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catholic charities
Diocese of Joliet
16555 Weber Rd.
Crest Hill, IL 60403

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



Join Our Board of Young Professionals

Catholic Charities' Board of Young Professionals is seeking new members. Membership is open to young professionals, ages 21-40, who are committed to helping the poor and vulnerable in their communities; meeting new colleagues throughout the diocese; and networking with other young leaders.

This group has a great time while making a positive impact in our community! Interested in joining? Contact Edith Avila Olea at 815-724-1220 or eavilaolea@cc-doj.org. We can't wait to meet you!



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Locations

WILL COUNTY
16555 Weber Rd.
Crest Hill, IL 60403
Phone: 815-723-3405
Fax: 815-723-3452
Head Start: 815-723-3053

GRUNDY & KENDALL COUNTIES
201 N. Liberty, Suite 241
Morris, IL 60450
Phone: 815-941-2560
Fax: 815-941-2563

DUPAGE COUNTY
3130 Finley Road, Suite 520
Downers Grove, IL 60515
Phone: 630-495-8008
Fax: 630-495-9854
Hope House Hotline: 800-941-8681

KANKAKEE, FORD & IROQUOIS COUNTIES
249 S. Schuyler Ave., Suite 300
Kankakee, IL 60901
Phone: 815-933-7791
Fax: 815-933-4601



The Giving Tree

The Giving Tree, Catholic Charities' donation center gratefully accepts donations of clothing, household items, and toiletries. Clothing and household items should be new or gently used. Toiletries must be new/unopened.

3016 S. State Street in Lockport (located behind Norma's Cafe)

Donation days/times:
Monday 9:00 am – noon

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Friday 9:00 am – noon

815-714-2674 or mhorvat@cc-doj.org

For volunteer opportunities at The Giving Tree please contact Stephanie Ambrose at 815-774-4663 ext. 3138 or ccvolunteer@cc-doj.org.

Wish List:

- Deodorant (men's & women's)
- Trial size shampoo & conditioner
- Men's boxers/boxer briefs (small, medium, large, XL, 2X, 3X (in colors other than white, please))
- Flip flops/shower shoes (men's & women's)
- Men's blue jeans
- Long underwear
- Sweatpants
- Men's shoes/boots (sizes 10 & larger)
- Diapers (size 4 & 6) and baby wipes
- Full size conditioner
- Full size toothpaste
- Men's body wash
- Feminine hygiene products



A Publication of Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet

SPRING 2017

the Connection



From Breaking Point to Turning Point

Keandra is a young mother who has experienced nearly four years of homelessness, but is very determined to create a better future for her family.

Without a home, she stayed wherever she could find shelter – sometimes with friends and family. Sometimes at a motel if she could gather enough money. Occasionally over the years, Keandra and her children stayed at Catholic Charities' Daybreak Center homeless shelter in Joliet to avoid sleeping on the streets.

"It was stressful," Keandra admitted. "My kids didn't really have a place to run around and... to be kids." Despite feeling overwhelmed by her situation, Keandra knew that she had to be strong for her children. While they were homeless, "the kids kept asking when they could go home," Keandra said. It broke her heart. She described it as feeling like a "tragedy" that she was unable to provide a stable home for them.

Then, in November 2016, Keandra discovered that she was expecting another baby. She was shocked and depressed. This was the moment she revealed as her "breaking point." Keandra was determined to find a home for her family. She worked closely with her Catholic Charities case manager and was accepted into the Turning Point permanent supportive housing program. Turning Point serves families with minor children (and single veterans) in scattered site apartments in Joliet. Case management and other supportive services are provided during regular home visits.

On January 25, 2017, Keandra and her children moved into a three bedroom furnished apartment in Joliet. Her



children are attending school and working on catching up to their grade levels. They are progressing well and enjoying school. Keandra is grateful for the opportunity to participate in Turning Point. "My family has been blessed," she said.

This tenacious young mom plans to begin classes to become a massage therapist. She's also starting counseling through Catholic Charities. Keandra is even writing poetry and music "to get things off my chest," she said. "We're going to make it through this," she proclaimed. "I'm much less depressed. I'm smiling more... talking more. I want my kids to remember that mom worked hard and never gave up."



St. Elizabeth Residences

Construction continues on Catholic Charities' first affordable housing complex.

The Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet St. Elizabeth Senior Living Community is located next to St. Ann Parish in Channahon and will be home to seniors (62 and older) who are living on low-incomes.

The independent living community will have four three-story twelve-unit elevator buildings (a total of 48 units). Supported by a variety of social services to promote self-sufficiency, St. Elizabeth will feature a clubhouse with a fitness center, computer center, and management offices. The property will also feature walking trails and the buildings will incorporate engineering and environmental standards intended to achieve a "green building" certification. Apartments are one and two bedrooms and each includes an attached one-car garage. There also will be a live-in manager.

Catholic Charities hopes to replicate this project throughout the Diocese of Joliet. St. Elizabeth Residences will welcome its first tenants this summer. Interested in living at The Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet St. Elizabeth Senior Living Community? Wait list applications are available at www.lamoineproperties.com or by calling 708-428-6417.

news bites



Toy Drive The generous students at Forest Park Individual Ed School in Joliet held a very successful toy drive to collect items to donate to our young clients. The students even learned all about Catholic Charities and how we help people in the community! What a fantastic project that will truly make a difference.



Board of Directors at Shepherd's Table Members of Catholic Charities' Board of Directors generously donated their time recently to prepare and serve a meal at Shepherd's Table soup kitchen in Joliet.

Spring Baskets St. Mary of Gostyn Catholic Parish in Downers Grove provided 100 spring baskets for our young clients from low-income households during Lent again this year! These special baskets included clothing, shoes, toys, and other goodies. Each child truly appreciated the baskets!

Project Homeless Connect Catholic Charities participated in Project Homeless Connect of Kankakee County in April. This event provided an opportunity for homeless individuals to access a wealth of important community resources in one stop.



The Week of the Young Child Catholic Charities' Head Start sites each celebrated The Week of the Young Child in late April with a fun variety of activities throughout the week!



Dear Friends

It is our duty to care for the elderly. As Pope Francis said, "The biblical commandment that requires us to honor our parents, reminds us of the honor we must show to all elderly people." At Catholic Charities, we take this responsibility seriously within our growing Aging and Disability Services division. The programs within this division are designed to encourage and support independence while protecting each client's dignity.

We welcomed the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to Catholic Charities last spring when we were named the program grantee. This program serves clients in Kankakee, Will, and Grundy Counties. The goal of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is to protect and promote the rights and quality of life for those who reside in long-term care facilities.

Staff and volunteers in the Ombudsman Program are advocates who seek to resolve complaints on behalf of individuals who receive long-term care services. Program team members also assure that the interests of residents are represented to policymakers and governmental agencies. These services are confidential and free. This vital program has been a tremendous help to the community and has grown substantially in the year that it has been with Catholic Charities. If you would like to learn more about our Ombudsman Program, please visit catholiccharitiesjoliet.org.

As you likely have read in this publication, several of our offices and sites have moved to new locations recently to meet our ever-changing needs. In addition to our DuPage County office moving to Downers Grove and St. John's Head Start site moving Elizabeth Street, our administrative offices have moved from Joliet to the Blanchette Catholic Center in Crest Hill. Although the Agency sold the building at 203 N. Ottawa Street, we maintain a presence there as our counseling and Head Start administrative staff still keeps offices on the second floor. In addition, we continue to operate Daybreak Center and four Head Start sites in Joliet. As always, our commitment to Joliet remains strong.

I thank you for your continued support and I ask for your prayers as together we serve those most in need throughout the Diocese of Joliet.

God Bless You,

Glenn Van Cura

Glenn Van Cura
Executive Director

Volunteer Spotlight

SARAH MARSH

Sarah Marsh is an outstanding volunteer in Catholic Charities' Foster Grandparent Program.

For the past 15 years, "Grandma Marsh" as she's known, has volunteered 16 hours per week at Head Start and public elementary schools in Joliet. Her duties include helping school children improve their reading, spelling, and math skills. This energetic 81 year-old rarely misses a day of volunteering. Grandma Marsh has assisted hundreds of children during her many years of service in the Foster Grandparent Program.

The Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service recently announced that Sarah Marsh, a volunteer in Catholic Charities' Foster Grandparent Program, was selected for the Governor's Volunteer Service Award in the SeniorCorps Northeast category. This recognition is quite an honor as nearly 200 nominations were submitted in this category. "Grandma Marsh" accepted her award on April 25 in Springfield.

Grandma Marsh is a teacher, a mentor, and an inspiration. We are grateful to have her as a part of the Catholic Charities family.

The Foster Grandparent Program offers older adults (55 and over) in Will County the opportunity to assist young adults with disabilities in addition to assisting children in local preschools and grade schools. Foster Grandparent volunteers receive a modest tax-free stipend, mileage reimbursement and generally volunteer 20 hours per week. Catholic Charities is currently seeking volunteers for this program. Individuals interested in volunteering with the program may contact Deb Sirek at 815-724-1157 or dsirek@cc-doj.org to learn more about the opportunity.



First Look for Charity

Catholic Charities participated in the 2017 First Look for Charity fundraising event at McCormick Place in Chicago on Friday, February 10th.

Guests enjoyed an exclusive "first look" at the Chicago Auto Show and also basked in the amenities of Catholic Charities' private hospitality suite. The suite featured live music, light food, drinks, and professional photos.

This was Catholic Charities twelfth year as a benefactor of this elite black-tie fundraiser. Thanks to everyone who made it a night to remember!

Thank you to our event sponsors!

Patrons:

- D'Arcy Buick GMC
- D'Arcy Hyundai
- Chicagoland Ford Dealers

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- Panduit



New Locations

Catholic Charities' DuPage County office has moved to Downers Grove!

This new location is easily accessible from all major highways and near public transportation. The space has been built out to meet the needs of Catholic Charities and continues to allow the agency to host various community events and trainings.

3130 Finley Road, Suite 520
Downers Grove, IL 60515



St. John Early Childhood Center has moved to a new location in Joliet. St. John Early Childhood Center provides Head Start services as part of Catholic Charities' Early Childhood Services division.

822 Elizabeth Street
Joliet, IL 60435

Head Start Employee Receives Scholarship

Mary Becerra, a substitute teacher in our Head Start program, has received the honor of the Mary Alice Buchanan Memorial Scholarship sponsored by the Illinois Head Start Association.

She received award recognition at the Illinois Head Start Association annual training conference in Springfield.

Mary Becerra became involved with Head Start when her son attended the program. While her son was enrolled, she participated in on-site early childhood education classes. Mary Becerra currently serves as a substitute teacher at Catholic Charities' Good Shepherd Early Childhood Center in Bolingbrook. She is working toward an Early Childhood Education degree and is a student at Joliet Junior College. Mary Becerra loves working with children. "I love seeing their happy faces as they are learning," she said. "I want to give back to the Head Start community and begin teaching full-time once I obtain my degree."



Our clients are praying for an angel to answer their prayers and keep them safe. Will you be an angel to those in need?

- Lisette, Mark, and their eight children are working to rebuild their lives after losing everything in a house fire. *They pray for an angel.*
- Janice is a senior citizen who is unable to afford food and medication that she desperately needs. *She prays for an angel.*
- Tara is homeless, pregnant, and struggling with depression. *She prays for an angel.*
- Jose is a veteran who is facing homelessness, PTSD, and diabetes. *He prays for an angel.*
- Please help us continue to do God's work in our community. *Please be an angel.*

Catholic Charities has been blessed with one very special angel who will match your donation – up to \$50,000. To donate, please send a check in the enclosed envelope, visit catholiccharitiesjoliet.org or call 815-724-1140.

Bless you for your support of Catholic Charities and those we serve.



Mobile Food Pantry in University Park

Our Mobile Food Pantry provided a food truck at Faith Movers Church in University Park (Will County) for the first time on May 11. This very successful Mobile Food Pantry was made possible with help from the United Way of Will County, Dot Foods, Governors State University, Faith Movers Church, and Northern Illinois Food Bank.



Save the Date

Friday, August 25, 2017

Joliet Country Club
1009 W. Joliet Highway
Joliet, IL 60433

Registration: 11:30 a.m.
Shotgun Start: 1:00 p.m.
Dinner: 6:00 p.m.

Early Bird Registration: (before 7/25/17)
\$150 (\$600 for foursome)

Regular Registration: (after 7/25/17)
\$160 (\$640 for foursome)



Register at
catholiccharitiesjoliet.org

Event questions:

Contact Marianne
mmelcher@cc-doj.org

Sponsorship questions:

Contact Pete
pkinsella@cc-doj.org

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