

# CATHOLIC CHARITIES

PROVIDING HELP. CREATING HOPE.



## 2011 Year in Review



2011 has been a very productive year for Catholic Charities. We have grown from a one-person office to one full-time and one part-time employee. New programs have been added while others have been enhanced. There is still much work to be done, but with the help of everyone, we are making a positive difference in people's lives. In this newsletter, you will find how instrumental you are in allowing us to work on your behalf – bringing help and hope to those in need.

### Martin's Cloak Food Pantry

This food pantry operates on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of every month in the basement of St. Martin of Tours church in Siberia. Throughout 2011, food was distributed to 1348 families or 4546 individuals. Of these, 1339 were 18 years of age or younger; 2647 were between the ages of 19 to 64 years; and 580 were 65 or older. Martin's Cloak and Catholic Charities are members of the Perry County Food Coalition, comprised of 5 food pantries in Perry County. Catholic Charities hosts the bi-monthly meetings and is the drop-off site for canned food/non-perishable drives conducted in the county. This food is then shared by the five pantries. Monetary donations are routed through the United Way, who serves as the fiscal agent. Any monies received through the Food Coalition are deposited to an account with the Tri-State Food Bank and the pantries use that credit for food purchases.

### Matrix Lifeline

Matrix serves as a resource for low-income pregnant women and women with young children. Assistance is given with diapers, formula, and connecting to other resources as needed. In June, we opened the Early Years Store which is supplied with donations from the community. Mothers can shop free of charge for maternity clothing, baby clothing, baby furniture, and other baby needs. Clothing is available in all sizes up to 2T. There is a limit on the number of visits and number of items that can be obtained in each visit. Currently, this ministry is working with several other organizations to expand and rename this ministry. At this time we are serving about 15 families each month.

### Specific Assistance

Catholic Charities spends a great deal of time and resources to help people with basic needs – food, clothing, and shelter. In our specific assistance program, we assist those in need with utility and rent payments, paying for prescriptions, and gasoline for out of town doctor's appointments. We are unique in our collaborations with other agencies, as we also distribute funds for these same purposes from the Perry County Clergy Association Benevolent Fund and the Salvation Army Emergency Assistance Fund. Recently, we have also begun dispensing funds from the Ohio Valley Gas Help Fund in their service area.

In 2011, many people were helped through these three funds. Through Catholic Charities, we assisted 355 families/1025 individuals. The Clergy Association Benevolent Fund assisted 146 families/569 individuals and the Salvation Army assisted 210 families/629 individuals.

We also serve as a resource for many people – guiding them through the maze of agencies (both government and social service) to get the assistance they need.

## Table Of Blessings

This weekly hot meal program is entering its third year. It is a wonderful collaboration between EUCC and Catholic Charities, with the help of other area churches, prayer groups, businesses, and individuals. In 2011 we served a hot nutritious meal to about 2650 people. Joining us each week are families in need of assistance to feed their families, senior citizens seeking a good meal in the company of others, widows and widowers who are lonely, and others who want to share in the fellowship. Everyone is welcome! There are no questions asked.

In the summer months, we receive fresh produce from St. Paul's Community Garden, Branchville Training Center, Wm. Tell Elementary Community Garden, VIP Foliage, and various people in the community sharing from their home gardens. We receive help preparing and donating food from several different groups. This is truly an ecumenical effort.



In 2011 we began **Budgeting Basics classes**. This is an intensive one-on-one financial counseling course designed to teach the very basics of budgeting to those who continually struggle to make ends meet. While this has been very successful, we are looking at ways to reach larger groups of people at one time.

## Providing Help and Creating Hope through Community Effort

Through our 5th Sunday collections, we received \$7285.12. Other parishes donated \$1594.55 to Martin's Cloak Food Pantry throughout the year and Noble's receipts added an additional \$992.19. Our appeals and other donations also allow us to continue our work of providing help and creating hope in many lives each year. We are presently working with the 4C2 community partnership to establish a community resource center, where many different non-profit agencies will be housed under one roof. The hope is that this will make it easier on those needing services to find the help they need in one location. As the various agencies work together in our efforts to improve the lives of the poor and vulnerable, we will more effectively make our communities better, as well. Through this effort, we began The Benefit Bank at Catholic Charities. This is sponsored throughout the state by Purdue University. At this time, we can assist with signing up for SNAP (food stamps), filling out the FAFSA form (financial help for post-secondary education) and registering to vote. We hope to add tax preparation to this soon. All services are free and open to those who need assistance. Also in partnership with the United Way, we presented the Poverty Simulation to three groups last year. This is a free program where participants are immersed in role-playing to understand the struggles of those living in poverty.

## Updates

Catholic Charities continues to serve on the Transportation Advisory Council involved with public transportation in Perry and Spencer counties. We attend Legislative gatherings when possible to speak for the poor in our area. Last year we worked with Branchville Training Center to provide clothing to released offenders and we collected books for participants in the Reading with Dad program. We are currently working with the Hometown Competitiveness Grant on the Rural Families Economic Success pillar and have begun working with Learn More Indiana in an effort to make sure all graduates of our local high schools are prepared for further education.

Last winter we distributed a total of 561 coats and 66 blankets to those needing warmth. **Hilger's Laundry** in Tell City cleans these coats for us free of charge.

Catholic Charities will continue to serve as your agency – providing help and creating hope for those in need in our communities. Without your support, none of these efforts and ministries would be possible. God bless all of you for your support through donations, volunteering, and prayer.