

Catholic Charities

Spring News 2017



Director's Letter

"To know a man's heart, to see what state it is in, necessarily involves finding out the treasure towards which that heart is pointing: the treasure that liberates and fulfills it, or that destroys and enslaves it." – Pope Francis (then Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio), *Fighting Corruption & Sin*

Dear Friends,

Just before Thanksgiving, I happened to see a childhood friend that I hadn't seen in quite a long time. I knew he had been through some tough times, but he smiled and told me how he had changed his life. He came from a good family, but through a series of decisions and destructive behaviors, he struggled for several years. With help, he had found a better path and was working to improve his life. I could tell he was doing better. He told me he was working full-time and had been "clean" for more than five years and intended to keep it that way. It gave me hope for him and his family when he said, "I have a new purpose in my life." It made me remember that we all need a purpose in our lives.

Looking forward while also realizing where we've been, the staff at Catholic Charities has been busy the past several months with several projects that involve moving program activities for children and families into different areas on Catholic Charities' campus. We created a work plan to utilize space better, making it more efficient and productive. These projects included electrical upgrades, converting fluorescent light fixtures to LED bulbs, painting walls, installing new flooring and hand rails for staircases and turning what was once a combined kitchen, dining and laundry room into three separate areas. We use the term "repurposing" to describe our efforts in these areas. We worked hard to make these spaces more functional for education and for families to have a better family experience while living at Bethany House. Our computer lab at Ryves is now totally handicap accessible and closer to our other educational activities, accommodating better oversight and increasing computer usage. The reality is that we've been in the repurposing business for a long time, not just with our facilities but also with the individuals we serve.

Sometimes we have to look deep within our collective efforts and strategies to find a compelling rationale to put a program into action. We try to apply logic and review evidence-based models to create any new programs or reconfigure an existing one. Our new adult learning program, the Food Service Training Program, is our way of furthering education and a path towards real employment. Inside this newsletter, you will learn how this program is helping people in our community find a new purpose while being repurposed.

In the quote at the top of this newsletter, Pope Francis tells us that to really know our heart, we must find the direction it is pointing. What direction should our hearts point? How will that determine the path we choose to bring purpose and meaning to our life? We find the most enjoyment in life when we search for and realize our purpose.

Sometimes, it only has to be a simple act of kindness, a smile, an encouraging word or perhaps letting someone close to you know how much you love them. We can see the face of Jesus in others, and we can be the heart of Jesus through our actions. What a great way to demonstrate the direction our collective hearts are pointing!

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John C. Etling". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

John C. Etling
Agency Director

What are You Doing for Others?

When speaking about Ryves Youth Center and its programs, it is easy to quote the number of children served or the specific activities provided. However, we often overlook the people who help our children grow into productive adults. At Ryves Youth Center, we have many amazing individuals who want to make a difference.

As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" Our volunteers challenge themselves with this question daily. One such volunteer is Robert Zerface.

Robert received his BA in Anthropology from Indiana University in Bloomington. After graduation, he taught English for several years in South Korea. Upon returning to the states, Robert moved to Terre Haute. He soon realized that he missed working with children, and thought that he would like to change his field of study. Robert heard about the Ryves Youth Center and Time for Me, a trauma-informed mentoring program, and decided that would be a good way to help children. During Robert's training, he spent time at the Youth Center to get to know the children better.

That extra time helped Robert choose his mentee, Damen. Robert and Damen set a schedule to meet together on a weekly basis. But, Robert was soon volunteering on other days, too – assisting with homework and supervising our computer lab. Robert has become a member of the Ryves Youth Center "family."

When asked what attracted him to Ryves Youth Center and why he decided to expand his volunteer efforts, Robert said that the children at the Youth Center needed "stability" and volunteers who would not be leaving the area. And the children

have taken notice. Because Robert is around and truly listens to them, children often talk to him about their problems.

So, what are you doing for others? Robert found an answer to the question and thankfully that answer includes the children at Ryves Youth Center.

Currently, **the Youth Center needs volunteers**, Monday through Friday anytime from 8 am to 8 pm. If you are interested in serving, please call the office at (812)232-1447.



Changes are in the Air

Staff and residents are springing into 2017 with many changes and upgrades at Bethany House. Catholic Charities received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which allowed us to renovate the Bethany House Emergency Shelter to provide increased security and better facilities for our staff and residents.

To prepare for the renovation, which began in October 2016 and was completed in February, the Soup Kitchen moved out of Bethany House to the Kids Cafe in the lower level of Ryves Youth Center. This move proved to be a more permanent solution.

Now being at Ryves, the Soup Kitchen has much more room for meal preparation, gives diners more room to eat as well as frees up much-needed space for the residents at Bethany House. The former Soup Kitchen space has been reallocated to the resident kitchen and dining room, and the former resident kitchen was converted into the front office and intake for the Shelter Program. Since diners are no longer entering Bethany House, it also provides more security for the residents.

Additionally, the residents' restrooms were renovated allowing multiple people to have access

to restrooms at a time. It is truly a blessing that we were able to get these much-needed renovations done promptly as well as meet the immediate needs of Bethany House. Thank you again to the Community Development Block Grant for making these improvements possible.

WANT TO SUPPORT BETHANY HOUSE?

Bethany House always needs donations of personal hygiene and paper products. Donations can be dropped off any day between 9 am – 5 pm.

Mark Your Calendars

43rd Annual Catholic Charities Benefit Dinner

Wednesday, September 6, 2017
at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College
O'Shaughnessy Dining Room
Silent Auction/ Social Hour 6pm
Dinner 7pm

Put Your Orange On

Friday, November 17, 2017
1 in 6 are food insecure in the Wabash Valley.
Just \$3 feeds a family of 4.



Christmas Blessings Every Day

Catholic Charities' Christmas Store is blessed to have a small group of outstanding volunteers that come in regularly throughout the year. Every Tuesday a dedicated group comes to the Christmas Store to sort through donated items to keep, send to the community or take down to trash, test hundreds of items for working condition, count endless pairs of socks and underwear, fold clothes, sheets and comforters, make up household package items and much more.

During the Christmas shopping season, these volunteers come in even more often to help families shop for Christmas gifts and restock the shelves. They have been investing in this community for many years; helping over 900 families each year have a brighter Christmas. One of our Tuesday volunteers has been with us for over nine years!

Although many items are delivered to the Christmas Store throughout the year, many of the household items we receive are picked up from retailers each month. In addition to helping out other programs across Catholic Charities, Ned Wenstrup can be found driving to Indianapolis every other week throughout the year to pick up household goods.

For ten years, Pam Grimes has coordinated the sock and underwear drive and has spent countless hours volunteering as a shopper's assistant multiple days each Christmas season. With a real gift for finding great bargains, Pam is also great at helping to purchase items we are in short supply of and delivers her "finds" on a regular basis.

The Christmas Store couldn't operate without volunteer shopper assistants during our Christmas shopping season, late November

through early December. These volunteers help shoppers make their way through the store with our families to ensure each person in the household receives Christmas gifts. They also help to restock and straighten shelves. A wonderful group of volunteers from St. Paul the Apostle Church, coordinated by Pat Zeronik, drive from Greencastle to help sort, stock and shop several times throughout the year.

A very special "thank you" to all our Christmas Store volunteers that come all throughout the year! You make this program possible and help so many in this community have a warmer, brighter, and merrier Christmas! We are incredibly thankful not only for all our volunteers do but also for their encouragement, commitment, friendship and their generous hearts.

Skills to Succeed

Recently, Catholic Charities in Terre Haute received funding through the Walmart Foundation totaling \$65,000. That, along with funding from the Catholic Community Foundation and Catholic Relief Services, is being used to create a food service and food safety training program. The goal of this program is to provide job training for adult learners wishing to enter the workforce while simultaneously providing approximately 41,975 meals for feeding hungry individuals at the Soup Kitchen. The program provides low-income and unemployed people the opportunity to learn food service skills such as food preparation and cooking, food safety through ServSafe, skills to be wait staff, and managerial skills such as scheduling, menus and food inventory.

"I can't tell you how many times my dad would tell me that the highest number of jobs in Terre Haute exist within the food service industry," reminisced Agency Director John C. Etling. "I believe he was right. We have such a variety of meal experience places in the Wabash Valley that we decided to reach out to one of our most responsive corporate donors and,

with their funding, create the Food Service Training Program. This adult learning program is our way of furthering education and a path towards real employment."

An advisory committee made up of local volunteers, chefs and food service industry leaders met over several months to create a 12-week training program, which includes weekly skills demonstrations and ServSafe education along with hands-on kitchen experience. Local chefs teach the weekly demonstrations and training modules while weekly menus are created to reinforce the skills learned. At the end of the course, the students will prepare a celebration for their families and local business leaders. Each successful student will be presented with a certificate of completion and special gifts to help him or her with their career. Best of all, Catholic Charities is offering this program free-of-charge to all accepted applicants.

Applications are currently being accepted for the second cohort of adult learners starting June 5, 2017. Please contact the office at (812)232-1447 if you are interested in participating in this program.



Catholic Charities

Providing Help. Creating Hope. Serving All.

1801 Poplar Street
Terre Haute, IN 47803
ccthin.org



ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS
The Church in Central and Southern Indiana



Non Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Terre Haute, IN
Permit # 86

MISSION STATEMENT *Catholic Charities in Terre Haute exists to serve the poor, the hungry, the homeless, the elderly, the neglected children, and the needy. Our goal is to relieve suffering and hardship for people in the community regardless of nationality, race, creed, or religion.*

Humble Servants

Each week, Terre Haute Catholic Charities Foodbank staff works to support our many agencies throughout the seven counties around Terre Haute. It's a great team of people dedicated to serving our neighbors who need help getting food for their families.

However, what makes a difference is the group of volunteer men and women that regularly come to the Foodbank to help us help others by doing "whatever needs to be done." They are selfless and humble, but also very gifted with many skills and a servant's heart.

Penny Fredrick and Stacy Pierce of West Terre Haute are two such servants. They regularly support the Providence Food Pantry by coming each week to "do the shopping" for the Pantry. Also, each month they dedicate several evenings to drive Foodbank trucks to mobile food pantries throughout Clay, Parke and Vermillion counties.

When asked why they do it, their response is simply, "There is a need, and it feels good to fill it."

And it feels just as good to have partners with such commitment and support.

