



The Secret Behind the Mask is You!

By Jennifer Abdrabbo, Institutional Advancement & Development Associate

Our theme for Cassba this year was “The Secret Behind the Mask”—and the secret was YOU! Your support of this year’s event helped us to unmask hunger, anxiety, loneliness, hopelessness and homelessness. We are reminded every year of the many blessings that come along with this event. The blessings of our amazing staff, the blessings of our dedicated volunteers, and the blessings of our generous donors and attendees.

The participation in our online silent auction bidding continues to grow and allows guests who are unable to enjoy the event in person the ability to support us from afar. Having said this, you sure can’t miss the enthusiasm and excitement that comes from being in person at the event. When Bishop Iffert flips the coin during our popular “heads and tails split the pot game” and the crowd roars with laughter or as Marty Kamer, our auctioneer, convinces a bidder to bid higher. You have to see it to believe it!

Congratulations to our grand prize winners! Cassba Cash raffle winners—First place Jessica Muehlenkamp, Second place Ramona Harber, and Third place Mike Hauser. Bourbon Raffle—First place Terry Arlinghaus, Second place Debbie Pasture, Third place Agnes Wessles, and Fourth place Dave Heidrich.

SAVE THE DATE FOR CASSBA 2025—AUGUST 24, 2025



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A Letter from the Executive Director



Rejoice Always... Give Thanks in All Circumstances

Dear Friends,

As summer fades and we transition into fall, I find myself reflecting on the blessings and challenges of Catholic Charities' ministries. Lately, I've been meditating on a powerful scriptural passage: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18). These words bring comfort and challenge, especially when considering the scope of our work here at Catholic Charities.

Rejoicing and giving thanks comes naturally when we reflect on the countless individuals who contribute to our ministries. Our staff, volunteers, and donors are the lifeblood of our efforts, daily helping to perform corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Beyond recognizing these incredible people, it's important to thank God for allowing us to serve and walk alongside thousands of our neighbors in their life journeys. At Cassba, our annual fundraising event, Terry Foster shared an emotional story about an encounter with a guest at the Parish Kitchen. Through this experience, Terry saw the face of Christ in the guest and realized how much his volunteer work has enriched his life over the past 15 years. What a daily blessing God provides!

In addition to those we serve, I am deeply grateful for Bishop John Iffert, whose pastoral heart and unwavering support have significantly impacted our ministries. His leadership is a blessing that permeates all that we do. I am also thankful for the opportunity to lead Catholic Charities. I am fortunate to work with a small but mighty staff whose dedication and talent inspire me daily. They are the unsung heroes behind our efforts. I'd also like to express heartfelt gratitude to the Curia staff, who are always ready to lend their support, and to our board of trustees, whose wisdom and commitment guide us forward.

Of course, our work would not be possible without our remarkable volunteers. They truly serve as the hands and feet of Christ, whether at Catholic Charities-Latonia office, Parish Kitchen, the mobile food pantry "Food for Friends," St. Joseph's Apartments, Pickett's Corner, or in our prison ministry. Their selflessness reflects Christ's love, and I cannot thank them enough for their invaluable service.

I offer my deepest gratitude to our benefactors—many of whom also volunteer. Whether you support us by giving your time or through donations to Cassba, our annual appeals, the 50th Anniversary Campaign, or indirectly through the DPAA, your contributions enable us to continue this critical work. Your generosity sustains our mission of doing God's work.

Rejoicing and giving thanks can be difficult during challenging times, but St. Paul reminds us that it's especially important. Amid financial strains, resource limitations, and overwhelming needs, gratitude can transform how we see our work and those we serve. Pope Francis beautifully teaches that a grateful heart stays young and vibrant, allowing joy to flourish even in hardship. In ministry, gratitude becomes a source of hope and renewal.

As we look toward the coming year, I pledge to practice gratitude in all circumstances—whether in our successes or the moments when "my plans" don't unfold as expected. Above all, I look forward to continuing this journey of doing God's work with all of you. With gratitude in our hearts, we can truly "rejoice always" in all we do. A grateful heart not only strengthens our ministries but also makes us more joyful disciples, open to the grace and guidance of God every step of the way.

In Christ,

Chris Goddard

News and Events

Charity First

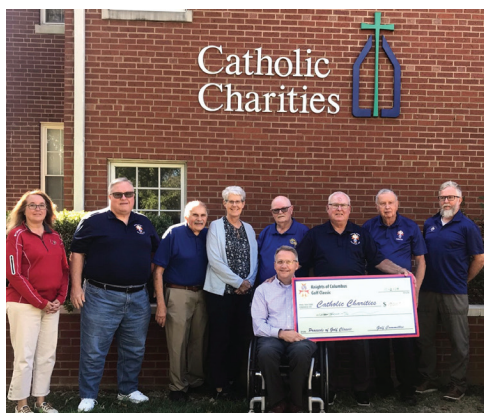
By Shannon Braun, Assistant Executive Director

Embracing their motto “Charity First,” Bishop Brossart students actively engage in service days at local organizations.

On September 20th, eight juniors and two parents volunteered at Catholic Charities and Parish Kitchen. Upcoming events will see 14 sophomores and eight freshmen, along with their parents, also lending a hand.

During their time there, the students cleared out storage rooms, organized closets, tidied the kitchen and toy room, and helped with yard work. Many items were recycled or donated to St. Vincent DePaul, and some students even distributed essential items during lunch at Parish Kitchen.

The students gained valuable insight into the various programs offered by Catholic Charities throughout the diocese, including mental health counseling at the Latonia office and schools, food assistance through Parish Kitchen and the Mobile Food Pantry, and housing support at St. Joseph Apartments. They also learned about additional opportunities to contribute their time and talents.



Annual Golf Classic Check Presentation

The Northern Kentucky Knights of Columbus Golf Committee presented Chris Goddard, Executive Director, \$19,000 from the proceeds of its Annual Golf Outing held in July. For 15 years the Knights of Columbus have donated \$168,000 to Catholic Charities Lifeline Fund. This fund provides clients with support during untimely financial hardships. Catholic Charities is so thankful for the dedication and support from the Knights, sponsors and golfers!

Pictured (L to R): Knights of Columbus Committee: Suanne Ledonne, Tim Buerger, Bill Theis, Vicky Bauerle, Catholic Charities, Chris Goddard, Catholic Charities, Keith Cahill, Dennis Elix, Carl Biery and Eric Oberschmidt.

SAVE THE DATE—APPRECIATION DINNER

Thursday, April 3, 2025 at 5:30 pm, Receptions Erlanger
More information in 2025

Being The Hands of Jesus Christ

By Karen Kuhlman

When unexpected challenges arise, we breathe a sigh of relief if they pass without causing too much disruption in our lives. But when the challenge is more than we can handle, we long for a partner who will walk with us on our journey towards a better day. Since 1931, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington has been that partner, smoothing the road for thousands in need of assistance. In turn, Catholic Charities has been the beneficiary of the kindnesses of thousands who have made possible its mission: *To extend a hand and change a life*. Perhaps nothing is more central to that goal than easing the way for families, mothers and fathers, and their children.

David Durr, a licensed clinical social worker, is a Mental Health Counselor and Director of Clinical Services for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Covington. In his three years with Catholic Charities, Durr has seen an escalating increase in the need for counseling due to multiple factors, and said, "Having dealt with the residual effects of COVID, we now deal with a new social style that causes people to become more isolated and work less than they have previously.

Today, many people are often very alone. They have less peer support and fewer friends to turn to than in the past. That can be a factor of working from home for a long time and not having the time to go out and enjoy peer support. Some people have not recovered from that isolation. We also see that as a factor in marriages where one spouse has been alone, working from home for a long time. Many of the challenges we deal with are anxiety-driven responses to today's society. Others may be related to family dynamics.

A big challenge for families is the emphasis on providing their kids with every opportunity in the world. Parents are almost exhausted, trying to attend multiple school,

social, and sports activities for their children. They are trapped, running around trying to do things for their children. Things may begin to fall apart when they don't have time for their primary relationship with their spouse because they are too busy."

Durr said, "Catholic Charities offers help to married couples trying in their way, yet finding things are falling apart. We use techniques that allow couples to go back to things that were true when they met, were dating, took an interest in each other's lives, and spent hours on the phone talking. So, we want to set aside time to be with each other, as we did when we first dated and fell in love. We need to go back to dating and sharing interests in one another's lives. Perhaps we can find 15 minutes at night, with no phone or media intruding, when we can be fully present to one another. Maybe we will just have coffee on the back deck together after the kids go to bed. And we absolutely want to pray together and share our worries and desires with God.

Adding to the distress many families experience is the influence of social media on children – and adults. There is so much stress to keep up. We compare ourselves to what others do for themselves and their children. Images on social media paint a portrait of the experiences of others who seem always to be dining out, always traveling, always at the beach, always enjoying





themselves. Our lives don't stack up well in comparison. When we can't keep up, we feel we are not good spouses or moms and dads. But often, those images are not authentic, nor is the story they seem to tell.

Durr said the impact of Catholic Charities' role on our youth cannot be overstated. "Students often lose all of the progress made during the school year over summer vacation. In general, when school is out, counseling is out. But, this summer, the children came every week, some less often, depending upon when they could attend. When the new school year began, our young clients returned to

school prepared to continue the success they gained the previous school year. This is a dramatic shift: Students often lose much of their progress over the summer and must start anew in the fall to recover lost skills.

We served 30 to 40 children of the ACUE schools who would not have received summer counseling without our partners. They would not have learned how to focus in class or calm themselves down in school. The children would not have been able to hold on to gains made during the previous school year. Our partners provided the children with the tools they needed. Their generosity made this success possible through our Lifeline Fund. We would not have been able to offer these programs without the generosity of our partners."

David Durr said, "When assisting our clients through different types of counseling, I know that I have that privilege because of the generosity of our Partners. We want to express our gratitude to them for making all this possible. If not for the donors, we could not offer these programs.

My job is to walk with someone through the pain they are experiencing. Think of this: If I ask you to pray for me, it's a privilege. It is a privilege to be asked to pray for someone. And it is a privilege to work with the clients. They let me in. They let me see what was going wrong and asked me to be a part of that. I couldn't have that privilege without the partners. I would not be able to walk for them. I represent all our supporters when I am sitting in that room and helping that person because their generosity put me there. I am demonstrating our partners' love for that individual, demonstrating their care and concern for that individual. It is a privilege to be part of that."

David Durr wants Catholic Charities partners to know: "We're growing we are finding new ways to reach the parishes in rural communities that we haven't been able to get to. We're using telehealth and other technological resources to help us serve more of the people in the Diocese of Covington. We are looking at ways to create groups and educational programs so that they can become more of a part of that process in each parish. Our strategic initiative calls for us to work with everyone so that we can help grow the love we are. We get the privilege of being the hands of Jesus Christ. And it's a great privilege. But we want to use the skills and the things we have to extend that privilege to those in the pews through educational programs and groups and provide individuals with resources to know who to call during life's struggles."

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 Client Care at 859-581-8974.

Free Homebuyer Education Class

Saturday, November 2, 2024

Saturday, December 7, 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. Contact Client Care at 859-581-8974.

Blessings Abound

By Jennifer Abdrabbo, Institutional Advancement & Development Associate

At the 50 th Anniversary celebration of Parish Kitchen, a ministry of Catholic Charities, we launched a campaign to raise funds for essential improvements and additions. We'd like to take a moment to provide you with an update.

Our current fire alarm system meets basic safety requirements but isn't set up to be able to communicate with the fire department to expedite their response time. Our guests rely on us to be there daily for sustenance, and we can't take the chance of something happening to the building where Christ is working daily through our staff, guest and volunteers. This project will be completed by the end of 2024.

Our next project will be a multi purpose building which will shelter our Catholic Charities box truck, ensuring its longevity and safety. Additionally, the building will offer much-needed storage space for Parish Kitchen and a dedicated area for volunteers to work on bikes during Pickett's Corner clinic days. Our Executive Director, Chris Goddard, is currently working with Don Knochelman, the Diocese of Covington's Director of Buildings & Property, on the specs needed so that we can begin approaching vendors for pricing. Our goal is to raise enough funds to cover the cost of the multi purpose building by Spring of 2025, when we hope to break ground.

As we count the many blessings that have come to our attention throughout our 50th Anniversary celebration, we hope you know that we count you as one of those many blessings. If you haven't sent anything in to support our special 50th Anniversary campaign, please prayerfully consider doing so. No gift is too small. Your support—whether through a one-time donation, a recurring contribution, or a planned gift—will make a profound difference in the lives of those we serve, where together, we can ensure that Parish Kitchen remains a beacon of hope and hospitality for generations to come. Your contribution will leave a lasting legacy of compassion and care. To make a secure donation scan the QR code or visit parishkitchen.org.



Program Updates continued

Food for Friends Update

By John Hehman, Coordinator

Our mobile food pantry, “Food for Friends,” has been busier than ever! We’ve seen an increase of over 8% in the number of households and individuals served across our six pantries compared to last fiscal year.

Thanks to a grant from the Sacred Heart Fund, we were able to purchase additional food, but we have now fully utilized those funds. We’re continuing to buy supplemental food from the Freestore Foodbank with donations raised during the Hunger Walk.

We also recently received a generous donation of 10,000 trial-size tubes of toothpaste from Beacon Benefits, which we are distributing at each pantry.

Starting in October, we’ll be offering a pocket prayer card with a cross to all our guests at the pantries.

If you’re interested in volunteering or have any questions about the pantry, please reach out to John Hehman at JHehman@covingtoncharities.org. Thank you for your continued support!



Busy School Counselors

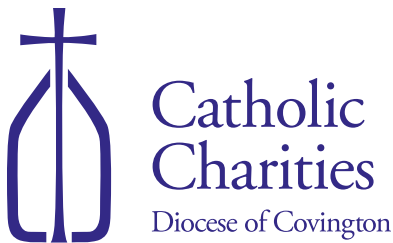
By Sheila Dumford, School Counseling Supervisor and School Counselor

As the new school year kicks off, the schedules of four Catholic Charities mental health counselors serving nine Catholic schools are filling up quickly. Their caseloads vary widely, addressing issues such as a child grieving the loss of a pet, a parent anxious about their child adjusting to a new school, and social anxieties manifesting in different ways. No matter the challenge, school counselors are on-site during school hours, providing essential support without requiring students or parents to leave campus.

While the counselors focus on individual student needs, an intern will spend eight weeks working with a group of second graders on an emotional learning curriculum. This program emphasizes five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, social skills, and relationship skills. By teaching these concepts, children will learn appropriate behaviors, how to foster healthy relationships, and develop a positive self-image. These social-emotional skills are crucial not just for their future but also for thriving at home and in the classroom.

In addition, our school counseling program supports students who need extra help with academics. The after-school Reach and Teach program pairs elementary and middle school students with high school mentors. This mentorship extends beyond a single hour each week, profoundly impacting the lives of both mentors and mentees.

Catholic Charities’ school counseling program is dynamic and continually evolving to meet the needs of students and schools. Visit www.covingtoncharities.org/services/child-and-family-services/school-based-counseling to learn more about our school counseling services.



Extend a Hand. Change a Life.

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www.CovingtonCharities.org
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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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*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.*