

Faith in Action



Catholic Charities
Archdiocese of New Orleans

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



OUR MISSION

Impelled by the love
and teaching of Jesus Christ,
while respecting the
dignity and potential of
all people, we collaborate
to offer life-giving programs,
advocate for the voiceless and
empower the vulnerable
to foster a just society.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in the Lord,

At the end of 2019, Pope Francis met with the survivors of Japan's triple disaster of the 2011 earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear accident. This, he said, "calls for experiencing the solidarity and support of a community. No one 'rebuilds' by him or herself; nobody can start over alone".

The mission of Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans is to ensure that no one who is rebuilding their lives or suffering does so alone. As the stories in this Annual Report illustrate, Catholic Charities works to create a more just society by welcoming the most vulnerable among us, walking beside them and working to meet their needs. Whether it is the childless couple who are blessed with a beautiful child through Adoption Services or the immigrant who seeks to master the English language through the English as a Second Language program, Catholic Charities stands hand in hand with the person or family in order to help them.

As we face our own triple disasters of pandemic, economic downturn, and Hurricane Laura, it is important to remember that we are not alone. Each one of us carries the light of the world in our souls. Matthew 5:15 tells us that "neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they set it on a lampstand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in Heaven."

I thank you for being the light in our Archdiocese and for providing the sense of community to those who are alone or vulnerable. As you read on, please keep in prayer those we have been humbled to serve in the past year and those whose generosity has made this ministry possible.

Wishing you God's blessings, and with gratitude for your participation in the work of Catholic Charities, I am,

Gratefully in Christ,



Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond
Archbishop of New Orleans



Catholic Charities
stands hand in hand
with the person or
family in order
to help them.



Dear Friends of Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans,

As I reflect on last year and the unpleasantness of what 2020 has brought us thus far, the constant that remains in my heart is faith. Hebrews 11:1 says that “faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen”. Every day, I hope that my faith in those things we hope for – peace, happiness, health – are in the hearts of those suffering brought on by the pandemic, the stay at home orders, the economic downturn and unemployment, and hurricanes.

At Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans, those that are vulnerable or suffering are at the forefront of what we do. Whether their disasters are of the everyday variety – loss of job, domestic violence, unplanned pregnancy -or of the natural kind, we are here for all of it. Our faith in the things that we hope for causes us to act. Mother Teresa said, “Faith in action is love, and love in action is service. By transforming that faith into living acts of love, we put ourselves in contact with God Himself, and with Jesus our Lord”. It is that which drives us to offer an open door, a warm welcome, dry ground, a defending voice, and a hand up for generations of Louisiana residents. This Annual Report showcases some of the work we have done in putting FAITH IN ACTION.

My gratitude to all of you who give of your gifts of financial support and time to be our partners in this action in our archdiocese. We could not do it without your support.

Asking God’s mercy and blessings upon you and your families, I remain



Sr. Marjorie Hebert, MSC

It is that which
drives us to offer
an open door,
a warm welcome, dry ground,
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Compelling Each Other to Learn English

On a Wednesday morning in August, a group of people gathered together the only way they could, on a platform that many of us have gotten to know all too well: Zoom. The participants were the students and volunteer teachers of a Level 1 English as a Second Language class, which, until the stay-at-home-order in March, took place at Carrollton Avenue Church of Christ. In attendance were ESL Site Facilitator, Claire, volunteer teachers Melinda, Frank, and Elroy, and a group of English language learners from across Latin America who now live in the New Orleans area.

The Zoom meeting marks a new phase of the English classes. Immigration, Refugee, and ESL Services of Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans has been offering English classes for over a decade. Immigrants and refugees from all over the world live in the greater New Orleans area, and for many, learning English is an important step in achieving better jobs, higher education, and a secure life for their families. In the last year, CCANO's ESL Program served almost 1,000 students. Even as the city closed down, the ESL program continued to offer classes online. For both students and teachers, remote learning was a new frontier, and a challenge. With the widespread isolation that accompanied COVID-19, English classes are not only a place for learning, but a source of connection.

Of everyone in the virtual class that Wednesday, Frank and Elroy have been program volunteers the longest. Frank is a member of Church of Christ, and when Catholic Charities first started hosting ESL classes there, 11 years ago, Frank was interested. "I had never done anything like that before, and I said, 'Well, I'm retired, and

I think that would be something that I would like.'" A few years later, Frank convinced his best friend Elroy to join as well. Since then, the two have been regulars in the level 1 class. They work one-on-one with students, and give constant encouragement. When classes are held in person, they make the coffee for break time and take time to check in with new students. According to one student, "Mr. Frank and Mr. Elroy are such wonderful people. They are always so kind."*

Frank and Elroy have also been strong advocates for the ESL program. They are two of dozens of teachers — all volunteers — who lead the English classes with the help of CCANO site facilitators, and they're responsible for recruiting at least one of the Level 1 students, Rosa.

Rosa, who moved to the United States three years ago, was a teacher in her native Peru. Her first job in New Orleans was as a hotel housekeeper. Most of her co-workers spoke Spanish, but she wanted a job where she'd be able to practice English, so she applied for a job at the Tic Toc Café, in Metairie. She was initially given a position as a dishwasher. The owner of the café, Mike Delahoussaye, noticed how quickly Rosa was picking up English, and soon moved her to waiting tables with the mostly English-speaking clientele. That's when she met two regulars, Frank and Elroy. They encouraged Rosa to attend the English classes. She came when she could, but childcare, a job, and the bus commute to New Orleans meant that she couldn't come regularly. When classes switched to online, Rosa could participate, even from work, where she'd listen on headphones during downtime. Of her English class, Rosa says, "In a few months, it's changed my life."



Now that she is able to communicate easily with customers and coworkers, Rosa was recently promoted to assistant manager. Mr. Delahoussaye says, “I hope that she’s working at Tic Toc 10 years from now, but I have a feeling she won’t be...if she’s not, I know it’s because of her talent, and her drive and determination.”

Other Level 1 students describe similar dreams and goals. Zenaida, who moved to New Orleans at the end of May, studied marketing and business in Honduras. Now, she says, “I want to take up my studies again, I want to work. My English classes are interesting; I’m interested in so many things. I want to learn English to be able to communicate...I want to be someone in life.” Another student, Martha, who is also from Honduras, agrees: “In life, it’s important to keep advancing, keep studying, keep learning, always.”*

Many ESL students are parents, too, and want to learn English to support their children. Elma, also in the Level 1 class, has a six-year-old daughter of whom she says, “She’s too smart! She started school last year and now she always wants to talk to me in English.”* Now that Elma’s daughter has started first grade online, both are attending classes remotely during the day. Now Elma has the tools that she needs to make sure she and her daughter both get the most out of their education.

For some, the transition to online learning was initially a struggle. Rosa had a head start because her church is now offering Zoom services. For Blanca, who moved to the US from El Salvador, Zoom was harder to learn at first: “With the pandemic, it has been a struggle to keep going forward. The truth is that at first, I had no idea how to do it. Little by little I have been learning, thanks to God. And yes, with the [online] classes... we’re not like the young people who pick it up so quickly, and sometimes it’s difficult”.* After practice and encouragement from her classmates and teachers, Blanca is confident using Zoom and attends class regularly.

She has noticed a big improvement in her English skills, too, which gives her more freedom and independence. “If I go to a restaurant I can order what I want to



eat... I remember that the first time I went out to eat I didn’t know, so I said yes to everything. They gave me two of everything, it cost a lot of money. I didn’t need 2 coffees, I didn’t need that.” She adds “It’s a little scary at first, that people won’t understand, but that’s what you have to do to succeed. [English classes] have helped me to be myself, and do what I want to do.”*

In many adult education programs, retention is a challenge. Students are often juggling work and family responsibilities in addition to attending school, and the Catholic Charities ESL program is no different. When asked what kept them coming back to class despite the challenges, Level 1 students all had the same answers: each other, and their desire for connection and the ability to communicate with others. Rosa describes feeling nervous before her first class. But after a while, she said, “You don’t feel afraid, you don’t have to apologize when you make a mistake. You talk, you make mistakes, but the teachers correct you, and you try again.”* Blanca describes the support that the students show for each other: “It’s so important because when a person doesn’t understand what the teachers are saying, another who does understand helps her...Yes, there’s a lot of support. It’s really wonderful because you learn to get along with the others. I had the experience of attending classes in person and we would always talk. There’s still a strong bond of friendship.”*

The students recognize, too, the many strengths that they bring to their new country. As Blanca says, “We’re all equal, and we all have the same rights before God and as people. Like they say here, nobody is more or less than anybody else.” Rosa adds, “I think that if people trust immigrants like me, and give us the opportunity to work, to see us, to support us...I believe that we can surprise them. We can do really good things for them, and for ourselves as well.”*

For more information about enrolling in ESL classes or volunteering with the program, go to <https://www.ccano.org/english-second-language-classes/>

* Quotes were translated from Spanish to English.

Welcoming the Gift of Life and Family

Lee and Ashli met and married a little later in life than many couples. Because of this, there was an awareness early on in their relationship that having a biological child might be a challenge. Ashli shares that the couple loved children and “always hoped and prayed for multiple children to be a part of their family.” When the couple’s suspicion of fertility struggles became a reality, they decided to forego pursuing fertility treatments and to instead focus on building their family through adoption. Lee shares that “adoption was already a topic extremely close to our hearts” as his older sister was placed for adoption when she was born.

In 2014, the couple reached out to Adoption Services, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans to inquire about adoption. They soon started the adoption home study process with the program and began learning about open adoption. The couple shares initially feeling “a little apprehensive about open adoption.” Ashli shares that once they learned more about the benefits of open adoption, their “anxiety and fears were quickly put to rest.” The couple soon finished their adoption home study, created their adoption profile, and patiently waited for their adoption profile to be selected by an expectant mother considering adoption.

In 2015, Caroline experienced a difficult reality as she was faced with an unplanned pregnancy. She remembers feeling “devastated and shocked, but mostly scared.” Having grown up in a pro-life household Caroline “never considered abortion as an option, but felt uncertain” about becoming a single mother. She reached out to her family, who lived out of state, for support. Caroline’s mother, Ginger, remembers receiving

the news “my thoughts went immediately to the health of her and the baby” adding “I knew she was scared.” Her father, David, who often spends weekends praying in front of the local Planned Parenthood facility, was extremely relieved “when Caroline said abortion was not an option.” After processing the news themselves and supporting their daughter through the initial shock, the family helped Caroline locate counseling services in the New Orleans area. David remembers “very vividly when Caroline called and said she “felt something come over her that told her to give this baby what she had, a mother and FATHER!” Caroline had decided to consider adoption.

The family reached out to Adoption Services, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans for information. Caroline began receiving counseling services and learning





about the adoption planning process. A couple of months later Caroline reviewed profiles (written information and photo books) of prospective adoptive families. Ginger remembers supporting her daughter with this important decision by helping her to consider the qualities “she would want in parents for her baby.” Caroline soon selected Lee and Ashli’s profile sharing that she “knew immediately” they were couple that could provide “everything I wanted for my child.” Caroline decided she wanted to meet them.

Lee and Ashli remember feeling “nervous” before meeting Caroline and her family for the first time. Lee adds, “our feelings were quickly shifted from a fear of the unknown to the start of genuine friendships that we all share today.” The families met several times during Caroline’s pregnancy, which Ashli feels enabled them “to make a connection with Caroline and her family personally, share in pregnancy updates, have the child’s gender revealed to us, and talk about the sweet little soul that we were all waiting to meet and love.”

Following her daughter’s birth, Caroline invited Lee and Ashli to the hospital to visit with the baby. Caroline’s father David shares, “it warmed my heart to know that Lee and Ashli chose Caroline’s middle name, a family name, as Lillian’s middle name too.” The families all spent time together with Lillian before leaving the hospital. Ginger recalls helping Caroline “pick out a beautiful gown for the baby to leave the hospital in when her new parents would take her home.”

Following Lillian’s birth and adoption placement, the families remained in contact. Caroline feels having a relationship with Lee, Ashli, and Lillian “means everything to me.” Ginger shares how “Lillian has brought so much happiness and love into our entire family. We marvel at how much she reminds us of Caroline when she was her age, but also marvel at how she also resembles her mom, Ashli.” David adds, “Ashli and Lee have made it so easy to be a part of Lillian’s life” often sending videos of every day moments and even Lillian singing a “birthday song to Gigi and Pops.” Ginger describes the sense of peace they all feel “watching Lillian grow and develop, we know where she is and what she is up to---there is no mystery or worry.” When Caroline thinks about her unplanned pregnancy and the relationship she now has with her birth daughter she reflects, “what I thought at the time was the worst thing that could have happened has now become one of the best things” adding “I couldn’t imagine my life without her.”

The families are now five years into their adoption journey and all feel blessed by their extended family relationship. Lee shares that Caroline and her family “have been extremely welcoming to us by allowing us to be a special part of their family just as they have become special members of our family” adding that “we call them our bonus family.” Ashli shares that , “from the beginning, they were very open and, like us, wanted the very best for Lillian.” Caroline agrees having “more family” has been a tremendous gift and says her relationship with Lee and Ashli felt “natural and comfortable from the beginning.” The families stay in contact through emails, texts, and visits and have even spent time together in Caroline’s home town. The families will share another life changing moment together when Lillian serves as a flower girl in Caroline’s wedding later this year. Lee and Ashli feel that the comfort of their “relationship with Caroline and her family, made entering into a second open relationship with our son’s birth mother that much easier to initiate and continue.”

Looking back on their path to becoming parents, Lee and Ashli feel they have grown as people, and as a couple. Having children has changed their lives for the better. They share that they “are proud of the family we have been lucky enough to build together. We love that we get to share the lives of our babies with the wonderful women who chose us to be the parents of the precious lives they brought into this world.”

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Providing Food with Empathy

Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans has been serving seniors with Food for Seniors for over 35 years. Food for Seniors provides monthly nutritional food boxes to seniors who are 60 years old or older and meet Federal Income Guidelines. Catholic Charities Food for Seniors is the sole agency of Louisiana's Commodity Supplemental Food

Program (CSFP) which works to improve the health of low-income elderly persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA Foods.

The Food for Seniors program also educates clients about good nutrition by providing nutritional information that includes easy to make recipes using commodity foods, caloric intake, how to stretch food dollars and eat a healthy diet.


Lucindya Rowe is one of the Catholic Charities Food for Seniors program's clients. She has been picking up her supplemental box for over 25 years. "Once I retired in 1995, Charity Hospital gave me information on the Food for Seniors program so I had my daughter bring me to pick up my first box from Hope Haven." Lucindya worked at Charity Hospital for 21 years and her field of expertise was in domestic work. Today, she picks up from West Bank Commodity Center in Harvey, which is very convenient to her home.

She enjoys all the items that are in the box especially the juice, milk and dry beans. "I really like all the items and it saves me money every month," Lucindya said. Her retirement is not much and she takes advantage of every program that can assist her. She is very appreciative of her monthly food box through Food for Seniors.

Lucindya is a mother of five, grandmother of nine, great-grandmother of sixteen and great-great grandmother of five children.

Lucindya hopes this program continues for all her family to enjoy one day. Her daughter has recently retired and now is part of the Food for Seniors program. Both Lucindya and her daughter love being part of the Food for Seniors program and that it helps supplement their monthly groceries.





The Food for Seniors program also educates clients about good nutrition by providing nutritional information that includes easy to make recipes using commodity foods, caloric intake, how to stretch food dollars and eat a healthy diet.

- How to build a healthy meal?**
- Make half your plate veggies and fruits
 - Include whole grains
 - Don't forget the dairy
 - Add lean protein
 - Avoid extra fat
 - Get creative in the kitchen
 - Take control of your food
 - Try new foods
 - Satisfy your sweet tooth in a healthy way
 - Everything you eat and drink matters
- This information is an equal opportunity provided.
"Food provided by the Commodity Supplemental Food Program is intended for the participant to whom it is distributed and not by any other person."

Spirit of Hope Program Lives Up to its Name

Life was moving along all right for Ed and Rhonda Nelson. Ed was working as an independent lawn service provider and general fix-it man for multiple people in the Slidell area. Rhonda, who is legally blind and suffers from stage 2 kidney disease, high blood-pressure and diabetes, is limited in her ability to work. She receives disability benefits. When COVID-19 happened, things became very difficult for the Nelsons.

It was not that Ed could not work; it became that Ed could not find work. The usual clients he services became unable to pay for fix-it projects and lawn needs. These clients began directing their money towards other necessities. Rhonda was very nervous. “We didn’t know what we were going to do,” Rhonda said. She reached out to the St. Tammany Parish Community Action Agency.

Spirit of
Hope provided
a listening
ear...

St. Tammany Parish Community Action Agency (St. Tammany CAA) serves as the housing, rental, and utilities assistance arm of the St. Tammany Parish government. They work in cooperation with Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans’ Spirit of Hope program. When clients come to

St. Tammany CAA, they have to meet criteria in order to qualify for assistance. Sometimes clients are in significant need but don’t meet criteria. Other times, the funding St. Tammany CAA can provide is limited. Those are the times when St. Tammany CAA leans onto Catholic Charities Spirit of Hope.

Spirit of Hope took on the Nelson’s case. Through the combination of grants and generous donations to Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans, Spirit of Hope provided a listening ear and paid for a month’s rent for the Nelsons.

In the following month, a Spirit of Hope caseworker followed up with Rhonda. “We are doing great,” she said. “Ed has some lawn jobs again. We are hopeful.”

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Spirit of Hope has shifted to helping clients with rental, employment and housing assistance. In recent months, Spirit of Hope has also helped serve Hurricanes Laura and Sally victims with emergency disaster response. This includes helping to provide much needed supplies in Lake Charles, delivering hygiene kits to evacuees in New Orleans and providing information and FEMA assistance.

Learn more about Spirit of Hope at <https://www.ccano.org/disaster-response-services/>.

Catholic Charities standing hand in hand

Through your generosity, we assisted **57,140** individuals through our 30+ programs.

62

persons served through
Adoption Services



Immigration Services
served

2,745
individuals

51,282

persons received

20,956,848

lbs. of food distributed in
all 64 LA Civil Parishes
through Food for Families/
Food for Seniors



St. Vincent Maternity Clinic

230

pre-natal & post-natal
office visits

Padua House Program
provided

10,610
days of care

249

individuals cared for through
Health Guardians Health
Care for the Homeless

Office of Justice & Peace
Prison Ministry

1,401

outreach services



Domestic Violence
Project Save provided

512

legal service hours

12,158

days of care

Ciara Independent Living



113

people served through
Catholic Charities'
Homeless Programs

2,910

days of foster care were
coordinated through
Therapeutic Family Services



ACCESS Pregnancy &
Referral Centers distributed

112,007
diapers

Deaf Action Center provided

3,514

hours of interpreting services



523

youth attended

45,319

days through our
Head Start programs



Foster Grandparents
recorded

75,208

of volunteer hours

Stay connected



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Archbishop of New Orleans

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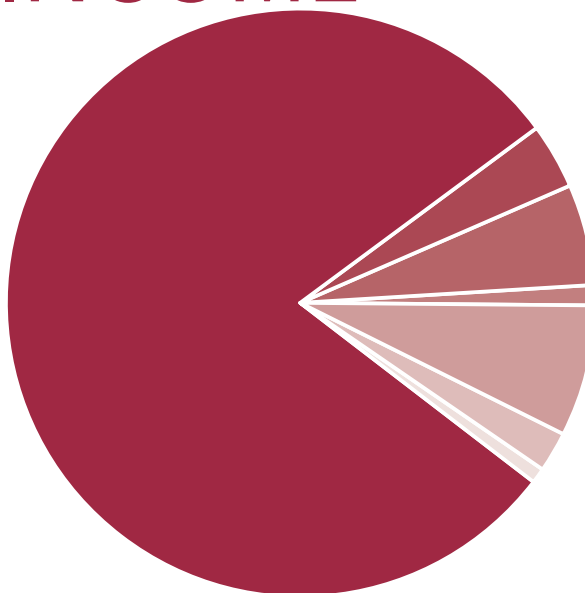
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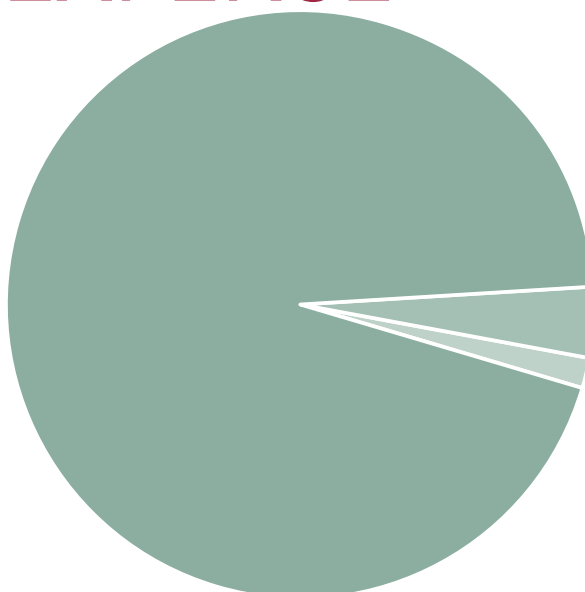


OPERATING INCOME

	AMOUNT
● Contributions	\$3,364,745
● Private Grants.....	\$1,041,550
● United Way.....	\$384,807
● Public Sources	\$36,046,772
● Program Service Fees.....	\$1,612,732
● Other Income	\$2,550,068
● Donated Goods and Services Received	\$410,695

TOTAL\$45,411,369

EXPENSE



95%

of expenses
are spent
on program
services, care,
and goods.

EXPENSES

	AMOUNT
● Program Services.....	\$42,622,234
● Management & General.....	\$1,676,141
● Fundraising	\$743,686

TOTAL\$45,042,061

(a) Unaudited fiscal year ended June 30, 2020

(b) Program services amount does not include 554,496 commodity food boxes distributed by Food for Families/Food for Seniors with a retail value of approximately \$27,724,800

(c) A portion of current year expenses were covered by grants from prior years.



Faith in Action





Catholic Charities
Archdiocese of New Orleans

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**United
Way**



CREDIBILITY • INTEGRITY • ACHIEVEMENT