



Catholic Charities

Diocese of Youngstown

Providing Help. Creating Hope.

SPRING/SUMMER | 2023

Caritas News

A SEMI-ANNUAL PUBLICATION FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES, DIOCESE OF YOUNGSTOWN

MISSION:

Rooted in the Diocese of Youngstown mission "to minister to the people in the six counties of Northeastern Ohio (and) to the world community," Catholic Charities will provide service to people in need, advocate for justice in social structures, and call the entire Church and other people of good will to do the same.

VISION:

Believing in the presence of God in our midst, we proclaim the sanctity of human life and the dignity of the person by sharing in the mission of Jesus given to the Church. To this end, Catholic Charities works with individuals, families and communities to help them meet their needs, address their issues, eliminate oppression, and build a just and compassionate society.

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PROVIDING HELP, CREATING HOPE

**By Rachel A. Hrbolich,
Diocesan Director of Catholic Charities**

A memory from my First Holy Communion party many decades ago is of a family friend telling me, "The most permanent thing in life is change." I can't tell you what prompted the delivery of this rather heavy expression on such a joyous occasion, but I have come back to this moment many times throughout my life, especially when things seem uncertain or bleak. Life is always moving, leading us to new encounters and opportunities. These yet-to-be-realized experiences can be sources of hope during difficult times.

At Catholic Charities, we are in the business of creating and nurturing hope! We want those we serve to know that change is possible. Many of our clients feel trapped in their current situation. It is our job to work with them on strategies for moving forward. Sometimes, it's a quick nudge in a new direction. Other times it's providing assistance and resources to embark on a brand-new path, leading to amazing results: a mother and her children moving from homelessness to their own apartment; a family struggling with unemployment finding a stable job with good pay; an older adult receiving supportive services to remain independent.

For many years, Catholic Charities has been **changing lives. . . one family at a time.** Thank you for helping us help others move from fear to faith, from darkness to light.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES CELEBRATES 20 YEARS PROVIDING FIRST STEP PROGRAM SERVICES



Twenty years ago, Catholic Charities' leadership in the Diocese of Youngstown came together to talk about services for women and children. Our adoption program was experiencing very little activity, and we were seeing more women making the decision to parent their children—even if that meant facing significant financial and emotional challenges. We realized that we needed to do more to support these women who were choosing life despite their circumstances, as well as those families who needed our help to give their babies and toddlers the best possible start in life. Thus, the **First Step Pregnancy and Family Support Program** was born (pun intended)!

First Step Programs are offered at each of the three Catholic Charities agencies serving our six-county diocese, providing material assistance (food, formula, diapers and other baby essentials) and case management (support and assistance accessing information and resources).

From the beginning, demand for the First Step program has been great. First Step for Change was developed to help raise funds to maintain a robust supply of material goods for First Step clients and families. An annual campaign since 2004, First Step for Change engages our Catholic parishes in the pro-life mission of Catholic Charities to assist pregnant women and families who look to us for help and hope.

YOUR 2022 CONTRIBUTIONS ALLOWED US TO SERVE:

- **2,512 ADULTS**
- **4,046 CHILDREN**
- **1,300+ HOUSEHOLDS**



SHE IS CLOTHED WITH STRENGTH AND DIGNITY, AND LAUGHS AT THE DAYS TO COME. SHE OPENS HER MOUTH IN WISDOM; KINDLY INSTRUCTION ON HER TONGUE. SHE WATCHES OVER THE AFFAIRS OF HER HOUSEHOLD... HER CHILDREN RISE UP AND CALL HER BLESSED...

PROVERBS 31: 25-28

A WELCOME SURPRISE!

"Kimberly" came to Catholic Charities to inquire about our First Step program. She had only recently learned that she was seven months pregnant! She had been told by medical professionals that she would never be able to have children, so you can imagine how shocked and overwhelmed she felt when she came to us for help. Our First Step case worker assisted Kimberly with finding prenatal care and provided tangible resources, such as a "newborn kit" (diapers, wipes, clothing, bath supplies, etc.), a bassinet, and a baby rocker. The case worker also connected Kimberly with the local health department for a car seat and helped her sign up for the WIC program. Kimberly was exceedingly grateful to Catholic Charities for providing baby items, resources, and moral support during a new and unexpected phase of her life.

a special thank you to these Knights of Columbus Assemblies or Councils, for their support of our Annual First Step for Change Campaign:

Assembly #2596, Youngstown
Council #341, Canton
Council #554, Massillon
Council #1818, Salem, OH
Council #3930, Youngstown
Council #4484, Newton Falls



Council #5582, Navarre
Council #11801, Garrettsville
Council #11915, Poland
Council #14186, Aurora
Council #11369, Canfield

CATHOLIC CHARITIES REGIONAL AGENCY OPENS 2ND LOCATION, VOICE OF HOPE SHELTER II

In January 2021, Catholic Charities Regional Agency opened an emergency shelter for homeless women and children called the Voice of Hope Shelter. This was in response to the shortage of family beds for emergency shelter in the community and made possible by CARES Act funds. Within days the shelter was full and developed a waiting list. Over the last 2 years a waiting list has been maintained and the need for a second shelter was identified and made possible by continued CARES Act funds. In the past 2 years there have been 99 individuals, or 65 families sheltered, with 45 families transitioned into some form of permanent housing or program. The shortage of adequate housing is a wide-ranging issue that many communities are facing. The shelter is intended to be a 30-day shelter with discharge planning that starts upon admission. The average length of stay has run closer to 60 days due to difficulty with finding housing.

"BEING ABLE TO ASSIST THE HOMELESS WITH A SHELTER PROGRAM HAS BEEN A WELCOME ADDITION TO OUR AGENCY."

**- NANCY VOITUS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CATHOLIC CHARITIES REGIONAL AGENCY**



Lorie Brackbill ~ Dawn Leslie
Voice of Hope Shelter II, Homestead

THOSE WHO SHUT THEIR EARS TO THE CRY OF THE POOR WILL THEMSELVES CALL OUT AND NOT BE ANSWERED.
PROVERBS 21:13

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Voice of Hope Dinner

SOLD OUT!

What a wonderful dilemma that we encountered while preparing for the Annual Voice of Hope Dinner scheduled for May 4, 2023.



Bishop David J. Bonnar

Not a single invitation was mailed, and yet we welcomed 339 guests to the event, hosted at The Grand Resort Ballroom in Warren. Dr. James Kravec, Chief Clinical Officer, Mercy Health Lorain & Youngstown and a previous Voice of Hope award recipient (2008) gave a lively keynote address.



Dr. James Kravec

Friends gathered from near and far to help us honor and recognize our award recipients:

- Father Jim Korda
- Sister Jean Orsuto
- Saint John School, Ashtabula received by Sister Maureen Burke

Guests enjoyed champagne, hors d'oeuvres, a fabulous meal, games of chance, a 50/50 raffle, and more.

Most importantly though, was the chance to gather together in friendship and fellowship, in support of the mission of Catholic Charities; to serve the needs of those who need us the most.



thank you

More than **\$35,000** was raised from this event to support Catholic Charities Basic Needs Assistance programs in all six (6) counties of the Diocese of Youngstown.



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SUPPORT CONTINUES FOR RESIDENTS AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES



*East
Palestine*

Catholic Charities Regional Agency has been in contact with the churches in East Palestine since the train derailment on February 3rd. The agency has partnered with Our Lady of Lourdes Parish by donating water, cleaning supplies and personal hygiene items. The agency also provided a caseworker over several weeks during their distributions to listen and talk with residents impacted by the derailment and subsequent issues from the accident. One of the regional agency's employees lives in East Palestine and has kept us updated with community activity and news.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Catholic Charities is partially funded by the Annual Diocesan Appeal.

WWW.DDOY.ORG/APPEAL

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Sign up for our e-newsletter too!
www.ccdoy.org

Follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube to hear about how we are providing help and creating hope to those in need in your community!



COMING SOON!

More to come on these special events and/or programs.

JULY - COMMUNITY CUPBOARD COLLECTION

SEPTEMBER - LUNCH & LEARN EVENT

OCTOBER - RESPECT LIFE MONTH

NOVEMBER - SEASON OF GIVING, #GIVING TUESDAY,
EVENTS WITH THE BISHOP (YOUNGSTOWN AND CANTON)