Letter from the Director

Every day, your donations to Catholic Charities are impacting people and changing their lives. What you may feel is a small thing - a bag of food to help a family through a weekend or an outfit for a woman searching for a job - can make a serious difference for people seeking help at Catholic Charities. In this newsletter, you will read about the people touched by your gifts. Thank you for opening your hearts and supporting families in need through Catholic Charities.

Catholic Charities recently received a handicap equipped van from a donor who said that her late husband would have wanted to pass it on to someone in need. Although we do accept vehicle donations and convert them to financial support, we knew this van was too special to just sell for cash. We wanted to find a family that would really benefit from all the specialized equipment and customizations that had been added. The cost for this type of equipment is well beyond the reach of most families we serve, but would be priceless to someone who could use it.

After interviewing several families, I met with Jamey, a single father raising a 13-year-old daughter with cerebral palsy. Jamey was fighting a shoulder injury from frequently lifting his daughter, Telsey. He struggled with transferring her in and out of the back seat of their car and was fearful this injury would result in him missing work. Although his mom and others helped him when they could, they were unable to lift Telsey. Except for when she rode the bus to school, Telsey rarely left home without her father. The specially equipped van would enable others to assist more and allow Jamey to lift her with less strain on his shoulder. As I watched Telsey and her father test the equipment, their friend Dawn whispered, “You have no idea how much this will change their lives.” Telsey was so excited to be able to sit in the front seat which gave her a whole new view of the world.

Thank you for continuing to open doors for those entering Catholic Charities. We remain most grateful for your support that enabled us to find the perfect match for such a powerful gift.

Many Blessings,

Michelle L. Martin, Executive Director
Emergencies Don’t Take the Day Off
By Jeanie Warner – Marketing, Media and Data Manager

On the first day of our move, I pulled into the parking lot of the new Salina location to see a car with Tennessee plates and severe damage to the passenger’s side. As I was walking up to the building, the woman got out of her car. I assumed that she was looking for one of the movers, so I asked how I could help. She said a man at the grocery store had directed her to Catholic Charities.

She told me that she was on her way to Washington State to see her relative who was gravely ill and didn’t have any money for food, gas, or a hotel. Our offices were in the middle of moving, so I was unsure which location had our supplies of food and clothing. I looked inside her car and saw five young children. Sadly, all that sheltered them from the cold rain on March 30th was a soggy blanket in the broken window. The baby was crying, and the three-year-old desperately needed a bathroom. The kids were shivering and hungry, so I invited them inside to warm up and use our restrooms while recruiting help from our staff.

Immediately, our Mobile Outreach Manager jumped into action and began searching through moving boxes for the bags of food she used for the homeless. We didn’t have any furniture set up, so she threw down a plastic table cloth for them to eat picnic style. I noticed the baby was sick and crying from a diaper rash. Digging through more boxes, we found some diaper cream to ease his pain. The kids were so hungry that they ate the soup cold, straight out of the can. They also needed dry, warm clothing and blankets. We asked their sizes, and our Executive Director went back to the old office to search for clothing to fit.

I came around the corner and saw the family sitting in a circle on the table cloth on the floor. I heard the mother tell them that everything was going to be better when they got to Washington. She told them they would buy a house in a nicer neighborhood, and they would meet new friends. I could see the excitement and hope in their eyes.

Our main concern was how to keep the cold rain out of their car. With duct tape and thick plastic, we did our best to cover the window as a temporary fix to shield the cold children.

Their gas tank was empty, and they either needed a place to stay for the night or a tank of gas. The mother’s last paycheck would be deposited at midnight, so they would have some money again. We helped them get some gas. The nine-year-old asked if he could help me with our moving tasks. Another staff member brought the 13-year-old a brand-new pair of tennis shoes that had been donated. She hoped they would fit him, and they did. His face lit up when he put them on his feet.

Our Executive Director arrived from the old office with clothes and blankets for everyone. They were ecstatic. Each of the kids tried the clothes to see what fit. We brought out clothing and food to put in the trunk of their car. Everything they owned was packed in there. They were starting out on a new adventure. We may never see them again, but I imagine that they will never forget the people in Kansas that helped them through a really tough time, while treating them with dignity and kindness.

As the kids were loading back into their car to continue their journey and the mother was hugging me, I was reminded that emergencies never take a day off.

LEGACY FUND CREATED TO HELP YOUTH
Catholic Charities is excited to announce the creation of a new fund to assist vulnerable youth. Through a legacy gift, The Mary Dolan Youth Assistance Fund has been established to assist individuals who from a young age have been on their own without any parental support or adult guidance. Often these children are ones who have “aged out” of the foster care system and left to fend for themselves without any stable role models. The fund will mainly assist these individuals with advancing their education or learning job skills, but other needs will be considered depending on the circumstances.

PLEASE CONSIDER LEAVING CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF NORTHERN KANSAS IN YOUR WILL!
Catholic Charities
12th Annual Fundraiser
Sunday, July 23, 2017 | 5:00 pm – 7:30pm

Salina Country Club
2101 E. Country Club Rd.

Social, Cash Bar,
Complimentary Dinner,
Live Auction

Dinner is complimentary - RSVP ONLY

Seating is limited, so make your reservation TODAY!

$100,000 Donation Match
Anonymous donors are offering a dollar-for-dollar match.
Every dollar you donate is DOUBLED!
Please donate today and give the Gift of Hope.

To RSVP, go to www.ccnks.org or mail the attached RSVP form below.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES 2017 ANNUAL FUNDRAISER RSVP

_____ Yes, I am able to attend. Number attending: ____

Names of Guests Attending ____________________________________________________________

_____ No, I am unable to attend, but please accept my donation of $ ____________________ towards the $100,000 Match.

_____ Check/Cash (Please make checks payable to Catholic Charities.)

_____ Donate online at www.ccnks.org

Card Number ____________________________ Exp. Date _________ Security Code ________

Name ____________________________________________________________

Signature _______________________________________________________________________

Address _________________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ St _____________ Zip ___________________________

Telephone ___________________________ Email ________________________________

(so we can notify you when your donation has been processed)
Diagnosis Not Stopping Terri’s Determination

Life was good for Terri. She loved her job and everything was falling into place. In 2001, she twisted her ankle and through testing it was determined that she had a form of muscular dystrophy - Charcot-Marie-Tooth (CMT) disease. Shocked by the diagnosis, Terri was determined not to let her illness affect her life and vowed to stay active and continue with her normal routines.

For the next 15 years, Terri’s life progressed normally and she focused on staying healthy. “I have been more blessed than many others with my disease,” said Terri. “However, last year I got sick and have stayed sick. It wasn’t what I expected. I had my job and health insurance, and now I am here. Everything has changed.”

Doctors are unsure if Terri has a secondary form of muscular dystrophy, and more testing is needed for them to discern the best course of treatment. Terri came to Catholic Charities to receive help through the Kelly Mead Fund with her medical bills and traveling expenses to the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City for testing.

This past year, Terri had to move back home to receive extra help from her family. “It was very hard for me to reach out for help. I am very independent and have worked since I was 15. I had been on my own, but now needed help. I feel like I have lost my independence, and it is something that I have struggled with this past year.”

Terri’s disease has drastically impacted her ability to work different jobs, as she has limitations and specific restrictions since the progression of her disease. She remains determined to work and stay positive. “Things could be worse, and I am so thankful for the help from my parents and the programs at Catholic Charities.”

Terri expressed sincere gratitude. “It is amazing that people are so selfless and help people they don’t even know. Without this help I wouldn’t be able to do this. I honestly thank all the donors and staff at Catholic Charities from the bottom of my heart.”

Payday Loans Leave Wes On Unstable Ground

Wes never thought that he would be the person asking for help, but a series of circumstances left him in crisis with nowhere to turn. “I always pay my bills on time and never use credit cards or borrow money,” said Wes a career cosmetologist in Salina.

Wes led a comfortable lifestyle with a great client base, but severe arthritis caused his career to end early leaving him to rely solely on his monthly disability check. This caused a change in his spending habits with little extra at the end of each month. When he discovered that someone he trusted had stolen his money, he did not know what to do. Unable to pay his rent and utilities, Wes feared he would lose the house he had called home for the last four years and turned to a payday loan. He soon discovered the pitfalls of these type of predatory loans, “That was the worst thing I have ever done. I got a $250 payday loan from them, and I needed to pay the entire amount with a fee (totaling nearly $300) when I got my next disability check. After I paid my rent and they took the payday loan repayment out, I only had $97 left for food, utilities, and other living expenses for the entire month. So, I got another $250 payday loan. The interest makes it impossible for me to repay. I didn’t know how to get caught up, so I continued to get more loans because I didn’t have an option.”

After months in the predatory loan debt cycle, Wes came to Catholic Charities for help with his utility bill. “I was someone who used to donate to charities, and now I was the one asking for help.” Wes added, “I was relieved to learn that Catholic Charities had a program to help people caught up in payday loans.” By helping clients to pay off their payday loans and switch to low-interest loans, Catholic Charities KLPP (Kansas Loan Pool Project) program enables people, like Wes, to break free of predatory lenders.

Wes appreciated being treated with dignity and respect. “No one at Catholic Charities judged me. It was hard for me to ask for help, and I wouldn’t have unless I really needed it.”
**Volunteer Spotlight: Sherrie and Cindy**

More than two years ago, Sherrie Kelly and Cindy Curran began volunteering for Catholic Charities. They were tasked with organizing the donated clothing to make it available for clients in the front lobby of the former Salina office. Storage space for donations was limited, and the lobby only had a small alcove to display the free clothing and shoes. In the beginning, they volunteered one day a week, but they soon realized that the demand was so great that they came twice a week and became especially involved as Catholic Charities prepared to move its Salina office.

“We really enjoy our time together, and it felt good to know that we were helping people in need,” Cindy said. One encounter that sticks out in her mind was between a father and son who were there looking for pants for the boy. “We went to the basement to try to find his size and brought up a whole box for them to find a pair that fit. In the box, the boy also found a shirt that made his face light up. His father quickly told him, ‘No, we are here to find pants.’ It was obvious that they were in great need, but the father didn’t want to be greedy, and they just took the pants. It has been eye opening volunteering here. The need is great, and the people are very grateful.”

Sherrie concurred, “One lady came to get a pair of shoes and donated the ones she had on for someone else who may need them. We are honored to do our small part in helping others. It is humbling.”

Cara Ivey, Volunteer Coordinator for Catholic Charities, credits Sherrie and Cindy for getting all the donations organized before the move to the new Salina location. “We are getting ready to open a thrift store at our new Salina location, and they have been instrumental in getting everything set up. We could not have done this without them, but we still need more help.”

Cara added, “We are looking for more volunteers to help us with the thrift store – sorting, organizing, and serving customers. We are planning to open the store in the coming months and will be determining our hours based upon the number of volunteers available to help in the store.”

If you are interested in volunteering for Catholic Charities, contact Cara at 785-825-0208 x216 or civey@ccnks.org. You may also register online at www.ccnks.org.

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**Grief Stricken and in Crisis, Atwill Finds Compassion**

Atwill had been caring for her husband for more than a year when he lost his battle with cancer. She was emotionally exhausted and in shock. The first two weeks after his death were a blur. Then reality set in, and she needed to pay bills. She was dealt another blow when she learned from the Social Security Office that she would only be receiving 1/3 of his benefits – making it nearly impossible for her to survive.

Atwill and her husband were retired and had planned to live out their golden years together. His passing left her feeling hopeless, and she wasn’t sure where to turn as her utilities were going to be disconnected. “I asked the lady at the Social Security Office who could help me, and she gave me a list of organizations and churches I could reach out to,” Atwill said. None of them helped except Catholic Charities. “When I met with Helen in the Manhattan office, she was so kind and compassionate. She told me that she would do what she could to help me. Catholic Charities came to my rescue!”

After expenses, Atwill only has $100 remaining each month to buy food, but she is happy to have money for her medicine. She stretches her budget by eating Ramon Noodles. “I feel so blessed by the Lord. I thank God for Catholic Charities. After caring for my husband for a year, I had no energy left. Because of the caring way I was treated by the staff at Catholic Charities, my energy was boosted.”

Atwill expresses her wish that others would be as compassionate as Catholic Charities, “I don’t think people understand that others, like me, have nowhere to turn. If you can get the support you need, it can make a huge difference.”

Atwill is making the best of her situation by becoming a Kansas Grandparent to earn some extra money. “I love being around the children, and I am in a much better place right now,” she positively proclaims while expressing her gratitude to God and Catholic Charities.
Catholic Charities accepts vehicle donations.

To donate or get more information, go to www.cnks.org or call 844-315-4483.

We accept most cars, trucks, vans, SUVs, boats, motorcycles, ATVs, RVs, trailers and airplanes.

EASY PROCESS • FREE PICKUP • TAX DEDUCTIBLE

THRIFT STORE
Catholic Charities will soon be opening a thrift store at its Salina office. Volunteers are needed to sort, organize, and serve customers. Volunteers may determine the hours and dates they are available to work. If you would like to volunteer at Catholic Charities, please go to www.ccnks.org or contact Cara Ivey at 785-825-0208 x216 / civey@ccnks.org.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS TRAINING
Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas is pleased to offer individual and family disaster preparedness training. Plan. Prepare. Protect. is a curriculum designed by Catholic Charities to educate individuals, families, parishes, and communities on how to prepare for disasters. The training is available free of charge to any parish in the Salina Diocese wishing to host it. For more information or to schedule a training, please contact Michelle Martin at mmartin@ccnks.org or 785-825-0208.

Double your Donation - Support the $100,000 Match!