Look for the Helpers ...

"When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’"

– Fred Rogers, aka Mr. Rogers

Every day our eight agencies provide help and hope for people in need. Thanks to a legacy of generous donors and committed staff members, we have been doing so, in good times and in bad, since 1912. The COVID-19 virus presents challenges, and we continue monitoring recommendations from health officials to protect the people in our care and in the community at large. At the same time, we are working even harder to maximize our ability to minister to the growing number of people who need us.

Even at this difficult time, at the Catholic Charities office (and in some cases, in our temporary home offices) our hearts are filled with gratitude. We don’t have to look far to see “the helpers.” The helpers are you, our supporters, and the 1,500-plus employees across our federation, who have been called to adjust, adapt, improvise, compromise, sacrifice, and trust as we seek the safest and most effective ways to serve.

See pages 4 and 5 to learn how our agencies are rising to the COVID-19 challenge.
I recently read an article by someone who had experienced a tragic, life-altering event. The writer offered various actions that helped her cope with her fear, anxiety and uncertainty: have faith in first responders, doctors and nurses; listen to experts and find solutions; rely on each other; and turn to service.

While appreciating the article’s good advice, I noticed the absence of something personally important to me: faith in God. Faith has certainly helped me navigate tough times such as these. There is no doubt in my mind that God is on this journey with us now!

Like you, we are experiencing the impact of COVID-19 risks and restrictions. We, too, are concerned about family, friends and even ourselves. At the same time, our services are needed even more at this time. I am so proud of our team. They have stepped up and put themselves at risk to continue helping those who turn to us for help and hope. We know the need will only increase as businesses close and employees are furloughed, laid off and let go. Already people who have never needed help are struggling to pay their bills, afford food and other basic needs.

We continue to monitor operations and make adjustments to protect the health and safety of employees and clients. We are, of course, concerned when the virus is detected among our clients and staff, especially in our residential facilities. Thankfully, as of May 1, only five residents in different facilities have tested positive and they seem to be recovering. Several employees have also tested positive but are recovering. We appreciate your prayers for them and for all our staff and clients.

In this issue you will read about our leadership role in a Regional Response Team that is bringing together 40 plus organizations to coordinate the efficient distribution of emergency relief to those most in need. We have also established a COVID-19 Call Center in our office to manage increased requests for assistance.

We have been truly blessed with donations - food, protective equipment, supplies and financial - that we are sharing with our agencies and others in our community. To all, we say “thank you!”

At our April staff meeting I noted that if we ever wondered if our work was essential, needed or meaningful, I hope we saw now that it is. Each of us plays a vital role. As we try to balance work and personal demands, as we feel stretched and overwhelmed, I hope we can at least take comfort in knowing we are in this together and here for each other.

Still, we need to take care of ourselves. I encourage everyone to take time to relax, pray, and find creative ways to engage with those who are special to us, even if we cannot gather together.

Despite the challenges that still lie ahead; my heart is full because of God’s grace and mercy, and the blessing of witnessing goodness through our work. And so, with great confidence in the Risen Lord and Savior, I wish you a Happy Spring and a Most Blessed Easter Season! Alleluia!

Grateful for God’s blessings,

Theresa E. Ruzicka
President, Catholic Charities

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Central Office Update: Coordinating Supplies, Providing Direct Aid
While teams and leaders at our eight Catholic Charities of St. Louis agencies have been working hard to implement new strategies and protocols to safely serve current and future clients, the central office team has been working to support those agency efforts and to develop more ways to reach out to people in need, including those who may be needing assistance for the first time.

Regional Response Team
Catholic Charities and more than 40 other social services organizations have come together as the COVID-19 Regional Response Team to coordinate the efficient distribution of COVID-19 related emergency relief to those most in need. Catholic Charities and the Salvation Army are co-leading the group’s Basic Needs efforts.

COVID-19 Call Center
Catholic Charities developed and launched a COVID-19 Call Center to respond to requests for rent, mortgage, utility, and general financial assistance that come through our main office phone line or are referred to us through the United Way 211 Hotline. The call center is expected to operate over the next three months, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The staff, which includes a Spanish-speaking professional, can access LAMP interpreters for callers needing assistance in other languages. LAMP (Language Access Multicultural People) is a Catholic Charities of St. Louis affiliated interpretation and translation agency.

Supply Central
The Central Office is also serving as a supply coordination and distribution hub for our agencies and community partners. Central Office staff members are exploring sources and securing much-needed personal protection equipment (PPE), such as gloves, masks, shields, and gowns; cleaning and sanitizing supplies; fresh and shelf-stable food; and gift cards for purchasing necessities. These items are cataloged and quickly distributed to the individuals and organizations with most pressing needs. While many supplies must be purchased, we have also been blessed with generous in-kind donations.

As agency, client, and community needs grow and change, we will continue seeking opportunities to develop solutions.

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GOOD NEWS
From Our Federated Agencies

Through these uncertain times, staff members at Queen of Peace Center are certain about one thing: the continuing opioid epidemic paired with COVID-19 related challenges means at-risk people are more vulnerable than ever. At St. Philippine Home, the agency’s maternity shelter, residents are sheltering in place, leaving only for limited essential outings. They are encouraged to practice social distancing, heightened cleaning and hygiene; wear masks and cover babies to reduce exposure. Two babies have been born since the shelter-in-place orders took effect. Thanks to the generosity of in-kind donors, the agency has been able to provide new moms with important baby and self-care items.

Sultana Davis, a former St. Patrick Center Women’s Night Program client, was recently featured in the St. Louis Review article, St. Patrick Center works to keep people safe, healthy. Photo credit: Lisa Johnston, St. Louis Review

St. Patrick Center experienced a COVID-19 exposure in early April at the agency’s 800 N. Tucker building that resulted in a two-week suspension of some operations, including the Client Welcome Center and Shamrock Club Day Treatment Program. St. Patrick Center continued to provide programs and services remotely and at the agency’s other sites. Also during that time, a wonderful new opportunity arose for St. Patrick Center’s longtime Women’s Night Program. Clients and staff moved to the former Little Sisters of the Poor campus on North Florissant Ave. The program will continue at this location and expand during the pandemic. The women in the program are enjoying their rooms, the scenery and meals. This program is a collaboration between St. Patrick Center, the City of St. Louis and the St. Louis Continuum of Care.

Cardinal Ritter Senior Services team is finding creative ways to keep things fun and interesting for residents and the hard-working caregiver staff. A recent visit to the Shrewsbury campus from St. Louis Blues mascot Louie evoked smiles and laughter. As an added treat, Chris Kerber, radio play-by-play announcer for the Blues, served as a celebrity bingo caller - via video conferencing - for Mother of Perpetual Help assisted living residents.

A continuing education session for SFCS employees was moved to an “online classroom” after social distancing recommendations became the new normal.

St. Francis Community Services has re-imagined services to ensure clients receive help they need during this pandemic. Programs have transitioned to remote video and phone service, including tutoring and art classes for students, counseling sessions, family support guidance, and even court cases. The agency also tapped into its long history of disaster relief experience by helping establish and staff the Catholic Charities COVID-19 Call Center. SFCS is focused on raising direct aid funds to help support financially vulnerable clients, especially immigrants who will not receive support from the stimulus packages.

In addition to continuing to serve shelter clients and staffing its 24-hour hotline, Saint Martha’s Hall has been informing the community that women experiencing domestic abuse are at even greater risk due to factors related to COVID-19. Executive Director Jessica Woolbright was recently interviewed about this topic on St. Louis Public Radio (When Home Isn’t Safe: Abuse Victims Look for Support During Pandemic) and by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Police and domestic violence advocates report uptick in calls for help since stay-at-home orders).

Despite the ongoing health crisis, Marygrove’s doors remain open to care for and protect children in need during this challenging time. Marygrove reports the children are safe, healthy and thriving! They remain optimistic about returning to their normal routines and have been staying busy. The agency’s recreational therapy team has ramped up the activities schedule to keep everyone active and engaged. This has included a variety of arts and crafts - like the no-sew mask pictured here - Easter egg hunts, science experiments, kickball, and cookouts featuring ice cream and s’mores.

Jennifer Odeneal, Parent Coach, delivering diapers.

Good Shepherd Children & Family Services staff continue to meet the needs of their foster care and pregnancy & parenting support clients through virtual visits and curbside delivery of diapers and other necessities. The maternity shelter continues to provide housing and services to moms and their babies who are receiving extra support as they cope with the added challenge of sheltering in place.

SAINT LOUIS COUNSELING  

mental health hangout

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We Remember

The Catholic Charities family remembers those who have passed away. Family and friends paying tribute are listed below.

Moms at the Maternity Shelter scrolled this message of hope on the Good Shepherd driveway.

Marketing & Admissions Coordinator Sandy Starns and Director of Assisted Living Facilities/Administrator Karen Ledbetter prepare large batches of hand sanitizer at Cardinal Ritter Senior Services.
We Honor

The Catholic Charities family recognizes those celebrating anniversaries, birthdays and other special intentions. Family and friends paying tribute are listed below them.

Jean Ahillion
Paul and Christine Anderson
Tom, Connie, Mary and John
Dan and Christina Angel
Micki Mayfield
My parents, Jim and Nancy
Rhonda Bourquin - 50th Birthday
Shane Bourquin - 12th Birthday
Tom Bourquin - 44th Birthday
Trevor Bourquin - 10th Birthday
Thomas Bufe
Aunt Pat
Mary Berges
Marilee Finder
Chris and Amy Garrison
Allis Gessgling
Birth of Maure Louise
Kristin and Christine
Joanie Hueling
Katie and Jim Hueling
JWP Birthday
Vincent O’Connell
Tom Johanns
Vincent Burke
Elaine Narems
Griner Grimes
Birthday
Donald Lancaster
Scott and Carle Lucak
Amy Anonymous
Lucian and Theresa
Matsouk
Anonymous
Sister Miriam, CCVI - Made her vows as a Sister of Charity of the Incarnate Word on 8/24/1968
Jay and Pam Boggeman & Family
Margaret Mole
Michael J. Mueller - Christmas John and Pat Mueller
Audrey Naumann
Eileen and Larry O’Brien
Edward Puzzella
Thomas Young
Jared Rashford, PhD
Anonymous
Allison Roberts - 2019 Christmas Campaign Chair
Anonymous
Allison Roberts
Bob and Mary Raymond
W. Peter
Jim and Kathy Ruggieri
Becky and Chuck Wrench
Teresa Ruzicka - In honor of YWCA Academy of Leaders Gayle Shank and Chuck Gottlieb
George Scholar
Mary and John Ammons
Bob and Pat Schott - 60th Wedding Anniversary
Joan Leeennon
Jeanne Sickles
John and Libbyanne
Nagors
Kevin and Rebecca Spradling
Sarah and Paul MATLAB
George and Deb Stock
Jeffrey Dobner, Jr.
Tim and Kelley Stock
Marti and Bob Stricker
Mary Christmas
Clare Connolly
Jim and Amy Torres
Jack Treathehole
Total Glass and Shelving
Mareesa and Ted Ruzicka
Caroline Trevaris, O.P. - 100th Birthday
Denaal Travers
Genevieve Walsh - 100th Birthday
Mark and Sue Greffe
Kara Wastner
Cindy and Bob Wessel
Ted and Theresa Ruzicka
Eileen Witterschen-Christmas
Robert and Martha Stricker

Special Intentions

Prayers for our son and his family.
David and Pat Dawson
Prayers for Special Intentions
Anonymous(2)
Family Health
Joe Flynn, Jr.
James Glaser
Fred and Patricia Glaser
End to abortion. End to hunger. Vocations. First Responders and Police.
Antoinette Hickel
Mary Kaufflin
Cindy Rittou
Prayers for the health of my sister Pat
David Koen
Heal, Daughter Joan
Donald Launtrein
Healing of our son Pat and Peter Mahoney
For healing and direction for family member Pamela Mahoney
Pray for my soul
Nate Witting
Good Health
Health and happiness for my wife (Charlotte), my children (Thomas, John, Tom, Catherine, Mary and Suzanne & their families) Jim and John (Bo) (Ch)
Larry’s Health
Stephanie Williams
Safe delivery of two babies
Frances Zach

Go to Bat for Kids - Now That’s a Winner!

While 2020 Go to Bat for Kids games are on pause while we wait out the COVID-19 challenge, we would like at this time to acknowledge those who supported our 2019 campaign. (2020 Go to Bat donors will be listed in a future issue, after the end of the 2020 baseball season.)

Home Run: $250-$499
Irish and Michael Abbe
Anonymous (19)
APPU-St. Louis Gateway District Area B
Mr. James Berges and Mrs. Catherine Berges
Barry T. Cervantes
Jack and Vicki Challs
C. Frank and Louise Chauvin
Mary Ann and Wes Plattman
Dr. Michael and Mrs. Caroline Chiolone
Mrs. and Mr. Michael Cline
Bob and Madeleine Cole
William F. Crump
Dr. and Mrs. Michael Darcy
Brian and Jennifer Davies
Terry and Willa Drury
Janet Errante
Larry Ferrer

MVP: $1,000-$2,499
Stephen J. Malyszko and Nancy A. Lange
Dale Schmidt/Schmidt Equipment & Supply Inc.

All-Star: $750-$999
Anonymous
Jim and Deborah Young

Stan and Lil Musial Tribute: $2,500 and Up
Great Southern Bank
Janet Musial Schwazer

Bill Taylor - Aug 20th Birthday, God’s mercy on his soul.
Gaynor Schoonhoven
In loving memory of Parks Thornton John Terry and in loving honor of his beloved mother, Martha Victoria Wolfner and his sister, Margaret Wolfner Terry Trudy B. and John D. (1952-2020) Valentine Family
Michael G. Thiss
Jim and Constance Burke
Sr. Barbara Travers, O.P.
Daniel Travons
Beatrice Park Vogan
William Harrison Wright, Jr.
Charles E. Whitten
Bea Nichols
Anonymous
Larry and Mary Naeger
Jeff and Debbie Poland
Linda Dickhens, Rita and Carl and Linda Campo
Holland and Knight,
Deacon Joe Emmerich
Karen Dunne
Kyla Ferrell
Tom Johans
Vincent Burke
Elaine Narems
Griner Grimes
Birthday
Donald Lancaster
Scott and Carle Lucak
Amy Anonymous
Lucian and Theresa
Matsouk
Anonymous
**We would like you to pay tribute to someone through a donation to Catholic Charities of St. Louis, distributed throughout the year to share good news with the community and grow the circle of support for the Catholic Charities of St. Louis mission. If you would rather receive this newsletter via email, please contact Ashley Mulhix at 314-256-5955 or amulhix@cclstl.org.**

Save These Dates

Please note that all in-person event dates are subject to change based on health and safety decisions related to COVID-19. Please check agency websites or social media updates for updates.

May 30
St. Patrick Center
“Virtual & Live Streaming” Irish Open Gala

June 29
St. Francis Community Services
Seeds of Hope Fundraiser and “Virtual” Celebration

June 23
Good Shepherd
Golf Tournament
Norwood Hills Country Club

July 20
Queen of Peace Center
Golf Tournament
Norwood Hills Country Club

Community Carl is an official publication of Catholic Charities of St. Louis distributed throughout the year to share good news with the community and grow the circle of support for the Catholic Charities of St. Louis mission.
When local Easter celebrations were canceled, Villa Duchesne and Oak Hill School junior Annie Fox of Frontenac wanted to find a way to keep the Easter spirit alive. She decided to design a cheerful Easter-themed yard sign to raise money for Catholic Charities of St. Louis’ COVID-19 relief efforts and KLIFE St. Louis, an interdenominational Christian youth ministry program.

Annie’s 300 signs quickly sold out and began popping up throughout her community, bringing about the sense of unity she was seeking while also netting $2,400 for the nonprofits.

Annie told The St. Louis Review that she chose Catholic Charities because she wanted to help those most affected by the pandemic and that “Catholic Charities is one of the most impactful organizations that reaches all St. Louis communities.”

On April 22, a refrigerated truck filled with donated fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy products, and other food essentials arrived at Marygrove, one of four agencies that benefited from the large donation. Good Shepherd Children & Family Services, Queen of Peace Center, and St. Patrick Center employees were also on hand to receive portions of the donated items.

The large donation was organized by top chef and restaurant consultant Rex Hale in cooperation with STL Foodworks; Jack Whisnant of Rain Crow Ranch in Doniphan, Mo. and Lanter Distributing.

The food is being used to prepare meals for residential clients at the four recipient agencies, as well as walk-in clients at St. Patrick Center. Hundreds are benefitting from this generosity.

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Cathedral Concerts hosted a “virtual concert” on May 1 to benefit Catholic Charities of St. Louis. The performance, which took place audience-free at the Cathedral Basilica, was live-streamed on various Catholic Charities and Cathedral Concerts online platforms. There was no charge for tuning in, however, viewers were encouraged to donate to our COVID-19 relief efforts.

More than 500 people viewed the live concert. Over $20,000 in donations were made the night of the performance alone, through both ccstl.org/donate and a special event site, gladitood.com/projects/cathedral-concert-for-covid-19-relief. Additional gifts inspired by the concert continue to arrive.

A recording of the concert is now posted on the event site, which will remain open until May 30 to accept additional donations.

Thank you to our host, Monsignor Henry Breier, Cathedral Basilica Rector, and the evening’s Cathedral Concert performers (pictured left to right) John Powell Walsh (organist), Cathedral Concerts Executive & Artistic Director, Scott Kennebeck (_tenor), and John Korak (trumpeter).

Pregnancy & Parenting Support Social Worker Angie Robinson prepares basic needs deliveries for Good Shepherd Children & Family Services off-site clients.

Property Supervisor Billy Lowry places signs of encouragement to cheer residents sheltering in place on Cardinal Ritter Senior Services’ main campus.

A Prayer for Our Uncertain Times

May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must choose between preserving their health and making their rent.

May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips remember those who have no safe place to go.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home.

As fear grips our country, let us choose love.

And during this time when we may not be able to physically wrap our arms around each other, let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors. Amen.

- Fr. Michael Graham, S.J.
Staying Busy While Staying in Place!

Marygrove residents and staff have been staying busy with schoolwork, outdoor games, and plenty of crafts. See inside to learn how all our agencies are adjusting to address COVID-19 concerns.