

THE **CLARION**
NEWS FROM CATHOLIC CHARITIES

2020 FALL EDITION



Be Not Afraid!

FOR BEHOLD, I BRING YOU TIDINGS OF
GREAT JOY WHICH SHALL BE TO ALL PEOPLE.

LUKE 2:10

Be Not Afraid!

Dear Friends,

COVID-19. The very name has become synonymous with apprehension, anxiety and uncertainty. Indeed, most of us our praying and hoping for an end to the seemingly endless pandemic.

In this Christmas season, it is therefore timely that we remind ourselves of the wonderous declaration from the Angel of the Lord:

BE NOT AFRAID!

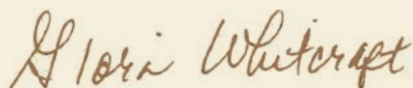
FOR BEHOLD, I BRING YOU TIDINGS OF
GREAT JOY WHICH SHALL BE TO ALL PEOPLE.

LUKE 2:10

The celebration of Christ's birth renews in us a sense of hope that transcends all of our temporal concerns, including and especially those ever present with this virus. It is in these times we find our greatest comfort and strength in Our Lord and His Church.

As front-line workers, we have proceeded with cautious determination to serve the many in our diocese who find themselves in great material, emotional and psychological need. And thanks to the generosity of our donors and funders, we have been able to provide assistance to many more in our community (see page 3).

On behalf of the families we serve, we remain deeply grateful for your prayers, volunteer time, and financial gifts. We wish you a Blessed Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.



Gloria Whitcraft, CEO



On the cover:
William-Adolphe Bouguereau's
Song of the Angels (1881)

REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE
RISE 296%
 DURING COVID-19

To date we have received \$463,500 in COVID-related funds earmarked for direct assistance to clients. In turn, we have been able to assist 2,286 individuals, a total that represents a 296% increase over the same period in 2019.

Assistance has been given for basic needs such as food, utilities, rent, car payments, mortgage payments, and transportation for any household that has experienced the loss of a job or been furloughed due to the pandemic and its associated stay-at-home orders. We have also made referrals for those suffering from mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, isolation and thoughts of suicide.

We have seen an unprecedented surge in requests since March. Among those seeking relief are many people who have never needed assistance before and had no idea where to turn. Many requests for assistance begin with walk-ins at our food pantries. Most requests though come through word of mouth. Once approved, we pay the landlord or utility directly on behalf of the family.

One of the most difficult circumstances we face is the single parent with young children. With some schools closed, or only partially reopened in some places, parents cannot return to work because children are too young to be left alone. Compounding matters, affordable daycare options are scant to nonexistent. With no viable options, debts continue to mount for these parents.

Overall the focus has been to stabilize households so they can avoid eviction and utility disconnects. The table below shows the COVID-impacted households and individuals served by our Resource & Referral Program from March 15 through August 31, 2020.

As the state implements the governor's Phase 5 of reopening, there will still be many out of work. As a result, we expect demand for assistance to remain high through Christmas and the for the foreseeable future.

REGION	HOUSEHOLDS	INDIVIDUALS	DIRECT ASSISTANCE
FORT WAYNE	495	1,571	\$145,925
SOUTH BEND	184	535	\$77,000
AUBURN	95	385	\$54,825
TOTAL TO DATE	774	2,941	\$277,750



Bringing Hope.

Our funders and donors have responded generously with additional support to allow us to expand our assistance in this time of great need. In turn, we are providing hope to an increasing level of need in our diocese.

ANDREA

Having been off work because of serious illness, Andrea finally started a new job in January so she could support herself and her daughter. Sadly, in March, her employer shut down because of COVID. Then her live-in mother was exposed to COVID so the entire family was quarantined for two weeks. Eventually Andrea went back to work only to be sent home due to illness. As a precaution, she was once again tested and quarantined. New to the job, Andrea had not earned sick pay to cover her time off from the layoff or the four weeks of quarantine. When she finally received her stimulus check, she put it all toward paying her bills and buying food. Unfortunately, she fell behind on her rent. She was finally able to get back to work, but her landlord was threatening eviction for back rent. Catholic Charities was able to assist Andrea so she could avoid eviction.



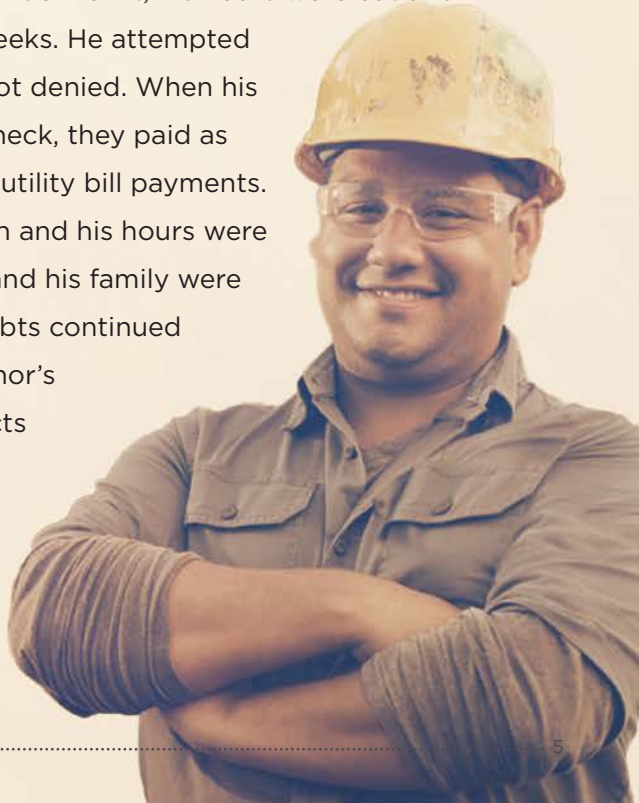
DEREK

Derek, a single father of three, was working full-time to support his family. He was furloughed in March when the pandemic hit. He lacked savings to cover expenses and his unemployment insurance was held up due to processing issues. Derek began to feel hopeless, but then he found a flyer from Catholic Charities listing COVID-19 support services. With just one phone call, he spoke with a case manager who reviewed community resources and provided Derek with much needed financial support, including paying a full month's rent and giving him a much-needed food voucher. This assistance provided Derek with hope for the future and a plan moving forward that provided security for the family.



NICK

A construction worker, Nick supports his wife and 3 children, including a newborn. When the COVID pandemic hit, his hours were cut and he had no income for several weeks. He attempted to file for unemployment, but got denied. When his family received their stimulus check, they paid as much as they could to rent and utility bill payments. However, as the months went on and his hours were only slowly coming back, Nick and his family were falling behind again because debts continued to mount, even while the governor's moratorium on utility disconnects and evictions was in effect. Catholic Charities provided rent assistance so they could catch up and avoid eviction.



WHEN COVID THREATENED ISRAEL'S PURSUIT OF RESIDENCY IN THE US, ISRAEL TURNED TO THE EXPERTS AT CATHOLIC CHARITIES.

The path to citizenship can be long and tedious requiring many years of effort: holding a job, securing numerous character references, submitting forms, paying fees and visiting immigration offices here and abroad. And when all this is interrupted by COVID-19, it can suddenly put a family on the brink of financial ruin.

Israel has lived in the United States for 20 years, the last 15 of which have been in Fort Wayne. During this time, he has held a steady full-time job, married Maddison, an American citizen, and become the father of two. Like so many in the restaurant business, he was laid off when COVID-19 hit.

Tragically, though, he was not eligible for unemployment because he is still working on gaining permanent residency. The rules of the stimulus also prevented Israel and Maddison from qualifying for the stimulus.

Because Maddison is on maternity leave and Israel is the main bread winner, no income meant that essentials like their mortgage and utilities would go unpaid. Threatened with losing their home, our Resource and Referral program provided the family with the necessary assistance to avoid defaulting on their loan.

When the pandemic struck, Catholic Charities spent most of the first couple months securing grants and donations to assist the many individuals, families and small business owners that needed assistance. With these relief funds inhouse, Israel and Maddison were able to stay afloat because we could pay their mortgage and utilities.

"Many thanks to everyone who made this [assistance] possible," say Israel and Maddison. "It's been a life saver."



HOW THE CATHOLIC CHARITIES FOOD PANTRY WAS A LIFE SAVER FOR ONE RECIPIENT.

“I don’t know what I would have done without Catholic Charities,” says Cheryl, a South Bend food pantry recipient. “I only had one can of chicken soup left on my shelf.”

Cheryl is recently disabled after many years of working in banking and retail stores. She has lived alone since her mother died, and was experiencing a great sense of isolation and loneliness when the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

Compounding her financial difficulties, she still has not received her stimulus check. She says that, since she did not have to spend money on food at the store, the Food Pantry has allowed her to keep up on her other bills more easily.

“It’s such a blessing to get this food,” she says. “Now I can put more money toward rent and utilities.”

Cheryl heard about the Food Pantry from a friend. As with many we have served, she has never had to seek assistance before. In fact, numbers requesting assistance from the Food Pantry have more than tripled since the start of the pandemic in March. Many come initially seeking food, but then learn about our Resource and Referral program which can provide help with other basic needs such as clothing, shelter and utilities.

Cheryl says she is surprised by the variety, quality and quantity of food she has received. She adds that she was even able to share some with an elderly neighbor who was living in isolation and afraid to venture out in public.

“Plus, you gave me the opportunity to actually cook!” she says. “I can actually focus on good nutrition, not junk food.”

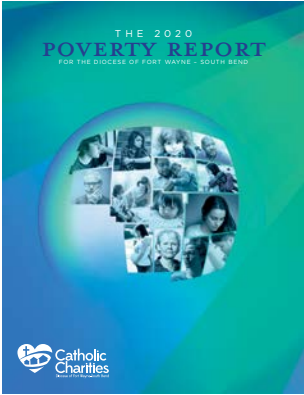
Like many older people who visit the Food Pantry, Cheryl was afraid of getting sick from coming into contact with others. As a result, she greatly appreciates all the precautions Catholic Charities has taken to safeguard her health when picking up food. The Food Pantry used to require clients to fill out a sheet of desired items and then we would bag them for them. But with the onset of COVID, we now pre-package bags with food. Each client gets one bag of canned food and one bag of fresh food.

We also reduce client contact with staff (e.g. signing forms) as much as possible and do not allow clients inside during food pantry hours. These measures help us maintain a clean food pantry and office area for staff, thereby minimizing everyone’s risk. All staff wear masks and practice social distancing during food pantry hours.

“I’m very, very grateful,” Cheryl says. “Catholic Charities has just been a life saver.”



INTRODUCING THE 2020 POVERTY REPORT



Last year we introduced our first annual Poverty Report as a means of helping our supporters understand more about the general economic conditions in our diocese, especially as they pertain to those living in poverty. With the 2020 report we go a step further and discuss some of poverty's underlying causes. For instance, what personal circumstances prevent someone from joining the workforce and leading more independent lives? For your copy of the new report, please visit: [EradicatePoverty.org](https://www.EradicatePoverty.org).

What follows are selected data from this year's report:



COUNTIES	POVERTY RATE	CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN POVERTY	EMPLOYMENT RATE	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
Adams	16.80%	25.60%	61.50%	\$51,713	84.10%
Allen	14.30%	21.80%	62.90%	\$53,402	89.30%
DeKalb	10.80%	13.90%	63.60%	\$53,808	90.20%
Elkhart	13.30%	19.20%	62.80%	\$55,399	81.20%
Huntington	10.20%	13.20%	62.50%	\$52,208	91.00%
Kosciusko	10.30%	14.10%	63.60%	\$58,402	85.50%
LaGrange	7.30%	8.30%	61.40%	\$60,675	63.70%
Marshall	11.40%	13.80%	59.10%	\$54,229	84.80%
Noble	7.50%	8.60%	62.10%	\$55,033	84.10%
St. Joe	15.70%	22.80%	60.50%	\$50,938	88.40%
Steuben	11%	18.90%	61.30%	\$56,101	90.10%
Wabash	12.70%	19.60%	57.40%	\$50,637	88.30%
Wells	9.50%	12.70%	63.20%	\$56,265	91.10%
Whitley	9.20%	15.90%	63.50%	\$61,153	92.70%
United States	13.10%	18.00%	59.80%	\$61,937	88.30%
Average	11.43%	16.31%	61.81%	\$54,997	86.04%

INDIANA DATA:

RANKING THE STATES ON A SCALE OF 1-50, INDIANA

Overall Child Well-Being	29th
Economic Well-Being	15
Education	15
Health	35
Family and Community	31

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING INDICATORS (2018)

Overall, in these four areas, every area has improved since 2010.

Children in poverty	275,000 (18%)
Children whose parents lack secure employment	403,000 (26%)
Children living in households with a high housing cost burden	348,000 (22%)
Teens not in school and not working	21,000 (6%)

EDUCATION INDICATORS

Overall, in these four areas, every area has improved since 2010.

Young children (ages 3 & 4) not in school 2016-18	100,000 (58%)
Fourth-graders not proficient in reading 2019	63%
Eighth-graders not proficient in math 2019	63%
High school students not graduating on time 2017-18	12%

HEALTH INDICATORS

Overall, all these areas have gotten worse since 2010, except the number of children without health insurance.

Low birth-weight babies 2018	6,572 (8.1%)
Children without health insurance 2018	109,000 (7%)
Child and teen deaths per 100,000 2018	528, (32%)
Children and teens (ages 10-17) who are overweight or obese 2017-18	33%

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INDICATORS

Overall, in these four areas, every area has improved since 2010, except the rate of children in single-parent households which has remained the same since 2010.

Children in single-parent families 2018	506,000 (35%)
Children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma 2018	174,000, (11%)
Children living in high-poverty areas 2014-18	154,000, (10%)
Teen births per 1,000, 2018	4,840

For more information, please visit: [EradicatePoverty.org](https://www.EradicatePoverty.org)

IN 2020, WE WELCOMED
THREE NEW BOARD MEMBERS



DAN FLORIN

Dan joined our Board in May of this year. He most recently served as Executive Vice President at Zimmer Biomet Holdings and previously as its Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. Prior to working at Zimmer Biomet, Dan was Chief Financial Officer for Biomet, Inc. Dan received his undergraduate degree from the University of Notre Dame, earned his CPA in New Jersey and an M.B.A. from Boston University. Dan and his wife, Kelly, have seven children and four grandchildren and have been active parishioners of St. Pius X since 2007. Dan said, "After spending 34 years in Corporate America, I wanted to focus on opportunities to give back to society."



SARA ST. CLAIR

Sara has been a registered nurse for 37 years. She joined the Catholic Church 40 years ago and is a member of St. Paul of the Cross in Columbia City. She has served as a religious-education teacher, Director of Religious Education, Pastoral Associate, lector, and Eucharistic minister. She also participates in RCIA, parish council, Cooks for Christ, and women's retreats. Sara and her husband Samuel have been married for 44 years, and have five children and 12 grandchildren. She and her family love nature, traveling, and gardening. "I am passionate about helping to meet the needs of others and Catholic Charities does that so very well! I am honored to be a small part of their mission!"



JUDITH PURSLEY

Retiring after thirty years of teaching in Catholic and private schools, Judy turned her interests to non-profit organizations that meet the needs of the under-served. She finds it rewarding to work with organizations that strengthen the lives of vulnerable children in our community, including Vincent Village, SCAN, and Erin's House. Continuing her interest in education, Judy serves on the boards of Canterbury School and Queen of Angels School. She is also a director at the University of St. Francis. Judy holds bachelor and master degrees in education. She had three children and six grandchildren, all of whom she holds dear. "I feel both humbled and honored to be serving Catholic Charities which brings together my faith and passion."

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

HOST A DRIVE

With the pandemic hitting families of every socioeconomic status, we are in need for basic need items.

HYGIENE DRIVE

- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Toilet paper
- Feminine hygiene
- Hair brush
- Lotion

CLEANING DRIVE

- Paper towels
- Laundry detergent
- Dish soap
- Sponges
- Cleaning products

BABY DRIVE

- Diapers (newborn to size 6)
- Wipes
- Baby detergent
- Bottles
- Pacifiers

CONTACT YOUR AREA OFFICE

Please contact your area office for additional information on their greatest need.

THANKS TO YOUR
GENEROUS GIFTS, LAST YEAR
WE WERE ABLE TO SERVE

22,546

#GIVINGTUESDAY

Giving Tuesday will take place on
December 1, 2020.

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