

Tidbits



Luncheon at Hollywood Casino

Foster Grandparent Program

Everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch at the Hollywood Casino in recognition of Catholic Charities Foster Grandparent Program. For more information about becoming a Foster Grandparent or a Senior Companion, go to www.catholiccharitiesjoliet.org. You can read all about both programs under our Aging & Disability Services Division.



Head Start children love to play on the new gym floor

New Gym Floor for St. Pat's Parish

The partnership between St. Pat's Parish in Joliet and Catholic Charities Head Start Program Broadway Center could not be stronger or more obvious! Just look at that brand new gym floor! Thank you Father Pete Jankowski.

Catholic Charities Senior Companion Program Rescues Seniors and Keeps Them From Being So Terribly, Terribly Lonely!

“I have been a widow for 22 years and have no outside life at all, it's my home and my dog,” says Bettie, a Senior Companion Program client at Catholic Charities. “When Monica (Bettie's senior companion) comes, she just brightens my whole day! She gives me something to look forward to,” Bettie says as she grins from ear to ear. Catholic Charities Senior Companion Program is all about helping older adults



Monica and Bettie enjoy lunch together

and those with disabilities maintain their independence, while giving those who participate the opportunity to make choices about their life while still maintaining their independence. The Senior Companion Program offers adults age 55 and older the opportunity to support and interact with their homebound peers through regularly scheduled home visits.

Bettie expounds, “Catholic Charities Senior Companion Program rescues seniors and keeps them from being so terribly, terribly lonely.”

Before becoming a client in the program, Bettie was first a senior companion herself, but when her eyesight began to fail, she looked to Catholic Charities for help. Now volunteer turned client, Bettie is reaping all the benefits of the program she so generously gave to others. Monica, Bettie's senior companion, looks forward to visiting Bettie as well. They have become quite close. Monica helps by taking Bettie to the doctor, dentist, shopping, out to lunch, or sometimes they just sit and visit.

In addition to our Senior Companion Program, Catholic Charities Aging & Disability services include: Options Counseling; Information & Assistance; Care Coordination; Crisis Intervention, and volunteer opportunities for older adults and persons with disabilities. Caregiver programming is also provided to support family caregivers and grandparents raising grandchildren.

Bettie has grown to love Monica. “We get along fantastically well, but then we have to say goodbye,” Bettie says as she begins to tear up. “At the end of our visit she has to go back to her world and I go back to mine, until next week.” Bettie just can't wait for next week, when she and her senior companion, Monica will be together again and Bettie will be just a bit less lonely.

For more information about our Senior Companion Program, please call 815-723-3405.

Dear Friends

Lessons Learned from Pope Francis

It seems unimaginable that summer has ended, fall has begun and winter will soon be upon us.



Summer was an incredibly busy time for the Agency. Between ongoing disaster relief in Coal City, Watseka and Kankakee; Back to School Fairs; special events, and meeting the growing needs of our clients, one season seemed to be absorbed by the next.

Amidst the multitude of work going on at Catholic Charities, I was given the extraordinary opportunity to join with other Catholic Charities executives in welcoming Pope Francis to Washington. It was truly my honor to be among his Holiness and thousands of supporters; some Catholic, some not. Still all of us were in awe by the message he brought.

Pope Francis spoke of inclusiveness, peace, and poverty. He spoke to each of us about our responsibility in taking care of the poor and vulnerable.

Soon we will be preparing for the holidays. Thanksgiving is nearly here and then Advent will be upon us. As I prepare, I cannot help but wander back to the memories I have of Pope Francis ministering to the poor himself: serving in soup kitchens; offering his blessings, and celebrating mass. Through his example, my allegiance and dedication to the poor we serve has been re-energized. I had heard his Holiness often speak of the poor and of our responsibility to serve the poor, but to see with my own eyes his personal commitment to the poor was remarkable. It was an awe-inspiring experience, which I will never forget.

I returned from Washington refreshed and prayerful. Now, as the holidays approach I invite all of you to join with me and Catholic Charities in our mission to walk with the poor through service, deed, and donation. I invite each of you to follow the example of Pope Francis and help Catholic Charities care for the poor and help us lead those we serve towards self-sufficiency.

The days are getting darker and longer and so are the burdens of those we serve. This Advent as we prepare for the coming of Christ let us remember the gift that He will bring. The gift of love binds all of us together as one. Whether rich or poor, acclaimed or marginalized, we are all one in Christ's love.

Catholic Charities will remember all of you this Thanksgiving and as we prepare for Advent. We wish you and your families all good things and the happiest of holidays. As always, we invite you to walk alongside Catholic Charities as we walk alongside and care for the poor and discarded.

May God bless you and your families always.

With deepest appreciation,

Glenn Van Cura
Executive Director



The rebuild continues in Coal City

Catholic Charities Remains Hard at Work Dealing with Long Term Disaster Relief

The tornado that hit Coal City combined with the severe flooding in Kankakee and Watseka has left Catholic Charities quite busy dealing with long term disaster relief. Even though the waters have receded and some homes have been repaired, the storm crisis that faced four counties of our diocese this past spring and summer is far from over. Catholic Charities provided assistance to 372 families who had nowhere else to turn.

Our work continues as Catholic Charities was designated to be in charge of case management in Coal City and Watseka. Counseling and relief services continue today. The Agency will stand by the communities and families as long as they need us. More than \$50,000 has been spent to help those in need. We predict much more need still awaits us.

We thank all of you who have contributed to our disaster relief fund which allows us to help those individuals impacted by disaster.



Sharing the spirit of Christmas giving with those in need.

Many of you read the heart wrenching stories that appeared in *Christ is our Hope* magazine concerning particular Catholic Charities clients who are in need of your help. These individuals and families will truly need your help to make their Christmas bright.

Please see the full list of our clients participating in our Gift of Christmas program on our website at www.catholiccharitiesjoliet.org. We know you will be as generous as you can be.

Kathy Fudge-White, Division Director of Catholic Charities Early Childhood Program and Someone You Should Know

Since 1991 Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet has been the Head Start Grantee for Will County. Kathy Fudge-White, Division Director of Catholic Charities, Early Childhood Services has been with the Agency for nearly 20 years and has seen great changes to the Head Start Program since she first joined Catholic Charities.

When Kathy was hired, the Agency had only four centers with 521 children.

The Agency now has five Head Start Centers; four in Joliet and one in Bolingbrook. Twenty-eight families participate in our Expectant Mothers Program; 165 families are enrolled in Early Head Start, and 557 families have their children enrolled in Head Start. Head Start offers a full day or part-time school day option to meet the needs of each family.

Every Agency center is NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accredited which ensures parents that the services offered are of the highest quality and procedurally follow standards for best practices. Each has received the Gold Circle of Excellence determined by the ExceleRate of Illinois. Illinois' Gold Circle of Quality recognizes programs which have demonstrated quality on all fifteen standards, as validated by a state approved assessor. Gold Circle programs meet or exceed specific quality benchmarks on learning



Mrs. Kathy Fudge-White

environment, instructional quality, and all program administrative standards; group size and staff/child ratios; staff qualifications; and professional development.

Kathy Fudge-White's 20 year focus on excellence in providing stellar child care has led to every teacher and home visitor needing to have earned a BA or higher with a specified discipline. All assistant teachers are required to hold at least an associate's degree or higher. Most administrative staff have their master's degree.

The beauty of Catholic Charities Head Start program is that the Agency does not just focus on the child; rather, the program focuses on the entire family. Each family is appointed a family advocate whose job it is to help improve the families' quality of life. The advocate focuses on such things as: employment; education; emergency services, and counseling. The advocate walks each step with the whole family hoping to ensure self-sufficiency throughout the years while making sure the families' young children receive the highest education possible. Head Start has openings at every level.

To see if your family qualifies for Early Head Start or Head Start please call 815 724-1102.

All Soul's Mass

On November 2nd, many friends of Catholic Charities gathered at the St. Francis Xavier Chapel at the Blanchette Catholic Center to celebrate mass and remember their loved ones who had passed away. This new tradition for the Agency was a beautiful celebration of those we love who have preceded us in life. Father John Balluff and Father Belmonte concelebrated this lovely mass.



Hundreds of friends of the Agency answered an appeal and sent names of those they had lost to the Agency, asking us to remember those loved ones in prayer. Each name was read out loud preceding the start of mass. It was a prayerful and beautiful celebration for many. Thank you to all who joined us in prayer. Your loved ones will remain in our prayers throughout the year.

Back to School Fairs

Bring Great Support to Those in Need

This year Catholic Charities held three Back to School Fairs. Fairs were held for those living in Will, DuPage, and Kankakee Counties. As in the past, our Kankakee fair was sponsored by Bears Care Foundation (The Chicago Bears).

All three fairs were tremendously successful. Children were treated to backpacks, school supplies, haircuts, and dental and physical exams. A total of 157 outside agencies were on site at different locations to help support the fairs, and 2,500 families were served. Everyone was thrilled to see 6,117 children get off to such a successful school year.

Thank you to everyone who supported our children through our Back to School Fairs.



Dentists volunteer their skills at Catholic Charities Back to School Fairs



Merry Christmas!

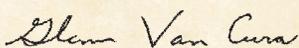
Pope Francis reminds us to give a voice to the poor. Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet gives a voice to the poor each day. We do so by walking with the poor through crisis; disaster; hardship; loneliness; hunger, and mental illness.

Christmas is not a happy time for those we serve. Many are homeless, sick, lost, and hungry. Many are impoverished seniors having to choose between buying food and refilling their medications. Many are children merely living the life they have been born into.

Please answer the call of Pope Francis who asks each of us to walk hand in hand with the poor and to do great things in their name. Help our clients live profound and impactful lives. Help our clients fulfill their God-given talents and become self-sufficient.

We have but one annual Christmas appeal. We encourage you to remember Pope Francis' trip to the United States. We ask that you remember him personally ministering to the poor. We ask that you be the example Pope Francis left each of us. We need your help now more than ever.

We pray you will be as generous as you can be. On behalf of the more than 63,000 people we serve, may God bless you and your families, always. May He grant you the merriest of Christmas!



Glenn Van Cura
Executive Director



Kathleen Langdon
Director, Development and Communications



Harrah's dealers make the night merry at Playing for Miracles

Playing for Miracles

Playing for Miracles, Catholic Charities annual fundraiser took place on October 23rd. Hundreds of guests gathered at the Carlisle in Lombard to gamble the night away! Harrah's professional dealers were on hand to maximize the fun, which they did splendidly. Great food, charitable gaming, and sensational prizes have been the talk of the town ever since. Catholic Charities honored Ecolab with our Corporate Champion award; St. Mike's in Wheaton as our Esteemed Partner Award, and retired employee Deacon Ron Madsen with our Heart of Charity Award. We would like to give an enormous thank you to our donors and sponsors who made Playing for Miracles a reality. Thank you!

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The line-up is long at A Swing and a Prayer

A Swing and a Prayer

The annual Catholic Charities golf outing returned after a ten year hiatus to great acclaim. A Swing and a Prayer enticed 90 golfers to play a round on one of the prettiest days of the summer. There was not a cloud in the sky the entire day. The shotgun start began in time for all the golfers to join in the after-party, Tailgate for Hunger, held at the Joliet Moose Lodge. Golf, great food, live bands, and new friendships were all around.

The tradition will continue next year as plans have already started, so stay tuned. Thank you to all of our golfers and our guests at Tailgate for Hunger. Your commitment to our clients is inspirational.

Catholic Charities' Board of Young Professionals

The Board of Young Professionals (BOYP) has been up and running for more than a year with 60 active members who gather monthly to serve Catholic Charities clients. Accountants, lawyers, teachers and non-profit professionals are just some faces in the mix. They have become a friendly advocate to Catholic Charities, the staff and the clients.



The BOYP enjoys a late night barbecue

Over the past year, the BOYP has participated in more than 25 social events, service opportunities, and networking activities. The board has been dedicated to serving clients at Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet Daybreak homeless shelter; Catholic Charities Hope House homeless shelter in DuPage; Catholic Charities Head Start Centers, and Catholic Charities transitional housing in Kankakee.

The board is very excited about their retreat and service project with the Sacred Heart Mission in Hopkins Park. The BOYP has planned a service retreat this November. The group will focus on home repairs and food assistance. This is the first young adult retreat of its kind in the Diocese of Joliet.

In August the board organized its first fundraiser named "Galloping for Good" at the Arlington Race Track. The event was BOYP run and they doubled their first fundraising goal. All proceeds were donated to Catholic Charities, Counseling Services.

The board will continue to serve different Agency programs as the need increases throughout the holiday season.

In mid-January, the board will head to downtown Chicago for fun and frolic at *Howl at the Moon*. Look for final details on the Agency website. The Board of Young Professionals has a whole roster of fun events and impactful service projects, so expect to hear more soon.

The Board of Young Professionals is always accepting new members. If you are a young adult (age 21-40) who wants to serve the community; build lifelong friendships, and is looking to network; please consider joining us. For questions, contact BOYP Coordinator, Edith Avila Olea at eavilaolea@cc-doj.org or (815) 724-1220.



Elim clients help Catholic Charities staff distribute backpacks in Kendall County

Elim Christian Services Partners with Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities is blessed to have collaborated with Elim Christian Services. Serving hundreds of children and adults each day, Elim Christian Services provides resources and educational opportunities to individuals with disabilities and their families. Together our partnership brought enough backpacks and school supplies to prepare 1,400 children in Plano, IL for a successful start to the new school year.



Staff volunteer to perform in Who Dunit

Who Did it at Who Dunit?

Why the wife of course! But you already know that if you attended Catholic Charities Who Dunit Murder Mystery Party at St. Mike's in Wheaton! Friends of the Catholic Charities programs in DuPage County gathered to take part in the murder mystery while supporting Catholic Charities programs. Good times, singing, dancing, and frightening screams were enjoyed by all. The revenue collected will support Hope House homeless shelter and Counseling in DuPage. Thank you for your support.



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For giving opportunities and more information about our programs, visit our website.

catholiccharitiesjoliet.org



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Working to Reduce Poverty in America.



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If you have any questions about this publication, please call Maggie Snow at 815.724.1165.

Our Mission

We are a faith-based organization providing service to people in need and calling others of good will to do the same.

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First Look for Charity benefits Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet and 17 other local charities.

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Exclusive Preview of the 2016 Chicago Auto Show

Friday, February 12, 2016 • 7:00 pm – 11:00 pm
Amazing Cars • Non-stop Food & Fun • Top Name Entertainment
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Watch for details in the mail.

Purchase tickets from Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet.

catholiccharitiesjoliet.org

By purchasing a ticket and attending the event, you are automatically entered to win one of two fabulous vehicles. Prize vehicle winners must be present.

First Look for Charity and the Chicago Auto Show are presented by the Chicago Automobile Trade Association, representing the new-car dealers of Chicagoland and northwest Indiana.

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