Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room

DEAR FRIENDS,

As the days grow shorter, we often crave more light and, thus, enjoy the many holiday traditions that bring light into our lives and homes this time of year. For those who aren’t able to see the light, Catholic Charities consistently strives to be a light and a beacon of hope. We work diligently to help those we serve see their own light—their own talents, skills and passions.

Whether offering encouragement and a smile to a 3-year-old child at Head Start, celebrating the independence of a senior who is accomplishing more today than she ever imagined or guiding a young

father working to provide a better life for his family, Catholic Charities joins them on their uniquely personal journeys. By partnering with you to provide care and services to improve lives, we are able to extend the hand of love and hospitality each day to our brothers and sisters who are vulnerable.

Pope Francis recently encouraged us to: “…let us open our eyes to our neighbor, especially to our brothers and sisters who are forgotten and excluded. That is where the Church’s magnifying glass is pointed.” By focusing on people who are typically forgotten and excluded continued on back page

Catholic Charities

As part of Our Daily Bread’s 35th anniversary commemoration, Catholic Charities held a forum on poverty and the need for a response that is grounded in social justice. The panel discussion took place on October 26 at Loyola University Maryland.

Two distinguished keynote speakers addressed the audience. Kathryn Edin, Ph.D., a Bloomberg Distinguished Professor of Sociology at Johns Hopkins University, co-author of $2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America, spoke about the extreme poverty faced by many Americans, and specifically by many in Baltimore. Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN, executive director of Pax Christi USA, exhorted the audience to address deeply entrenched poverty and inequality in Baltimore by committing to social justice and taking decisive action to ensure a more equitable society.

“Catholic Charities is committed to advancing the conversation about poverty, especially in our own Baltimore community, where a quarter of the population lives below the poverty line,” said Bill McCarthy, executive director of Catholic Charities of Baltimore. “We were very pleased to sponsor this forum and thrilled to have two extremely distinguished speakers address the experience of poverty and our moral imperative to work for systemic change to ease our neighbors’ hardship.”

In addition to this forum, other ODB 35th anniversary commemorative events included an interfaith prayer service, volunteer appreciations and regional receptions.

To learn more, visit cc-md.org/our-daily-bread

THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT IN ACTION

Baltimore Women in Action (BWIA), a philanthropic giving circle supporting Catholic Charities, will donate the stockings and stuffers for approximately 100 children in residence at St. Vincent’s Villa this Christmas season. Some of the founding members are pictured here from their stocking event in 2015.

Many of the BWIA members will gather at St. Vincent’s Villa on Thursday, December 15, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. to fill the stockings and have lunch together. If you are interested in donating to or participating in this event, please contact Terry Weigel at 667-600-2031 or tweigel@cc-md.org.

If you wish to learn more about Baltimore Women in Action, please contact Terry. BWIA will host a celebration and recruitment event in early January that you can attend and learn more about this wonderful group of women donors.

Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. —ROMANS 15:13

THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT IN ACTION

Baltimore Women in Action (BWIA), a philanthropic giving circle supporting Catholic Charities, will donate the stockings and stuffers for approximately 100 children in residence at St. Vincent’s Villa this Christmas season. Some of the founding members are pictured here from their stocking event in 2015.

Many of the BWIA members will gather at St. Vincent’s Villa on Thursday, December 15, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. to fill the stockings and have lunch together. If you are interested in donating to or participating in this event, please contact Terry Weigel at 667-600-2031 or tweigel@cc-md.org.

If you wish to learn more about Baltimore Women in Action, please contact Terry. BWIA will host a celebration and recruitment event in early January that you can attend and learn more about this wonderful group of women donors.
The grants include:

- $65,000 from the Marion I. and Henry J. Knott Foundation to Catholic Charities to support the men as they transform their lives.
- $40,000 from the William and Mary T. Hearst Foundation to support the men as they transform their lives.
- $35,920 from Behavioral Health System Baltimore to provide mental health and substance-related disorder services at the Youth Opportunities Center in West Baltimore.
- $30,000 from the Maryland Emergency Food Program (MEFP) for food programs at five parishes in West Baltimore: St. Peter Claver, St. Gregory the Great, St. Edward, St. Cecilia and the Church of the Immaculate Conception (Baltimore).
- $20,000 from the T. Rowe Price Foundation for the Youth Opportunities Center in West Baltimore.
- $15,000 from the City of Baltimore to provide job readiness and placement assistance to the residents of West Baltimore.
- $50,000 from CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield to Villa Maria Community Resource to support the growth of trauma-informed behavioral health services for children at the Safe Kids Zone in Penn North through the establishment of a therapeutic after-school program.

To learn more, visit cc-md.org/esperanza

Catholic Charities Receives Several Grants to Support Programs in West Baltimore

For more information on programs and events, visit cc-md.org
A Family’s Call to Serve

AS THE VOLUNTEER resource manager at Sarah’s House for the past 16 years, I have had the privilege to witness countless acts of generosity toward our guests. Like so many other Catholic Charities’ programs, Sarah’s House relies greatly upon community support in order to fully realize our mission to serve families in need. This support takes several forms, from a high school student tutoring a child to a local church serving a monthly meal. But when I consider the impact that a family can make in the lives of our guests, I look no further than the example of the Wecker family.

Inspired by a sense of gratitude and a call to action to help underprivileged children, the Wecker family has supplied backpacks, towels, sleeping bags and flip flops to the children who attend a week-long summer camp. They have also supplied many items for transitional housing including sheets, towels, dishes, silverware, pots and pans, microwave ovens, toasters and coffee makers.

Each year, our fully licensed childcare center serves more than 75 children, ranging from 6 weeks to 12 years old. The Weckers have donated breakfast foods, peanut butter and jelly, juice boxes, meats and cheeses, after-school snacks, books, shoes and diapers for the children.

“We are blessed to be a blessing to others,” Don Wecker said of his family. Through their commitment to Sarah’s House since 2004, the Wecker family has literally impacted the lives of hundreds of kids. Harriett Smith, our childcare director, adds, “The Weckers have been a true blessing in carrying out their late father’s legacy of the importance of giving. They are a blessing to the children and staff of Sarah’s House because they are selfless providers who constantly put the needs of others first.”

— Bruce Clopein, Volunteer Manager, Sarah’s House

To learn more, visit cc-md.org/sarahs-house

An added comfort for our behavioral health clients

“One reason a dog can be such a comfort when you’re feeling blue is that he doesn’t try to find out why.”

— AUTHOR UNKNOWN

VISITORS TO OUR outpatient sites in Dundalk, Cumberland and Millersville are likely to experience not only a warm and caring staff, but on many days, the warmth and care of the program dog. Zoe, Ben, Marv and Jake are canine members of the Villa Maria Behavioral Health Services teams. They have been a source of comfort and happiness for many children and adult clients.

As any pet lover would expect, interactions with dogs in a mental health clinic can sometimes bring out positive responses in the people we serve much more readily than even our most experienced clinicians.

ZOE
Zoe, a mixed breed rescued puppy, is a therapy dog owned by Sarah Rojas, office manager at our Anne Arundel County site in Millersville. Zoe assists in calming down clients who are dealing with a variety of symptoms, such as anxiety, hyperactivity and anger.

MARRY & JAKE
The outpatient clinic in Cumberland is fortunate to have two dogs—Marv and Jake, both Labrador Retrievers, owned by Lisa Serfass and Karla Diehl, respectively. Clients ask what days Marv and Jake will be there so they can schedule their appointments on those days.

One client said the only reason he came back to our clinic after having had bad experiences at other clinics was that we must be different because we had a dog. Lisa recounts how a young girl had been able to reveal her own sad experiences and feelings by initially attributing them to the clinic dog before having bad experiences at other clinics was that we must be different because we had a dog. Lisa recounts how a young girl had been able to reveal her own sad experiences and feelings by initially attributing them to the clinic dog before being able to acknowledge them as her own.

So if you need to schedule a visit to any of these three clinic locations, do so on a day when you can spend a happy minute with one of our furry friends, and thank them with a scratch on the back for what they bring to our organization.

For more information on programs and events, visit cc-md.org
Open your heart and make your gift today at cc-md.org/Blessings. Lives are improved and our community is stronger because of you and your generous support. Thank YOU!

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

CHEIRISHING THE DIVINE WITHIN ALL

From our roots in the late 1700s to today, Catholic Charities is Maryland’s leading nonprofit provider of human services, serving over 160,000 individuals and families every year. We also provided more than 589,000 meals to people who were hungry. With compassion and respect for people of all faiths, races and circumstances, we improve the lives of children and families, seniors, people living in poverty, immigrants and people who are intellectually disabled. As part of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, we cherish the Divine within all whom we serve in 80 programs throughout Baltimore City and nine counties.

For more information:
Catholic Charities, Communications Department
320 Cathedral Street, 3rd Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201-4421
Telephone: 667-600-2000
Fax: 410-576-2179
Email: info@cc-md.org
Website: www.cc-md.org
Maura Ryan, Managing Editor
Dennis Burns, Editor

For the first time in 26 years, A Taste of Maryland will be held at the B&O Railroad Museum. With your participation, we can make A Taste of Maryland 2017 our biggest and best yet.

Also new this year is THE AFTER PARTY for young professionals, 9 p.m.-12 a.m.

Tickets: $50 per person before January 20, limited quantities available. For more information: Julie Kolankiewicz at 667-600-2016 or JKolankiewicz@cc-md.org

Terry Weigel, Associate Director of Program Giving, 667-600-2031 or tweigel@cc-md.org