Open up possibilities.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES
KANSAS CITY – ST. JOSEPH

hope | matters
A Publication for Friends and Supporters of Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph.

VISION A community that is transformed as it empowers the vulnerable to lead lives of dignity and self-determination.

MISSION Inspired by the Gospel and dedicated to proposing bold solutions through hope-filled services, action and advocacy for those in need.

Fighting Hunger in Missouri
We’ve Got Work To Do

Every day, Missouri’s food-insecure families must choose between paying for food or other necessities. They make excruciating choices like:

69% choose between food and utilities
31% choose between food and education
66% choose between food and medical care
40% choose to water down food and beverages

Missouri Ranks Among Highest in Food Insecure States
Food insecurity and poverty go hand in hand. The most accurate predictor of food insecurity is poverty and many people living in Missouri struggle with having enough to eat. We meet them in the Welcome Center and within the community. We meet with young, old and the middle class who are affected by hunger – yet it remains an unseen problem.

The USDA estimates nearly 17 percent of Missouri households experience food insecurity which translates to 1,019,350 people and 289,210 children.

The term “food insecure” has been defined as “a lack of access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members or limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods,” (Map the Meal Gap). Food insecure homes include working middle class families and single parents, it also includes those without homes and without jobs.

Few populations in Missouri are unaffected by hunger.

Working Together to Impact Hunger
Two years ago Catholic Charities aligned programming within the agency to serve clients in crisis, while also impacting larger core issues families and individuals face. When meeting clients in the Welcome Center who need food we offer immediate help – but we’re also seeking to impact those struggling with low wages, unemployment and housing.

The key indicators of food insecurity are poverty, unemployment, low wages, single family households, lack of home ownership, lack of savings, poor health and a low minimum wage. The goal of the Welcome Center is to connect clients with internal programs offering long term support as determined by the client. To meet them where they are and to address their specific needs.

Each week the Welcome Center serves 320 clients throughout Kansas City – on the busiest days we see 80 people.

The need for services in Western Missouri continues to grow and we need your help this holiday season. Donations of canned goods, baby formula and other non-perishable food items are critical in keeping our shelves full.

It’s hard to focus on anything when you’re hungry.

Feed the hungry.
Be a part of a proud Kansas City tradition.
Proceeds benefit Episcopal Community Services and non-perishable food is donated to Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph.
Register at www.sportkc.org/thanksgiving-day-5k.
Get in Touch

Catholic Charities
816.221.4377 | 800.875.4377
catholiccharities-kcsj.org

Contribute
Catholic Charities Foundation
P.O. Box 413953
Kansas City, MO 64141-3953

Volunteer
Christie Dade
816.659.8216

Connect

Subscribe
To receive news from Catholic Charities of Kansas City-St. Joseph, visit the Contact Us page at catholiccharities-kcsj.org.

Our Values
Catholic Charities believes in establishing a shared belief system among all stakeholders that guides our actions, reinforces our ethics and shapes our future.

Show dignity to each person

Practice compassion for all

Promote social justice

Open up possibilities

Work together

Saying Farewell to Deacon Dan Powers

Four years ago, Deacon Dan Powers arrived in Kansas City to lead an organization with a rich tradition of service to those in need.

In early 2015, Catholic Charities opened a new headquarters on Main Street in downtown Kansas City.

Deacon Dan guided Catholic Charities through this period of change which led to a new, personalized approach to meeting those coming to the agency – the Welcome Center. Rooted in this welcoming spirit, each person is greeted as though Christ himself. Our visitors are met with the intent of serving them and their needs.

At this location, the doors are open to all. Deacon Dan has successfully instilled a powerful expression of Christ’s command to love one another.

Thank you, Deacon Dan for your witness of the Catholic Faith through charity. May God bless you on your journey in service to the Diocese of Charleston, South Carolina.

Kansas City’s Next Generation of Leaders
Junior Board Creates Opportunities for Young Professionals

You might be familiar with Soirée – an annual fundraising event held in Kansas City each spring. You might not be familiar with the group that organizes the popular affair, the Junior Board of Catholic Charities.

This dynamic group of professionals began in 2009 with an idea for Catholic Charities to engage a younger audience and to connect with the community. Last year the Junior Board raised nearly $40,000 for Catholic Charities and hopes to exceed that goal in 2017.

The Junior Board recently stepped up to help with several volunteer opportunities and looks to further support the agency by connecting with staff members and learning more about those we serve. In addition to fundraising and volunteering the group finds time to meet monthly and organizes networking events including the annual Tacky Christmas Sweater Party.

The Junior Board is currently planning Soirée and is seeking committee members to help coordinate the event in various capacities.

If you or someone you know may be interested please visit the Catholic Charities website, or the Junior Board of Catholic Charities Facebook page.
Faith A Motivating Factor to Adopt
Catholic Charities Helps Strengthen Forever Families

Staff members Ashley Dooley-Wohlgemuth and Jamie Batschke share a gift they received from an adoptive couple.

Margaret and her husband were married knowing they would not be able to have biological children. A friend of Margaret’s knew several couples through their parish who had adopted and suggested they connect with one other. It was during this time Margaret and her husband began making plans to adopt a child.

“Having friends who had adopted was huge for us. We had so many friends who adopted and offered a lot of support, especially because their children were older and they had already been through the process.”

“Faith was a motivating factor. Our faith encourages us to avoid extreme medical procedures to have children.”

“155 pregnant women were helped last year

A Catholic Charities case manager mailed them an application and they proceeded to the interview and home study process. “It was probably 18 months start to finish (process) for us.”

Margaret and her husband have an open adoption with their daughter, Marion and her birth parents. Initial contact was made through letters and pictures. Margaret suggests normalizing contact for those children who identify with being adopted.

“For us it’s much more comfortable because we had lots of contact through the years – there’s a level of familiarity. My friends who have more open adoptions than us, it’s just part of the deal. The birth families become more like extended family members.”

“Missouri Adoptee Rights Act

House Bill 1599 was signed by Governor Nixon in July 2016 and allows adoptee’s to request a copy of their original birth certificate. The law took effect on August 28, 2016.

The new law also allows birth parents to determine a preference for contact through the use of the Birth Parent Contact Preference Form which includes a medical history information form.

For copies of the forms or for more information please visit: www.health.mo.gov/data/vitalrecords/adopteerightsact.php

Margaret’s advice for those thinking about adopting, “Do it! I come from a family of five children and between all of the grandchildren half of them have been adopted. I love that my children’s cousins share the adopted piece together – that they have that in common. When all of the grandkids are together there is no distinction between biological and adopted grandkids.”

“I will not leave you as orphans.
I will come to you.”
John 14:18

Margaret and her husband eventually adopted another child with the help of Catholic Charities.

“It’s the greatest thing – of course you’re going to love this child as your own and of course you will have struggles, but it’s worth it.”

“arrest
noun
1. a period of imprisonment or confinement for a crime or offense.
2. the process of placing someone in jail or prison.

Please remember Catholic Charities in your will or estate plan.
The Catholic Charities office in St. Joseph hosted a reception including board members, staff and Catholic Charities friends. Guests gathered at the Pony Express Museum for food and drinks and an opportunity to learn more about one another. Many thanks to hosts, Margaret and Pat O’Malley for an enjoyable afternoon.

Small groups were taken to the Welcome Center at 1123 S. 10th St. where construction is still underway to repair the space. This is the first building to be owned by Catholic Charities since the first branch office opened in St. Joseph in 1979.
Many Hands Make Light Work When Responding to Disaster
How Volunteers Rebuilt in Orrick, Missouri

During the week of October 24th Governor Jay Nixon traveled throughout the state of Missouri hosting roundtable discussions about disaster relief and recovery. These discussions are a part of Safer, Stronger Missouri Week – a statewide emergency preparedness tour. He met with faith based organizations, community leaders and volunteer groups including Catholic Charities of Kansas City – St. Joseph in Lee’s Summit, Missouri.

Governor Nixon also announced a $4 million dollar grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service to support AmeriCorps members who play a vital role in disaster recovery across the state of Missouri.

Catholic Charities of Kansas City – St. Joseph offers disaster related case management services to empower survivors and communities with a focus on vulnerable populations. The Disaster Case Managers assist survivor(s) with creating recovery plans and developing more resilient communities.

Aren Koenig, Community Preparedness and Resiliency Project Manager leads efforts throughout Missouri and Kansas. “Catholic Charities has a history of providing disaster case management services and being involved in local recovery efforts. We’ve been involved when it comes to large scale evacuations.”

Through her work, Aren has been a part of construction efforts to rebuild homes and install playgrounds in neighborhoods affected by disaster.

“Low attention disasters like the Orrick tornado in May of 2014 are underfunded. Through partnerships with local community leaders and faith based organizations we were able to assist the community with rebuilding a home for an 83 year old survivor. This rebuild was only possible through collaborative efforts and the existing relationships we have with non-profits and faith based organizations in Missouri.”

For more information on Missouri’s disaster recovery initiative visit www.governor.mo.gov

A Love Story

Looking through the glass partition in the Welcome Center one Thursday, I wondered who I would meet next. The only thing I knew someone had asked for clothes. As I glanced about the room, the tattooed, thin individual grabbed my attention and I fleetingly hesitated.

As I entered the room and called out for Lou, a young woman in a wheelchair turned to the man next to her and anxiously spoke to him. She wasn’t the only anxious person as I quickly realized that Lou was indeed the tattooed young man I was to serve.

I invited Lou and Beth into a private room. I noticed that Lou carefully pushed the wheelchair and made a place for Beth. He helped her adjust her back brace and asked if she was alright before sitting down. With her assurance and a brief tender exchange, he turned and in a soft spoken voice asked me how I was.

Simply, I was humbled by this homeless couple and the bond they shared. As their story unfolded, it became clear that these young people had been through more in their short lives than I could ever imagine. Beth had been injured and almost died. Lou fought to remain at her side despite other’s reluctance to let them stay together while recuperating. Now they were back living under a bridge. I asked about housing but they just wanted some clothes. They excitedly told me that they were going to the symphony and wanted to look their best. Someone in their ‘neighborhood’ had invited them trying to share a few moments of normal life.

Lately, I have been thinking of another homeless couple – Joseph and Mary. I have entrusted Lou and Beth to their protection. Joseph and Mary’s homelessness was temporary. May Beth and Lou’s situation also be temporary. As you prepare for Advent, perhaps your spiritual journey is to the stable in Bethlehem or maybe under a bridge in your town. This year, perhaps you can help us present to the Christ Child a gift of love for those in need who ask for little but give so much to those around them.

Stephen Hilliard, Executive Director Catholic Charities Foundation
Christmas Shining Star

This Christmas, adopt a family and shine a light of hope for those in need. Learn more at christmasshiningstar.org.

Give great gifts while giving back this Christmas!
Contact Amy Smith at 816.659.8257 or asmith@ccharities.com

Christmas Cards
Packs of 10 cards with envelopes
$15 per pack

Dove
Colorful
Angel
City

Catholic Charities Signature Coffee
This blend is a bold brew that pours with a purpose: fighting poverty in our community.

12 oz. Regular – $13
12 oz. Decaf – $15
Around the Agency

We are thankful to have spent the summer months with these seminarians. They helped out whenever necessary, working special events, counseling clients and leading our morning meetings. We wish you well in your endeavors.

Students of Holy Cross School pick up supplies thanks to the Junior Board. The two kids pictured here were much more excited about the supplies than the idea of heading back to school!

Sondra and Bob are honored as Missouri Outstanding Older Workers. Both were nominated by their employers for their hard work and dedication. We’re proud to celebrate you!

Marshelle Lyons and Deacon Dan Powers pray over interim CEO, Sunny Jones.

“And the Lord replied to Moses: Take Joshua, son of Nun, a man of spirit, and lay your hand upon him. Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole community, and commission him in their sight.”

Numbers 27:18-19

September is Hunger Action Month. Staff sported orange in support of Feeding America and raising awareness for the 1 in 7 people struggling with hunger in the United States.

Clients of the TurnAround program gather for a reception honoring their achievements. Several clients shared inspiring stories with the group. As you can see from the pictures everyone had a great time!
Open up possibilities.

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We've Got Work To Do

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St. Joseph Welcome Center,
Touring the New Space

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Many Hands Make Light Work

This Christmas, be an angel to your neighbors living without hope. Donate today.

"It is possible to stand again and it's possible to move forward. Angels are among us."

Freida, client

United Way