PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

When I wrote to you in April, COVID-19 dominated headlines. Here we are several months later, still very much focused on the pandemic. COVID-19’s monopoly on our country’s news coverage, however, changed with the May 25 killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

With that tragic event, a wound that our country still struggles to heal was ripped open again for Black Americans, sparking cries from people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds for the conversion of individuals, policies, and systems that perpetuate racial inequity. (My June 5 reflection, Unity and Racial Equity: More Work to be Done, can be found in the News section of our website, www.ccstl.org/news-updates.)

At times like these, when there is so much fear, discord and uncertainty, our faith can be weakened by doubt. Or it can be strengthened as we are reminded that we cannot endure without God.

I find myself more than ever leaning on the comfort of prayer, daily Mass, and (socially distant) connection with my faith community. I pray that you, our supporters, and those in our care experience the hope and strength that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit so generously pour out when we allow ourselves to trust, to surrender, and to rest in their divine, protective embrace.

This hope and strength are at the heart of what we do at Catholic Charities of St. Louis. With your help, we continue answering Christ’s call to care for those who are poor and vulnerable, offering them dignity, help, and in many cases, the support they need to move towards self-sufficiency.

The pandemic has increased the depth and breadth of need and we are responding, as you will see inside this newsletter, with flexibility, persistence, and creativity to care for those most affected.

This is what Catholic Charities of St. Louis does, and has been doing for more than 100 years. Thanks to the historic generosity of faithful supporters, we have prevailed through crises before.

What a blessing that many of you have already reached out with additional gifts in response to the pandemic. This helped us quickly launch our COVID Relief Call Center, which continues to receive 50 to 70 calls daily from St. Louisans needing assistance due to COVID-19 related hardship.

And we continue ministering to our other brothers and sisters in need, more than 100,000 each year.

We will soon mail a letter featuring a snapshot of our overall COVID-19 relief efforts. We hope it inspires you to help neighbors in need by supporting our Annual Fund.

Again, thank you for your past, present and future support. You are in my prayers as together we strive to build a stronger community, one unique child of God at a time.

With sincere gratitude,

Theresa E. Ruzicka, CPA
President, Catholic Charities of St. Louis

OUR MISSION: In response to the teachings of Jesus Christ, our mission is to serve people in need, especially those who are poor and vulnerable; work to improve social conditions for all people in the community; and call members of the Church and community to do the same.
Service Delivery: Keeping Kids Active and Engaged at Marygrove

When asked how boys in her care, ages 13 to 19, are coping with COVID-19 restrictions, Cypress Cottage Assistant Supervisor Madison Smith beamed with pride and said, “Marygrove kids have been through so much in their lives. They are so resilient. They’re some of the strongest kids you’ll ever meet.”

In addition to adjusting to masks and social distancing, Marygrove faces tight restrictions on outings and visitors, similar to those implemented in senior living communities.

In the spring, group home supervisors like Madison suddenly found themselves in the role of teacher, helping students navigate their new online school environments.

“We came up with projects to keep them from getting burned out,” said Madison. “We wrote thank you cards to doctors and nurses, made crafts, held physical activity challenges and even Lego tournaments.” If something positive has come out of the quarantine, says Madison, it has been watching older teens engage in activities, like a recent comic strip making contest, that before they probably would have considered uncool. “They are really still kids at heart.”

Once the school year ended, and without the option of off-campus adventures and sporting events, staff had even more time to keep everyone active and engaged. The recreational team found new ways to enjoy favorite activities and created several new ones too.

Recreation Therapist LaRoy Kincaid created Pin Blast, a dodgeball variation that assigns each player a bowling pin to protect, while also rolling balls to knock down other players’ pins. Players must maintain the required six-foot distance from each other. Balls are wiped down between players and hand sanitizer is generously applied. The game has been, well, a hit!

LaRoy, who is also a Marygrove P.E. teacher and coach, is proud of how the kids have stayed positive, despite their initial disappointment over formal team sports being cancelled. With creativity, he is finding other ways to give them the benefit of athletics and applying his signature coaching style.

“I don’t cut players,” says LaRoy. “Everyone gets a chance to play. The teamwork and bonding give them something they’ll use the rest of their lives.”

Fundraising: Seeds of Hope 2020, Not Your Average Gala

With its largest annual fundraiser scheduled long before “pandemic” became a household word, St. Francis Community Services (SFCS) had a decision to make. Cancel? Postpone?

After exploring options, the team chose to keep the original June 20 date but transform the Seeds of Hope Gala into a virtual event. With only 10 weeks to prepare, they were determined to create a unique experience for supporters.

“Every donor is not just giving money,” explained Development Director Owen Griffith. “They are giving to our mission. We had to create a virtual experience to hold onto that.”

Communications Coordinator Susan Nichols helps behind the scenes during the Seeds of Hope “virtual gala.”

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“We looked at what others had done but really wanted to pave our own way,” said Development Director Owen Griffith. “We envisioned something engaging, fun, and mission based.”

The agency took a leap of faith by waiving attendance cost, as well as forgoing tried-and-true silent and oral auctions. Instead they relied only on a raffle, a fund-a-need segment, and a sincere desire to share their mission story in an authentic way.
In mid-June, as a gesture of gratitude to employees across our federation, Central Office representatives delivered flowers, candy and thank you cards to 33 service sites. Deliveries were made over two days and included stops in St. Louis City and County, as well as St. Charles, Lincoln, Jefferson, and Franklin Counties.

Catholic Charities Ambassadors from five parishes recruited fellow parishioners to provide most of the 1,200-plus cards needed for every employee to receive one. Additional letters came from Central Office employees and their family members.

“Our visits elicited even more joy than we expected,” said Deacon Brian Selsor, Director of Mission Integration, who offered a blessing at each site he visited. “Colleagues told us it was nice to know that people at the Central Office and in the Catholic community were thinking about them at this particularly challenging time. A team member at one Cardinal Ritter Senior Services living communities told us her job is tough, especially now, but she loves it.”

We extend a heartfelt thanks to the Parish Ambassadors who led the thank you card collection: Lyn Grace at Annunziata; Barb Murray at Cathedral Basilica; Charlotte Slankard at Our Lady of Providence; Tammy Lawrence at St. Alban Roe; and Cindy Bohrer at St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. And thank you to ALL who provided cards!

If you would like to learn more about bringing the Ambassador program to your parish, please contact Lisa at lshea@ccstl.org or 314.256.5927. You can also visit ccstl.org/get-involved/parish-ambassadors.
Catholic Charities Receives and Distributes 200,000 Masks

Representatives from Catholic Charities of St. Louis visited the St. Louis County Department of Public Health’s John C. Murphy Health Center on Friday, June 5, to pick up 200,000 3-ply disposable masks purchased by the Public Health Department with Federal CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act funding.

Masks were then delivered to all eight Catholic Charities, as well as to Archdiocese offices; Regina Cleri home for retired priests; the Catholic Charities Central Office, and Operation Food Search.

“As a family of eight social services agencies directly assisting hundreds of adults and children daily, our need for personal protection equipment is great and ongoing,” said Catholic Charities Chief Operating Officer Don Halpin. “We are grateful to the St. Louis County Department of Health for this generous supply of surgical-grade masks to help protect those in our care and those who provide that care.”

Keeping the Spirit of Go to Bat for Kids Alive

Like you, Catholic Charities of St. Louis is ready to see our beloved Cardinals retake the field, even though it will be without fans.

Over the course of the past 20 seasons, Go to Bat for Kids has more than filled Busch Stadium with children, their families and/or caretakers, and employees of Catholic Charities to see a game, many for their first time! It could not happen without the generosity of hundreds of annual donors who help create some very special memories.

While we cannot get to the stadium this season, we plan to keep the spirit of Go to Bat for Kids alive by working with the Cardinals to arrange Fredbird visits to several of our residential agencies, including Marygrove, Cardinal Ritter Senior Services, and potentially more! First and foremost we must make sure that our children, older residents, staff, families, and Fredbird are safe.

If you made a donation to this year’s Go to Bat for Kids campaign, you will receive a letter later this year detailing how your gift can be used to bring help, hope, and joy to those served by Catholic Charities of St. Louis.
Catholic Charities, Operation Food Search Host Drive-Up Events

In response to additional community need brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, Catholic Charities partnered with Operation Food Search to host food and supply distribution events on May 16 and July 24.

For the two events, Catholic Charities provided 1,000 bags of personal hygiene products, cleaning supplies, hand sanitizers, face masks, and over $25,000 in gift cards, and shelf stable food. Operation Food Search and Sysco St. Louis contributed a variety of fresh food items, including meat, produce, premade sandwiches, cheese and juice. Catholic Charities USA provided shelf-stable food items. Representatives from the Gateway Grizzlies professional baseball organization (including mascot Izzy) also stopped by to drop off food at the May event.

About 40 volunteers from Catholic Charities, Operation Food Search, and the National Guard helped each event run smoothly. Catholic Charities donors helped fill bags. St. Louis Police Department North Patrol assisted with traffic control.

Catholic Charities volunteers included employees and their families, donors, board members, Parish Ambassadors, and members of the Catholic Charities Young Professionals group. Thank you to all who helped us to tangibly care for neighbors in need!

Save These Dates

August 31
Good Shepherd Children & Family Services
Monthly Infant Adoption Informational Meeting
Details: goodshepherdstl.org/infant-adoption-info-session

September 14
Marygrove Golf Tournament
Forest Hills Country Club
Details: marygrovecatholic.org/events/golf-tournament

September 28
Good Shepherd Children & Family Services
Monthly Infant Adoption Informational Meeting
Details: goodshepherdstl.org/infant-adoption-info-session

October 16
Good Shepherd Children & Family Services
#Safe4ANight online fundraiser
Details TBA

November 6
Cardinal Ritter Senior Services
Heart & Cross (Virtual) Gala
Details TBA

November 7
St. Patrick Center Veterans Day 5K Run/Walk
Soldiers Memorial, Downtown St. Louis
Details: stpatrickcenter.org/veterans-day-5k-runwalk-2020

Community Call is a publication of Catholic Charities of St. Louis, distributed throughout the year to share good news with our 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 Aleisha Mulnix at 314-256-5955 or amulnix@ccstl.org.
We Remember

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

Ingrid, Stefan, and Helen Aubermann
Anonymous
Remo Baldi
Joan Baldi
Betty Banstetter
Anonymous
Paul and Marcia Strieker
Ka Toyang, Mrs. Tessie Suarez, Ka Chabeng, Rod Sarmiento, Soc Salveira, Benjoe Sarmiento
Edwin Banzon
Alice Baranick
Robert A. Barry
Edward Eugene “Ed” Bardot
Nadine and Aaron Aitch
Brandon and Alesha Bardot
Kathleen Cancienne
Barbara and Jason Fischer
Robert and Dena Grus
Rosalyn Lewis
T.J. McQueen
Mother Earth Nature Designs LLC
Richard Barnhart, Jr.
David and Effie Westphal
Alice Beck
Anonymous
Virginia Bettlach
Barbara Fournier
Dr. Robert Bolinske
Chris and Anne Chivetta
Ann Bowen
Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Fitz
Gordon, Ill
Mr. and Mrs. A. Charles Hiemenz, Ill
Louis Brown
Theresa Brown
Bill Burge
Kathryn Burge

Marie “Margie” Capps
Mary Rose Desloge
George A. Capps Memorial Foundation
The Woolbright Family, The Voss Family, The Kerins Family
Mary Anne Clifton
Thomas and Mary Vogel
Angela Cole
Donna McCall
Susan Cuddihee
Anonymous
Dennis Cuddihee
Therese F. Dawson
Anonymous
Vince Andrzzejewski and Kathy Rex
William J. and Elizabeth Dohack
Virgil W. Dohack
Marion Doing, John Doing, Laury Toenjes, Jack Head and Rita Grunewald
Steve Doing
Carol Driller
Gary Driller
Frank Ebbesmeyer
Rev. James T. Edwards
Ted and Donna Agniel
John and Marge Asbury
J. Gerry and Jo Ann Quinn
Ronald Fazzold
Donna Holscher
Edwin Fearnley
Virgil W. Dohack
Tony Ferrmann
Lawrence and Joan Masters
Mary Jane Fritz
Williamsburg Road Neighbors
Mary Geekie
Margie Lyons and Mike Lyons
David Grieshaber and Kathryn Grieshaber
Anonymous
Patricia Grimes
Cherie and Pat Baehler
Jill Haberberger
Tom and Lori Kimminau
Patrick A. Hartman
Richard and Susan Hartman
Stanley Heinemann
Rose Marie Heinemann
Robert B. Hoemeke
Shirley Hoemeke
Joan Immethun
Donna Gregowicz
Marilyn, Lee & Kristen and Landon
Jerry Jenkins
Paul and Karen
Our brothers and sisters in Christ
Tracey Johns
Tony Jokert
Everett Joyce
Edward Joyce
Jane Kavanagh
Peter and Laura Ruminski
Laurie and Jimmy Keller
Velda Keller
Caddy Kilker
Jeanie Kirtley
James Saufnauer
Jerome Koerber
Kenneth and Debra Borgmeyer
Ramona Haller
Eugene and Ottlie Konold
Tom and Barbara Boone
Rita and Leo Kuchem
Tom and Lori Kimminau
For all who have died of the coronavirus
Constance Kuntz
Dorothy Lauman
Mrs. Jill Lauman
Howard Marshall
James and Jeanine Buishas
Fred Molitor
Mary Lou Molloy
Glennon and Renee Brueckner
Elizabeth Klump
Jack Schuler
Anonymous
Shirley Naeger
Larry and Mary Naeger
Mary Ann Quinn Naughton
William Naughton
Raymond Newsham
Emily Newsham
Alice Nouhan
J. Allen and Marjorie Thiel
Bill and Pat Olwig
Rob and Julie Kinzie(Lyons)
Gerald A. Ort
Martha Ort
Dennis Edward Osalkowski
Robert Burton
Paul and Anne Chapman
Charles and Yukiko Coody
David Hathman
Larry and Debbie Jacobson
RPS Risk Family at U.S. Bank
Brett Shewey
Family loved ones
Nancy O’Toole
Jack Owens
Marie Owens
Erin Pierce
Anonymous

Saint Louis Counseling staff working remotely check in with colleagues through teleconferencing.

Marygrove held an on-campus graduation parade to celebrate their 21 high school graduates, the agency’s most grads ever in a single year!
We Honor

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

Anne and Mark Armstrong-Honor and Thanksgiving for all you do
Rita Sponamore
Dr. and Mrs. Rita Wong, Dr. Philip and Elizabeth Banzon, Ms. Pett Banzon, Auggie Moncada, Ej Banzon
Edwin Banzon
Leonard and Mabel Beerman
Sandra Herb and Connie Brinker - 50th Wedding Anniversary
Gladyis and Larry Martin
Deacon Bernie Buckman
The Yadamec Family
All those who suffer and have died as a result of COVID-19
Anonymous
CCSTL Central Office Staff
Lisa Shea
CLAM Staff
Anonymous
Mrs. Patt Stover
Ron and Ann Stover
Vincent J. Tedeschi
Donna Tedeschi
Dorothy Thornton
Rick and Nancy Nieder
Julia Todd
Herbert Todd
Dorothy Tracy
***
Donald Unterreiner
Anonymous
Michael C. Utterbach
Byron Utterback
Catherine Vance, Rebecca, Ann Marie, John and Tom Vance
Bernard Vance
Christa Voss
William and Margaret Kish
Donald Wendt
Elizabeth Wendt
Mike Westhoff
Terry Westhoff
Thomas E. Whitehead
Margaret Krahman
Charles E. Whitten
Paul W. Leible
Warren Wiedemann
Marilyn F. Wiedemann
Patricia Witte
***
Norbert & Alma Schumer,
Edwin & Cora Moncada, Jason & Amy Schamburg, and Linda (Moonier) Steinbecker
Sharon Moonier
Mr. and Mrs. Don Moxley - 50th Wedding Anniversary
***
Father Matthew
Anonymous
Dr. James L. Ottolini
Alice “Cady” O’Grady
Barbara Ottolini
My Friends
Anonymous
Marjorie Ann Parks
Mary K. Damazyn
Ed Puzzella, new Board Chair of Catholic Charities
Sisters of the Visitation
Jerome Roth
Anonymous
Theresa Ruzicka
Kate Tansey
Cardinal Robert Sarah
Francine Plunkert
Gene and Clo Scafeer
Joyce A. Kluge
Fr. Jack Schuler
Lori Plescia
Wilma Schulte
Mark D. Schulte
Msgr. Joseph Simon
Dr. James McAllister
Fr. David Skillman
Stephen Schreiber
Mary Smith
John Smith
Sr. Jeanne Margaret Stoltz, OP - 75th Jubilee
Ed and Stephanie Griesenauer
Mary Vest
The Dunns
Randy Vest
Jim, Becky, Emily and Patrick John Powell Walsh
Kathryn Sherrick
John Walsh
Michelle Ochonicky
Nurses
Charlotte Wiegert
Por la salud de Joel Hernandez y Lourdes Macias
Lourdes Macias Sanchez
Prayers for the end of the Care of St. Louis, contact Amanda Dunnivant at 314-256-5907 or visit www.ccsstl.org. Tributes above were received April 1, through June 30, 2020.
We Honor

All those who have died from virus
Anonymous
Mrs. Patt Stover
Ron and Ann Stover
Vincent J. Tedeschi
Donna Tedeschi
Dorothy Thornton
Rick and Nancy Nieder
Julia Todd
Herbert Todd
Dorothy Tracy
***
Donald Unterreiner
Anonymous
Michael C. Utterbach
Byron Utterback
Catherine Vance, Rebecca, Ann Marie, John and Tom Vance
Bernard Vance
Christa Voss
William and Margaret Kish
Donald Wendt
Elizabeth Wendt
Mike Westhoff
Terry Westhoff
Thomas E. Whitehead
Margaret Krahman
Charles E. Whitten
Paul W. Leible
Warren Wiedemann
Marilyn F. Wiedemann
Patricia Witte
***
Norbert & Alma Schumer,
Edwin & Cora Moncada, Jason & Amy Schamburg, and Linda (Moonier) Steinbecker
Sharon Moonier
Mr. and Mrs. Don Moxley - 50th Wedding Anniversary
***
Father Matthew
Anonymous
Dr. James L. Ottolini
Alice “Cady” O’Grady
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Francine Plunkert
Gene and Clo Scafeer
Joyce A. Kluge
Fr. Jack Schuler
Lori Plescia
Wilma Schulte
Mark D. Schulte
Msgr. Joseph Simon
Dr. James McAllister
Fr. David Skillman
Stephen Schreiber
Mary Smith
John Smith
Sr. Jeanne Margaret Stoltz, OP - 75th Jubilee
Ed and Stephanie Griesenauer
Mary Vest
The Dunns
Randy Vest
Jim, Becky, Emily and Patrick John Powell Walsh
Kathryn Sherrick
John Walsh
Michelle Ochonicky
Nurses
Charlotte Wiegert
Por la salud de Joel Hernandez y Lourdes Macias
Lourdes Macias Sanchez
Prayers for the end of the Care of St. Louis, contact Amanda Dunnivant at 314-256-5907 or visit www.ccsstl.org. Tributes above were received April 1, through June 30, 2020.
Even while sheltering in their rooms during a pandemic, Mary, Queen and Mother Center residents shared words of wisdom.

Mary, Queen and Mother Center is a Cardinal Ritter Senior Services’ skilled nursing facility located on the agency’s Shrewsbury campus, which is also home to independent living, assisted living, memory care, and affordable housing facilities.

Cardinal Ritter Senior Services is the largest Catholic Charities of St. Louis agency and traces its roots to 1960, when the agency, then named Cardinal Ritter Institute, was founded to address the needs of a growing senior adult population.