

Sharing the Good+News

Winter 2018

From the Executive Director



Ann M. Badach

Catholic Charities maintains a footprint of 10,000 square miles in the Diocese of Erie. How is that possible, you may wonder? Well, the truth is, we could never do what we do if we were a singular agency. But as a network of agencies, programs and ministries, we provide services that reach across 13 counties, and provide hope to every person we meet. Thus, when emergency

calls come into our offices, we stand ready to respond because we are a network, and not a stand-alone agency.

A few short weeks ago, for example, we received back-to-back calls from families in need of beds, clothing and utility assistance. Our staff worked closely with our own St. Martin Center to enable each of these families to avert the immediate crisis, and offered longer-term casework services to assist them in managing other stressors as well.

A major fire in Meadville that occurred just two weeks before Christmas resulted in the loss of food baskets for over 100 people. Again, Catholic Charities made sure that

there would be food on all of their tables — on Christmas day and beyond. And speaking of Christmas, the staff of our Prince of Peace Center in Farrell opened the doors of their agency on Christmas day to provide a hot meal and hospitality for anyone in their community who had nowhere to go. Over 60 people were able to enjoy conversation and companionship, all because of the compassion of our Catholic Charities network.

In this edition of our newsletter, you will find new stories of kindness that speak to the importance of inclusion, and of generosity that enable our mission to continue.

As we enter a brand-new year, I find myself feeling very humbled to stand among my colleagues in service to persons in need, and grateful for the generosity to all of you who make our work possible. Thank you for serving. Thank you for giving. And thank you for caring. May God abundantly bless you in 2018.

Yours in Charity,



What's inside?

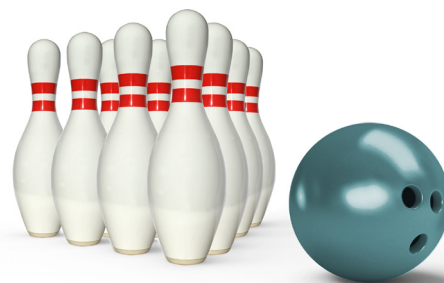
See how the disabilities office is spreading J.O.Y. across the diocese



STRIKE!

J.O.Y. ministries participants enjoyed bowling this past summer at Eastway Lanes.

Pictured on the far left is Joanie Dore. Brian Zona, Gracie Gausman and Matt Johnson are all smiles too.



Agencies and Services:

Good Samaritan Center

Shelter for Temporarily Homeless Men;
Food Referrals; Thrift Store

St. Martin Center

Emergency Assistance; Early Learning Center; Financial Counseling; Housing Counseling

Prince of Peace Center

Soup Kitchen; Budget Counseling; Thrift Store; Food Distribution; Home Case Management & Life Skills

St. Elizabeth Center

Food Pantry; Thrift Store

Counseling & Adoption Services

Professional Counseling; Pregnancy Counseling; Problem Gambling Counseling; Anger Management Groups; Sexual Abstinence Program; Adoption Services; Refugee Resettlement

Christ the King Manor

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

Saint John XXIII Home

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

Harborcreek Youth Services

Campus-Based Residential Facilities; Assessment/Diagnostic Services; Private Education; Drug and Alcohol Counseling; Community Service; Work Experience; Multi-systemic Therapy and Therapeutic Foster Care; Campus Ministry

Better Housing for Erie

51 Units of Affordable Housing

PASTORAL SERVICES

Family Life: Pre-Cana; Engagement Encounter; NOVA; Worldwide Marriage Encounter; "Families Always Matter"; Family Perspectives; Transitions; CDSG Divorce Ministry

Disabilities: Deaf Ministry; Parish Advocacy; Spiritual Enrichment; Victorious Missionaries; J.O.Y. Ministries

Social Justice and Life:

Justice & Peace Respect Life Advocacy

Mission: Mission of Friendship; Propagation of the Faith; Mission Education; Holy Childhood Association

Rural: Pastoral & Ecumenical Outreach; Spiritual Support; Parish Education; Retreats/Enrichment Day Programs; Faith Sharing Groups

Focus on... Inclusion

Sign of the Spirit

Ministry offers spiritual opportunities for the deaf community

Have you ever attended Mass offered in a different language? You can follow along, sure. But your participation is limited, the homily is a mystery and the sense of spirituality isn't necessarily the same.

For members of the deaf community, that might be the typical Mass experience.

That's why the Diocese of Erie has an American Sign Language interpreted Mass weekly, part of a larger ministry offering opportunities for spiritual growth for the deaf community.



According to Michele Inter, director of the Diocese of Erie's Ministry with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, people who are deaf represent about two percent of the general population. But as people age, that number grows. So does the importance of meeting their spiritual needs. The Catholic Foundation, through Catholic Charities, is answering that need by supporting the ministry with funding and other resources.

The weekly American Sign Language Mass is an important aspect of the ministry. It's offered every Sunday at St. Joseph Parish/Bread of Life Community, 147 West 24th Street in Erie.

"We are blessed with some wonderful interpreters. They really see their interpretation as a ministry," Inter says.

The Deaf Ministry Board helps to identify interpreters as well as additional opportunities to serve the deaf community.

"The board is seven people whose job is to design and provide opportunities

to enable the deaf community to grow spiritually," Inter explains. They creatively develop opportunities for growth, such as last fall's retreat with Patrick Graybill, a deacon from the Diocese of Rochester,

New York, who is deaf and particularly attuned to the spiritual challenges of the community.

The board is also working on ways to engage the broader deaf community, not just those who are coming to

church. Inter recalls a conversation in which a deaf person revealed he was never taught weekly Mass attendance was required.

"What's interesting about deaf culture and the deaf community is that they haven't necessarily had the same catechesis or the same religious education experience that everyone else did," she explains. "So we're getting better at reaching out and giving them those experiences. Catechizing the deaf community is something that really needs to happen, and we are working on that."

The ministry is extending a hand to parishes, offering expertise as they seek to help those who have difficulty hearing. It serves as a resource for parishes looking to offer listening systems that make it easier for the hard-of-hearing to experience the Liturgy. While it would be prohibitively expensive to actually provide listening systems, the ministry can and does offer guidance, resources and suggestions for parishes as they seek to help parishioners hear and participate more.

Inter and the Deaf Ministry Board are also working on making it easier for the deaf community to find the spiritual resources they need. For more information, visit them online at www.ErieRCD.org/deaf.htm.

Focus on... Inclusion

Your Gifts Help Expand J.O.Y. in Diocese

If ever an organization was perfectly named, J.O.Y. Ministries would be it. An outreach ministry for teens and adults who have cognitive disabilities or are on the autism spectrum, it provides ongoing faith formation as well as a supportive community for participants, their families and caregivers. The ministry is named for what it helps participants discover: Jesus' Opportunities for You.

"J.O.Y. gives participants the opportunity to grow and to get to know God, and to get to know their life's journey with God," says Michele Inter, director of the Diocese of Erie's Ministry for Persons with Disabilities.

Those opportunities come in any number of forms — including attending Mass, Bible study and fun outings like a recent old-fashioned hoedown complete with a band and square dancing.

"The more that we've done and the more that people have enjoyed themselves and grown spiritually, the more we've just blossomed and flourished," Inter explains.

Having started in March 2017 with just eight members, the ministry now includes 55 regular members, an increase that occurred almost entirely through word-of-mouth.

"It's also clearly the work of the Holy Spirit," Inter says confidently. "If you listen with an open heart, he'll lead."

As important as the weekly group activities are, J.O.Y. Ministry makes its biggest impact by encouraging participants to get involved with their home parishes. It's not that persons with cognitive disabilities or autism are prevented from being active in parish life, Inter emphasizes,

it's just that people often "don't think about it." J.O.Y. Ministry is helping to change that by encouraging participants and their families to consider new possibilities.

"One of the keys of the ministry is giving them that extra enrichment and time to be together, but also taking some of that spiritual growth that they have experienced back to their home parishes. It goes from being included to belonging."

As a result of their involvement with J.O.Y. Ministry, persons with disabilities are stepping forward as altar servers, greeters and lectors in various parishes. Inter says that true belonging develops when people begin thinking of them not as persons with special needs, but as fellow parishioners.

"It's wonderful to see that we're not thinking about the disability, we're thinking about the individual," she says.

While the ministry is focused primarily in Erie County, it's looking to expand. Inter is currently seeking volunteers who would like to be engaged with the ministry in Oil City and Warren.

In addition, an upcoming special event offers an opportunity for lots of new members and volunteers to get involved. The "Night

to Shine" dance will take place February 9. Guests will not only enjoy music and dancing, but also enjoy having their photos taken as they walk the red carpet. J.O.Y. Ministries is seeking 75 core members and 75 escorts to participate. If you, a family member or friend might be interested in the event or in helping expand the ministry, contact Inter at minter@ErieRCD.org.



J.O.Y. ministries hosted a gathering at St. Mark Catholic Center on December 9, 2017, for an afternoon of Advent reflection.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dale DeMarco,
Board Chair

Eric S. Dart, Ph.D.

Bill DeLuca

Sr. Kathleen Dietz, FSO

Rev. John Jacquel

Joseph Kloecker

Ann Rutkowski

Evelyn Seyboldt

Atty. Colleen Stumpf

Atty. James B. Toohey

Ann Badach,
Executive Director



Bringing **Faith, Hope and Charity** to Life

429 East Grandview Blvd. • Erie, PA 16504

814/824.1250

Toll Free: 800.374.3723

www.ErieRCD.org

or **www.ErieRCD.org/charities.htm**

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Erie, PA
Permit No. 285

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**



Matt Mead Photography LLC

Congratulations!

Catholic Charities Board Member Evelyn Seyboldt, and her husband, Dave, recently received the Outstanding Philanthropists Award at the National Philanthropy Day luncheon hosted at Lake Shore Country Club by the Association of Fundraising Professionals of Northwest Pennsylvania. Congratulations to the Seyboldts on this well-deserved recognition!

You can have an everlasting influence on the lives of families in need throughout our diocese with a planned gift to Catholic Charities. Simply ask your attorney to include a bequest for Catholic Charities in your will.

**Contact Lisa Louis at (814) 824-1237
or LLouis@CFNWPA.org to learn more.**

Focus on...

Another Way to Give

Robert and Pauline Osmer Endowment for Catholic Charities

Pauline Osmer describes herself as “just a little Polish girl from the Lower East Side.” Now, after a rewarding career and life of service, that little girl’s big heart has led her to establish an endowment for Catholic Charities.

Following graduation from East High School and training through both Hamot and Gannon, Pauline began working in health care. Her interest in cancer care led her to earn certification in radiology. For decades following, she touched the lives of countless cancer patients and their families as she worked at the right hand of radiation oncologist, Dr. Peter Scibetta — first at Hamot, then at the Regional Cancer Center. Over the years, she became closely involved with patients and accompanied families on a journey none wanted to take. In retirement, Pauline continues to support people in need by volunteering at the St. Patrick Food Pantry and Emmaus Soup Kitchen. She has a gift for drawing people into conversation. With patience and compassion, she listens and learns of life circumstances that burden others.

“I was fortunate in my life,” she says. As she did her financial planning and considered making lasting gifts, she knew she wanted to touch the people “who need an opportunity to get their life going.” With this in mind, Pauline chose Catholic Charities as beneficiary of her endowment. She was attracted by the work and mission of Catholic Charities,



Pauline chose Catholic Charities as beneficiary of her endowment.

by the scope of services offered and also by the leadership structure of the Catholic Charities network of agencies.

Pauline eventually met with Ann Badach, executive director of Catholic Charities.

“Pauline had such good questions,” Ann says. “Our conversation reminded me of the value of the expanse of our agencies throughout our network. The administrative leadership and accountability inherent in our structure gives donors confidence about the investment they are making in us

through an endowment.”

Naming the endowment for herself and her late husband brings a smile to Pauline’s face.

“My Bob was good with money. He made sure we did things right and that I would be okay should anything happen to him,” she says, noting that his good planning has enabled her generosity.

Thinking back on her decision to establish the endowment, Pauline observes, “I’m so glad I can be a small part of it. When I left our meeting, I just felt so good, so happy. God gave me a good life. I want to give someone a chance to make their life a little better.”

MORE INFORMATION



The Catholic Foundation of Northwest PA is in service to every parish and ministry in the broad Diocese of Erie, supporting religious, education, social and pastoral ministries by connecting donors to the needs of our communities. Endowments generate funds annually in perpetuity as the donor designated — to benefit the work of Catholic Charities. The Catholic Foundation holds many endowments that support regional ministries.

More information is available from Lisa Louis, executive director of the foundation, at (814) 824-1237 or at mycatholicfoundation.org.



Focus on...

Thank You, Donors! (October 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017)

Abbey of the Genesee
Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. Lee C. Anthony
Mr. and Mrs. Gregory T. Badach
Mr. and Mrs. James Bahm
Ms. Lynda Baldwin
Ms. Brittany Barko
Father Christopher Barnes
Mr. Joseph A. Bartek
Dr. and Mrs. Warren Beaver
Benedictine Sisters of Erie
Mr. Arnold E. Bergquist
Ms. Sally A. Bojarski
Bonded Services Corp
Mr. and Mrs. Dwayne Brooks
Mrs. Mary Ann Brugger
Mr. and Mrs. James Bucklin
Ms. Vienna P. Cocuzzi
Dahlkemper Landscape Architects &
Contractors
Mr. Dale R. DeMarco
Mr. and Mrs. Michael J. Donikowski
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Elson
Mr. and Mrs. John B. Enders
Dr. William J. Evans
Mr. John Galla
Gannon University
Mr. and Mrs. James W. Garvey
Mr. and Mrs. Gary L. Glunt
Ms. Valerie Jean Gorniak
Dr. and Mrs. Doug Grisier
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Hattrup
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Hill
Ms. Doris M. Inter

Mr. and Mrs. William L. Kerins
Mr. William King
Mr. and Mrs. Warren B. King
Koldrock Waters, Inc.
Father Thaddeus Kondzielski
Dr. and Mrs. Frederick R. Krueger
Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Linnan
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Loftus
Mrs. Hazel L. Luchini
Mr. Frank Manning
Mr. and Mrs. James M. McCloskey
The McCormick Family
Mercyhurst Preparatory School
Mr. and Mrs. David M. Miller
Mr. and Mrs. Michael J. Minnaugh
Mr. David J. Murphy
Ms. Kathryn W. Parks
Father Gregory Passauer
Mrs. Maureen Peters
Mr. and Mrs. James R. Peterson
Ms. Patricia Petrisek
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Quiggle
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Rectenwald
Mrs. Sally Rouch
Mr. and Mrs. David J. Ruef
Saint Jude School
Saint Michael School
Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Sala
Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern
Pennsylvania
Slovak National Club
Deacon and Mrs. Jerome T. Sobrowski
Bill and Joy Steger Charitable Fund
Mr. and Mrs. John J. Suminski

Edward and Amalia DiLoreto Memorial
Fund of the Erie Community
Foundation
Ms. Jean Ann Verdecchia
Mr. Marshal D. Wallace
Welders Supply
Mr. and Mrs. Harry J. West
Mr. and Mrs. Timothy F. Widomski

IN MEMORY OF

Mrs. Ruth Zaksheske

Ms. Lynda Baldwin

Mrs. Marilyn Bergquist

Mr. Arnold E. Bergquist

Mrs. Elizabeth Gossage

Anonymous

Mr. and Mrs. Michael J. Donikowski

Mr. and Mrs. David J. Ruef

Mr. and Mrs. James Bucklin

Dr. Vincent Prioletti

Ms. Vienna P. Cocuzzi

Mr. Gerald Peters

Mrs. Maureen Peters

Mrs. Emma Passauer

Father Gregory Passauer

The Rev. Msgr. Edward Zeitler

Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Linnan

Mr. Raymond Bojarski

Ms. Sally A. Bojarski

Mrs. Alice Donnelly

Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Hattrup

Mr. Elijah McCloskey

Mr. and Mrs. James M. McCloskey

IN HONOR OF

Michael and Marlene Lucas

Mr. and Mrs. Gregory T. Badach

Mrs. Loretta Marzucco

Mr. Frank Manning

Mr. Robert Suminski

Mr. and Mrs. John J. Suminski



CNS photo

“

*Poverty is not an inevitable misfortune: it has causes that must be recognized and removed, in order to honor the **DIGNITY** of many brothers and sisters, after the **EXAMPLE** of the Saints.*

POPE FRANCIS
ANGELUS, 10/15/17

”