

Notes from the Heart

JULY 2016

News from Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans

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Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans provides life-giving programs that deliver health and human services to the most vulnerable and needy throughout 8 civil parishes in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. We serve people regardless of race, religion, age, ethnicity or economic status.

SUMMERTIME AT CATHOLIC CHARITIES

From the desk of Sr. Marjorie Hebert, M.S.C., President & CEO

Written by Ashley Bellant

The long days of summer are here and while the heat and humidity signify to many a time of vacation, relaxation, a time to take things slow – the same cannot be said for us here at Catholic Charities. From our summer SERVE (Students Engaging in Reflective Volunteer Experiences) volunteer sessions for youth to our ongoing work in the aftermath of tornadoes and flooding affecting LaPlace and the North Shore, we continue our mission to serve those in need.

July also marks the beginning of a new fiscal year for our organization. It is during this time that we wrap up and put away the data of the last fiscal year. We also calculate our service numbers from the past year; volunteer hours served, number of clients served or the total value of items and goods donated, for example. It is always gratifying to see the many hours we have collectively dedicated to helping those in need and even more impressive to total the number of lives you all have enabled us to touch. While I am proud of the work we have accomplished and excited to share these final numbers, it is important to remember that numbers on a page aren't the heart of who we are as an agency. It is the "one" – the individual that we are serving, the smile we are able to give someone in need, the hand we are able to hold when someone feels lost or forgotten – that truly makes these number impactful. This impact would not be possible without the support we receive in the form of your time, your gifts, monetary or otherwise, and your prayers.

Each one of those numbers represents a unique story, and I for one, feel so blessed that Catholic Charities is a positive part of those stories. As we begin a new chapter, please join us in prayer for renewed energy and give thanks for the community of people looking out for one another and serving those in need as Jesus instructed us to do.

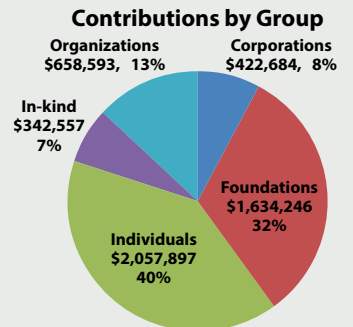
Our Lady of Prompt Succor, continue to watch over us during this hurricane season! We pray God's blessings upon those we serve, our donors who give graciously and generously, our volunteers who are our partners in ministry and the energized staff who compassionately serve!



THANK YOU!

Many thanks to the individuals, organizations, businesses and foundations that support our 30+ life-giving programs each year. During the past fiscal year, you have contributed **\$5,115,977*** in cash and in-kind donations. Your support provides help and creates hope for thousands of individuals and families in need. Thank you for your generosity!

**Contributions for unaudited fiscal year ended June 30, 2016. Includes contributions from the 2015 Archbishop Hannan Community Appeal which raised \$2,002,408.*



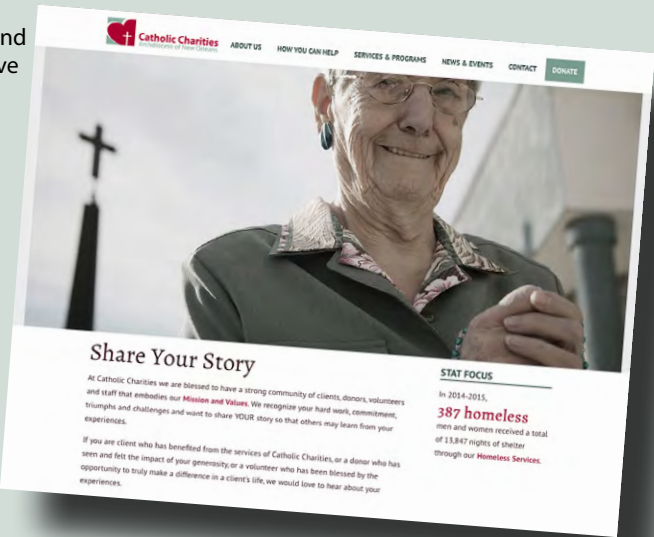
Share Your Story

Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans is excited to announce a new addition to our website! The new Share Your Story page allows clients, donors, volunteers or anyone else affected by the work of Catholic Charities to share their stories with us.

The people we serve and those who help us serve them are at the very heart of our mission. We want to share with the community the stories of those who helped shape Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans into what it is today.

If you are a client who has benefited from our aid, a donor who has seen your generosity at work in our community or a volunteer who has made a difference in the life of even one person that we serve, we want to hear from YOU!

You can visit www.ccano.org/share-your-story/ and start sharing today. We look forward to hearing from you!



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News from **Catholic Charities**
Archdiocese of New Orleans

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- **and More!**

www.ccano.org
(504) 523-3755 | ccano@ccano.org

FOSTER GRANDPARENTS

The national Foster Grandparent Program began in August of 1965 with a dual purpose of engaging limited-income people aged 55 and older in volunteer service to meet the needs of their community and enriching the lives of their elderly volunteers. The program is part of Senior Corps, which is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Currently, there are more than 33,000 Foster Grandparent Program volunteers nationwide. The program has been with Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans for over 30 years.



The role of each foster grandparent is to provide one-on-one assistance to troubled children with exceptional needs in classroom settings. They serve as tutors, mentors and role models for 15 to 40 hours each week. They provide emotional support, model appropriate behavior, assist with adjustment to new people and places and encourage socialization with other children.

By sharing their empathy, experiences and wisdom with a younger generation, the program allows older individuals to remain physically and mentally active and to enhance their self-esteem and independence. Not only does volunteering as a foster grandparent allow them to spend time with children, but the elderly also get to visit with other seniors. Many foster grandparents have commented they feel like they have a purpose in the community and are still needed. Being a foster grandparent keeps them from becoming lonely and isolated. Foster grandparents aren't the only ones reaping the benefits. The children also benefit from having a consistent person in their lives who provides unconditional love, support and positivity. Oftentimes, these children don't have a stable family structure. A foster grandparent serves as

the comforter, helper and grandparent figure that many children need. They make the children feel unconditionally loved and important.

Shelli Simeon, Foster Grandparent Program Director, commented, "Our community has a high percentage of children who are unable to read or who have fallen two to three grade levels behind in reading and become disengaged at school. Foster grandparents help them improve their literacy skills, build confidence and increase engagement." Teachers often report an increase in social, emotional and developmental skills in children who have the support of a foster grandparent in their classroom.

The Foster Grandparents Program is valuable to



the community because it provides intergenerational exposure, helps seniors remain active in their community and enhances the lives of children. Simeon often hears stories of children who run into their foster grandparents years later, and they always remember "grandma or grandpa from school."

Catholic Charities' Foster Grandparent Program serves 20 sites in Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany parishes, including public, private and charter schools and Head Start facilities. Currently, there are 83 active Foster Grandparent Program volunteers offering thousands of hours of their time each year. Two of our foster grandparents have been volunteering for 23 years, and another recently celebrated her 93rd birthday!

In April, long-time foster grandparent, Bobbie Bridges, received the Joseph Massenburg Memorial Award for Excellence in National Service from Mayor Mitch Landrieu for her work with The Foster Grandparent Program.

If you or someone you know is 55 or older and wants to share your experience and compassion with children in our community, contact Shelli Simeon at ssimeon@ccano.org or (504) 310-6882.

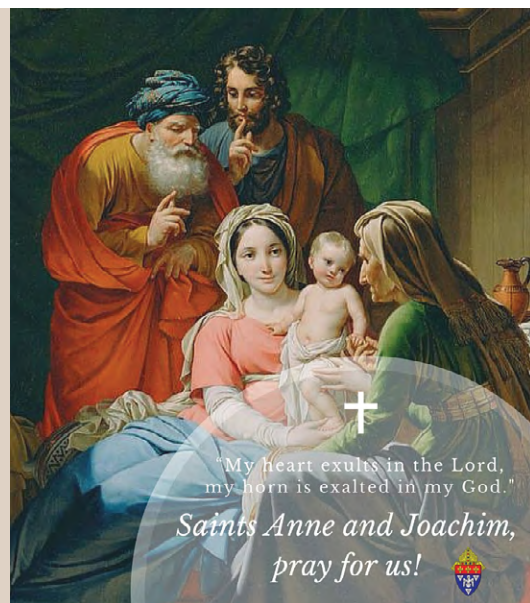
Pray for us

On July 26, we celebrate the Feast of Saints Anne and Joachim, the parents of the Virgin Mary. Saint Anne was born in Bethlehem and eventually married Joachim, a shepherd from Nazareth. The two were childless, and Anne was growing older.

Both Anne and Joachim were visited by angels who promised they would bear a child who would be celebrated for all of time. The two were soon blessed with a daughter, Mary, whose life Anne promised to devote to God. In thanksgiving for the miracle God had given them, Anne and Joachim delivered Mary to serve at the Temple when she was three years old. There she began her journey in faith that eventually led her to motherhood, as well.

Because of his model of devotion to the Father, Saint Joachim is the patron saint of both fathers and grandfathers. He is most always portrayed dressed in green, which is the color of hope. Similarly, Saint Anne is the patron saint of mothers and grandmothers; she is also the patron saint of infertile women and unborn children. She is often portrayed as a loving, devoted mother to young Mary.

Saints Anne and Joachim, pray for us!



3rd Annual Peace Games a Big Success!

On July 1, 2016 the Peace League of New Orleans held the third annual *Peace Games New Orleans* at St. Mary's Academy. The day-long event gave 67 young men from in and around the city a chance to interact, hear from community activists, and of course, play basketball. This year's speakers included Michael Ruffin from the City of New Orleans, Alfred Marshall from Stand with Dignity, and Antonio Travis and the Black Men Rising group from FFLIC.

The Peace League of New Orleans has been a three year collaborative project of Isaiah 43/ Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans, One Voice Louisiana, and Temple of Praise Ministries. The league was created in response to requests from young men who attended an Interfaith Peace Initiative event in 2014. This season the Peace League held several Saturday tournaments leading up to the Peace Games. Additional activities included a health fair, empowerment sessions, job search support, and team coaching.

Peace Games New Orleans is modeled after the Chicago Peace Games and the work of Fr. Pfleger as a means to curb violence by helping build relationships across neighborhoods. Seven teams competed in this year's event. The 1st and 2nd place teams received trophies and their



players who demonstrated outstanding commitment to integrity and hard work were also recognized. The final award, the Herbert Tennessee Peace Award, was presented to Harvey Stewart, a player on the Herb World team who was recognized as an outstanding participant within the league.

Additional support for the Peace Games was provided by several donors and volunteers.



Head Start students are moving up!

Last month, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans held promotion ceremonies in honor of our Head Start students. Early Head Start students who reached the age of 2 were promoted to Head Start, and students who reached the age of 5 graduated from the Head Start program and are heading off to kindergarten in the fall!

Promotion ceremonies were held at St. John the Baptist, Incarnate Word, St. Mary of the Angels and Louise Head Starts. A total of 145 children were promoted this year: 35 from Incarnate Word, 17 from St. Mary of the Angels, 56 from St. John the Baptist and 37 from Louise! The majority of students graduated from the Head Start program altogether, while some were promoted from Early Head Start classes to Head Start classes.

Friends and families were invited to attend the ceremonies. Each Head Start program added personal touches to their own ceremonies and made them special for the students. With the help of their teachers, each class performed a short song or poem for those in attendance.

Guests at the Louise Head Start promotion ceremony were able to see the positive effects of Head Start first hand. A sister and brother, both of whom completed the Head Start program and are now in high school, spoke to students and parents about the importance of education and the value of getting a jump start so young.

This year, the ladies of the St. Elizabeth's Guild handed out small gifts to the graduates and served refreshments to the children and their families at the reception. We are thankful for the love and support the ladies have shown to this year's Head Start students.

Near the end of the St. John promotion ceremony, Sr.

Marjorie Hebert, President and CEO, asked the young students, "Who's excited to go to kindergarten next year?" A mass of hands shot into the air, and all the students smiled and laughed. While their teachers will miss them greatly, we are proud of all of their accomplishments and excited to see what each of their futures hold. Congratulations, grads!

