

# Sharing the Good News

Fall 2021

## *A note from Ann*

I'm sure you're familiar with the well-known English proverb, "Many hands make light work." Well, that could easily be the anthem for Catholic Charities in 2021. Especially during this multi-year pandemic, we know that none of us can manage life's challenges alone.

Catholic Charities, as we are defined, is the charitable, social service arm of the Diocese of Erie. Our mission statement reminds us that we provide healthcare, social and pastoral services to people in need, regardless of faith. We know that our bishop cannot be everywhere there is a need, but instead, entrusts to us the responsibility of caring for our neighbors across our 13-county diocese. Whether in our administrative offices at St. Mark Catholic Center or in the brick-and-mortar buildings that make up our network of agencies, we are committed to helping to build a better future for our neighbors in need.

Before the snow buries many of us in northwest Pennsylvania, I invite you to take a road trip to any of our agencies and see what the many hands of Catholic Charities can do. Start on I-79 and travel to the Prince of Peace Center in Farrell and feel the energy as volunteers sort clothes and arrange household items in the thrift store; then, witness the camaraderie while hot meals are served in the soup kitchen.

A few miles up the road in Hermitage, stop by Saint John XXIII nursing home and watch heroes in action while loved ones are cared for in their elder years with needed therapies, medical resources and companionship. Later, you may want to travel through the countryside and meet the volunteers who distribute hundreds of bags of food to neighbors each month at St. Elizabeth Center in Oil City. Their compassion and work ethic are second to none. And while you're at it, go a little further east

and stop by Christ the King Manor, the second of our elder-care facilities and meet more healthcare heroes offering extraordinary care to hundreds of residents who call the manor their home.



A few more miles east and you'll arrive in the beautiful town of Clearfield, where the Good Samaritan Center rests peacefully among lovely homes and buildings, providing a clean and welcome place to stay for men who currently have no home.

Back north, stop by St. Martin Center on Erie's east side where they showcase a 5-star Early Learning Center, a food pantry and other social services, while

Catholic Charities Counseling and Adoption Services on the west side (with satellite offices in many locations) demonstrates gospel values through its counseling, adoption and refugee resettlement programs.

And speaking of those many hands, I want to thank everyone who volunteers on our various boards and committees, serving as the engine for all the great work that is done on behalf of the Gospel. Many hands DO make light work, and I am personally grateful to all of you reading this newsletter who make possible the work WE do through your financial support. During this season of thanks, may God bless you for giving.



Ann M. Badach  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Yours in Charity,



## A focus on...Parish tithing and agency grants

### Parish tithing

Catholic Charities, Inc. recently received generous donations from two parishes and their pastors: Fr. Larry Richards and his parishioners from St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community Parish and Fr. John Detisch and his parishioners at St. Jude Parish. Each community chose to tithe their fundraising proceeds as a way to support the good work that is done by Catholic Charities in and around our 13 counties of the Diocese of Erie.



Fr. Richards strongly believes that tithing is a way to "give to God what belongs to God first," and he shows

that by taking care of those in need through their food pantry and clothing store as well as their involvement with the overflow shelter. Additionally, the top 10 percent of all their fundraising proceeds is automatically donated to a single charity or a group of charities, regardless of faith.

Fr. Richards often asks himself and others, "If your parish were to close today, would anyone notice besides your parishioners? If not, then have you truly done your job?" Accountability to these words helps drive his commitment to tithing.

So, what is tithing? Tithing means setting aside a certain amount of one's income for God, as shown in the first book of the Bible. In Genesis, Adam and Eve's children brought portions of their flocks and first crops to the Lord in order to thank him for a successful harvest.



The parishioners at St. Jude the Apostle Parish along with their pastor, Fr. John Detisch, also embrace tithing as a way to thank God for their own successful "harvest."

They did so by graciously donating a portion of their annual car raffle proceeds to Catholic Charities, Inc. Inspired by the teaching and

example of Jesus Christ, Fr. Detisch and his parishioners truly felt the call to give back.

Fr. Detisch says, "Catholic Charities is the arm and bloodline to the people in need in and around our community." Since early in his priesthood, Fr. Detisch remembers always thinking of Catholic Charities as the place to go or to refer people who reached out to him for help. He is honored "to aid the countless, nameless people that Catholic Charities provides services to each and every day."



#### Good Samaritan Center

provided utility and rent assistance to individuals and families throughout Clearfield County.



#### St. Martin Center, Inc.

purchased nine electronic devices to assist teachers in the St. Martin Early Learning Center and improve communication with parents while access is limited during the pandemic.

**Catholic Charities Counseling and Adoption Services** provided emergency assistance to individuals and families in need throughout the Diocese of Erie.



### Agency grants

**Nearly \$100,000 has been given** in grant monies to Catholic Charities affiliates and agencies in response to various emergency needs in 2021.

These grants, created in part from the generosity of our supporters, accomplished the following:



#### St. Elizabeth Center

helped with the purchase of six months worth of hygiene and food items.



#### Prince of Peace Center

helped fund resources needed for their soup kitchen including the purchase of nutritious vegetables and lean meats.



## *A focus on...* Giving the gift of time and talent

### *Meet Catholic Charities' newest board members*



#### **Josh Berg**

Josh Berg is the area manager and vice president with Northwest Savings Bank. He joined the board of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Erie, Inc. in April 2021. Josh says, "I believe that it is very important to help those in need in order to make Erie a better community, and Catholic Charities is the perfect organization to do just that."

Josh has been married for 16 years to his wife Kristy and has one teenage son and two Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers. Originally from Jamestown, NY, he now lives in Fairview and belongs to Holy Cross Parish.

"I am hoping my past work experiences as well as my experience serving on other boards will help provide support to Catholic Charities' mission and vision," Josh says.



#### **Charlene Kerr**

Charlene Kerr joined the board in January 2021. She says, "I was asked if I would consider joining the board by a friend who thought that I had experiences and talents to offer to the group. I am interested in giving back to the community and this is one way that I can do that."

Charlene feels the work of Catholic Charities is important and wants to make sure others are aware of the organization and the programs that it offers. In trying to give something back to her hometown and Erie, she is excited to bring her many skills including expertise in economic development planning, grant writing and administration, and plan implementation.

"I think that keeping religion in the forefront, including for our youth, is crucial for our future, especially given today's political environment," Charlene says.



#### **Jim Dible**

Jim Dible was pleased to join the board in May of 2021 as a way to repay and give thanks for the wonderful blessing of his first child. Jim and his wife Judy welcomed their eldest son through the assistance of a Catholic adoption agency.

Jim's career was spent in broadcast and print journalism which

brought him to Erie in 1996 to join the Times Publishing Company. Jim retired as the company's CEO at the end of 2007, but he has stayed active in the Erie community ever since. Jim and Judy have two sons and have been blessed with ten grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Jim says, "I would like to devote my time and talents to the ongoing growth and awareness of the charitable arm of the diocese, while continuing to assist in advancing the mission of the agencies we serve."



#### **Alison Samuels**

Born and raised in Erie, Alison Samuels believes in giving back to her community. But this is just one reason she chose to join the board in May 2021. "I like how wide a net Catholic Charities, Inc. casts, aiding more than 25,000 individuals yearly regardless of people's faith and ethnic background," Alison says.

Alison is currently a vice president of commercial banking with ERIEBANK. She has previous experience on various boards and committees with specialties in areas of finance and marketing and development. She lives in Millcreek with her son Andrew and is a member of St. Luke Parish.

In Alison's tenure on the board, she hopes to solidify Catholic Charities, Inc.'s identity and broaden its giving network.

## A focus on...Gala wrap-up

October 9th was a special day for Catholic Charities as the doors of the Yehl Ballroom at Gannon University opened wide for friends and benefactors to host its Helping Hands Gala. After the pandemic forced a cancellation in 2020, the newly-named event in 2021 sparked the acknowledgment of its 30th year while recognizing Helping Hands honorees Deacon Richard and Victoria Brogdon and the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund donors as well. Many thanks to everyone who attended, watched via livestream and supported this event through donations and silent auction participation. Your generosity shows that you care about others in our community, and you believe in the work and the mission of Catholic Charities. Here are a few of the evening's highlights:

### *Helping Hands honorees*

Deacon Dick and Victoria Brogdon, members of St. Jude the Apostle Parish, Erie, were honored with the Catholic Charities' Helping Hands Award for their commitment to church and community in the Diocese of Erie and beyond.

For many years, the Brogdons have been the helping hands to many people in the Erie area affected by homelessness, poverty and illness. They've ministered to refugees and the elderly and have been active in parish life as eucharistic ministers and religious educators.

Deacon Dick and Victoria are actively involved in "Our Neighbors' Place," an overflow homeless shelter. The couple has collaborated with Catholic Charities Counseling and Adoption Services by

assisting Erie's growing refugee population. They also volunteer with ServErie.

Additionally, special recognition was given to those who donated to the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund for Catholic Charities. Letters and certificates were sent to these individuals and businesses for their generous donations during these extraordinary times.



Photo by Sheila Grove

Victoria Brogdon, left, and her husband, Deacon Dick Brogdon, were honored at the 2021 Helping Hands Gala. Bishop Lawrence Persico, and Ann Badach, executive director of Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Erie, right, presented them with the Helping Hands Award.

### *Special thanks: Sponsors and host circle*



Photo by Sheila Grove

This year, 20 Host Circle Sponsors supported the Helping Hands Gala. This generous group believes in Catholic Charities' mission to serve people in need, regardless of faith, and helps to lead to the overall success of the event. Catholic Charities, Inc. also thanks all its corporate sponsors for the evening, including Presenting Sponsors PNC Bank, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield and AHN Saint Vincent Hospital.

### *The impact of Catholic Charities affiliates and agencies*

Helping Hands Gala attendees learned that 26,519 persons received at least one and sometimes more services through Catholic Charities' agencies and ministries in the 13 counties of the Diocese of Erie last year alone. Bishop Lawrence Persico underscored the important work of Catholic Charities in his opening remarks:

*"Because of the work of Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Erie, over 20,000 hungry people were fed last year. That is nearly triple from*

*two years ago," he said. "Nearly 4,000 people were given clothing they needed and another 9,000 received some type of emergency assistance, which also is nearly double what we did in 2019. The men and women who work in our agencies have first-hand experience encountering those in especially challenging situations." He added, "They know what it's like to work with a single mom on the verge of homelessness, providing her not only with housing, but also with counseling and instruction that will help her get on her feet, grow in confidence and establish a better life for herself and her children."*

# A focus on...Gala sponsors

## Thank You! **SPONSORS** to our

### Presenting-



### Diamond



### Gold



### Ballroom



### Bronze



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### Supporting



### Host Circle

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Dale DeMarco  
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### MISSION STATEMENT

As Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Erie, we are witnesses and servants of Jesus Christ. Consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church, we provide health care, social and pastoral services for those in need, regardless of faith. Catholic Charities is committed to the sacredness of human life and the betterment of society.



## SERVING PEOPLE OF **ALL FAITHS**

### Agencies and services:

#### **Good Samaritan Center, Clearfield**

Shelter for Temporarily Homeless Men,  
Community Referrals

#### **St. Martin Center, Erie**

Emergency Assistance, Early Learning Center,  
Budget Counseling, Housing Counseling

#### **Prince of Peace Center, Farrell**

Soup Kitchen, Budget Counseling,  
Thrift Store, Food Distribution,  
Home Case Management and Life Skills

#### **St. Elizabeth Center, Oil City**

Food Pantry, Thrift Store, Referral Services

#### **Counseling & Adoption Services (Multiple locations)**

Professional Counseling, Adoption Services,  
Pregnancy Counseling, Addictions Counseling

#### **Christ the King Manor, DuBois**

Continuing Care Retirement Community,  
Skilled Nursing Care, Personal Care, Alzheimer Units,  
Rehabilitation Services, Home Support and  
Independent Living Cottages

#### **Saint John XXIII Home, Hermitage**

Assisted Living, Respite, Physical Therapy,  
Alzheimer Services, Long-Term Care,  
Occupational Therapy

### PASTORAL SERVICES

#### **Social Justice and Life:**

Social Justice and Peace, Respect Life Advocacy

**Mission:** Mission of Friendship,  
Propagation of the Faith, Mission Education,  
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**ADVANCED GIVING DATES  
NOVEMBER 15-29**

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