



August/September 2021

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY[®]

OF CLEVELAND

WHERE LOVE LEADS TO ACTION

CHAPTER AND VERSE

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends,

Unbelievably, we have already passed the halfway point of 2021! The pandemic is waning (please pray for that to continue), we can comfortably meet in person, our projects are gearing up to return to at least the norms of early 2020. We have been so blessed.



As we look back on the 2021 Red Wagon Luncheon Cleveland Edition, I think it is safe to say it was an event to remember. We had a wonderful time sharing the good works of the Christ Child Society with people throughout the Cleveland community, all the while enjoying so much fun and laughter with members of our Christ Child Chapter. Thank you, past Persons of the Year **Adele Malley** (1999), **Susan Ferraro Smith** and Robert C. Smith (2012), Dr. Rustom and Mary Khouri (2015), and **Karen** and John Kirk (2020) for your behind the scenes help in making this event a huge success. Thank you, Theresia Oreskovic, 2021 Red Wagon sponsor from Peter & Co. Jewelers and all our members and donors for your generosity.

The combination Spring/Legacy Luncheon marked the return to in-person events following COVID. The excitement of gathering with our members and honoring their tireless volunteer work was inspiring. Congratulations **Eileen Rini**, our newest Mary Virginia Merrick Award recipient, and Christ Child anniversary celebrants who received recognition for their many years of service to children in need. Thank you, Organization Vice President **Kathy Michael** and Public Relations Chair **Katie Camaglia** for your thorough planning to make this event a lovely day for everyone involved.

Our Day of Reflection provided time for prayer and reflection. Thank you, Kim Langley, for offering us the opportunity to take the time to think about "what was lost, what is left, and what is possible" and "how to love the world for what it is." Thank you, President-Elect **Paula Conrad**, and Religious Activities Chair **Ann Ertle** for coordinating this relaxing, enjoyable day. Father Ralph, special thanks for celebrating Mass and joining us for lunch. We are grateful for your ongoing spiritual direction and friendship.

As always, thank you Christ Child Society of Cleveland members for all you do to help Challenge Childhood Poverty in Greater Cleveland. Our chapter is successful because of your willingness to share your God-given talents so generously.

Blessings,
Mary Herrick

CCS CLE NEWS!

News You Need To Know **NOW!**

August 4	Executive Committee via Zoom at 9:30 a.m.
August 18	Evening on the Lake Cleveland Yachting Club at 6 p.m.
September 8	Executive Committee via Zoom or in person TBD at 9:30 a.m.
September 10	Deadline for submissions for October/ November Chapter & Verse Newsletter to Cathy Harbinak
September 15	Board Meeting CCS Office at 9:30 a.m.
September 15	General Business Meeting CCS Office at 11 a.m.
September 17-19	NCCS Conference Potomac, Maryland TBD
October 8	Clambake Lakeside Yacht Club TBD



Showcase Readies for Fall Season

Showcase's semi-annual BAG SALE begins on September 11 and continues through September 14 and ends at 1 p.m. on the 15th. We are also looking for volunteers for Changeover which will begin at 1 p.m. on September 15 and 9 a.m. on September 16. Changeover is emptying the store of all summer items, cleaning everything, restocking with our fall items and redoing all our displays. It is a huge undertaking to complete in just 2 days. Many hands make light work!! Sign up for a time for Changeover or just to volunteer a shift at Showcase on SignUpGenius.

As always, a huge Thank You to our all-volunteer staff who have been running Showcase profitably for over a year now!!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES August/September 2021

Volunteering has resumed in full force with no mandatory COVID protocols or preregistering UNLESS requested by chair person. Members are welcome to wear masks, etc., per personal choice.

Layette Packing

First Monday, 10:00-12:30

August 2, September 13 (due to Labor Day)

Contact: **Carla Calevich**

Euclid-St. John of the Cross Sewing Group

Fourth Thursday, 9:00-12:00 -

No sewing until further notice.

September sewers should 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

Program starts August 3

Contact: **Carol Janas**

"My Stuff" *DAY CHANGE

Third Thursdays, 10:00-12:00

August 19, September 16

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 2021- 2022 school year

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

Contact: **Lynn McMahon**

St. Rocco Library

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

No reading until further notice

Contact: **Laura Cengic**

Showcase

Shifts available Tuesdays – Saturday

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

Hours for Summer on Thursdays from 4 - 7 p.m.

Please read the SignUpGenius article in this newsletter for all sign up options.

Contact: **Sharon Hensel**

*Contact information can be found in our Chapter roster.

Day of Recollection Theme: The Spirituality of Happiness

On July 14, St. Ladislas Church welcomed the Christ Child Society of Cleveland to spend our annual Day of Recollection on their lovely tree-lined property in Westlake. Kim Langley, M.Ed., shared her spiritual insight to making life more joyful. Kim explained, like herself, many women submerge themselves into a very busy life – almost to the point of being on “autopilot.” This sentiment truly resonated with the audience. Kim encouraged us to take ourselves less seriously and to more often laugh. She reminded us we need to “love the world as it is!” and to support an attitude of forgiving the world for being what it is and loving it unconditionally. Of course, we can make it better and do so by serving others. Ultimately, doing good for others will bring us happiness. Kim certainly pegged the CCS mission and the legacy of Mary Virginia Merrick who never let her physical hardship define her life.



Our spiritual director, Fr. Ralph Wiatrowski celebrated the Mass for our gathering and it was also the feast day of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha. Saint Kateri Tekakwitha (1656-1680), is the first Native American saint and she was born to a Mohawk Chief father and a Catholic Algonquin mother. Fr. Ralph described her as an ordinary person with a strong devotion to the Eucharist and a deep concern for others. Can you see the overall theme of this Day of Recollection? Do for others and do not pray for a lighter load – pray for a stronger back. We ended the event with a yummy box lunch by Well Done Catering.

The event committee, guided by Religious Activities Chair, **Ann Ertle** and President-Elect, **Paula Conrad** offered a wonderful, prayerful event. Our gratitude to the committee for planning a truly enjoyable day for us to share.

*Note: “My Stuff”™ Chair **Kathy Moehring** thanks everyone who contributed soap for the “My Stuff”™ bags.*



2022 – 2024 Executive Board Nominations and Applications

If you are interested in becoming an officer, please complete the application form found on our website. The Nominating Committee will review all completed applications and develop a slate of officers for the 2022–2024 term. The slate of officers will be published in Chapter and Verse in the December 2021/January 2022 issue and the officers will be elected at the winter business meeting in February 2022. Submit the completed application to **Cathy Caruso** via email or phone (see roster for information) by September 30, 2021.

ELIGIBILITY: To be eligible for elective office, a member must have served on the Board for at least one term, except for the financial secretary, recording secretary and corresponding secretary, who do not need prior Board experience but who must have three years of membership (including the provisional year) and/or the specific qualifications necessary for the job (such as accounting or bookkeeping experience for the financial secretary position). To be considered for any elective office, a member must be active and in good standing.

Mary Virginia Merrick Award, 2021



Friends and fellow Christ Child members pose with 2021 Mary Virginia Merrick Award Recipient Eileen Rini

We are familiar with the remarkable legacy of Mary Virginia Merrick (1866-1955) and have chronicled her life's work in helping impoverished children. At the very young age of 11, she pledged to God a life of service. Following an accident in her early teens, Mary suffered paralysis and was plagued with constant pain; yet she kept her promise and found a way to serve others for more than seven decades.

As members of the Christ Child Society, we follow in Miss Mary's footsteps with our enduring love for the Christ Child and our continuing efforts to serve children in need. Every year since 1983, we have awarded the prestigious honor to wear the Mary Virginia Merrick medallion to one exceptional volunteer who exemplifies Mary's words, "Find a need, and fill it."

This May, the Mary Virginia Merrick Award Nominating Committee accepted members' testimonials as to who among us best emulates Miss Mary's attributes and virtues. Combining these with volunteer histories provided by Mary Cay McConnell, Chair **Katie Camaglia**, **Carol Janas**, **Joanne Nally**, **Kathy Cole**, **Jane Donovan**, and **Julie Jerdonek** examined all the information. After thoughtful consideration and discussion, **Eileen Rini**, member since 1975, was chosen for the 2021 honor. During her 46-year membership, Eileen eagerly accepted the challenges of leadership roles. Many Starlight Balls and Red Wagon Luncheons were orchestrated under her direction. She also served on the Executive Committee as Financial Secretary. A special place in her heart though, was and still is, Showcase. Her membership actually began with logging volunteer time at Showcase East on Buckeye Road. Eileen has truly given of herself, her time, and her treasure to carry out the CCSC mission to Challenge Childhood Poverty in Greater Cleveland. During the June 23rd presentation, a stunned Eileen humbly accepted the prestigious award in the presence of her son, Chip, who flew in from South Carolina to surprise his mother. Chip sweetly mentioned that his mother was the extraordinary "behind the scenes" type of volunteer. Congratulations Eileen...you are a most deserving recipient of this honor, showing us all by your example that "Nothing is ever too much to do for a child."



Eileen Rini was surprised to be selected as the 2021 recipient of the Mary Virginia Merrick Award and by an unexpected visit from her son, Chip.



2021 Members Honored for Years of Service at Spring Luncheon



Red roses were presented to those members who celebrated milestone membership anniversaries in 2020



Among those honored for years at service at the Spring Luncheon were Carol Janus and Cathy Caruso

Christ Child Society Continued to Serve Children throughout our Hot Cleveland Summer

Christ Child Society women rallied once again in mid-Summer at the Shoes and Clothes for Kids (SC4K) huge warehouse to package our uniforms in preparation for distribution before school opens this fall. Thank you to **Janie Nickodem**, Christ Child's Children's Closet Chair, who engaged over 25 social service agencies, schools, and community centers and programs who in turn submitted requests to SC4K for specific boy and girl sizes. Teams of Christ Child volunteers carefully filled each order with custom sizes including two each of pants, collared tees, socks and underwear, school supplies and a \$15 gift card toward shoes all stuffed into a very cool backpack. Without a doubt our Cleveland children will return to school looking "smart" wearing their new attire. A huge thank you to **Loraine Wancata**, Christ Child Uniform Chair, who used "SignUpGenius" as an option to fill 56 volunteer slots in July and her hard-working teams of amazing women who helped challenge childhood poverty in greater Cleveland.



Christ Child Society's New "Approved List of Organizations" Participating in our Project Distributions

The Christ Child Society has distributed layettes, My Stuff bags, beds, cribs, coats, and uniforms to social service agencies, churches, schools, hospitals, and city and county departments for many years. These organizations give our items directly to children living in poverty. We have developed friendly, trusting relationships with their staff who came to our offices regularly to pick up items. However, CCS realized we needed more information about our participating organizations.

The past year, a CCS Committee, **Maura McLinden**, **Linda Cochran**, **Sheila Gulick** and Chair **Julie Jerdonek** worked diligently to contact and track responses of our participating organizations through a new and comprehensive CCS Organization Information Form. We can now validate that our participating organizations' mission aligns with the Christ Child's mission to challenge childhood poverty in Greater Cleveland. We have firsthand information about the services and programs these organizations provide to children, the age range and numbers of children they serve monthly, and their impact on children. We also have current contact information for the organizations' Executive Directors, Department and Program Managers that will benefit future CCS marketing and grant writing efforts.

Sheila maintains the Organization Database and adds new organizations when completed Information Forms are returned. Currently we have 32 "Approved Christ Child Organizations". The Approved List is displayed on the CCS office bulletin board and will be updated as more organizations are added. Important! The Committee requests that Program Chairs and volunteers cross-check and reference the "Approved List". If an organization is not on the "Approved List" and wants to participate in our distributions, please provide them with an Information Form and refer them to our Committee to follow through. A huge thank you Maura, Linda, and Sheila for your hard work and dedication with this ongoing effort!



Julie Jerdonek



Maura McLinden



Sheila Gulick



Linda Cochran

CCSC Members Keep Rockin' and Rollin'

The Christ Child Society of Cleveland is extremely blessed with talented and generous members and donors. The Red Wagon Committee, led by Chair **Carol Janas**, President **Mary Herrick**, and President-Elect **Paula Conrad**, organized a unique virtual fundraising event that offered loads of fun and imaginations were let loose. **The Red Wagon Event – Cleveland Edition** created an opportunity for CCSC members and friends to gather weeks before the event for casual photos taken alongside our red wagon. (Not familiar with the red wagon story??? See pages 3-14 in the Membership Roster.) Several Cleveland historical sites were selected for backdrops – A Christmas Story House, Progressive Field, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Chandelier at Playhouse Square, the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, the Cleveland Sign at Edgewater Beach Park, the Pink Towers at Malley's Chocolates, and the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. Photos were submitted and incorporated into a YouTube video shown for the first time on May 21, 2021. (For access to the video, go to The Red Wagon Event - Cleveland Edition - YouTube.) The 15-minute video shows endorsements from hometown sports celebrities, local TV personalities, radio hosts, politicians, and well-known Clevelanders – all who support the CCSC mission to Challenge Childhood Poverty in Greater Cleveland. Our longtime friend, WKYC Chief Meteorologist/Anchor Betsy Kling and our Spiritual Advisor, Father Ralph Wiatrowski offered their thanks for the tremendous volunteer work performed by our ladies. Videographer Carolyn Emerine truly captured the personalities of our members and beautifully showcased the CCSC's mission.



We are most grateful for the generosity of our Red Wagon Partner Sponsor, Theresia Oreskovic, owner of Peter & Co. Jewelers in Avon. Theresia graciously donated four exquisite pieces for the jewelry raffle and welcomed us into her store to film the raffle drawings. Michael Angelo's Winery and Bakery in Richfield offered continued support with their general raffle basket donation. Members **Rose Dziak** and **Sheila Gulick** kindly contributed items to the general raffle. For the complete list of donors and winners, see below.



On behalf of the thousands of in-crisis children we serve, THANK YOU. It is because of your outstanding support of the Christ Child Society of Cleveland Red Wagon – Cleveland Edition that we surpassed our fundraising goal and raised \$40,000, the highest net profit in recent years. The time spent in planning, executing, and filming those great photo ops paid off. Our members truly love the work they do. CCSC will keep that red wagon rockin' and rollin'..."Nothing is ever too much to do for a child!"

Partner Sponsor

Peter & Co. Jewelers
Theresia Oreskovic, Owner

MEMBER AND FRIEND SPONSORS

Mary Beth Baucio
Mary Breen
Carla Calevich
Katie & Jim Camaglia
Anne Chorba
Paula Conrad
Andrea Dean
Mary Feikle
Irene Fitzgerald

Kathy Gonnella
Alice Graham
Mary Graves
Mary Herrick
Catherine Houk
Carol M. Janas
Julie Jerdonek
Diane Joeright
Bernadine Kaniecki

Mary Khouri
Connie Kinner
Karen B. Kirk
Judith Kole
Karen LaFond
Kathy LaPorte
Suzanne Loyd
Kathleen Marsh-Wintour
Dan & Darlene Meges

Barbara Miller
Karen Rebolz
Marlene R. Rydzewski
Donna M. Scarcella
Denise D. Shafer
Susan Ferraro Smith
Maria Snyder
Mary Jo Sustar
Terry Tomon
Ursuline College

GENERAL RAFFLE WINNERS

Coach Bag and Gift Cards

Iris Pieschalski, CCSC member

The Best Part of the Pizza is the "Dough"

Karen Tinley, CCSC member

Michael Angelo's Winery and Bakery Basket

Nanci Schlabig, Donor

JEWELRY RAFFLE WINNERS

John Hardy Bubble Necklace

Meg Kearns, CCSC member

John Hardy Bead Necklace

Dorothy Beyer, Donor

John Hardy Earrings

Mary Jo Sustar, Donor

John Hardy Bracelet with Charm

Laurey Gillen, CCSC member

Coach Wristlet

Entry of Red Wagon Photo....Jane Donovan, CCSC Member

A God-wink in our midst!

God-wink...An event or personal experience, often identified as coincidence, so astonishing that it is seen as a sign of divine intervention, especially when perceived as the answer to a prayer.

The story begins when Red Wagon Chair **Carol Janas** contacted **Laurey Gillen** (member since 2009) with the news that she was the winner of the John Hardy bracelet with a heart charm, donated by Peter & Co. Jewelers. It was May 27th, Laurey's birthday, and she was sadly alone. This was the first birthday she would celebrate without her husband Tom who passed away October 29, 2020. For 50 years, the Gillens shared every special occasion together. Laurey had a heavy heart that day. Upon hearing the good news, she shed a tear and exclaimed that she never wins anything! Of course, with the help of divine intervention, the new bracelet with the heart charm must have been sent by Tom as a sign of his eternal love. With Carol's help, Laurey was fitted with the new bracelet and hasn't taken it off since. Coincidence? Perhaps...but it would be touching to think Tom convinced some angels (or perhaps MVM) to help him make Laurey's birthday special! May that bracelet adorn your wrist for many more birthdays, Laurey!

Christ Child Society Welcomes Community Volunteers

This summer St. Joseph Academy (SJA) junior students served as Christ Child Society's first community volunteers in our mission to challenge childhood poverty. The students from the SJA Cross Country Team requested to volunteer for Christ Child as part of a school service requirement and membership in their honor society. The athletes hoped to serve together as a "team" following their daily cross country workouts. Christ Child met their dream service opportunity!

Past President **Cathy Caruso** and Service Vice President **Julie Jerdonek** hosted an orientation and information breakfast for the young women as an introduction to Christ Child and our projects. They learned the activities needed to accomplish our mission: managing our vast inventory and supplies; preparing and arranging stock items for packing around the tables; and the list of items included in packing for babies and boys and girls of all sizes, and distributions to community social service staff. The young women worked alongside our members to pack our layettes ensembles and My Stuff bags and worked at our resale boutique, Showcase. Additionally, the students eagerly took home bolts of fabric to cut into blanket lengths for our Christ Child sewers.

Thank you to Christ Child Chairs, **Carla Calevich**, **Kathy Moehring**, and **Kathy Cole** who graciously planned the students' volunteer times for June and July for Layette and My Stuff packing and Showcase. Thank you to Cathy and Julie for the orientation, and to all our members who mentored the students onsite.

We are grateful to SJA students Anne Dubecky, Stephanie Hwodeky, and Alexia Wenzel for reaching out for Christ Child Society of Cleveland's brand new opportunity to serve infants and children. Will Anne, Stephanie, and Alexia be Christ Child's next generation of members? The young women's volunteer experience provides them with a terminus a quo for their future service to children in poverty in our community.



70th Annual Charity Event benefiting Christ Child Society of Cleveland

Save the Date

Starlight Soirée
In-Person Event

Friday, November 5, 2021
Cleveland History Center

Honoring Person of the Year
Rev. Walter H. Jenne

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

1. Come join us and have some fun by purchasing a ticket. Invitations will be mailed at the end of September. Contact Kathy Michael for more information.
2. Consider a Corporate Sponsorship by purchasing a table. Contact Cathy Caruso if you would like to receive sponsorship information.
3. Place an advertisement in the program. Contact Karen Kirk or Kathy Marsh for more information.
4. Donate to and participate in the Silent Auction. Contact Kate Toma or Paula Conrad to donate or to find out more information.
5. Purchase raffle tickets for Cash and/or Jewelry Raffles. Raffle tickets will be mailed by the end of August. Contact Liz Niehaus for more information.
6. Donate \$25.00 gift cards to the shopping and dining extravaganza. Contact Kate Toma or Paula Conrad to donate or for more information.

Event tickets, sponsorships, advertisements and raffles will be available on our website middle of August.
www.christchildsoctycleveland.org

For general event information, please contact Kate Toma or Paula Conrad.

Remembrance/Endowment Report

March 4 - May 5, 2021

Memory

Olga Centivany
Linda Clark
Jennifer Gill
V. Elanie Hickle
Margaret McNamara
Jennifer Miller
Mary Vandevelde
Mary Lou Weaver (9)

Honor

David Bratnick-Seminarian, Grandson of Florence Orris
Lois Jbara- Mother's Day wishes
Mary Kobb-Mother's Day wishes
Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Kraus-Happy Anniversary
Joe Migliore-Congratulations on your Retirement
Eilleen Rini-Congratulations on receiving the MVM Award
Sharon Seaton-Happy Birthday
Father Jim Stenger-Congratulations, 40th Anniversary of his Ordination
Cathy Stibora-Congratulations on your Retirement

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

Wednesday, August 25, 2021 at noon
Friday, September 24, 2021 at noon

In Our Thoughts

Dena Heim, upon the passing of her sister, Carol Mariano
Peggy Krinsky, upon the passing of her husband, Russell
Terri Monek, upon the passing of her husband, John
The family of Patrician Neff upon her passing
Carol Price, upon the passing of her sister, Marilyn Rossman Bartucci

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 March 4 - May 5\$925.00

TOTAL FOR FISCAL YEAR \$23,672.00

Online Remembrance Giving available on our website at christchildsocietycleveland.org

New! Links to *Signup Genius* Showcase Volunteer Spots

Now On CCSC "Member-Only" Website

Christ Child members can now access a *Signup Genius* Link for volunteering at Showcase via our website <https://christchildsocietycleveland.org>. Simply login to "**MEMBERS ONLY**", located under Membership using our password and click on the link under Showcase. (If you need the login password, please ask any Board member.) Links will be posted after the initial notification of a new volunteer opportunity via a Christ Child Constant Contact email. Please visit this website to sign up to volunteer at Showcase and other events and projects as more opportunities develop in the upcoming months.

Christ Child launched *Signup Genius* as an alternative tool for members to volunteer at Showcase. The pilot received accolades from **Kathy Cole**, the Showcase Chair and our members. *Signup Genius* is a user-friendly, transparent, and a way for members to plan and organize their busy calendars. Program Chairs receive timely reports of scheduled volunteers and members email reminders of their time slots –a win-win for all! As we increase use of *Signup Genius* in the months ahead, please visit the site for more volunteer scheduling opportunities. Thank you to **Robbie Wolan** and **Colleen Wyszynski** for leading the *Signup Genius* effort to provide this helpful tool, and to **Terri Parker** for creating and posting links on our CCSC website.



SPECIAL EDITION

2021 Year End Report



Communication/PR/Social Media

Chairman **Katie Camaglia** enthusiastically reports the Public Relations Committee tripled in size to 3 members this past year! Their most recognized effort is the introduction of Constant Contact, which is used by many nonprofits including National CCS and the Cleveland Diocese, to send more professional, appealing email messages. Please open and read these messages as they will help keep us all connected and “in the know.” In addition, social media accounts are now very active. Everyone is encouraged to follow our chapter’s activities and presence on Facebook and Instagram -- the goal is to grow community-wide awareness and increase our contacts. The committee helped promote our mission and events with articles and ads appearing in *Currents Magazine*, *Northeast Ohio Catholic Magazine*, the *Diocese Weekly Electronic Newsletter*, and on Radio 1260 The Rock.



Ad Hoc Committee

The students in the John Carroll University Nonprofit Administration Master’s Program presented their Capstone Project – research and analysis of the workings of our organization and our needs going forward. The next step is to contact other chapters who have purchased or rented their own space to determine the challenges and opportunities they experienced during their search. Chairman **Rose Dziak** will provide updates as we move forward.



Development

The nine members of the Development Committee, chaired by **Meg Kearns**, created a database of the organizations we serve to track what each organization receives from our programs; researched and provided statistics for the problems our programs address; “brainstormed additional fundraising ideas; and identified local family and corporate foundations as possible funders for our chapter. In addition, the Christ Child Society’s Guidestar profile was updated – Guidestar is an information service reporting on US nonprofits – and an organizational profile was created for the Cleveland Foundation’s website. During the past fiscal year, we received a \$1,200 grant designated for “My Stuff” from a private family foundation, and the National Christ Child Society’s Day of Service Award, an unrestricted grant of \$500. We also received a \$5,000 grant from the Murphy Family Foundation for “My Stuff” and a \$1,500 grant (in-kind) from the Greater Cleveland Dental Society.

Events

The Events Committee’s purpose is to ensure each planned event meets four goals – to raise money to Challenge Childhood Poverty in Greater Cleveland, to engage each member of the committee, to spread the word about who we are and what we do, and to have fun! In addition to assisting with the Red Wagon and the Soiree, the committee organized an “Evening on the Lake” at the Cleveland Yachting Club last August, and a Clambake in October. The 19 women taking part in this committee, led by Chairman **Karen Kirk**, were very successful in helping us meet each project’s purpose.



Showcase

Following closure for COVID, Showcase re-opened with a 100% volunteer staff, including volunteer managers, all led by Chairman **Kathy Cole**. The store continues to run in the black, averaging a profit of \$2,800 per month after rent, utilities, and expenses. With Salvation Army no longer making pickups, a driver delivery team was established to pass along items to Edna House, St. Herman's, City Mission, West Side Catholic Center, I'm in Ministry, Habitat for Humanity, Birthright, and Salvation Army. Email messages announcing sales and special events not only go to our membership but to over 200 customers who have shared their email information. Following a successful trial run, SignUpGenius will be used going forward to help schedule store volunteers. Showcase is a group effort, and its success is because of our fantastic volunteers – over 7,300 volunteer hours were logged in the last fiscal year.



Book Program

Again, this year, the Cleveland Kids' Book Bank gave us boxes and boxes of Christmas books. After sorting by Christ Child members, 5,450 Christmas books were distributed to 21 community centers, parish PSR classes, and schools. In addition, 7 parishes participated in the 2nd annual Christmas Book Sunday where Christ Child members offered books to parishioners following Mass. The Christmas book giveaway was so successful, the program was expanded for Easter. 3,424 Easter and other religious themed books were distributed to 18 schools and 3 parish PSR classes, as well as the Layette and Merrick House Reading Enrichment programs. Project coordinator **Meg Kearns** has asked that the Book Project be considered as one of our chapter's official projects, with a budget, chairman and co-chairman.



Membership

Chairman **Carol Fondran** reports that our chapter ended the last fiscal year with 368 members. Since that time, 20 members were lost to non-renewal and sadly, there were 6 deaths. At the same time, 12 provisionals joined the ranks and 2 former members rejoined. As of June 30, 2021, membership stands at 356. Membership renewal runs from July 1-15. The renewal time was tightened up with the goal of having the new rosters printed and mailed in September.



Newsletter

Three weeks prior to the print deadline, articles, photos, artwork, etc., are sent to Chairman **Cathy Harbinak** for review, editing, and approval for input in the upcoming newsletter. The material is vetted and sent to **Kate Toma** at StreamlineCLE for layout and design. This past year, we successfully created and circulated 6 issues of *Chapter and Verse*.



Provisionals

The ten members of the 2020-2021 Provisional Class met monthly from July through November, planning a Christmas Party for the preschoolers at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School. This class showed great flexibility as their party was rescheduled twice due to COVID, then instead of the customary in-person celebrations, the parties were required to be held remotely. These resilient women managed to provide the school's 44 staff members with lunch AND all the materials necessary to carry out the parties without any of them entering a classroom. With so much of their project donated, the class finished their Christmas party with an additional \$245 – those funds were donated to the Christ Child general budget. Chairman **Kathy Bush** reports that all members of this class successfully completed their provisional year and were installed as full members in March.



Children's Closet

Chairman **Janie Nickodem** experienced a busy year coordinating activities for the Coats, Uniforms, Beds, and Cribs programs that make up Children's Closet. Many children benefitted from the work done by the chairmen and volunteers of these programs despite the challenges presented by COVID-19.



Coats

Following the Community Needs Assessment's recommendation, the winter coats' focus shifted to infants and preschool-aged children. Chairman **Carole Moran** reported that prams and toddler sizes were distributed on October 21-22, 2020. Twenty organizations having Mom's First and preschool programs received a total of 584 winter jackets. The program is looking for ways to expand, allowing for distribution through January where there is need.



Beds

The Beds Program, chaired by **Arlene McNamara**, received referrals from 28 social service organizations. Through those referrals, a limited number of volunteers were able to provide 178 beds to children who had no place to sleep except on the floor or in their mother's beds, which is unsafe. Our partner, *I'm In Ministry*, delivered and set up the beds. CCS Cleveland also provided sheets, blankets, and pillows for these precious children.



School Uniforms

Due to the pandemic, our volunteers did bulk uniform packing along with employees of Shoes and Clothes for Kids, reported Chairman **Loraine Wancata**. Christ Child volunteers also helped SC4K pack school supplies, laundry detergent, personal hygiene kits, and 20,000 articles of clothing. We sorted and stocked shelves for a Joann Fabric and Faber Casteel products distribution to benefit community agencies and teachers for school programs. Through our efforts, 2,594 uniforms and countless other items were given to needy children.



Portable Cribs

Christ Child Society of Cleveland advocates and supports safe sleeping environments for newborns by providing portable cribs to social service agency staff through an application and voucher process. COVID changed everything! Requests for portable cribs declined. Additional purchases were made as the price of the cribs was increasing. This past fiscal year, 49 cribs were distributed to needy children, leaving an inventory of 177 cribs. Chairman **Sheila Gulick** and her volunteers expect the demand to return to normal or even increase in the coming year.



Layettes

Chairman **Carla Calevich** and the 40 Layette Program volunteers remained very dedicated during this pandemic year. Their greatest achievements were starting 1,084 babies in need with a loving bundle of necessities and supporting the many organizations we serve. The social workers were grateful that no matter what, the Christ Child Society was ready to meet their needs! In the coming year, the group plans to engage with volunteers who can cut and iron fabric for the ladies who sew and to connect with agencies that have not been working due to the pandemic.



St. Francis Library

Despite the many challenges and restrictions presented by COVID, St. Francis School Library had a successful year! Chairman **Lynn McMahon** and 8 volunteers adapted to changing circumstances and schedules and remained a valuable resource for the children and families of St. Francis, both in books borrowed from the library and books given away over the course of the year. The group met the needs of 225 children!



St. Rocco Library

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, services normally provided to the St. Rocco students were suspended. Instead, Christ Child members provided reading enrichment for 125 children by distributing books at Christmas and Easter and arranging for an additional book give-away for summer reading. Chairman **Laura Cengic** reported the school intends to permit Christ Child volunteers to return in the Fall of 2021!



Merrick House

Chairman **Carol Janas** and her team successfully made some COVID adjustments to keep their reading enrichment program alive during the pandemic. Thirteen books were purchased for use by staff as they read to the children. Each of the 24 children was given an activity packet to be used at home as they read *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Books received from the Cleveland Kid's Book Bank allowed for each child to take home a Christmas book, a Spring themed book, and 2 additional books at the end of the school year. The Christ Child in-person reading program was modified to include 4 reading sessions in Fall 2020 and 7 sessions in Spring 2021. Carol anticipates Merrick House will welcome back Christ Child members to read to the children on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Tuesday of the month by September 2021.



Parkview Head Start

Even though in-person reading was not permitted, reading enrichment was still provided for the 90 preschool students at Parkview School, reported Chairman **Sharon Skotko**. In September, a copy of *Green Eggs and Ham* was given to each of the 5 homeroom teachers to read to their students. A few weeks later, each child received his/her own copy of the book, along with an activity packet for home use. The book *Giraffes Can't Dance* was given to the teachers in December, and in March, each student received the book along with many activities related to the

story. Ms. Whatley, the administrator, said the staff and students really appreciated the books and activities. Another 90 books, donated by a Girl Scout troop, enabled each child to receive a book in May. Sharon looks forward to volunteers returning to in-person reading as soon as it is possible.



"My Stuff"

Chairman **Kathy Moehring** reported the "My Stuff" bags continued to be in high demand during the pandemic. Even with a limited number of volunteers for many months, 1,818 bags were packed and distributed to 19 agencies. Friendly Inn Settlement was added as a permanent monthly agency, bags were offered to 4 additional agencies, and West Side Community House received bags on an emergency basis. In the coming year, "My Stuff" will be working with the Partner Participation Committee to see if additional agencies can be added to the monthly

distribution list. The team also hopes to include coloring books and crayons in the 3T bags!



Did You Now...

Winter jackets will be arriving in late September or early October. Please check your email for messaging on dates, times and distribution location for our annual coats program. Any questions? Contact **Carole Moran**.

If you have signed up to receive this newsletter via the United States Postal System, you may occasionally experience a delivery delay. If so, please remember the newsletter is posted on our website (www.christchildscleveland.org) the first day of each of the six months it is published: February, April, June, August, October and December. You can catch up on what is happening by checking the Newsletter portion of our website while waiting for your mail.

Our social media platforms, Facebook and Instagram, are other sources of timely information. Check them out and follow Christ Child to help increase our visibility.

Our newest communications tool is Constant Contact. This timely, brief and eye catching messaging tool sends emails to members on a periodic, as needed basis. If you have an email account that you have shared with Christ Child and are not receiving Constant Contact email, please check your Spam or Trash folder. If our Constant Contact messages are ending up in your spam or trash, please redirect them to your inbox.



Christ Child Society of Cleveland

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DATED MATERIAL: Please deliver by August 1st.

an Evening-on-the-Lake at

Cleveland Yachting Club

a Christ Child Society social event



MUSIC • DRINKS • DINNER • RAFFLE

Wednesday, August 18th, 2021

6:00PM - 8:00PM

200 Yacht Club Drive, Rocky River, OH 44116
(Self-Parking)

\$75 per person / Guests are welcome to attend
Reservations are due by August 10.

RSVP on the website at:

<https://christchildsoctetycleveland.org/evening-on-the-lake>

Or mail your check to:

Christ Child Society of Cleveland
Attn: Evening-on-the-Lake
7901 Detroit Avenue, Suite 300
Cleveland, OH 44102

*Please consider making a donation to support
our mission if you are unable to attend.*

"Challenging Childhood Poverty in Greater Cleveland"

Articles for the Newsletter

Please contact **Cathy Harbinak** if you have any special needs or volunteer requests for the newsletter.

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