



DIGNITY RESPECT AFFECTION ATTENTION HOSPITALITY



 **Parish Kitchen**
A ministry of the
Diocese of Covington

Celebrating Over 47 Years of Serving Those in Need!

Spring 2022

Alan Pickett
Catholic Charities,
Executive Director

Warm Welcome
365 Days a Year

Parish Kitchen Staff

James Wendeln
Manager
Amy Bauer
Assistant Manager
Mindy Garcia
Parish Kitchen Associate

Weekend Staff

Gayle Gillen
Chris Meyer
Erica Sellman
Clare Vetter
Jim Young

Catholic Charities
Advisory Board

Tim Beck, Chair
Julie Fortner
Deacon Jerry Franzen
Gregory George
Dan Groneck
Jeff Jehn
Dan Meier
Ed Monohan
Sr. Fran Moore
Randy Rawe
Tom Rawe
Msgr. Gerry Reinersman
Clare Ruehl
Mary Paula Schuh
Jim Volz

The Parish Kitchen is an important ministry of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington. But it is an essential ministry to area residents who walk through doors of Parish Kitchen every day. Since 1974, for 365 days a year, the hungry have known they can count on a warm welcome and a nourishing noontime meal, free of cost, in a safe and friendly environment. Not even the recent pandemic could stand in the way, as grab-and-go meals temporarily replaced in-person dining. This ministry is made possible by the Diocese of Covington, the generosity of donors, the dedication of the professional staff and hundreds of volunteers. Now, Jim Wendeln, one of those volunteers, is stepping up to become part of the professional staff as the new Parish Kitchen Manager.



Jim Wendeln

When Jim reflects on his long career, he looks back on a life spent in service to others. He has seen active duty with the U.S. Army Reserves and worked in law enforcement for 39 years. But his post-retirement private security job didn't really give him many opportunities to be of assistance to others in meaningful ways. Throughout his career, Jim sought to approach difficult situations he encountered as an opportunity to be a problem solver for the people he met daily.

For instance: Jim was an officer with the Villa Hills Police Department when the Ohio River left its banks in 1997. The rising waters flooded many homes in the Bromley community, resulting in great loss for many of the residents there. But they were the beneficiaries of Jim's problem-solving expertise as he spearheaded an effort to raise funds to help replace appliances lost to the rising waters. His natural inclination to be a helpful problem solver lightened the load for many of the flood sufferers.

He wants to continue to be of service to others, especially if that service is a ministry of the Catholic Church. He and his wife, Diane, have been Parish Kitchen volunteers for 7 years and enjoy the opportunity to be of assistance to those who need a helping hand. *(Continued on page 2)*

Parish Kitchen
P.O. Box 1234,
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www.parishkitchen.org
<http://www.facebook.com/ParishKitchen>
www.covingtoncharities.org

A Warm Welcome

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They knew there was an opening at the Parish Kitchen for a kitchen manager and thought the position might be just the opportunity Jim had been looking for.

Jim knows he has a lot to learn, but he accepts the challenges that Parish Kitchen presents. He wants to maintain the quality of service established by his predecessors and appreciated by its guests. He has learned a great deal about people during the course of his work in law enforcement. He hopes to transfer those skills and his respect for his fellow man to his work at the Parish Kitchen. He wants to be helpful to the staff and keep the guests of the Parish Kitchen well fed. Jim Wendeln plans to engage the guests there without being intrusive; to assist, where possible, by being attentive for appropriate opportunities for lending a hand and changing a life. Please join us in welcoming Jim as the new Parish Kitchen Manager, and thank him for his willingness and desire to serve.

Youth in Action

The SEEK retreat, lead by Sr. Catherine Bauer, OSB, allows students preparing for confirmation to encounter Christ by walking in the footsteps of those who are homeless. The students visit various non-profits that serve the homeless, including Parish Kitchen. The students pray, watch, reflect and process who and why families are homeless. By the end of the day, they can grow in love and empathy for those in need.

Madison Arstingstall, a student at Mary Queen of Heaven school, was moved with the need to help after attending the SEEK retreat. She organized her classmates to make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for Parish Kitchen. They are making approximately 80 sandwiches and hoping to get more grades involved. Madison's response to the SEEK retreat shows how a single, young person can learn about a problem and find a way to help. Through Sr. Cathy's leadership, Madison is a great example of how to put your faith into action.



Madison and her classmates make sandwiches for Parish Kitchen guests

St. Joseph Catholic School in Crescent Springs collected hats, gloves, razors, deodorant and desserts during Catholic Schools Week. Thanks so much!



Volunteer Spotlight

"I want you to be concerned about your next-door neighbor. Do you know your next-door neighbor?" I recently came across this quote from St. Teresa of Calcutta, and it reminded me that for the past 36 years, our weekend manager, Jim Young, has led students of St. Joe's in Cold Spring to volunteer at the Parish Kitchen. These students *have* met their next-door neighbor, in the faces of the homeless and the hungry.

In 1986, Jim Young was a volunteer at the Parish Kitchen as well as a junior high religion and science teacher at St. Joe's. He began to provide his students with an opportunity to volunteer with him at the Parish Kitchen. Six students would sign up via the chalkboard, to serve lunch to guests at the Parish Kitchen, once a month on the first Saturday.

Jim wanted his students to have a well-rounded Catholic education. For him, this meant not just being taught in the classroom but serving the community. He hoped the students "would realize there are people that do not have all the advantages, but they are the same as us." He then incorporated in the classroom the experiences the students had volunteering.

While leading this experience, Jim shared how impressed he was with the students' ability to find time to serve amidst their busy schedules and do so with enthusiasm. He said the guests have appreciated their enthusiasm, and those they serve have been overheard saying, "We really like to see the smiling faces of the young people!"

When Jim Young retired from teaching at St. Joe's in 2016, Shari Gearding, a St. Joe's parishioner, whose older children were taught by Jim, and volunteered at the Parish Kitchen, took charge of organizing this effort. She wanted her younger children to volunteer at the Parish Kitchen like her older ones. She created an online sign up for St. Joe's junior high and high school parishioners so they can continue to volunteer on the first Saturday of the month. This online sign up fills up way in advance!



Jim Young and his students sharing their time to assist the Parish Kitchen

Thank you to Trader Joes of Crestview Hills for the donation of flowers. Not only were we able to place fresh flowers at each table but each guest was able to choose a bouquet of flowers to take with them as they left.



Keira Schneider and Candace Stallmeyer, Juniors at Notre Dame Academy, painted the Parish Kitchen windows for Christmas and Valentine's Day. They are amazing artists!



Respect

Hospitality

Attention

Affection

Dignity

Parish Kitchen Wish List

- Hats
- Rain Ponchos
- Hand Warmers
- Gloves
- Belts for pants
- Hand Sanitizer (small)
- Foot Powder

*If you can donate any of these items,
please drop off items to:*

Parish Kitchen
**1561 Madison Avenue (Corner of 16th
& Madison) Between 8 a.m. and 1
p.m.**

Calling All Gardeners!



There are several raised garden beds at the Parish Kitchen that will need planting, weeding, and harvesting throughout the spring and summer. If you have knowledge or just like gardening, we need your help. This would be a great volunteer opportunity for a small group or individuals. Please go to www.parishkitchen.org and register to volunteer or call Amy Bauer, at 859-581-7745 for more information.