



December/January 2021

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY® OF CLEVELAND

WHERE LOVE LEADS TO ACTION

CHAPTER AND VERSE

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members & Friends,

As I reflect on this past year, I can't help but think of our members and how we have experienced unprecedented times. With COVID-19 looming all around us, our conversations of how to move forward have often left us feeling so conflicted. Some people have painfully lost loved ones, while at the same time, some families have grown closer and more in love with those around them. At times, our hearts are heavy, and other times, we are filled with overwhelming joy.

But when the conversations are over, the Christ Child ladies always return to the basics – how can we help those around us; how can we help advance God's kingdom. It is *God, First; Loving/Serving our Neighbor, Second*, regardless of our circumstances. We know God is always with us. For this reason, there is no need for endless worry, but rather, the need to share our many blessings. The ladies of the Christ Child Society are very good at this – always giving, always sharing with others. As our Starlight Soiree video reminds us, ***"That is the Christ Child Society."***

I want to thank all our wonderful members for your unconditional love and generosity, for the countless volunteer hours you so willingly give, and for so enthusiastically sharing your personal talents. Thanks to everyone who helped to make our Starlight Soiree a success, especially all the women who served on the Starlight Soiree Committee, and all who contributed to our largest annual fundraising event. I want to extend a special "thank you" to **Susan Ferraro-Smith**, Brendan Gulick, Betsy Kling, **Kate Toma**, **Terri Parker**, **Janie Nickodem**, **Jean Canestraro**, **Katie Camaglia**, and **Sheila Gulick** for the many hours spent in creating a memorable event to share with our members and benefactors. ***Congratulations to all for making history – our first virtual Starlight Soiree!*** Could our founders ever have imagined this 104 years ago?

I also want to congratulate our 2020 Persons of the Year, **Karen** and **John Kirk**. I know I speak for everyone when I say, "Congratulations" and "Thank You" for all the wonderful things you do for the Christ Child Society of Cleveland. You have set such a beautiful example for us all – we love you!

Lastly, I want to say I am so grateful for all of you and the opportunity to serve. Please remember Father Ralph in your prayers. I wish you and your family a healthy and blessed Christmas season.

God Bless,
Mary Herrick



CCS CLE NEWS!

News You Need To Know **NOW!**

December 2, 2020	Provisional Christmas Party
December 6, 2020	Christmas Book Sunday
January 13, 2021	Executive Committee Via Zoom at 9:30 am
February 3, 2021	Provisional Review TBD

Merry Christmas

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY!

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:14)

May God bless you and your families with peace and joy for the year to come!

We are grateful for your service and appreciate all you do for the Christ Child.

Sincerely, The Officers and Directors of the Christ Child Society of Cleveland



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES December 2020/January 2021

***NEW VOLUNTEER PROTOCOL:** COVID protocols are required at all CCS volunteer sites. **Please contact the project chair listed below to confirm your participation and to verify that the event has not been delayed or canceled.** The number of volunteers will be limited due to social distancing requirements. Masks are required by the State of Ohio at all facilities. Thank you for your cooperation and know we greatly appreciate your time and talent and all you do for the Christ Child Society!

Layette Packing

First Monday, 10:00-12:30

December 7 - Canceled due to Covid / January 4 - TBD

Contact: **Carla Calevich**

Euclid-St. John of the Cross Sewing Group

Fourth Thursday, 9:00-12:00 - *No sewing until further notice.* Sewers may call Andrea Dean for fabric.

Contact: **Andrea Dean**

Independence Sewing Group

Second Wednesday & Thursday, 10:00-2:00

No sewing until further notice.

Contact: **Laura Cengic**

Merrick House Reading Enrichment

First, Third and Fifth Tuesdays, 9:30-11:00

No reading until further notice

Contact: **Carol Janas**

"My Stuff"

No packing in December. January TBD

10:00-12:00

Contact: **Kathy Moehring**

Parkview HeadStart Reading Program

First and Third Tuesdays, 9:30-11:00

No reading until further notice

Contact: **Sharon Skotko** and **Sharon Harwat**

Portable Crib Team

First and Third Tuesdays, 10:00-12:30

Contact: **Sheila Gulick**

St. Francis Library

During the school year

Tuesday 9:30-2:00/Wednesday 9:30-2:30

Reading limited at this time

Contact: **Lynn McMahon**

St. Rocco Library

During the school year Monday 8:30-12:00

Reading limited at this time

Contact: **Laura Cengic**

Showcase

Shifts available Tuesdays – Saturday

11:00-2:00/ 11:00-4:00/ 12:00-4:00

Contact: **Mary Jane (MJ) Miller**

***Contact information can be found in our Chapter roster.**

2020 Starlight Soirée

THE 69TH ANNUAL CHARITY EVENT

Midyear, **Kate Toma**, Starlight Soirée Chairperson, and her 22 Committee members began planning a bigger and better charity event for November. The goal was accomplished but with a hitch—**IT WAS VIRTUAL!** The Starlight Soirée which funds over 50 percent of the operating costs for the Christ Child Society of Cleveland projects was a **WEEK LONG EVENT—November 9 through 16**. Savvy shoppers watched their Silent Auction bids daily throughout the week awaiting the broadcast on **Friday, November 13**. The event which took place at the Cleveland History Center opened with Brendan Gulick, the voice of BuckeyesNow.com, along with a handful of excited children getting the party started! Joyful children aboard the legendary Euclid Beach Carousel helped Brendan tell the story of those children in Greater Cleveland who are not fortunate enough to be gleeful all the time. As members of the Christ Child Society, we know this. Betsy Kling, WKYC TV Chief Meteorologist and 5PM Anchor, spoke of Christ Child Society changing the lives of children from the very start of their young lives. Ms. Kling knows this. Mary Virginia Merrick, our Foundress and Servant of God, knew it too.



Invoking tradition, the Persons of the Year 2020 were announced by President, **Mary Herrick**. Christ Child Society bestowed this honor upon **Karen and John Kirk**. (Karen is a member since 2012.) Through their generosity, the Christ Child Society will meet the material, educational and emotional needs of the community's in-crisis children. Undoubtedly, The Kirks' see the Christ Child in every child. All during their 52 years of marriage while raising Elisa and Brian, they advocated service to others particularly children in need. We thank the Kirks for their "Over the Moon" sponsorship, as well as all the generous sponsors listed on our website and elsewhere in this newsletter.



There were "watch parties" on phones, iPads and even big flat screen TV's partnered with technology to connect to YouTube. It was fairly easy and comfortable to prepare for this Soirée....no suits for the fellas, no fussing to get the gals' hair, makeup and outfits together and no driving to a venue! It was an in-home evening even though seeing friends in person was sorely missed. To view the Starlight Soirée broadcast, go to: <https://youtu.be/hb8atgBFtsg>.

Raffle chances provided thrills for **Peggy Harrison**, the winner of the \$5,000 cash and **Barb Pugel**, another lucky winner who will have to decide between three exquisite diamond bracelets donated by long-time supporter, Marlen Fine Jewelers in Rocky River. Silent Auction winners were notified at the close of the Starlight Soirée and congratulations to these supporters. Everyone is a winner in the eyes of the Christ Child. All those who supported this virtual event...gracious donors, generous sponsors, and giving members should be proud that they contributed to our mission of **CHALLENGING CHILDHOOD POVERTY IN GREATER CLEVELAND**. Our members and supporters are the very best. We knew that. They understand by helping impoverished children with basic needs that we all take for granted is following the legacy of Mary Virginia Merrick: **Nothing is ever too much to do for a child. THAT IS THE CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY.**

Thank you to, **Katie Camaglia** - Public Relations Chair, for preparing and sharing with us this and the Meet the Kirks articles.



Cash and jewelry raffles were held at the Marlen Jewelers with several Christ Child members watching on Tuesday, November 17.

MEET THE KIRK FAMILY

During the Starlight Soirée broadcast on November 13, many viewed **Mary Herrick** presenting the Persons of the Year 2020 Award to **Karen** and **John Kirk**. This has been a beautiful tradition extended to 26 former recipients. (View the CCS Roster for a complete listing on pages 1-6.) The previous recipients were afforded the opportunity to share this honor with their family and close friends on the night of the gala event. COVID-19 took this from the Kirks. President **Mary Herrick** scheduled a "Zoom" celebration after the Soirée broadcast and all were welcome. The Kirks' children, Elisa and Brian, Karen's sister, John's brother and several of their close friends and neighbors and, of course, CCS members, joined the "Zoom" party. It is not the same as being in person. No hugs. No handshakes. Toasts were made, however!



Elisa and Brian stole everyone's heart! Arriving prepared with speeches, Brian spoke first with his admiration for his father. He referred to a song by David Crosby "Hero". Brian didn't sing it but merely recited the chorus with feeling:

*And the reason that she loved him, Was the reason I loved him too
He never wondered what was right or wrong, He just knew*



Brian spoke, "My father's a quiet guy, and I think of that beautiful quote from St. Francis of Assisi, 'Preach Christ at all times. When necessary use words.' And I think that characterized my father's walk..." Brian showed his love for his mother, too, by saying only one word can describe her: "AWESOME."

Elisa, who didn't wish to be upstaged by her younger brother (we wouldn't know she is older because she is so cute), offered her words of love starting out by quoting Mary Virginia Merrick with: "Nothing is too much to do for a child." She went on, "They taught Brian and me, and now their grandchildren, that every person in this world is a child of God and it's our duty to care for one another especially the most vulnerable. My parents give gladly and don't ask for anything in return. As Jesus taught us, when they serve the needy they 'sound NO trumpet' before them. It makes me proud to see them recognized for their contributions to the Christ Child Society and the people it serves."

Karen and John have left a legacy with their children. All of us hope to do the same. In the present time during a pandemic, we are all doing our best to keep ourselves and our families going forward and still not forgetting the children we serve. We had a successful event and we are grateful for everyone's support especially the Kirk Family!

WEST SIDE CATHOLIC CENTER HONORS CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY



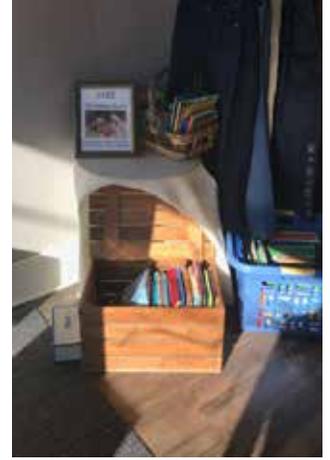
Christ Child Society of Cleveland is the 2020 recipient of the *Sr. Kathleen Kilbane Walk in Faith Award* from the West Side Catholic Center. The award is given to an individual or organization who continues to advance and support the mission of the West Side Catholic Center (WSCC) in faith-filled, exceptional ways. Our organization was honored via the WSCC's November 20 "Warm Heart Winter Nights" virtual benefit. **Mary Herrick**, current Christ Child President, and **Paula Conrad**, current President-Elect, accepted the award on behalf of our membership. While all awards are celebrated, it is quite an honor to be recognized by a fellow Catholic social services agency with similar missions.

Additionally, **Irene** and **John Fitzgerald** received the West Side Catholic Center's *Dorothy Day Humanitarian Award* for their long and faithful service to people in need. Irene is a Christ Child Society member since 2013.

The virtual event and award presentations were live streamed at <https://www.wsccenter.org/warmhearts>.

SHOWCASE IS DECKING THE HALLS FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

There are some great Christmas fashions and decorations for all ages at Showcase! Make it a stop for your Christmas shopping and get some great deals. New items come in daily. Showcase is also giving FREE children's Christmas books to customers to encourage them to spread the love of reading to a child they know!! Thanks to the Cleveland Book Bank for making this possible.



If you are in the mood to play Santa, Showcase is looking for donations and has a Santa Supply Wish List. To defray costs for supplies used at showcase and keep profits going to the children of Cleveland, **Kathy Cole** created a Showcase Supply Wish List. Items include paper towels, toilet paper, dish soap, hand soap, distilled water, Kleenex and air freshener sprays which are used daily by all volunteers. Donations can be dropped off at Showcase or pick up can be arranged.

Showcase remains an all volunteer staff, thanks to the great members of Christ Child Society. We now have a delivery crew taking our discards to local shelters. If you would like to join this crew please email **Kathy Cole**.

Showcase can now be seen on Facebook. Search Christ Child Society of Cleveland Showcase Resale Store and friend the page to spread the word about our shop.



ROSARY RALLY

Over 21,000 Rosary Rallies took place across the country on Saturday, October 10. Christ Child Cleveland Chapter member **Diane Joeright** organized one of these rallies in North Royalton that was attended by over 50 people.

Attendees prayed the rosary for reparation for sins and offenses committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary and prayed for the conversion of our country. The event coincided with the anniversary of the 1917 apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima of Portugal. Participants for the North Royalton Rally included Christ Child members. All COVID protocols were followed.



PROVISIONAL CHRISTMAS PARTY SCHEDULED

Provisional Chair **Kathy Bush** is hopeful the Class of 2020 will be able to host a Christmas Party on December 2 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School. Kathy reports this year's class is very flexible planning for both an in person and a virtual party. The 43 children in Pre-K through grade three will enjoy either party format.

Santa will not be able to attend the party this year due to COVID restrictions, but games, crafts and gift bags full of toothbrushes, toothpaste, books, pencils, Playdough and candy canes will be given out. Also, the entire staff will be treated to individually boxed lunches. The Class of 2020 is determined to keep the tradition of an annual Christ Child Christmas Party alive despite many contingencies.



CHRISTMAS BOOKS GIVE AWAY

For the second year, children will be receiving free Christmas books in early December thanks to the generosity of the Cleveland Kids' Book Bank and the hard work of our organization. **Meg Kearns** and **Sue Simon** organized many volunteers who separated over 5,000 Christmas books into three age categories: preschool, early elementary and upper elementary. Once sorted, the books were each given a Christ Child Society sticker, then boxed for distribution. Like so many Christ Child projects, a lot of thought, time and physical work went into this one.

And just how do we give away this bit of holiday cheer during a pandemic? Creative thinking! Books will be delivered to selected schools by Christ Child members in early December. Hopefully, students will actually be in school to receive them. On Sunday, December 6, other volunteers will be giving away Christmas books after Masses at the following parishes – Our Lady of Mount Carmel, St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Ladislav, St. Malachi, and St. Mary's and St. Vincent De Paul, both in Elyria. Additionally, books are being included in "My Stuff" bags and available free of charge for customers at Showcase. Hopefully, many children will be listening to or practicing reading *A Visit from St. Nicholas* (more popularly known as *The Night Before Christmas*) and other childhood favorites.

All COVID-19 protocols will be carefully followed for this book distribution and all other Christ Child endeavors. However, if you volunteer for an upcoming project, please check with the chairperson if mandates are added or changed in Ohio.

NATIONAL CCS DAY OF SERVICE

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY OF CLEVELAND VIRTUAL STORY HOUR

This year's National Day of Service event was held during the week of October 25 - 31. The theme was "**Energize • Inspire • Engage: Expanding our Reach**" with the goal to encourage chapters to customize an event around an existing program or an unfilled need in their community.

Our chapter created a virtual story hour after having received permission from HarperCollins Children's Books, Penguin / Random House Publishing, Scholastic Inc., Simon & Schuster Publishers, and Dr. Seuss Enterprises, Ltd., to read books online. Because of restrictions required for permission from the publishers, all videos are "unlisted".

Members recorded themselves reading children's books, the videos were posted to YouTube, and a list of links was sent to seven agencies and schools. The videos will be available until December 30, 2020. Special thanks to our readers: **Marybeth Baucro, Ellen Becks, Katie Camaglia, Laura Cengic, Pat DiVitto, Mary Feikle, Lynne Gerace, Marsha Gleine, Liz Niehaus, Marie Pompili, Karen Rebholz, Sharon Skotko, Dolly Thomas and Stephanie West** who recorded a whopping 24 stories! During the week, the videos were viewed a total of 195 times. Congratulations to all who helped with this project!

Please contact **Meg Kearns** if you would like a list of links to the stories.



GRANTS BENEFITTING "MY STUFF" BAGS RECEIVED

The Development Committee is pleased to announce two grants received to benefit the "My Stuff" Bag program! The first grant, from the Greater Cleveland Dental Society, is a \$1,500 in-kind donation of toothpaste and toothbrushes. The Greater Cleveland Dental Society Foundation works to raise awareness of the importance of good oral health through education and providing resources that will enhance the overall health care of our NE Ohio community. We are grateful for their continued support of our program.

The Murphy Family Foundation supports organizations addressing the problems and causes of poverty in the greater Cleveland area. The majority of grants help provide food for the hungry, shelter for the homeless and educational support services for the disadvantaged. We are thrilled to have received a \$5,000 grant from The Murphy Family Foundation in support of the "My Stuff" Bag program.

Special thanks to **Kathy Moehring, Rose Dziak, Denise Shafer, Kathy Marsh-Wintour** and Lisa Ludec for helping to pull together all of the information needed to complete the grant applications.

Remembrance/Endowment Report

September 6 - November 3, 2020

Memory

John Backovsky	Bill Faude	Leona Massaro (2)	Dr. Nicholas Popovich
Kathe Bartel (11)	Jeff Graves (3)	Don Moracz	Helen Smith (2)
Kathleen Burke	Thomas Leonti, Sr. (5)	Julie Ann Paulus (3)	Kathy and Bill Tench
Anne Carroll	Edward Lyzen		

Honor

Marybeth Baucco, Congratulations and Thank You for your 8 years of service on the National Christ Child Board
Joan Bryan
Karen and John Kirk, Congratulations on being the 2020 Christ Child Society Persons of the Year
Susan Ferraro Smith, Congratulations on joining the National Christ Child Society Board

In Our Thoughts

Karen Argie on the death of her sister, Kathleen Burke
Anne Chorba on the death of her brother, John Backovsky
Lynne Della Donna on the death of her sister, Mary Sims
Laurey Gillen on the death of her husband, Thomas Gillen
Arlene McNamara on the death of her husband, Edward McNamara
Colleen O'Shaughnessy on the death of her father, Neil Raleigh
Maire Shuster on the death of her husband, Dale Shuster
Father Ralph Wiatrowski, Get Well wishes

The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
Masses for Christ Child members,
living and deceased and their families are:

Thursday, December 24, 2020 at noon
Monday, January 25, 2020 at noon

Please notify the Christ Child office regarding deaths of CCS members or their immediate family members.

Send Remembrance/Endowment checks to:

Christ Child Society of Cleveland,
7901 Detroit Avenue, Suite 300,
Cleveland, Ohio 44102

Donations September 6 - November 3, 2020 \$2,005.00

TOTAL FOR FISCAL YEAR \$12,410.00

Online Remembrance Giving available on our website at christchildsocietycleveland.org

BRINGING HOPE THROUGH PRAYER . . . THE PRAYER PROJECT

Mission: Praying for others and ourselves in the name of The Christ Child. Please consider giving of yourself in prayer for each other, for our projects, for the children we serve and their families, the agencies we serve, for all those suffering during this time of COVID, for special intentions, for thanksgiving, forgiveness, growth, love, kindness, respect, and HOPE.

Another way to pray is by attending the monthly Mass at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist for Christ Child members, living and deceased and their families. Dates are in the newsletter under Remembrance.

The Prayer Project is open to all, anytime of day or night, anywhere, no dress code, no set schedule and no rules. YES, you get volunteer hours for praying. This is a perfect way to meet your volunteer hours requirement during the pandemic. You will receive much more than service hours . . . you will be filled with Holy Moments through prayer and we are confident some miracles will come along with those Holy Moments!

Please consider joining The Prayer Project . . . all of us need prayers and miracles in our lives . . . prayers are answered and miracles happen every day! Most importantly - whether part of The Prayer Project or not - please PRAY!

You are welcome to call **Terri Parker** with any questions.



Christ Child Society of Cleveland

7901 Detroit Avenue, Suite 300
Cleveland, Ohio 44102

www.christchildsocietycleveland.org

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DATED MATERIAL: Please deliver by December 1st.

Articles for the Newsletter

Please contact **Cathy Harbinak** if you have any special needs or volunteer requests for the newsletter.
Articles for the Feb/March issue will be due by Tuesday, January 12.

Mary Herrick
President

Paula Conrad
President-Elect

Julie Jerdonek
Service VP

Kathy Michael
Organization VP

Marsha Gleine
Recording Secretary

Liz Niehaus
Corresponding Secretary

Denise Shafer
Financial Secretary

Mary Jo Dailey
Endowment/
Remembrance

Cathy Harbinak
Newsletter Editor

Rev. Ralph E. Wiatrowski
Spiritual Advisor