

Partners Newsletter

Autumn 2025 | Edition #107



Catholic
Charities
Diocese of Covington

Dreams Are a Journey— They Unfold Step by Step

By Emily Hudepohl, Integrated Communications Marketing Specialist

This year's Cassba, themed "Dreams Are a Journey," reminded us that every journey begins with a spark of hope and that the path forward is made possible through the care and generosity of others. With your support, Catholic Charities continues to walk alongside those in need, helping them take meaningful steps toward healing, stability, and renewed purpose.

Together, we are helping lift the burdens that weigh down the journey towards hope and new beginnings. Whether it's a parent rebuilding their life, a child seeking stability, or a neighbor rediscovering their self-worth, your presence at Cassba helped fuel their journey. Each act of generosity at this event became a small light along someone else's path.

We are incredibly grateful for the dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, and guests who brought this year's event to life. Whether you attended in person or supported from afar, you played a meaningful role in advancing our mission and reminding our clients that their dreams matter.

There was no shortage of joy and energy throughout the evening, from the friendly bidding wars during our silent and live auctions to the crowd-favorite "heads or tails" game with Bishop Iffert. Each shared moment was a beautiful reminder of the power of community and the joy that comes from giving with purpose.

Congratulations to our raffle winners!

Cassba Cash Raffle – First place: Lois Seissiger, Second place: Dan Fagel, Third place: Clare Ruehl

Bourbon Raffle – First place: Jennifer Topmiller, Second place: Gary Goddard, Third place: Tom Lampe, Fourth place: Cynthia Cleves; Dream Vacation Raffle Winner – Eileen Marks

Mark your calendars: Cassba 2026 will take place on Sunday, August 30!



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of Dr. John Darpel

A Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

I'm excited to share that this fall marks the beginning of something extraordinary for Catholic school students in our diocese. Beginning with the 2025–2026 school year, Catholic Charities will launch CARES—the Catholic Approach to Resilience, Engagement, and Support—at Holy Cross, Holy Trinity, and Mary Queen of Heaven elementary schools. This pilot program will serve all 400 students at no cost to schools or families, reflecting our deep commitment to ensuring that every child in our care is seen, valued, and supported not only in academics but also in their emotional and spiritual growth. At the same time, we are pleased to provide mental health counseling to two new schools – Immaculate Heart of Mary, Burlington, and St. Peter & Paul, California.

The decision to expand our services and launch CARES was shaped directly by the feedback of our Catholic school partners. In May 2024, Catholic Charities surveyed all Catholic elementary and high schools in the Diocese. The survey had a twofold purpose: first, to gain a clear picture of the current landscape of mental health counseling services available in our schools; and second, to identify opportunities for strengthening and expanding those services in preparation for the 2025–2026 school year. 29 of 36 schools (an 80.5% response rate), and the message was clear: schools want more counseling support but face limited resources. The details of CARES and the call to action it inspired are described in the article *Made in the Image and Likeness of God* by Karen Kuhlman (pages 4-5).

Together, the launch of CARES and the expansion of our counseling program represent an important step forward in our mission to walk with children and families in their journey of faith and learning. We are building a system that strengthens not only academics, but also resilience, compassion, and hope—qualities that shape the whole person. In this way, Catholic Charities is helping our schools prepare students not only for success in the classroom, but for lives of faith, hope, and love—lives firmly rooted in Christ.

To prepare for this new initiative, Catholic Charities has welcomed Holly Barrett-Sears, Jessica Gangwish and Justin Voight, who will provide expertise and guidance. They will collaborate with school counseling supervisor Sheila Dumford (Mary Queen of Heaven and Holy Cross Elementary) and Michelle Barbian (Holy Spirit Elementary). Together, this team will ensure that CARES is carefully tailored to the needs of each school community while staying firmly grounded in our Catholic mission.

In Christ,

Chris Goddard

Save the Date – Appreciation Dinner

Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at 5:30 pm, Receptions Erlanger (More information in 2026)

News and Events

Guided by Grace: A Summer of Learning and Growth

By Brandy Medaugh, Client Care Specialist and St. Joseph Case Manager

“Instruct the wise, and they will be even wiser; teach the righteous, and they will learn even more.” –Proverbs 9:9

This summer has been a season of learning and growth for the children at the St. Joseph Apartments.

We were blessed with two amazing educators who dedicated their time and talents to help develop and sharpen the knowledge of 16 children within the supportive housing program.

Several children will be entering Kindergarten equipped with knowledge of counting, letter and number recognition, and the ability to identify, and some even write, their names, thanks to Tutor Kris and the consistent support she provided weekly to the younger children.

A large group of our school-age children will be entering the new school year with stronger reading skills, new social skills, and improvements in math and writing, thanks to Tutor Theresea. Theresea provided her time and talents to a large group of children each week. She also helped the children to develop a classroom of their own, an imaginative space where they could play school and further develop their love of learning.

With the help of tutoring, 12 of the children completed the Kenton County library’s summer reading challenge. In total, over 178 books were read this summer by the children at St. Joseph. We are thrilled to watch their continued growth throughout the upcoming school year.

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.” –Matthew 28:20



NKU Women’s Basketball Team Serves at Parish Kitchen

By Emily Hudepohl, Integrated Communications Marketing Specialist

The Northern Kentucky University Women’s Basketball Team and coaches recently spent a day serving lunch at Catholic Charities’ Parish Kitchen. With warm smiles and welcoming words, the athletes greeted guests and handed out meals, showing the same teamwork off the court as they do on it.

Working side by side, the players brought energy, unity, and encouragement into the kitchen. Their willingness to step forward together in service was a powerful witness of compassion and teamwork in action. Catholic Charities is grateful for their example and support.



Made in the Image and Likeness of God

By Karen Kuhlman

Little by little, the days grow shorter, and we welcome the cooler temperatures that usher in the beauty of Autumn. The rhythm of family life shifts as the laid-back days of summer give way to busy school schedules. Summer wardrobes are replaced with school-friendly clothing, and children transform into students settling in with new teachers, making friends, and learning new things each day.

Their efforts are joined by teachers and support personnel who strive daily to achieve a common goal: “Let us make this the best school year ever!” Sharing that commitment is Chris Goddard, Executive Director of Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Covington, a position he assumed in May 2024. Before joining Catholic Charities, he spent four years teaching at Notre Dame Academy and Seton High Schools, where he saw firsthand the importance of Christian-rooted counseling in supporting students’ growth. That experience informs his vision for expanding Catholic Charities’ school counseling program and strengthening services that nurture students’ emotional and spiritual well-being.

Just as the school year brings new routines and opportunities, it also highlights the need for support for all students. Historically, Catholic Charities provided intensive, one-on-one mental health counseling for the 3–5% of students with the greatest needs. While essential for those students, the remaining 95–97% had limited access to preventative and universal support.

Surveys conducted by Catholic Charities in 2024 across all diocesan schools, combined with research into national best practices, guided the development of CARES—the Catholic Approach to Resilience, Engagement, and Support. CARES provides counseling for all students while ensuring intensive support for those with the greatest needs.

CARES addresses the needs of the entire school community, ensuring that all children have access to care while providing deeper interventions for those who need them most. By building on the experience of educators and evidence-based clinical best practices, Catholic Charities and school partners will create a model that is practical, sustainable, and adaptable, yet firmly rooted in the Catholic mission. Through a tiered or layered approach, CARES will move beyond a one-size-fits-all model to a comprehensive system that respects the dignity and value of every child.

The multi-tiered structure includes: Tier 1 offers school-wide programming to foster resilience, healthy relationships, and a positive learning environment; Tier 2 provides small-group, targeted interventions for students needing additional guidance; and Tier 3 delivers individualized counseling for students facing more intensive challenges. By combining universal, targeted, and intensive support, CARES strives to ensure that every child benefits from both preventative care and focused interventions.





This fall, CARES will launch at Holy Cross, Holy Trinity, and Mary Queen of Heaven schools, reaching over 400 students. Because each school has unique needs, CARES will be developed collaboratively with school leaders, teachers, counselors, and parents to ensure the program fits each of the three communities.

"This approach is unique," Goddard says. "As a Catholic organization, we bring a deep understanding of the human person, made in the image and likeness of God. Our role goes beyond addressing challenges like bullying or anxiety—we aim to prepare students for success in the classroom and in life, through a lens of faith, resilience, and hope."

Catholic Charities provides a distinct and comprehensive service that supports not only students but also parents, teachers, and school leaders. By grounding counseling in a Catholic understanding of the human person, the program helps students flourish academically, emotionally, and spiritually, equipping them to live out their faith with confidence and purpose.



Our Catholic Charities school counseling team is dedicated to walking alongside students, families, and educators throughout the Diocese to provide support and encouragement.

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 859-581-8974.

Free Homebuyer Education Class

Saturday, September 6, 2025

Saturday, October 4, 2025

Saturday, November 1, 2025

Saturday, December 6, 2025

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.
Contact Client Care at 859-581-8974.

Parish Kitchen 50th Anniversary Fund Update

By Jennifer Abdrabbo, Institutional Advancement & Development Manager

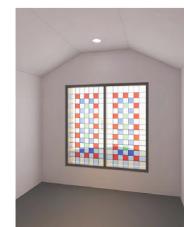
We are thrilled to share that thanks to the generosity of our incredible donors and local foundations, we have secured the funds to move forward with constructing a new multi-purpose building and expanding our current facility.

In addition, we received support to help offset the rising cost of meals, which have increased by nearly 30% per serving.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the following major donors for making this possible:

- The Butler Foundation
- RC Durr Foundation
- Oakley Farris in memory of Eva G. Farris
- The Haile Foundation
- Elsa Heisel Sule Foundation
- Charles & Ruth Seligman Foundation

Your generosity is helping us continue to serve our neighbors with dignity, compassion, and care.



Program Updates continued

Pickett's Corner: A Ministry on the Move

By John Whitaker

Over the past three years, Pickett's Corner—through the support of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington—has repaired and distributed more than 1,000 bicycles to individuals in need of basic transportation for work, medical appointments, and essential errands. While the numbers are significant, it is the personal stories, shared one by one, that reveal the heart of this ministry. Many recipients return to our site at 15th and Madison simply to say thank you and to share how their lives have changed.

"I no longer need to take my medicine because I had improved so much. I take this bike everywhere."

"I got a job delivering Uber Eats using the bike you gave me. I wore out the tires. You fixed it up with a new rack and new tires. I'm still rolling."

"I've used my bike to help me recover from ACL surgery. It's the perfect transportation. I ride it 5 to 10 miles every day."

There is nothing complicated or bureaucratic about Pickett's Corner. It operates with simplicity and purpose, rooted in a call to love our neighbor. Most of the volunteers are retirees who enjoy biking and repairing bikes, but above all, they find joy in helping others and living out their faith. All are welcomed with dignity and compassion, and while bikes are given freely, we hold sincere expectations of gratitude and responsible stewardship from each recipient.

We continue to rely on the generosity of our community to sustain this important work:

- We are in constant need of gently used bicycles. If you have one to donate, please email: pickettscorner23@gmail.com. We can arrange pickup within a week.
- To make a financial contribution, please visit www.covingtoncharities.org/services/community-outreach-services/picketts-corner
- To purchase one of our higher-end refurbished bikes, contact pickettscorner23@gmail.com. Buying a cruiser, mountain, or hybrid bike from us at a discounted rate helps offset the costs of locks, seats, tires, and maintenance for the broader fleet.
- Volunteers are always needed and welcomed. Contact pickettscorner23@gmail.com to get involved.

Pickett's Corner continues to be a shining example of what can happen when faith is put into action—and wheels begin to turn.



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stories, and ways to get involved,
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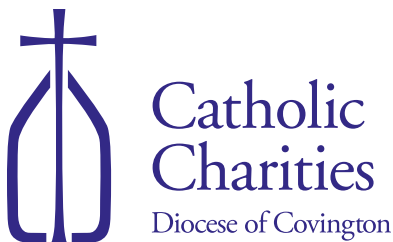
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Serving the community for over 94 years

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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Diocese of Covington

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*Partners newsletter is published three times a year in spring, summer and winter
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Counseling Services; Housing Services; and Community Outreach Services.*