

# Charities USA

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**The intersection of  
Parish Social Ministry  
and Catholic Charities'  
Strategic Priorities**

**The Catholic  
Disaster  
Preparedness  
Program**

## **Living the Gospel together:**

**Catholic Charities and parishes**



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## EDITOR'S

## COLUMN

A temptation among lay people is abdicating the duty of prayer to the professional religious: clergy and nuns. A similar temptation for parishes is abdicating social ministry to larger charitable organizations. Both temptations should be resisted since every baptized person shares in the three offices of Christ: priest, prophet and king. The last office of king is the one directed toward service.

The Catholic Charities ministry seeks to help parishes fulfill their mission of anticipating the Kingdom of Heaven by serving not only fellow parishioners but also all people in the community. Catholic Charities USA's Parish Social Ministry Leadership Team, comprising staff from parishes and local agencies, takes the lead in this effort by sharing best practices and offering relevant resources. Sister Betsy Van Deusen, who chairs the Leadership Team, writes in the introduction (see page 6) that the team will soon offer an electronic program to help parishioners learn about social ministry.

In a 1994 issue of *Charities USA*, Bishop Joseph M. Sullivan stated, "In the future, if the Church is going to be an effective witness to the Gospel, the Church has to be in the broader community. I think parish social ministry is a lever to make that happen, because it doesn't say we're just going to serve Catholics in the parish. It's for people in need in the community."

Bishop Sullivan's statement points us to the example of Jesus' own ministry, which was not limited to his own village: "And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people" (Mt 4:23).

Perhaps another aspect of Jesus' ministry to keep in mind, when considering parish social ministry, is that he would send his disciples "ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he was about to come" (Lk 10:1) to prepare the people to receive him well. It's a nice way to see the partnership between Catholic Charities and parishes. ■

David Werning, Managing Editor

To comment on this issue, please write to David Werning at [dwwerning@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org](mailto:dwwerning@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org).

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“We certainly realize this work is far more than simply providing a bag of groceries or a utility payment. Catholic Charities, in collaboration with many parish volunteers, extends the palpable love and compassion of God to those who may have been hard hit by life’s challenges. We believe this is truly a sacred ministry.”

– Sister Donna Markham OP, PhD



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

- ▶ Catholic Charities is the organized humanitarian ministry of the church in the United States and, as such, is deeply embedded in the life of the local church across the country. Key to the impact of our commitment to help those who are in need is vibrant collaboration between parishes and Catholic Charities agencies. The Catholic Charities Parish Social Ministry Leadership Team at the national office comprises members from local parishes and Catholic Charities agencies. Together they encourage and assist parishes in establishing local social ministry teams grounded in Catholic Social Teaching and in best practices in the delivery of services to families and individuals that may be in need. In the pages that follow, you will hear some compelling stories of how together we reach out to our neighbors in need.

We certainly realize this work is far more than simply providing a bag of groceries or a utility payment. Catholic Charities, in collaboration with many parish volunteers, extends the palpable love and compassion of God to those who may have been hard hit by life's challenges. We believe this is truly a sacred ministry.

Immediate needs are complemented with the offer of program support, counseling, jobs training and professional services of all kinds. The stronger the collaboration between parishes and Catholic Charities, the better able we are, as church, to build durable communities of compassion and human dignity.

As the first disciples were faced with the dilemma of feeding thousands of people with few resources, we continue this great and bold mission of extending generosity and kindness to those who so long to be nurtured by the goodness of their neighbor, no matter the challenges.



**Sister Donna Markham OP, PhD**  
President & CEO





# Living the Gospel together:

## Catholic Charities and parishes

By Sister Betsy Van Deusen, CSJ, Chair of the Catholic Charities USA Parish Social Ministry Leadership Team and Director of Community Partnerships for Catholic Charities in Albany, NY

- ▶ Parish Social Ministry (PSM) has its roots in the Acts of the Apostles: “There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed according to need” (4: 34-35). Churches have continued to meet many and various needs of people throughout the centuries. Imagine if there was a seamless connection between the Church and the Catholic Charities network in every diocese! And houses of worship of other faiths, too!

Since 1910, Catholic Charities has practiced social ministry, and to a great extent with parishes. After the War on Poverty, and in response to it, Catholic Charities released in 1964 The Cadre Report (“*Toward a Renewed Catholic Charities*”) to “serve, transform and humanize social structures, and convene the Church and others to do the same.” The report encouraged collaboration be-

tween Catholic Charities agencies and parishes and local neighborhood and civic groups.

In the 1980s a change occurred in the social work profession: community organizing and engagement became less prevalent and clinical and therapeutic models of service delivery dominated the field of practice. As a result, parishes had fewer opportunities to influence the work of Catholic Charities. In some places the relationship between parishes and Catholic Charities became more distant and in others the connection remained strong.

Catholic Charities in its Vision 2000 report stated, “Catholic Charities must help the Church at large fulfill its service mission.” In 2008, Catholic Charities, recognizing the work of PSM in many dioceses and the need in others, released *Catalysts and Collaborators in Social*







*Ministry*, which has proven to be the handbook for PSM across the Catholic Charities system. Father Larry Snyder, chief executive officer at the time, wrote, “Our goal in Catholic Charities is to become an animator and collaborator of the work of the Gospel with and through the church community in our dioceses.”

*“Parish Social Ministry is the action that the faith community takes to live out the Gospel we proclaim and to grow in love with God and neighbor”* (Catalysts and Collaborators).

As a national network, Catholic Charities has enormous potential through its agencies and programs to encourage parishes to be engaged in the work of the Gospel. Our investment in forming parish leaders and teams in the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and introducing them to the myriad ways that we feed the hungry, care for the prisoner and house the homeless will pay extraordinary dividends.

There are multiple iterations of PSM: parishes partnering with Catholic Charities on a particular project and providing funding and volunteers; Catholic Charities inviting parishes to assist with a project or program already in existence; or Catholic Charities and parishes discussing how collaboration might work best.

Sometimes parishes provide space for a Catholic Charities office or service. This issue of *Charities USA* articulates the many benefits of PSM and the models at work.

When the Catholic Charities ministry offers its expertise to communities of faith, we often get volunteers, advocates and donors. We find people hungry to learn more, become more involved and serve as the spark that a parish needs to become more deeply involved in the work of the Gospel.

Catholic Charities USA's Parish Social Ministry Leadership Team, comprising staff from parishes and Catholic Charities agencies, supports parish social ministers around the country. The Leadership Team offers network calls to share ideas and receive encouragement. It hopes to have an electronic certification process available soon for parishioners to become well-versed in their faith and the social ministry in our tradition.

As the landscape in which we operate continues to be rocky and unknown, sharing the work of Catholic Charities with parishes is needed now more than ever. How lovely to be an instrument to set a heart on fire for justice, to be the hands and feet for a new program and to engage a parish in advocating for the needs of the most vulnerable. That is the work of PSM, an indispensable aspect of our ministry at Catholic Charities. ■





# Working together with Catholic parishes:

## Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans

By Tom Costanza, Director, Office of Justice and Peace, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans

► The relationship between Catholic Charities and Catholic parishes has always been vital to addressing the needs of parish and community members. Since 2013, Sister Marjorie Hebert, president of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New Orleans (CCANO), has directed CCANO to focus on resources and funds to assist Catholic parishes. Through her leadership, CCANO allocated resources to hire a full-time Parish Outreach Case Manager.

Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond also encouraged the relationship between Catholic Charities and parishes. “The Catholic parishes are on the frontline of helping people who are poor,” the Archbishop said, “and Catholic Charities is there to help the parishes.” He stated that each parish should have an outreach ministry to those struggling with poverty and a Social Justice Coordinator.

CCANO responded to Sister Hebert and the archbishop by structuring its parish social ministry efforts according to the USCCB’s *Communities of Salt and Light: Reflection of the Social Mission of the Parish*. The four areas of ministry in *Salt and Light* include:

- 1 Faith Formation in Catholic Social Teaching
- 2 Outreach and Charity
- 3 Advocacy and Organizing
- 4 Global Solidarity



CCANO analyzed 105 parishes through this framework and found that 95% had Outreach and Charity Ministries and 65% had Global Solidarity Ministries. More work needed to be done in the areas of Faith Formation and Advocacy and Organizing.

To track its efforts, CCANO’s Planning and Evaluation Department created a survey that asked pastors what Catholic Charities services they are familiar with, whether they have referred parish-





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— Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond



ioners to Catholic Charities, and the types of assistance parishioners need. The direct feedback from pastors helps CCANO to improve its parish outreach. According to the survey, all parishes have received services from Catholic Charities. Seventy-five percent of the parishes received between five to 10 different services. The dollar value of services (including benefit enrollment in SNAP and Medicaid) is \$1,380,000.

The work of Parish Social Ministry, through the model of *Salt and Light*, calls us to make concrete the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. CCANO feeds the hungry and gives drink to the thirsty through our food programs. We counsel the doubtful through our Counseling Solutions programs. We shelter the homeless through a comprehensive homeless services program.

We have been blessed with an outstanding Parish Outreach Staff that covers all of the bases of our service delivery – including

case management, benefit enrollment and direct service. Raphael Velazquez, Doug Kariker, Mary Smith and Marilyn Shraberg work directly with parishioners, pastors and their staffs to meet the needs of the community. Outreach in the form of Faith Formation is directed by Kevin Fitzpatrick, director of the Office of Justice and Peace Program.

CCANO strives to give hope to those who are poor, as Pope Francis urges in his letter based on the Third World Day of the Poor: “... seek in every poor person whom you encounter...his or her true needs...[do] not to stop with their obvious material needs, but... discover their inner goodness, paying heed to their background and way of expressing themselves and in this way initiate a true fraternal dialogue.” ■

**“CCANO feeds the hungry and gives drink to the thirsty through our food programs. We counsel the doubtful through our Counseling Solutions programs. We shelter the homeless through a comprehensive homeless services program.”**

— Tom Costanza





# Living out the call

## Parish Social Ministry and Advocacy

By Kimberly Mazyck, Senior Manager, Engagement and Educational Outreach, CCUSA



Throughout its 100+ history CCUSA has been advocating for those struggling in poverty.

- ▶ The CCUSA Social Policy team supports those leading or participating in advocacy efforts in their local community, including local Parish Social Ministry groups (PSM). CCUSA's team helps identify positions, suggests speaking points, and offers guidance to promote the dignity of the human person and the common good. With this support and resources, the Social Policy team reminds PSM groups that a "culture of encounter" can be developed.

Pope Francis invites us to work for "the culture of encounter...as Jesus did: not just seeing, but looking; not just hearing, but listening; not just passing people by, but stopping with them; not just saying 'what a shame, poor people!', but allowing yourself to be moved with compassion."

Developing a culture of encounter means living Catholic Charities' mission, which is providing service to people in need, advocating for justice in social structures and calling the entire church and

other people of good will to do the same. As individuals look, listen and stop with compassion, they become equipped to fulfill this mission.

PSM teams around the country practice charity. They may provide funds for a utility bill or call a utility company to help clarify a bill. They also might support legislation such as payday lending reform. Direct service and advocacy work together for a culture of encounter.

For some parishes without a PSM team, the subject of advocacy may seem daunting and too political. Catholic Social Teaching helps to assuage these feelings through sound instruction about the importance of civic action in the life of parishioners.

The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* declares that participation in the public square involves everyone, including churchgoers: "The social and political involvement of the lay faith-

ELIAS KONTOGIANNIS



CCUSA's Social Policy team hosts "Poverty Simulations" where participants assume the roles of low-income family members who have to access services and pay bills on a limited budget



**“...social policy activity in the name of the parish is a deliberate and planned ministerial activity.”**

— Kimberly Mazyck, Senior Manager

ful in the area of culture moves today in specific directions. The first is that of seeking to guarantee the right of each person to a human and civil culture” (No. 557). This section also states that, “At the root of the poverty of so many peoples are also various forms of cultural deprivation and the failure to recognize cultural rights. The commitment to the education and formation of the person has always represented the first concern of Christian social action.”

In other words, social policy activity in the name of the parish is a deliberate and planned ministerial activity. It does require the pastor’s support, because the pastor’s oversight gives him a unique perspective. He may have priorities based on the variety of groups in the parish. Still, building a social ministry team of parishioners with diverse skills and insights greatly benefits the pastor in his responsibilities and uses well the gifts of the laity. Having a parish social minister who coordinates social justice efforts would also be a great benefit.

If you want a PSM team at your parish, support your case with material from CCUSA’s Social Policy team, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, or your state Catholic conference. But whether you have a PSM team now or want to build one, the CCUSA Social Policy team is eager to work with you on your social ministry goals. For support, contact us at [socialpolicy@catholiccharitiesusa.org](mailto:socialpolicy@catholiccharitiesusa.org). ■



Catholic Charities executive directors and CCUSA government affairs director meets with New York delegation on Capitol Hill



# Partnering for impact

The intersection of Parish Social Ministry and Catholic Charities' Strategic Priorities

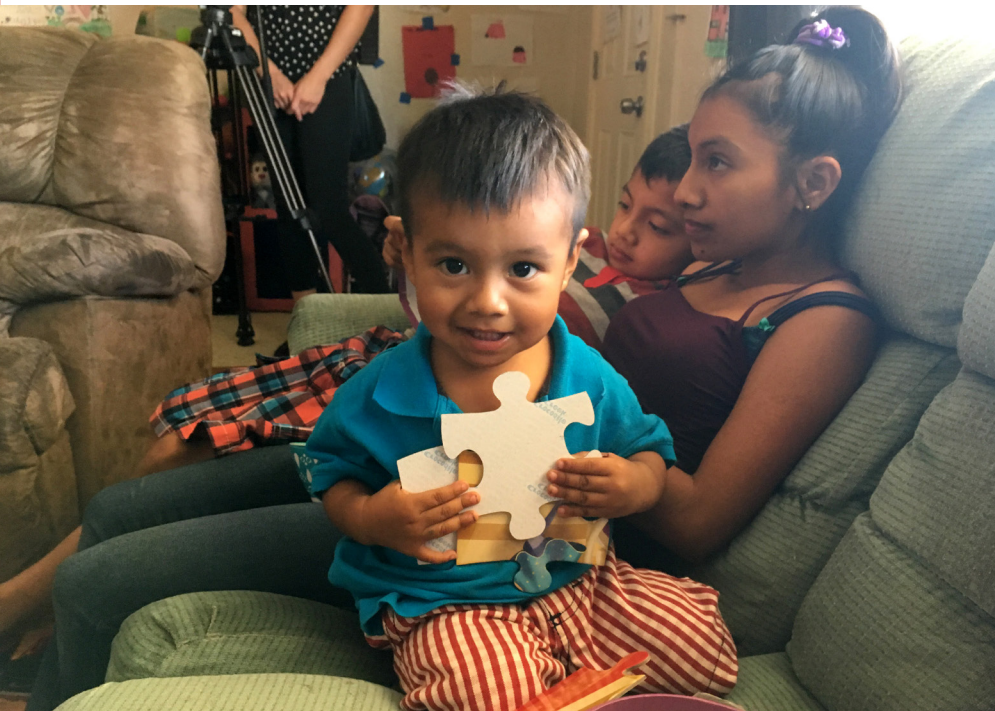
By Scott Hurd, Vice President, Leadership Formation

- ▶ Good things can happen when Catholic Charities agencies and local parishes work together. Through such partnerships, agencies can greatly expand their capacity to serve the vulnerable in local communities, and parishes are provided opportunities for their members to express their love for God and neighbor. The possibilities for such collaborations are not limited to a few foundational programs, but include the whole breadth of services a Catholic Charities agency might offer. To provide a few examples, the pages that follow demonstrate how parish and agency partnerships are addressing the current strategic priorities of the Catholic Charities ministry.



### Disaster Services

After Hurricane Harvey in 2017, Mary Queen Church in Friendswood, Texas, worked with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston to distribute groceries for 8,000 people over 14 days.



### Immigration and Refugee Services

Saint Monica Church in Indianapolis works with their local agency to implement the Catholic Accompaniment and Reflection Experience (CARE) Program. CARE connects volunteers with undocumented immigrants and unaccompanied children in need of social services and emotional and spiritual support while they comply with immigration proceedings.





### **Advocacy and Social Policy**

After hearing from Catholic Charities agencies in Texas how predatory payday lenders were harming low-income communities, the Texas Catholic Conference convened leaders from Catholic Charities, parishes, and other groups who successfully lobbied lawmakers to pass legislation in dozens of cities and towns.



### **Food and Nutrition**

Thanks to the Catholic Charities of Louisville Common Earth program, refugees farm community gardens on parish properties to cut household grocery costs and support a local food bank.



ELIAS KONTOGIANNIS

### **Catholic Identity And Leadership Development**

Across the country, Catholic Charities leaders provide formation in Catholic Social Teaching for parishes. To train the trainers, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston has created a Parish Social Ministry Certification Program.





### **Integrated Health**

Over the past year, Catholic Charities West Virginia conducted four regional conferences at parishes to address the opioid crisis and dispel stigmas associated with substance abuse disorder.



### **Affordable Housing**

St. Stephen's Church in Pennsauken, NJ, and Diocesan Housing Services of the Diocese of Camden jointly developed Stonegate, a 75-unit apartment building for low-income seniors.



### **Social Enterprise**

Catholic Charities Maine sponsors annual e-waste recycling days at multiple parishes throughout the state. Thanks to this initiative, proceeds from recycling over 100,000 pounds of e-waste benefit the agency's Eco-Joy program which energizes parishes to care for creation through integrating ecology, education, and spirituality.





# The Catholic Disaster Preparedness Program

By Jennifer L. Dyer, Program Director, Agency Capacity Initiative Disaster Operations, Catholic Charities USA

- ▶ Every dollar spent on disaster preparedness saves seven dollars in recovery efforts. Preparedness is important, it is virtuous and it is the responsible thing to do. It's not only a fiscally-responsible undertaking; it also saves lives and reduces the injury and harm a disaster event may unleash on a community. And yet, so many of us do not prepare. We do not prepare because the work feels daunting and there always seems to be a more immediate need for the limited resources at our disposal.

MaryLynn Lufkin, director of Disaster Relief for Catholic Charities of Eastern Oklahoma, has an unwavering commitment to preparing communities prior to a disaster. During non-disaster times, Lufkin is a one-person "team," responsible for, among many other things, preparing individuals, families and parishes in 31 counties and across the 26,417 miles that encompass the Diocese of Tulsa.

As much as Lufkin would like to offer preparedness training in each of the 78 parishes and missions in the diocese, and to the many vulnerable communities in between, she simply could not get to everyone. "A two-hour training," Lufkin shared, "would take a full eight hours with the travel time, set up and breakdown...sometimes more,

depending on how far I had to drive to get there." And yet, when she would offer a training the response was always great. "People were so hungry for the information," she said. "We have a lot of tornadoes here and people wanted to know how they could keep their families safe, protect the things that were really special to them and how to help others."

Catholic Charities USA's (CCUSA) Disaster Operations Office heard the same requests from diocese to diocese. Catholic Charities agencies across the network wanted to offer preparedness trainings. Parishes were interested in receiving the training as well, but the resources were just too limited to meet the needs. In response, CCUSA designed the Catholic Disaster Preparedness Program in collaboration with local agencies and with input from parishes, parishioners and priests.

The Catholic Disaster Preparedness Program is a three-part video training series, delivered over the course of about eight hours. The program trains individuals, families and parishes to build resiliency and enhance response efforts in communities in such a way that it provides all Catholics the opportunity to live out their call to soli-



parity and to assist those most in need, while enhancing the dignity of those individuals impacted. The trainings provide instruction on how to stay safe, mitigate the impact of a disaster and give of oneself during a disaster event.

Part one of the video series is a three-hour training that can be split into two sessions. It emphasizes what a family needs to do to be safe during a disaster event, taking into account where the people live and who lives in the household. Part two, which is also a three-hour training split into two sessions, focuses on the parish and the steps the parish can take to mitigate the impact of a disaster while continuing to serve the needs of its community. Part three is a 1.5-hour training that concentrates on what assets the parish has and how the community can share its gifts with those who may have been impacted during a disaster.

The Catholic Disaster Preparedness Program offers another benefit to participants: It provides a number of opportunities to educate and engage around poverty and justice issues. For example, we know that disasters impact disproportionately those who are poor and vulnerable, those whom God has asked us to serve and care for in a very special way. While people are engaged in response and recovery efforts following a disaster, they are often open to learning why disasters impact those who are poor and vulnerable more than others and how that translates into the challenges of everyday life. Therefore, this video training series, while focused on disaster preparedness, can also provide a foundation for continued conversations and opportunities for individuals and families to live their faith more fully beyond disaster response. ■

AGENCY PHOTO: DAVE CRENSHAW/EASTERN OKLAHOMA CATHOLIC



MaryLynn Lufkin presents Disaster Preparedness information to parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish in Skiatook, Okla., a parish in the Diocese of Tulsa and Eastern Oklahoma.





# Emergency vouchers scale to meet needs in rural Eastern Washington

By Scott Cooper, Director, Parish Social Ministry

- ▶ In 2015, the worst wildfires in Washington State history decimated housing in rural Okanogan, Ferry and Stevens Counties. The fires burned hundreds of thousands of acres and destroyed more than 300 homes, nearly a third of which were uninsured.

Catholic Charities Eastern Washington (CCEW) responded swiftly. Our trucks arrived with blankets, towels, food and water to address the fire victims' immediate needs, and through the Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) disaster funding mechanism we provided immediate financial assistance.

Our disaster response also became a lasting commitment, thanks to our existing emergency assistance voucher system. Our disaster case manager arrived in the community with a stack of vouchers—a promise of payment to help replace what had been lost. Leveraging existing partners, funds and processes, we scaled up our voucher system to assist scores of people in rebuilding their lives.

CCEW also uses the vouchers to serve our substantially rural service area. In small Eastern Washington towns of 1,000–5,000 people, residents can count on two institutions: a parish and a community food bank. But if residents need gas to get to Spokane for medical care, to keep their electricity connected, or to fill a new prescription that's unaffordable, local resources are scarce.

During a series of listening sessions held around the Diocese of Spokane from 2000–2001, small parishes told CCEW they needed help addressing their neighbors' financial challenges. In response, CCEW expanded our small emergency assistance voucher program to offer rural communities a flexible tool for assisting their neighbors financially.

The voucher system is straightforward. CCEW provides funds for emergency services. A local church or agency provides relationships with local businesses and utilities. When a resident comes with a need, the church or agency writes a voucher, and the busi-

ness, knowing CCEW is good for the money, provides the service. CCEW reimburses. Cash is never put into the client's hands; CCEW pays the vendors directly.


### Emergency vouchers are tailored to local needs

If communities demonstrate a need, CCEW introduces our voucher program and adapts the tool to work locally. Sometimes the pastor and parish secretary serve as our voucher writers. In other cases, the local food bank or community action agency is a better fit. We partner with St. Vincent de Paul conferences. In one small town, the best partners are pastors of two Protestant congregations. In each case, we seek approval from the parish pastor – after all, we're using funds raised in Catholic parishes. It only makes sense to have them on board when we dispense those monies.

The costs to run the program are limited to occasional printing of vouchers, postage, fiscal and accounting, and, primarily, the money budgeted each year to back up the vouchers. Pastors in rural community parishes sing the praises of having a flexible tool at their disposal. Because the emergency funds are unrestricted, they can be used for any basic need that cannot easily be met by other means, as long as the vendor will accept our voucher. I'm known for saying, "I like the weird ones," meaning the unusual cases that don't fall into typical categories. Help replacing a well pump that supplies a household's water? Done that. Steel-toed work boots so a young man can start a new job? Done that, too.


### Managing and reporting the voucher system

We ask voucher writers to work with local vendors (e.g., the grocery store, the gas station, etc.) to make sure the process runs smoothly. That small business owner needs to be confident that we will pay them in a timely way. But think for a moment about the power of being able to say, "yes, we can help you," when someone knocks on the parish door. The secretary can pull a Catholic Charities voucher from a drawer and send that person out with an actual resource to meet the need for gas, food or utility services.



**TRI-COUNTY CATHOLIC CHARITIES**

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**TRI-COUNTY CATHOLIC CHARITIES**

DATE ISSUED: \_\_\_\_\_

TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Merchant)

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

You are authorized to provide the following to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Recipient) (# served – adults & children)

\_\_\_\_\_  
City / Town

ID #: \_\_\_\_\_ Photo Yes / No

Gas and/or oil \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Utilities \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Rent \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Food or baby supplies ONLY \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Prescription \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHORIZED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

X \_\_\_\_\_  
(Recipient's signature in presence of issuer)

X \_\_\_\_\_  
(Counter-signature in presence of merchant)

MERCHANT'S SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

Merchant: **Please send bill AND white voucher to:**  
Tri-County Catholic Charities  
P.O. Box 2253  
Spokane, WA 99210-2253

Every quarter, we send a report to all voucher writers and pastors to let them know how much of the annual budget has been spent, in which communities, on what goods and services, and for how many beneficiaries.

Crucially, our agency budgets for this annually, providing a predictable and stable resource. In Eastern Washington, vouchers remain a tool to serve those in need and to build relationships with rural communities. ■

*If you are interested in developing your own emergency voucher system, check out CCEW's toolkit with resources for getting started at <https://www.cceasternwa.org/parishsocialministry>.*



## CCUSA announces its Innovation Challenge at the 2019 Annual Gathering

- ▶ A highlight of this year's Annual Gathering was the announcement by Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA), of CCUSA's Innovation Challenge. The challenge, which awards a total of \$1 million to three agencies, seeks to inspire member agencies within the Catholic Charities network to propose a fresh solution toward alleviating, reducing or eliminating poverty.

"Building on this year's Annual Gathering theme, Bold Ideas Create Great Change, I want to provide our ministry a platform to think creatively and innovatively about how they address the needs they encounter in their community every day," said Sister Donna.

"This challenge serves as a catalyst to encourage ideas that lead to systemic change in the way they address poverty."

Agencies grouped into three categories based on the number of full-time employees – small, medium or large – will submit proposals to CCUSA. The proposals must recommend new and innovative approaches rather than expand upon current programs. The application deadline for the CCUSA Innovation Challenge is Jan. 31, 2020, at 11:59 ET. Only one submission per member agency will be accepted. To learn more about the CCUSA Innovation Challenge please visit [CCUSAInnovates.org](http://CCUSAInnovates.org).



Photographs of the 2019 Annual Gathering in Albuquerque, New Mexico



PHOTOS: ELIAS KONTOGIANNIS

Sister Donna Markham delivering her presidential address to the gathering



Catholic Charities agency directors networking



The Serpent Trail Dancers perform during the opening prayer



Mona Patel offering her keynote address



Sister Donna presents the Good Samaritan Award to the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, represented by Sister Jayne Helmlinger, president of LCWR



# Helping food pantry clients make healthy choices:

Catholic Charities partners with Walmart

- ▶ Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) received a \$1.4 million grant from the Walmart Foundation to reduce hunger among people struggling with poverty. While most of the funds supported outreach and enrollment for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program at 47 Catholic Charities agencies in the United States, some of the funds paid for Catholic Charities food pantry consultations.

CCUSA contracted with Bonnie Faitak, healthy food systems project manager at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), to lead the consultations. She based her presentation on the UAMS program, “Improved Nutrition in Communities,” which includes information on how pantry design can support healthy choices for individuals and families who access some of their food at pantries. The overarching goal of the program is that every person can reach and maintain a better state of health, including people struggling with food insecurity or low incomes.

Four agencies received a pantry consultation from Faitak: Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Trenton, N.J.; Catholic Charities Omaha; Catholic Charities Bureau, Inc., Diocese of St. Augustine (Jacksonville, Fla.); and Catholic Charities of Portland, Ore.

At the consultation in Trenton, Catholic Charities staff from Trenton, Camden and Paterson were present. Participants learned that the top three components of a healthy pantry design are having written nutrition guidelines, using a “client-choice” distribution model, and having adequate refrigerated storage. While all three components impact pantry clients, the client-choice model does so most directly.

In traditional pantry settings, clients may hope to get some food they like or at least can use from the pre-packed bag they are given. But in a client-choice pantry, the options are more numerous and potentially more healthy.



To encourage healthy choices, pantry staff can move food items with greater nutritional value to the front of the space, bundle ingredients for a meal on a common shelf, and create signs that display the health benefits of the particular item. “Having a food sample available for clients to taste, along with the recipe and ingredients, is another way to encourage a healthy choice,” Faitak said.

A client-choice pantry offers an intangible benefit as well. “Having a client-choice pantry shows the clients that you care for them and respect them,” Faitak said. “You’re not just handing them a bag, but interacting with them and answering questions.”

The actual design of the pantry space garnered most comments as participants shared their takeaways from Faitak’s presentation. Anne Casale, business manager at the Mount Carmel Guild pantry in Trenton, said she was eager to convert to client-choice and was already planning to tap local medical schools for a nutrition education supplement to the pantry service.

CCUSA hopes to offer more pantry consultations in the future. Agencies that receive the consultation are eligible for up to \$1,500 to implement recommendations. Any agencies within a particular region may participate in the consultation too. The hope is that each local convening stimulates broader changes in pantry design and product placement. The results of the consultations to date were shared at CCUSA’s annual gathering in Albuquerque, N.M., this past September. ■



## Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens Raised \$1.36 Million During the 2019 Bishop’s Humanitarian Award Dinner

- ▶ Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens raised \$1.36 million on June 19 at the 2019 Bishop’s Humanitarian Award Dinner. Held at Cipriani Wall Street, all proceeds benefit the more than 160 programs and services of Catholic Charities. During the program, Catholic Charities presented Nicola DeAcetis AIA, principal at MDG Design and Construction; Richard Lagnese, Sr., chief executive officer of Allied Construction; and the Russo Family, owners of Garguilo’s Restaurant, with the Bishop’s Humanitarian Award. Frank Fusaro, co-founder and president of Forum Group, received the Bishop Joseph M. Sullivan Service Award, and six employees of Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens, John Belfon, Sarai Bosques, Josefa Castro, Elaine Merchant, Jessica Russell and Wendy Schwartz received the John J. Farrell Award.

Top: Pictured left to right: William R. Guarinello, MS, President and Chief Executive Officer of HeartShare Human Services of New York, poses with Margaret Russo, wife of Nino Russo, owner of Garguilo’s Restaurant and recipient of the 2019 Bishop’s Humanitarian Award.

Top right: The NYPD Ceremonial Unit Honor Guard performs the National Anthem/Pledge of Allegiance.

Bottom right: Students from a Catholic Charities afterschool program located in Jamaica, Queens, entertain the crowd with a Broadway medley from Annie and The Lion King.





### **Pope Francis bestows papal honor on James Amato for exceptional service to the Church**

James Amato was named a Knight in the Order of Saint Gregory the Great by Pope Francis. Amato has served in the Secretariat for Catholic Human Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in various capacities for more than three decades. He was named Secretary for Catholic Human Services in 2011. An active State Licensed Professional Social Worker, he has dedicated his professional life to advancing the charitable works of the local Church and assisting those most in need throughout the Philadelphia region. Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap., conferred the honor during evening prayer at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul on September 5, 2019.

### **Catholic Charities of the Diocese of New Ulm highlights Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of New Ulm and New Ulm Diocesan Council of Catholic Women designated October 2019 to launch an ongoing campaign to raise awareness and reduce domestic violence in every diocesan parish. At all Masses during the second weekend in October, a woman from the parish shared a statement from Bishop John LeVoir on the importance of reach-

ing out as the good Samaritan and not ignoring the issue from the other side of the street like the priest and Levite.

Bishop LeVoir's statement was prompted by an address he heard from Kathy Bonner, primary spokesperson for the National Council of Catholic Women's Initiative, "Women Healing the Wounds." Bonner's address considered domestic violence against women on a national and local level. Bishop LeVoir learned from Bonner, a domestic violence survivor herself, that children in abusive homes grow up to be victims and perpetrators just like their parents unless the cycle is broken through counseling and treatment. "There is a crisis and until we are willing to intervene and educate around this ongoing, multi-generational dysfunction," Bonner said, "the cycles of domestic violence will continue to flourish."

Each parish now has on hand reference materials from "Women Healing the Wounds" and Catholic Charities for both victims and perpetrators on how to seek help. Catholic Charities counselors and staff (1-866-670-5163) provide information on safe haven alternatives if someone needs to leave a dangerous environment. Homily Hints and Prayers of the Faithful were also offered to encourage everyone to address the issue and support families in their efforts for assistance. ■

### **Catholic Charities Archdiocese of San Antonio, Inc. adds shower trailer to mobile relief unit**

Catholic Charities, in partnership with the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Inc. and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, added a shower trailer to its Mobile Relief Unit fleet. The shower trailer comprises two showers, a toilet, sink stalls and a two-unit washer/dryer room to provide humanitarian aid to the homeless and the displaced. It will complement the existing Mobile Relief Unit that provides fresh meals from a kitchen and distributes water, food and clothing.

Community Outreach staff and volunteers provide fresh meals and distribute basic needs from the Mobile Relief Unit, affectionately named Hope by the community. The Mobile Relief Unit serves the San Antonio community and the 19 counties of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. It has traveled to Uvalde, Laredo, McAllen, and El Paso to assist those in need. During the last fiscal year, the Mobile Relief Unit served 8,053 individuals in and around San Antonio.



Photo (l-r) Elder Carlos Villareal from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, MSPS; Catholic Charities' President/CEO, J. Antonio Fernandez.

# “We won’t give up on you”:

Transformative power and the possibility of Catholic collaboration

By Patty Repikoff, Pastoral Advocate for Mission, Catholic Community Services/Catholic Housing Services of Western Washington

► In early 2016 Washington’s Catholic bishops recognized that the state’s economy was creating drastic disparities in wealth and the plight of the poor was reaching a crisis point. With the assistance of diocesan Catholic Charities’ offices, the bishops hosted listening sessions across the state to better understand the “joys, hopes, griefs and anxieties” of people mired in poverty in order to foster compassion within the statewide Church (*Gaudium et spes*, No. 1).

In November of the same year, the bishops promulgated a pastoral letter, *Who is My Neighbor? The Face of Poverty in Washington State*. The letter challenged Catholics to take action as a community of faith and as neighbors to become a Church that does not give up on or abandon people struggling on the peripheries of economic progress. Catholics should inform their consciences to stand in solidarity with them.

The letter encouraged participation in PREPARES, a program at Catholic parishes across Washington State that serves preg-

nant women and families with children up to the age of five. PREPARES was established in 2014 as the state bishops’ Life to Justice Initiative and funded by a Catholic Campaign for Human Development Strategic National Grant.

Catholic Charities agencies and many Catholic partners collaborated to create PREPARES networks of trained parish volunteers ready to serve. By 2019, 158 parishes across the state had responded to 12,231 families, providing accompaniment, basic needs, support groups and referrals to professional services, including multilingual services for Spanish-speaking residents and indigenous farmworkers.

*Who Is My Neighbor?* also inspired CCS to create the Catholic Collaborative for Poor Families and Communities in the Archdiocese of Seattle. With the support of Archbishop Sartain and his Presbyteral Council, CCS shaped the Collaborative to focus on a parish’s responses to those living in poverty within its





boundaries. The USCCB's publication *Communities of Salt and Light*, a statement on the social mission of the parish, guided the project: "Parishes are the home of the Christian community: they are the heart of the Church . . . the local parish is the most important ecclesial setting for sharing and acting on our Catholic social heritage."

In November 2017, as part of the Collaborative, CCS identified and placed a highly-skilled Catholic Charities staff member, known as a Catholic Regional Network Builder, at the service of parishes in each of CCS's three regions to help initiate, strengthen and expand parish outreach and advocacy. By fall 2019, CCS had also named two Network Builders for Latino and Farmworker communities.

Parishes are welcoming the expertise, organizing savvy and partnership that Network Builders bring to the development of parish dreams, large and small: forming social concerns teams, rebuilding food banks, providing elder transportation, organizing candidate forums, arranging immigration clinics, welcoming refugees and asylees, and repurposing parish buildings as shelters for unhoused families.

One pastor, Father Cal Christiansen, contacted CCS when he and his parishioners discerned a call to do more for people struggling with poverty in their parish. They wanted to do something big, but they needed help. "CCS provided the much-needed structure, expertise and knowledge in helping our vision take shape and form," Father Christiansen said. The result was Mercy House: a St. Vincent de Paul outreach center, a pregnancy crisis clinic, and more.

The Collaborative enables Catholics to weave networks of partnerships across organizational and geographical boundaries. In May 2019, Network Builders, Catholic partners, 70 parishes, and 2,000 Catholics organized a 13-day pilgrimage: *Walking and Witnessing for Immigrant Families*. The pilgrims walked 4,346 miles from three directions across Western Washington to the Tacoma Federal Immigration Detention Center. Auxiliary Bishop Elizondo celebrated Mass outside and preached to those inside, "We, as citizens of this wonderful country, and citizens of the heavenly land, want to send a message to all our brothers and sisters inside this facility ... you are not abandoned."

The bishop's words confirmed the bold hopes and possibilities for Catholic collaboration, "We...won't give up on you." ■

2019-2020

UPCOMING TRAINING & EVENTS

**December 2-6, 2019**

**Applied Institute for Disaster Excellence (AIDE)**

*Jacksonville, Fla.*

**Disaster Operations**

disasteroperations@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

**January 28-30, 2020**

**Retreat with Fr. Bob Dufford, S.J.**

*Marriottsville, Md.*

**Scott Hurd**

shurd@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

**May 11-15, 2020**

**O'Grady Leadership Institutes, Bethany Center**

*Lutz, Fla.*

**Scott Hurd**

shurd@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org

**October 27-30, 2020**

**Annual Gathering**

*Cleveland, Ohio*

**Jean Beil**

jbeil@CatholicCharitiesUSA.org



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Catholic Charities USA thanks our sponsors, exhibitors, and more than 400 attendees for taking part in the 2019 Annual Gathering in Albuquerque. We especially thank our local hosts—Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Santa Fe—for their warm welcome and hospitality.

Visit [www.CatholicCharitiesUSA.org](http://www.CatholicCharitiesUSA.org) to learn more about the 2020 Annual Gathering in Cleveland.