provision of corporal and spiritual works of mercy, I am personally drawn to the more challenging work of Jesus, which involves the profound transformation of lives. While Jesus physically and spiritually healed hundreds, possibly thousands, during his lifetime, His ultimate desire was to transform the lives of those He encountered. As we know, some were transformed, while others chose to walk away.

With that as a backdrop, I have started contemplating and posing questions to our staff, Board of Trustees, and to some of our donors and volunteers. How well are we doing in assessing the impact of our diverse ministries? While excelling in meeting immediate needs, the more profound question remains: How successful have our sustained efforts been in transforming lives and inspiring both recipients and contributors, such as our volunteers and donors, to live their faith?

Without genuine engagement with our neighbors, actively seeking their perspectives, and understanding how to serve them more effectively, we will never know and therefore are paramount considerations. Equally crucial is evaluating our evangelization efforts—effectively spreading the Good News of the Gospel to those we serve. While acts of charity testify to our faith and may draw others closer to Christ, yet another fundamental question remains: Do tangible acts truly bring people closer to Christ?

In the pursuit of understanding, it is inherent for us to engage in dialogue, possibly through surveys but more significantly through direct interaction, with those we serve to gain a deeper understanding of their needs. While we have diligently collected and assessed feedback from staff, donors, volunteers, and partners for our strategic plan, we have deliberately postponed engaging with those we serve until we determine the right questions, the purpose behind them, how we intend to utilize the gathered information. These are complex yet essential considerations as we reflect on the impact and efficacy of our initiatives.

In conclusion, my optimism for Catholic Charities extends beyond acts of charity and potential service expansion. It encompasses a pivotal focus on evaluating the organization's effectiveness to foster transformative change. To those dedicated to our mission, I extend an invitation to join me on this journey, actively seeking your ongoing input as we address these important questions and joyfully engage in providing both corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

May God continue to bless you and our ministries.

Chris Goddard

News and Events

Help A Neighbor. Donate a Bike! 2024 goal is 300 bikes!

Start the year off right with a resolution to clean out your garage while simultaneously providing valuable transportation for our neighbors in need. Pickett's Corner repairs and distributes bicycles. People use them for transportation to work, the store or doctor appointments. We are accepting new and gently used adult size bikes. Please send an email to pickettscorner23@gmail.com.

Mark Connaughton, Catholic Order of Foresters Court Trustee, presented Chris Goddard, Executive Director of Catholic Charities, and Alan Pickett, retired Executive Director of Catholic Charities, a check for \$1,500 for Pickett's Corner.



We are so honored!

This past fall, the Butler Foundation board created ***The Mary Sue (Lutz) Butler Faith and Family Award*** in honor of the late Sue Butler. ***The award is conferred on a person whose quiet, consistent acts of love and service demonstrate an abiding commitment to faith and family***, just as Sue lived her life. The inaugural awardee was Rosalie Hentz, one of our very own wonderful and dedicated volunteers, who regularly can be seen at our St. Joseph Apartments. By receiving this award, Rosalie selected Catholic Charities to receive \$25,000, in her honor, which she chose to go to St. Joseph Supportive Housing and Parish Kitchen. We are very thankful to the Butler Foundation for this grant and are truly blessed to have Rosalie as a part of the Catholic Charities family.

SAVE THE DATE

Parish Kitchen will be celebrating it's 50th Anniversary on June 17, 2024.
Open House Reception will be from 5:00-7:00 pm at Parish Kitchen.



The Poor You Will Always Have With You (Mk14:7)

By Karen Kuhlman

"This is a summons never to lose sight of every opportunity to do good." Pope Francis (June 13, 2021)

Catholic Charities has been seizing opportunities to do good in the Diocese of Covington since 1931. Opportunities present themselves in the form of the hungry, the homeless, those in despair, and those in prison. Catholic Charities counselors minister to those seeking relief from burdens, which take many forms.

Anna Phillips, a Client Care Coordinator and Parenting Supervisor, said the charity is happy with the past year's accomplishments and excited to work on a strategic plan with new Executive Director Chris Goddard. "It helps to look at things we have done and make a plan and direction for the future. Regarding Parenting Classes, things slowed down a bit prior to COVID-19 as the landscape of services changed. During COVID, online classes were offered as an accommodation to people.

We see fewer people registering now, and we are looking at ways to revamp our curriculum and include niche areas, such as families suffering from the effects of substance abuse. Probably 75% of those who come to our class are either using, have used themselves, or are involved with someone who is using."



We are currently reviewing research-based curriculum for at-risk families with many children or families with children with special needs or behavioral issues. Also under consideration are community workshops in one or two schools that would help address specific needs such as child development or discipline methods.

Some clients are referred to Catholic Charities through the court for family reunification. It could be that a parent hasn't seen a child for a while, or perhaps since birth, and is trying to reconnect. Maybe a parent never knew they had a child and is starting from scratch. Anna Phillips sees children under 12, while David Durr counsels older children. For more therapeutic issues, counseling can shift from individual children to family counseling.

These programs are not without cost to Catholic Charities: some have a hefty price tag of \$3,500. Catholic Charities is exploring more affordable programs in the \$1,500 range and is considering updating existing copyrighted programs for around \$300 each. But not all needs come with hefty price tags. The Parent/Child program also accepts donations of coloring books and small, single-use cans of Play Dough for children to use during their Parent/Child program sessions.

Catholic Charities recognizes parenting is a difficult job and offers programs that can strengthen the relationship between parents and children. Children can be challenging and demanding; sometimes, their behavior is difficult for parents to understand or change. Catholic Charities' goal is to help parents develop healthy, nurturing relationships with their children.

Phillips said: "We teach communication skills that prevent problems from developing and offer healthy alternatives to yelling and spanking that encourage children to cooperate. We help parents develop

appropriate expectations of their children by teaching them how they grow and learn.”

Belle Zembrodt, a clinical counselor, said her role at Catholic Charities is that of a therapist serving clients. She said that at this time in her life, this is where she wants to be, and is glad to be able to focus on individual clients, couples, and families rather than serve in an administrative position. What has encouraged her is witnessing the success of her clients. She relates an experience with a client who was having episodes several times a day during which he would black out and literally beat himself up. Upon waking, he would discover self-inflicted injuries and had no memory of how or why they occurred. Doctors had conducted many tests and could find nothing physical that would explain the lack of recall. The client ultimately had to quit work due to the recurring episodes of lost consciousness. The doctor recommended Eye Movement Desensitization Reprogramming, one of the therapies available at Catholic Charities. Zembrodt is certified in EMDR and explains it as a therapy focusing on the body.

There are many different therapies, but EMDR is specifically appropriate for trauma. Traumatizing experiences such as combat, physical assaults, abuse, witnessing a shooting, or even hearing about one can cause the memory of such events to be stored in the body instead of the brain. If you can't remember something that happened to you, talk therapy is not going to work because you haven't stored the traumatic memories in your verbal memory; the traumatic memories are stored in your body. The brain recognizes triggers and tries to protect you from memories that might result in episodes such as those experienced by Zembrodt's client. EMDR is a way of accessing traumatic memories; it unlocks those memories stored in your body. In her client's case, his problems were the result of childhood abuse. Zembrodt has been seeing him for eleven months now. He began coming to Catholic Charities twice weekly, but Zembrodt now sees him only once a week. He hasn't had an episode in eight weeks and is back at work.

Zembrodt said, “Everyone is unique, and no one set path necessarily for therapy exists. It isn't like a cookbook; therapists learn about different symptom clusters to determine the best evidence-based



treatment for their clients. Sometimes, a combination of treatments is appropriate. It is very individual; you want to meet your clients where they are. You want to ask: How can I get to know you and help you get to know yourself so you can get to where you need to go and flourish? Health is not just the absence of disease. It is flourishing, thriving, and living your best life.

The concepts of hearth and home have long kindled the imagination of Americans. Images of family and friends gathered together in love for simple family dinners, holidays, and celebrations of milestones are part of the fabric of the American Dream. Some find the dream elusive, but the Counselors of Catholic Charities Housing Services work diligently to make it a reality for many.

Patti Anderson is one of Catholic Charities Housing Counselors who works with first-time homebuyers and those in danger of losing their homes to foreclosure. The COVID-19 pandemic added a degree of difficulty to homeownership.

Catholic Charities Housing Counseling offers support via the Foreclosure Delinquency Program, supported through the Kentucky Housing Corporation. Qualified applicants have suffered a 10% loss of income due to COVID. The corporation will pay up to \$60,000 to bring your loan current, an excellent program for those facing delinquency issues. They will pay the delinquency up to the next six months of your mortgage payment, not to exceed \$60,000 for the entire amount of support. Anderson has received referrals for over 40 clients

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Program Updates

Parents of Addicted Loved-Ones (PAL) Free Support Group

**2nd & 4th Wednesday
of each month**

6:30–8:00 p.m.

Catholic Charities,

3629 Church Street, Covington, KY 41015

PAL provides continuing education along with support, at no charge, for parents with a son or daughter suffering from alcohol or drug addiction.

Friends & Family of the Incarcerated Free Support Group

3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Catholic Charities,

3629 Church Street, Covington, KY 41015

A safe, welcoming community where you will be accepted without judgment. Questions? Contact Dave Pike at 859-669-3636.

Free Homebuyer Education Class

Saturday, March 2, 2024

Saturday, April 6, 2024

Saturday, May 1, 2024

9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Catholic Charities,

3629 Church Street, Covington, KY 41015

Learn about managing money, budgeting, insurance, inspections, mortgage lending, realtors, protecting your investment and predatory lending.

Class size is limited. REGISTRATION REQUIRED: (859) 581-8974.



Welcome Dave Pike as Jail Ministry Coordinator

In March of 2023, Dave Pike, our new Jail Ministry Coordinator, retired after thirty-three years of service in Catholic Healthcare. Working in both the Mercy Health and St. Elizabeth Healthcare systems, he had the good fortune to work in many different disciplines. Dave worked in mental health as a substance abuse counselor, then in hospital

support services as a department Director, and in the field of Mission and Spiritual Care as a Chaplain and Vice-President, Mission and Values.

Dave possesses a B.A. in Philosophy from a Catholic Seminary College, owned by the Redemptorist Fathers of the Baltimore Province, an M.S. in Management from Indiana Wesleyan University, and also completed advanced studies in Theology in the master's program at Xavier University.

After enjoying a beautiful summer of golf at Kenton County Golf Course, he began to feel the “God-bug” as he likes to call it, inviting him to become active again in some sort of meaningful work. The ad for the position of Jail Ministry Coordinator kept speaking to me and he decided to respond.

Dave has been so impressed with the quality and commitment of the volunteers that are active in the Jail Ministry. They each bring their own gifts and talents to the people they meet. Giving a sense of caring and hope to those struggling to find their place in the world.

Dave comments that he often ponders the question; “What does it mean to be a Christian?” And while he never quite reaches an absolutely satisfying answer, he knows being active in some form of “helping” is a part of it.

If you would like to learn more about volunteering in our Jail Ministry program, contact Dave at 859-669-3636 or visit our website www.covingtoncharities.org.

Program Updates continued

Do not be afraid...I am with you (Isaiah 43:5)

Life is filled with peaks and valleys, calm waters and rough seas. It is during difficult times that we often find ourselves lonely and afraid, but then a trusted friend takes our hand and reassures us that everything is going to be okay. Catholic Charities for many, is that trusted friend. We meet clients where they are and help them navigate through life's challenges.



Your financial commitment to Catholic Charities Annual Campaign demonstrates your support for what we do. The numbers speak for themselves...since our previous fiscal year:

- Our Mental Health Counselors have seen an increase of 72% more clients

- Client Care calls are up 60%

- Parish Kitchen has served 43% more meals

- Two new food pantries were added in Mason & Pendleton Counties

- 27 homes were saved from foreclosure

Here's how you can make a difference: Donate using the enclosed envelope or online at www.covingtoncharities.org.

Thank you for your continued support!

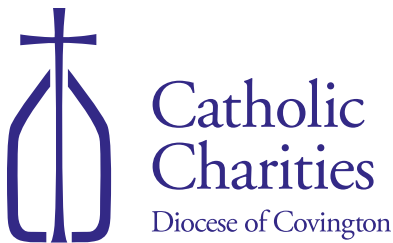
The Poor You Will Always Have With You (continued from page 5)

through this program; most of her clients do not use the total amount of support available. Those not eligible for this program may be eligible through another program for some type of loan modification.

But, even in difficult times, Anderson has reason to be encouraged. She is happy with the attendance at the Home Buyers Education Classes this year, especially given the dramatic rise in interest rates late in the year. But she advises caution when considering offers of assistance from unfamiliar sources. She was pleased to have prevented one particular client from being scammed: the client received a text saying she would be eligible for a loan modification. Anderson listened to the telephone presentation with her client as the loan officer explained the terms; the more she heard, the more leery she became. She determined that the caller was working a scam that would have cost her client several hundred dollars.

Looking ahead to the new year, Anderson hopes mortgage rates will go down but doesn't see a dramatic drop in rates. She said, "If they do go down a bit, we will be able to put many more people in the driver's seat regarding their ability to purchase a home. A home buyers assistance program through the Northern Kentucky Home Consortium offers \$10,000 down payment assistance to qualified buyers through funding targeted to Covington, Ludlow, Newport, Dayton, Bellevue, Independence, Erlanger, and Florence."

For more information about these or any of Catholic Charities programs visit www.covingtoncharities.org.



Extend a Hand. Change a Life.

3629 Church Street
Covington, KY 41015
859.581.8974
www.CovingtonCharities.org
www.facebook.com/CovingtonCharities

Serving the community for over 94 years

Our Mission: We serve all people in our Diocese who lack basic human needs, including physical, spiritual, or emotional, regardless of their religious beliefs.

Using a unique holistic approach, we support and empower our clients to achieve self-sufficiency by providing guidance, tools, and life-skills.

We also serve our volunteers, supporters, and partner agencies/ministries by providing the means for them to serve and assist their neighbors in need through our programs or referrals.

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*Partners newsletter is published three times a year in spring, summer and winter
for friends of Catholic Charities. Catholic Charities provides Child and Family Services;
Counseling Services; Housing Services; and Community Outreach Services.*